The Unheard Voices of Refugee Students:

Understanding Syrian Students’ Well-Being and Capabilities in Jordan’s Double-Shift Schools

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This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
To the children I met,
and to the millions of children displaced by conflict,
whose visibility and potential
should not be determined by borders.
DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University of similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit of 80,000 words.

Hiba Salem
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Abstract

This research seeks to extend current understandings of the experiences and challenges that face refugee students learning in protracted refugee situations like Jordan. The project looks at Syrian refugee students’ experiences and perceptions of learning in Jordan’s segregated, double-shift schools. Education for refugee has focused on enhancing access and learning quality, seeking to allow refugee children to gain a sense of normalcy and create opportunities for their futures. However, little attention has been paid to how refugee students’ experience their learning spaces in more long-term refugee situations, and how their well-being, aspirations, and perceptions of self and the future are influenced by the education initiatives that refugee-hosting nations put forth.

Through a qualitative phenomenological approach, I draw on Sen’s Capability Approach to explore children’s perceptions of their well-being and experiences in schools and outside schools. I engage with students to understand the values and hopes that children have for their present and future, and I examine how these values are shaped by the interactions between schools and the social, economic, and political factors that affect students. This study uses visual-based methods with children to elicit conversations, and also draws on five teacher interviews and classroom observations.

The findings of this study portray the important role that schools play in influencing how refugee children’s identities are shaped, and the extent to which students’ school reinforce or transform the limitations that refugee children experience within their hosting nation. It contributes to understanding the values that children believe are important for their well-being in these schools, and provides a discussion on how children’s needs and the challenges they face can also vary across age and gender. The research offers compelling insight into how negative practices within schools, how segregated school structures, and a lack of alignment between policymaking and practice can harm children’s development and undermine the benefits of access to education. These findings illustrate the importance of situating refugee students’ well-being in relation to their social, political, economic, and cultural factors. Finally, the study also calls for a greater understanding of how the well-being of parents and teachers can influence refugee students’ own well-being.
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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Do not judge us for our appearances. Try to speak to us and help us, not through money, but through your feelings towards us. Talk to us. That can help us feel hopeful about our lives.

_Syrian participant student’s ‘Letter to the World’, 16_

In 2011, the Syrian conflict began during the last two terms of my undergraduate degree. In uncertain and dazed states of conflict, we rose every morning and took a forty-five-minute bus journey to the University campus, its gates now embellished with tanks and armed security. Our mobile phones were disconnected upon arrival, and an eerie sense of bareness spread across the university grounds. For many weeks, we continued our learning in isolation, until our classmates from Daraa returned, dressed in black to mourn the losses of their fathers, brothers, and cousins. Though no ceremonies were ever held for our class, we completed our degrees together in the summer of 2011, before the violence made its way across the rest of the nation.

The unexpected arrival of conflict stripped the sense of security and optimism that is to be anticipated after university. Those months in 2011 and what followed mark the final times I saw many of my friends and family, who fled the country before they were otherwise forced to join the military or who escaped to seek protection. After months of being employed at my first job, the company closed in the hope of relocating to an area less dangerous. Yet, quickly, the country became lamented with violence, chaos, kidnapping, and growing poverty. However, having a university degree continued to protect my sense of identity and potential, and despite phases of unemployment, I was able to find work and escape, even if momentarily, the relentless and devastating effects of conflict.

As risks heightened, the future of Syria and the lives of its citizens became veiled in uncertainty. We played guessing games and predicted the date of the end of the conflict. “Next month”, my grandmother would say, “the end of this year might be more realistic” my dad argued. The guessing games stopped a couple of years later, and today, Syrian children have not known anything but

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1 First signs of uprising and conflict began in the city of Daraa.
conflict and displacement. Syria, and its region, have been warned by UNICEF (2014) against allowing Syria’s children to become what has been termed as the ‘Lost Generation’: the millions of children who will grow up without an education. The disruptive and eye-opening experiences of those years transformed my aspirations, and in 2014, I was accepted for an MPhil Education at the University of Cambridge to begin a journey that would allow me to contribute to understanding the effects of conflict and displacement on children’s lives and learning.

Since entering this field, I have grown aware of the pressing issues that face the world today and the importance of calling for quality education for displaced children. Having delved into this vital area of research, I have also learned of the gaps in the field against the continually changing and rising rates of displacement. As millions of children and youth lead lives shaped by uncertainties and limited rights, education emerges as an embodiment of hope, opportunities for change, and inclusion. However, a disconcerting image of educational spaces and policies is also represented by the dropout rates, reports of violence, and relentless hardships that refugee children and youth continue to experience today. These contrasting realities have encouraged me to pursue a PhD illustrating the needed voices and experiences of refugee children, whose lives continue to be led in protracted refugee situations. As represented by the opening quote of this chapter, this study hopes to share the voices of children to understand how the resources and efforts invested into educational settings for refugee children shape their lives, and portray the gaps and shortfalls of these efforts by exploring children’s own conceptualising of their needs.

1.1 Statement of the Problem
Forced migration has become one of the most critical phenomena of our time. For decades now, the rights of children and youth affected by conflict and displacement have been reinforced by international policies and the mandates of several United Nations agencies and conventions (Anderson et al., 2011; UNHCR, 2011; UNICEF, 2015b). Evaluating education for children affected by conflict and displacement continues to receive increasing attention by researchers, organisations, and policymakers. However, over 27 million children worldwide remain out-of-school in conflict-affected areas (Ferris & Winthrop, 2010; UNICEF, 2017). Dropout rates are exceedingly high in secondary education, and only 11 per cent of refugee adolescents living in low income countries are enrolled in secondary education (UNESCO, 2018).

Despite progress made towards increasing educational access to children affected by conflict and the development of further agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals that call for greater attention to quality and inclusion, numerous issues diminish some of the positive effects
of these investments and collaborations Goals (UNICEF, 2015b; United Nations, 2015). The 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report, which was dedicated to research in migration and displacement, highlights some of the continued shortfalls between policies and feasibility in practice, such as the lack of sufficient teacher training, limited work permits and opportunities for continued learning, and the attitudes of refugee-hosting nations and communities towards the inclusion of refugees (UNESCO, 2018). Furthermore, studies have persistently shown that refugee children are often faced with violence and harassment within their school settings, are forced to navigate social arrangements and factors within and outside schools that foster a sense of exclusion and a reshaping of individuals’ identities and aspirations (Davies, 2005; Pinson et al., 2010; Huppert & So, 2013).

These shortfalls can undermine the benefits of education and reinforce the conflicting power of education to do harm or to positively influence children’s lives (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000). Some of the vast and contradictory effects of education are discussed in the literature review. These issues are even more problematic in contexts of forced displacement, where educational solutions are often approached through short-term planning, despite the prolonged nature of today’s refugee situations. Most specifically, discrepancies between international and national policies, and the everyday experiences of schooling, appear to continuously exclude refugees from social, economic, and cultural integration, creating a sense of uncertainty for refugee children. The experiences of children and youth affected by conflict and displacement have begun to form an important area of research. However, there remains a need to understand the extent to which schools reinforce or transform the negative implications of displacement on children’s perceptions, well-being, and aspirations, and for guidance in moving forward.

1.2 The Study and Its Contribution
Over eight years have passed since the Syrian conflict erupted. Today, the identities and lives of millions of Syrian refugee children continue to navigate through refugee protracted situations. The central aim of this study is to explore how refugee children experience their educational settings in developing nations where political and socioeconomic tensions affect communities, and the ways in which these schools engage with refugees’ everyday realities of displacement that therefore enhance or limit their well-being. This study shares the voices of Syrian refugee students in Jordan, exploring their well-being through their own perceptions of their lives and needs. It studies how refugee children experience their educational settings in contexts of displacement, examining whether these structures and processes respond to children’s needs and realities of displacement.
There is limited research available on how children conceptualise their well-being in refugee contexts and how their perceptions of educational settings influence their sense of self, values, and aspirations. The qualitative, phenomenological study contributes to debates in the field on the role of education in creating factors in schools that harm or contribute positively to refugee’s well-being, and the role that education can take on in responding to refugees’ realities outside of school. It adds to discussions on the use of the Capability Approach with disadvantaged children, portraying the importance of engaging students in research and understanding their realities through their perceptions, and to discussions on the dual power of education in contexts affected by conflict and displacement. Finally, this study provides research-design ideas and discussions on the use of visual-based methods with vulnerable students, and their value in helping children reflect on sensitive subjects in chaotic school timetables. The study asks the following research question and sub-questions:

Which capabilities do students identify as most important, positive, or detrimental to the development of their well-being?

1. How do school settings help shape, enhance, or limit these values, and how are students’ capability development affected as a result?

2. How do factors around and outside of school settings interact with their capability development within schools?

1.3 Terminology

Several terms are used throughout this dissertation. Firstly, I explore education in contexts of displacement, focusing on refugees only, who have been granted asylum and whose rights are thus recognised by their hosting nation (Pinson et al., 2010). The context of this study also explores the particular challenges that arise in protracted refugee situations, defined by the UNHCR (2015) as contexts where 25,000 or more refugees have continued to live exile for at least five years, in efforts to argue for a need to reconceptualise educational planning in long-term contexts such as these.

The key concept guiding this research is well-being, which is conceptualised through the Capability Approach, offering an account of well-being that is examined through whether individuals are able to choose and achieve the values that they have had the freedom to reflect on identify and important for their quality of life (Walker, 2003). The terms capability, functionings, and agency
are central to this framework, which are explained in the literature review in Chapter 3. This study draws on Sen’s theorization of the Capability Approach, which recognises that well-being should be evaluated by individuals’ own freedoms to choose that which they have reason to value (Sen, 1992). I draw on this approach to examine how children’s values and identities are being shaped by their experiences and perspectives of their social arrangements as they begin to navigate their spaces of secondary school, which reports have highlighted as the most critical age period, due to the high dropout rates of Syrian refugee children from secondary education (Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016; Carlier, 2018). Finally, the study is driven by the importance of the notion of student voice, recognising children’s rights to be heard and involved in matters that affect them (Alderson & Morrow, 2011).

1.4 Thesis Structure
This thesis is comprised of 12 chapters, including this introductory chapter. Chapter 2 introduces the research context, providing an overview of the Syrian conflict, its displaced population, and the political, social, and economic challenges that shape Jordan’s response to the Syrian refugee crisis and the educational opportunities for Syrian refugee children. In Chapter 3, I examine the key debates in the field of education for forcibly displaced children, illustrating its progress while outlining debates around the needs of refugee children and youth in refugee crises today. By reviewing some of the shortfalls in research, I argue Chapter 4 that well-being emerges as a useful concept for understanding the links between the conditions that refugee children navigate and their educational experiences. I review some of the key approaches to examining well-being, and illustrate why Sen’s Capability Approach emerges as a valuable framework for the study. Following this, Chapter 5 presents the methodological choices that shape this research design, justifying the phenomenological and qualitative study approach and detailing the sampling choices and research methods.

The remaining chapters present the findings and results of this study. The first four findings chapters (Chapters 6 to 9) are presented across Part 1 and Part 2, with two chapters comprising each part. The findings presented in Part 1 focus on students’ experiences in schools and the factors that influence their well-being within these settings, while Part 2 illustrates the factors that exist outside of school and that enhance or limit their well-being. In Chapter 10, I share findings that provide reflections on participants’ well-being, contextualising these findings in relation to the distinctive effects of forced displacement stages, gender, and mental health.
Chapter 11 discusses the findings of this study, bringing together Part 1 and Part 2 to describe the role of schools in responding to refugee children’s lives and everyday realities. I discuss these findings through the Capability Approach framework, illustrating the values that children perceive as important and the effects of schools as social arrangements in supporting or restricting their well-being. Finally, Chapter 12 concludes these discussions, summarising the key findings and highlighting the implications of this research to future areas of study.
Chapter 2: Jordan, the Refugee-Hosting Nation

This chapter aims to describe the context chosen for this study, Jordan. It begins by giving insight into the Syrian conflict and its displaced population, and then proceeds to introduce Jordan’s response plan to the refugee crisis. By doing so, the chapter also provides an overview of the challenges that affect Jordan’s communities, resources, and systems.

2.1 Syria Conflict
Eight years ago, in March of 2011, the Syrian conflict came to be. What initially started as small demonstrations in the area of Daraa quickly erupted into one of the deadliest and most destructive conflicts. The conflict has displaced over half of Syria’s population: 6.2 million persons are internally displaced within the nation’s borders and over 6.7 million people are now refugees (Nussbaum & Sen, 1993). Today, the majority of Syrian refugees are displaced within neighbouring countries: official registrations reveal that there are 3.6 million in Turkey, 929,600 in Lebanon, and 662,000 in Jordan, as well as those residing in Iraq and Egypt (UNHCR, 2019b). Europe, America, and Canada have also taken smaller numbers of Syrian refugees.

The Syrian refugee situation is considered the largest displacement crisis of our time (United Nations, 2016). At least half of Syria’s displaced population are children, for whom a No Lost Generation strategy was launched to create educational access across the region and protect the risks facing Syrian refugee children from losing out on their education and security, as well as the threats that face the region as a result (UNICEF, 2014b). Today, several initiatives and collaborations have been developed to increase educational opportunities for Syrian refugee children (Supporting Syria & The Region, 2016; UNHCR & UNDP, 2018). In 2016, the Supporting Syria and the Region Conference took place in London and brought together governments worldwide to address the needs of vulnerable persons in Syria, refugee-hosting nations, and displaced Syrians in these neighbouring countries. Over $12 billion was pledged to support these nations, leading to the largest amount of money ever raised in a single day for a humanitarian cause (Supporting Syria & The Region, 2016).

Despite these efforts, two-fifths of Syrian refugee children remain out of school in the region (Karasapan & Shah, 2018). Furthermore, Syrian children who have accessed education are at a high risk of dropping out in countries like Jordan and Lebanon, especially those who are 12 and above or who are in secondary education (World Bank, 2013; Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016).
Numerous factors have been identified as risks for dropout, including poverty and child labour, poor quality of teaching, lack of safety due to bullying, discrimination and abuse, and the uncertainty that faces Syrian refugee families in these countries (Education Working Sector Group, 2015; Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016). The next section will provide a contextualised overview of these factors in Jordan to describe the current educational realities of Syrian refugee children.

2.2 The Jordanian Context
The political and socio-economic factors in Jordan represent some of the most pressing issues that face refugee hosting nations today. Today, Jordan holds the second highest share of refugees compared to its population, at 87 refugees per every 1,000 inhabitants (UNHCR, 2017b). Prior to the Syrian conflict, Jordan has welcomed those fleeing conflicts in the region over many decades, including Iraq and Palestine, and was able to sustain these needs through the help of international aid (Francis, 2015). For example, the nation holds the highest number of Palestinians with more than two million Palestinians living in Jordan, most whom have been granted citizenship in the country (Zhang & Tiltnes, 2013). Despite the commitment these numbers reveal, Jordan is one of the few nations that are yet to sign the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 Protocol; the Convention that defines the term ‘refugee’ and outlines the basic minimum standards for the treatment of refugees (Christophersen, 2015). However, Jordan has repeatedly reaffirmed its commitment to the refugee crises of the region and progressively developed goals to provide safety and education for its refugee communities.

The Syrian refugee crisis marked a turning point for the nation. The rapid, continuous, and high influx of Syrian refugees arriving at the borders of Jordan have challenged the nation’s systems and resources and threatened its already-scarce resources, rising unemployment rates, and strained healthcare and education systems. Over 80 per cent of Syrian refugees live outside of camps in host cities, the majority of whom are concentrated within Jordan’s most vulnerable and underserviced communities (Francis, 2015; Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016). Over 86 per cent of refugee families live under the national poverty line, and over 50 per cent of families rely on income generated by children (Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016). The desolate states of poverty that refugees experience in Jordan is strongly related to the limited work permits available to them. Studies have shown that harsh living circumstances not only exclude Syrian refugee children from schools, but also increase the need to engage in informal labour to support their families or for girls to be married (Tom et al., 2016; Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016; Arab & Sagbakken, 2019).

2.2.1 Enhancing Rights During Insecurity
To address these challenges, the nation has launched the *Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis*, the first of its kind in the Middle East region, to incorporate response plans that address the needs of refugees and communities hosting them (Francis, 2015). Furthermore, the Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan (3RP) has also guided nations in the region to respond to the refugee crisis through partnerships with national actors, the support of the UN, and collaborations with NGOs and other partners (3RP, 2018). These plans reflect the government’s commitment to integrating the refugee response plan as part of its key objectives, including a commitment to providing Syrian refugees with protective shelter, humanitarian aid, economic opportunities, and access to health and education services. However, committing to these conditions has placed great strain on the country. It has left Syrian families living in extremely dire conditions, while also reducing the quality of life for Jordanian citizens (Nasser & Symansky, 2014; Alshoubaki & Harris, 2018). In 2017, the World Bank (2018) reclassified Jordan from an upper middle income to a lower middle income country.

The competitiveness and reduced resources for communities has also affected the security and social cohesion of the country due to tensions between refugee and non-refugee communities (International Rescue Committee, 2013; UNHCR et al., 2014; Van Esveld & Martinez, 2016). In a study by Francis (2015), the author argues that the Jordanian public has consistently stressed the negative implications of the Syrian influx and has not created positive discourse around the potential economic and social benefits. Additionally, while the nation has sought to commit to increasing work permits and economic opportunities, the government is also limited by the pressures of its citizens. The Syrian influx exacerbated frustrations that were in existence prior to the Syrian crisis, such as the nation’s rising rates of unemployment, massive water scarcity, marginalisation, and weakening education and health services. These tensions are also fuelled by the widespread notion that Syrians are willing to accept jobs and salaries that Jordanians are not (Stave & Hillesund, 2015). While the government has agreed to increase work permits and inclusion rights for Syrian refugees in Jordan, a study by the International Labour Organisation (2015) found that 65 per cent of Jordanian workers interviewed believed that Syrians should live in camps, 85 per cent believed they should not be allowed to enter Jordan, and 80 per cent felt that Syrians pose a threat to the nation’s security and stability (Stave & Hillesund, 2015). These challenges are also reflected in the educational system, as portrayed in the next section.

2.2.2 Access to Education

By signing the Jordan Response Compact following the London Syria Conference, Jordan sought to commit to providing access to education for all Syrian refugees and increase economic
opportunities, including job creation, for youth and families. Jordan thus agreed to redraft a response plan to the protracted situation by shifting away from short-term planning (3RP, 2018). The nation has sought to address the needs of Syrian children by creating educational opportunities through non-formal, informal, and formal education.

Through non-formal education, students are able to enrol in certified education programmes that intend to help address dropout and the disruption of education. These programmes include drop-out programmes for those who are ineligible to re-enrol and catch-up programmes to help facilitate the reintegration of students into the formal school system (Culbertson et al., 2016). Informal learning centres provide psychosocial support, literacy and numeracy skills, and ‘life skill’ learning, but may not provide certified learning (UNICEF, 2015c). The experiences of children across non-formal, informal, and formal education settings have not been explored extensively. However, the limited data available does show that students reflect more positively on informal and non-formal settings than formal education, due to the psychosocial support available, the flexible schedules, increased sense of security, and positive relationships with their teachers (Education Working Sector Group, 2015; Tom et al., 2016).

Over 64 per cent of Syrian refugee children are enrolled in Jordan’s formal education through the double-shift schools: a system where Jordanian students attend schools in the morning, and Syrians attend in the afternoon (Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016). While this double-shift system existed pre-conflict due to high demand for educational opportunities, the Ministry of Education was seeking to eradicate the double-shift system to improve the quality of education by 2010 (Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016). Instead, the Ministry of Education created 102 new additional double-shift system schools following the London Syria Conference to increase educational spaces for Syrian refugees (Barbelet et al., 2018). Recent data does indicate improved enrolment rates, perhaps due to the slow nature of change following these commitments and the dropout rates that continue to challenge these efforts. Furthermore, it is reported that 41 per cent of Syrian children remain out of school, and that children living in host communities rather than camps are three times as likely to remain out of school (Carlier, 2018). This may be explained by the financial support and international aid for refugees that is comparatively better in camps, as well as more accessible schools with higher psychosocial support (Tom et al., 2016; Carlier, 2018).

The double-shift system has been developed to address the increasing demand for educational spaces, and may have been implemented as a temporary solution to integrate Syrian refugees into
the national system (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2017). The system allows Syrian refugees to access the formal schooling system and follow the Jordanian curriculum, which is taught in Arabic, the same language taught in Syria. However, the double-shift system has contributed to social tensions between communities (Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016). The demand for double-shift systems has reduced learning hours for Jordanian children, overstrained infrastructures, caused additional demand on hygiene and classroom supplies, as well as on the number of qualified teachers (UNICEF, 2015a).

Despite the protracted nature of the Syrian refugee situation, the double-shift system continues to segregate the two communities. The experiences of Syrian refugee students in these formal schools, and the causes of school dropout, are explored in a limited number of studies. These reports have outlined some of the key challenges that reduce the quality of education for Jordanians and Syrian refugees, and the effects of social structures on children’s educational prospects. In a qualitative study, which reviewed literature and also interviewed 105 refugees from Syria living in Jordan’s host communities, Van Esveld & Martínez (2016) found that teachers in Jordan’s public sector may not be qualified or adequately trained. Furthermore, teachers hired to teach during the afternoon shift are hired on temporary contracts that lack the security offered to morning shift teachers, such as health benefits and paid vacations during winter and summer, and the majority of teachers do not appear to receive specialised training. Children and families interviewed in this study reported the links between lack of training and tensions within communities, and outlined that the discrimination, harassment, and violence that Syrian students are exposed to on their way to school and in school have “altered their perceptions of school and their families’ views of Jordanian host communities” (p.50).

In a longitudinal study by Rossum et al., (2017), which included surveys with over 1,200 families and 4,000 Syrian refugee children across three years and interviews with mothers, the findings show that the high cost of transportation, quality of teaching and learning environment, child involvement in labour, and violence in schools were the main barriers to children accessing education in Jordan. However, the study also found 68 per cent of children who are not currently in school in Jordan are children who dropped out of formal education. The study finds that violence in school is the main reason children dropped out, with incidents of harassment by Jordanian peers and even teachers increasing each year. This study also noted that while corporal punishment may be a common practice in Jordan, the use of humiliating physical punishment towards Syrian refugee children was more openly tolerated. Similarly, a nationwide household
survey and interviews with Syrian refugee families showed that while violence and harassments are experienced across different types of education access in Jordan, children often reported more positive relationships with their teachers and more valued learning in informal settings (Education Working Sector Group, 2015). The mixed method study, an Evaluation of Emergency Education Response for Syrian Refugee Children and Host Communities in Jordan by Tom et al., (2016)\textsuperscript{2}, reviews the challenges of accessing and remaining in schools as perceived by education stakeholders, parents, teachers, and students across different education initiatives in Jordan. The study also finds that performance, teacher training, and safety at schools within the double-shift system is necessary to improve opportunities for both the Syrian refugee and Jordanian communities.

These studies help to shed light on the challenges facing Jordan and the factors that prevent refugee families accessing and continuing to access education. Despite the negative findings linking experiences in formal education to dropout rates, there is limited research that investigates more comprehensively the experiences and perceptions of Syrian refugee children in these settings. The importance of engaging with student’s perspectives is discussed in the literature review chapter.

\textbf{2.3 Conclusion}

Jordan continues to seek to enhance educational opportunities for Syrian refugee children in Jordan, and has also committed to increasing work permits and opportunities for Syrian refugees. However, while international agreements and aid have sought to support the nation, Jordan faces pressures from its own citizens, the needs of refugees, and the pressures of global policies. Prior to the influx of Syrian refugees to Jordan, the country already suffered from overstrained structures, limited work opportunities, and poor services. Today, tensions between the refugee and non-refugee communities are evident due to competitiveness over resources and services. These tensions, alongside temporary solutions to increasing education, such as the segregation of Syrian and non-Syrian communities in schools through the double-shift system, translate into the learning experiences of Syrian refugee children and affect their likelihood of remaining in school. However, while some reports have outlined some of the key challenges, there is currently limited research on Syrian refugee students’ experiences within formal schools, and the effects of the economic and social instability on their learning and futures.

\textsuperscript{2} The study involved a literature review, interviews with key education stakeholders from governments, agencies, and international organisations, interviews with parents and teachers, and focus group discussions using visual methods with children.
Chapter 3: A Review on Education for Refugee Children

This chapter engages with the theoretical and empirical literature on refugee students’ education and well-being. The first part of this review examines the current state of education for children living in conflict-affected and refugee contexts, analysing the gaps and shortfalls in the fields which inspired the focus of this study. This entails the complexities and challenges that continue to shape the lives of millions of displaced children across the world, as well as the lives of citizens living in refugee-hosting nations. The second part of this review argues that well-being is a useful and important concept through which refugee children’s experiences can be better understood, helping to examine and evaluate the efforts and inadequacies in providing quality education for refugee children.

3.1 Education in Contexts of Conflict and Displacement
The field of education in contexts of education and displacement has garnered growing interest and influence over the last decades. The progress that the field has made to date is strongly dependent on the historical advocacies and movements dedicated to providing education for all children (UNESCO, 2000; UNHCR, 2011). The following sections describe the development of the field, the state of the field today, and the changing dynamics of the field.

3.1.1 Frameworks and the Foundation of Education for Displaced Children
Outbreaks of armed conflict increased the demand for official responses to displacement. Following the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which states the fundamental human rights of all, the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees became the first official statement to recognise that refugee children should be awarded the same opportunity to access primary education as nationals in refugee-hosting nations (Nicolai, 2003). These inspired the mandating of agencies like the UNHCR following the Second World War and UNRWA following the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, and the beginning of research and publications on the impact of conflict, such as UNESCO’s 1947 Book of Needs (UNESCO, 1947). Decades later, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), signed in 1989, became the most comprehensive and one of the earliest treaties to recognise the importance of ensuring children’s full rights, while also calling

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3 The book provides a review and account of the educational needs and cultural losses that affected 15 countries post-war.
4 The human rights treaty entails 54 articles that cover the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights that all children are entitled to.
for a greater quality of education as well as the development of secondary education opportunities for all children (Nicolai, 2003; OHCHR, 1989).

Evidence of children’s needs in contexts of conflict and displacement began to emerge soon after, such as in the reviews *Refugee Children: Guidelines on Protection and Care* by the UNHCR, *State of the World’s Children* (UNICEF, 1996), and in 1996, the study *Impact of Armed Children on Conflict* by Machel (1996). Machel’s study was one of the first of its kind to report the threatening conditions that armed conflicts exert on children’s rights to safety, dignity, and education. This study detailed the violence children faced within these contexts such as the recruitment of child-soldiers, gender-based violence, and the destruction of schools.

The vicious nature of armed conflicts within nations’ borders, and the recognition of their impact on children’s rights and safety (Pinson et al., 2010), led to education in emergencies developing as a field. The impact of conflict was examined officially during the World Declaration Forum in 2000, where the declarations on human rights made decades earlier were revisited and nations worldwide joined in commitment to the Education for All (EFA) by 2015. The effects of conflict were subsequently recognised as one of the key barriers to achieving the EFA goals. Since, the impact of conflict and displacement, and the rights of children living within these contexts have progressively gained more attention by governments, agencies, policymakers, and practitioners.

Today, the field continues to grow as new challenges, complexities, and efforts shape its direction and concerns. The emergence of the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies and the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook have provided guidance for researchers and practitioners responding to children’s educational needs through “preparedness, response, and recovery” in contexts of emergencies, including natural disasters, conflicts, displacement (INEE, 2012). The INEE Minimum Standards contain 19 guiding standards that are used to enhance quality education in contexts of emergencies. These relate to the quality of the learning environment and inter-sectoral requirements (such as security, hygiene, nutrition), teaching and learning (curriculum, teacher training, language, pedagogy, assessment), teachers and personnel (administration, management, recruitment and selection, work conditions, and supervision and support), and policy and planning (education policy formation, implementation, and coordination). However, the breadth of these standards and the multiple definitions that are used to conceptualise education in settings affected by conflict and displacement, and ‘education in emergencies’, also represent some of the shortfalls of the field. The gaps and discrepancies between the types of emergencies and
their contexts undermine some of the central questions that underpin the field. For example, today’s agendas, including in the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015), united the field through an agreed call for greater quality, integration, and inclusion. However, there lies huge differences between the experiences of children living in contexts of natural disasters, armed conflict, and forced displacement. This can be seen in researchers’ attempts to approach the field, where authors may use the term education in emergencies but note the importance of not including natural disasters within their research (see Mundy & Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Burde et al., 2017). Yet, within education in contexts of armed conflict, there are vast distinctions across the different forms of conflict. These distinctions are discussed in the coming sections.

3.1.2 Education in Armed Conflict
The importance and benefits of providing education for children affected by conflict are recognised as a result of the link between conflict and education, as well as the implications of conflict on children’s rights and well-being. For example, a significant volume of research in education in emergencies has focused on the link between curriculum, school practices, and the breakout of conflict. Tawil & Harley (2004), for example, examine the segregation and curricula between Protestant and Catholic schools in Ireland and analyse the combined implications of non-inclusive curricula, which teaches values and notions of self-worth specific to one community, and the added use of textbooks that distort historical anecdotes have on emphasising and exacerbating divisions within societies. The ‘hidden curriculum’ in education, that can carry political, cultural, or religious agendas and negative attitudes has also been investigated in research, particularly by highlighting the importance of inclusive curricula to help nations transition into post-conflict settings, such as qualitative case studies conducted in Angola, Ghana, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Kenya, Solomon Islands, Lebanon, Kosovo, and Northern Ireland (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Tawil & Harley, 2004; Paulson, 2011; Clarke & O’Donoghue, 2013; Shuayb, 2014). The influential study by Bush & Salterelli (2000) has famously described the phenomenon linking education and conflict, describing this as ‘The Two Faces of Education.’ The authors argue that children and schools are not disconnected from culture and society, rather, that schools can perpetuate the values and attitudes of a given society through the practices and structures of social arrangements that exclude and marginalise children and that fuel conflict. In addition to the curriculum, numerous factors determine whether schools inflict harm, such as the uneven distribution of access to education, the targeting of schools in contexts of conflict, the recruitment of children as child soldiers, and the promotion of hatred towards others through pedagogical practices (UNESCO, 2011). Simultaneously, the study recognises the power of education to address social tensions and increase tolerance and citizenship amongst communities. Authors have also argued that there are
links between out-of-school youth and conflict, noting young people are less likely to support conflict if there are alternative pathways for their futures (Barakat et al., 2008; Burde et al., 2017). This is also examined in an observational research in Sierra Leone which indicated that out-of-school youth are nine times more likely to join conflicts than youth in school, and quantitative studies in sub-Saharan Africa which use national surveys to portray the links between conflict and high populations of uneducated male youth, compared to higher levels of education (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2008; H. Barakat, 2009; Burde et al., 2017). The link between conflict and education has been key to understanding the mechanisms of educational planning that can contribute to mitigating, transitioning, and potentially even recovering from conflict (Novelli & Lopes Cardozo, 2008; Barakat et al., 2013).

The dual power of education demands us to better understand the world’s education systems, as argued by Davies (2005, p.358), for if we do not look “at how, or what, young people (and adults) learn, this spiral into violence and destruction can only continue”. The need to provide education in such fragile contexts and to simultaneously enhance the quality of education has helped to gain the attention of governments due to the link between education and the stability of nations (Winthrop & Matsui, 2013; Burde et al., 2017). Understanding the two faces of education has thus helped formulate the different areas of research in the field today. It has encouraged the development of protective standards and global agreements intended to bind nations to create educational opportunities for children affected by conflict.

Today, debates in the field of education in emergencies predominantly revolve around understanding the challenges and needs that influence whether access to quality education for children affected by conflict is, or ever can be, achieved. The field has also expanded into understanding the distinct challenges that gender and disability may have on children’s learning in these settings (Grabska, 2010; Marshall, 2015; Burde et al., 2017; Bakhshi et al., Trani, 2018). These studies span across different areas of research, which seek to examine the challenges of providing access to quality education and review the best approaches. However, the cumulative evidence from these studies demonstrates that the challenges and gaps are not independent of context, such as whether the studies examine conflict, temporary, or protracted displacement settings. This relates to the argument made by Burde et al., (p.2017, p.623) on how the Education in Emergencies framework is not without its limitations, especially in its notion of emergency, which “implies a temporary solution and seems ill-suited to describe crises that endure over time”. While refugee education is a fact of education in emergencies, forced displacement today brings forth
uniquely complex and wide-reaching challenges that cross both borders and societies on an overwhelming scale. Therein exist macro and micro questions that cannot be approached similarly to those from natural disasters and temporary displacement. In the next section, these questions and challenges are described and some of the major gaps in the area are outlined.

3.1.3 Education in Contexts of Displacement
Today’s conflicts and continued violation of human rights have yielded a relentless rise in the number of displaced people, redirecting the world’s policies and reshaping the structures of societies. By the end of 2018, nearly 70.8 million people were forcibly displaced (Grabska, 2010). Displaced individuals also appear to forcibly remain in displacement for longer, as refugee situations now last on average 26 years (UNHCR, 2017a). As reported by the UNHCR (2019), nearly 78 per cent of displaced people live within protracted refugee crises; contexts where the displacement of more than 25,000 individuals has continued beyond five years. Due to this alarming rise in displacement, there has been an accompanying resistance by governments to grant asylum (Pinson et al., 2010). As a result, there are different groups of displaced persons today, including stateless people and asylum-seekers who have not yet received the status and paperwork to access basic services, highlighting the pressing issues that challenge the achievement of basic human rights (Albarazi & van Waas, 2015; Christophersen, 2015). This review specifically focuses on the experiences of refugee groups; refugees who have crossed international borders, were granted asylum, and thus are visible to their hosting nation’s policies and laws (Pinson et al., 2010). While refugees granted asylum are safe from armed conflict, refugees are still susceptible to being deprived of their human rights and basic needs (Zeus, 2011). The purpose of this narrowed focus is to review the challenges in the field encountered when displaced individuals’ rights have been officially recognised, and to examine how the lengthened and heightened nature of displacement today influence the educational opportunities and experiences that refugee children are forced to navigate. The following segments review empirical and theoretical evidence on education in refugee contexts.

3.2 Numbers, Policies, and Learning for Uncertain Futures
Refugee education has been influenced by legal and political perspectives that recognise refugee individuals as groups of individuals deserving of political protection, a development that is deeply rooted in the links between refugee law and humanitarian right laws (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014; Buckner et al., 2017). The 1951 Refugee Convention, and its 1967 Protocol, have compelled states worldwide to provide protection for refugees, including countries that have not signed the treaty, such as Jordan and Lebanon (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014). However, the responsibilities
have not been shared equally by nations worldwide. Today, over 84 per cent of refugees live in developing countries, most of whom reside in their home country’s neighbouring nations (Mundy & Dryden-Peterson, 2011; UNHCR, 2019). This has left nations with already limited resources having to accommodate for a high influx of refugees, thus creating discrepancies between refugees’ protective rights and the capacity by which they can be defined, fulfilled, and realised.

3.2.1. The State and The Role of Education for Refugees
The disconnect between policy and refugees’ experience are responsible for many challenges faced by refugee children and their education. Over four million refugee children continue to remain out of school worldwide, and the progression between education levels falls from 61 per cent in primary education to 23 per cent in secondary education, and drops further to as low as one per cent in higher education for refugee children and youth (UNHCR, 2018). There are growing efforts to understand the challenges that restrict refugee children from accessing and remaining in schools (UNESCO, 2011; Mundy & Dryden-Peterson, 201; Burde et al., 2017). While there are important theoretical and empirical studies, as shown the literature review by Burde et al., (2017), the grey literature developed by international organisations also contributes to the field by providing foundational statistical data, describing barriers to access, safety, and the evaluations of initiatives implemented such as the different forms of access provided through NGOs (such as non-formal, informal, community centres). However, these reports also highlight the gaps in the field and the need for an enriched understanding of contexts. For example, one of the reports that shaped my own study is the Access to Education for Syrian Refugee Children and Youth in Jordan Host Communities by the Working Sector Group (2015). Through a nationwide household survey with Syrian refugee families and focus group interviews with over 4,700 households, the study sought to identify key barriers facing youth in Jordan and links to school dropout amongst non-formal, informal, and formal settings. The study was of its first kind to compare students’ experiences across formal, non-formal, and informal education settings, reporting that children reported higher levels of positive emotions and learning in non-formal and informal settings. However, the study was not able to examine children’s reasons indepth.

Researching the experiences of refugee children in-depth has begun to form an important and rich area of academic literature. The field has acknowledged the importance of literacy and numeracy skills, as well the role of education in giving refugee children a sense of normalcy and routine, providing safe and nurturing environments, creating social opportunities, and linking children’s presents to more positive futures (Winthrop & Kirk, 2011; Buckner et al., 2017). Education is seen to give hope to refugee children “is seen to make valuable contributions to the struggle for life
Refugee voice and experience has recently emerged as an important area of study. The work of Mundy & Dryden-Peterson (2011) was one of the first publications to bring together several case studies and reviews of education in conflict zones that focus on refugee children’s voices and well-being, as well as the perspectives of teachers, while also reviewing initiatives implemented by international organisations. The volume introduced the importance of taking steps beyond providing access to education by investigating the needs and perceptions of children affected by migration, helping inform this thesis by highlighting discrepancies between children’s experiences and the goals of educational planning. In one of the chapters of this book, the *Learning for a Bright Future: Schooling, Armed Conflict, and Children’s Well-Being* study by Winthrop & Kirk (2011), the authors examined refugee children’s experiences in the contexts of an initiative implemented by the International Rescue Committee. The study explores children’s perceptions of their well-being in relation to their schools and in relation to their teachers to understand what displaced students valued about their learning. It drew on a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, through interviews, focus group discussions, questionnaires, classroom observations, school mapping, video, photo documentation, and book analysis. Student participants were between the ages of 8-19 from Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Sierra Leone. The mixed methods approach to this study helped elicit children’s perceptions and compare between how the purpose of education is conceptualised through policies and children’s interpretations of the purpose of their education. Most notably, the authors argued that while learning emerged as a central aspect of schools and participants’ experiences, they also identified other important aspects of education, such as the importance of social opportunities and the link between school and their everyday factors and realities that children must deal with. Furthermore, Winthrop & Kirk (2011) argue that education for refugees must consider the diverse learning needs of displaced children and the importance of creating opportunities for student agency. Similarly, in a later chapter, Winthrop (2011) elaborates on their previous study further by emphasising the importance of understanding how students conceptualise their own learning needs and values. Winthrop (2011) note that the findings of their research have shown that there are gaps between what policymakers identify as important and the diverse forms of learning that students conceive as useful to their lives. My own study builds on these texts by seeking to address the gaps discussed in my Context section (Chapter 2), which exist between educational planning in Jordan and the lived experiences and needs of Syrian refugee children in the nation.
The importance of understanding gaps in educational planning in refugees is especially important today. More recently, research has demonstrated the current and changing state of forced migration, which more than ever before, tests the goals of global efforts to provide education for all children. The length of displacement and rising number of protracted refugee crises, call for a nuanced understanding of the role of education for children and youth who may lead lives in resettlement. Understanding the role of education must also recognise the diverse contexts and complexities that face refugees worldwide. Education for refugees in distant resettlements may be experienced differently than if displacement takes place in neighbouring countries, due to the fact that the numbers of refugees are small, and that displaced individuals who are granted refugee status in countries like Canada, for example, “are given a pathway to citizenship unavailable to the majority of refugees globally” (Dryden-Peterson, 2016, p.6) and where refugees often live in “weakly legalised environments” (Landau & Amit, 2014, p.534). These diverse experiences and challenges are not widely understood, and as argued by Reed et al., (2012), researching subjects such as refugees’ mental health has predominantly taken place in developed countries (see Correa-Velez et al., 2010; Simich et al., 2010; Majumder, 2016), demanding the need for research in other contexts to better understand the challenges.

Based on the challenges described above, the forthcoming sections will elaborate on two key issues that stand as barriers to achieving the benefits of education. First, the disjunctions between the role of education and refugees’ uncertain futures. Second, the continued divisions between refugee and non-refugee communities.

3.2.2 Exclusion, the Role of Education, and Uncertain Futures
In *Refugee Education: A Global Review* by Dryden-Peterson (2011b), the author calls for a reconceptualisation of the role of education for refugee children and the need for a more nuanced definition. One of the key limitations in achieving quality of education for refugees is the disjunction between access to education and a sense of vision for refugees’ futures (Dryden-Peterson, 2011b). The recent priorities of global agreements, such as the SDGs, have emphasised the need for the integration and inclusion of refugees into refugee-hosting nations’ services, systems, and communities. However, as noted by Pinson et al. (2010, p.10), the ways in which nations worldwide have responded to forced displacement, and the omnipresent negative images of refugees represented in the media, in policies, and in the attitudes of societies and governments “expose major tensions underlying the nation-state as a political community”. Refugees continue to be seen as a threat to a nation’s stability and economy, and as increasing competition for jobs and resources in an already competitive environment (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014). Moreover,
while there have been shifts in government policies due to international pressures for inclusion, there remains a rift between policy and practice (Landau & Amit, 2014). Through a review of literature on the gaps between policy, experience, and transitions for refugees, it is evident that there are different levels of influences impact refugees children’s experiences of school. These include: the rifts between policies and practice, and the role of belonging in protracted refugee situations, as described below.

**Policies, Practice, and Experiences**
Countries like Jordan and Lebanon have sought to implement official policy frameworks to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis and children’s needs, including Lebanon's Ministry of Education and Higher Education plan *Reaching All with Education* (2014) and the Jordan Response Platform for the Syrian Crisis (2015). Beyond committing to providing education for all, nations like Lebanon and Jordan have also acknowledged the importance of endowing refugees with work permits in the refugee-hosting nation. However, in the present day, the failure to commit to effective implementation of work opportunities for refugees has huge implications for children’s education and aspirations. In most contexts in developing nations, like Jordan and Lebanon, children who access education are faced with bleak realities due to the lack of work permits and related lack of integration into society (Dryden-Peterson, 2017). Poverty can impact families’ and children’s decision-making about education prospects and the likelihood of progressing beyond primary school (Morrice et al., 2019). The disjunctions between education and future opportunities also impact children’s development of their personal aspirations. As described by Dryden-Peterson et al., (2017, p.30), the “lack of alignment between normative aspirations and doctrine external to the nation-state and mechanisms and institutions of enforcement within the nation-state presents a paradox for the refugee children and young people who seek education within these precarious spaces”.

In a study by Bellino (2018), the author navigates this issue through what is referred to as the ‘contradictory discourse’ about the value of education by drawing on ethnographic observations and interviews with youth, aged 17-28, who are attending or have attended formal school in Kakuma Refugee Camp. The aim of the study was to understand their educational trajectories and the value of their formal education for their future prospects. The study found that refugees had limited opportunities for formal work, and that the nature of waiting, uncertainty, and spatial limitations posed by camps and forced displacement shape individual’s aspirations and agency to shape a better future. It argues that receiving education as a ‘way out’ sets refugees up for failure due to the lack of policies and opportunities that allow refugees to work. This study also reflects
the limited mobility, rights, and participation that refugees experience in camps, which is resembled by other studies conducted with refugees in these settings, such as a study exploring refugees' experiences in a Palestinian camp, where students discuss the effects of their limited spaces on their perceptions of their futures. The study found that youth, particularly female participants, used their limited spaces to focus on their learning and education, seeking to challenge their limited mobility and restrictions through scholarships and qualifications (Marshall, 2015). In a paper by Dryden-Peterson (2017), the author draws on several of their previous studies, which include interviews with a teacher, interviews students and families and observations in Kenya, to note that while a shift towards integrating refugees into formal education can reduce the uncertainties that refugees face, there is a need for greater connections between policies and actors, including students, teachers, families, and governments to help refugees reconceptualise their learning and reflect on the purpose and aspirations for their futures. However, understanding how young people navigate their post-school prospects remains an emergent and understudied area, as argued by Morrice et al., (2019). In their recent study, the authors draws on qualitative and quantitative studies with 86 young refugees from Ethiopia, Iraq, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia, who were between the ages of 13-24 and who had been resettled in the UK, to examine their aspirations of how they perceive their futures post-education. The study found that the policies affecting refugees in the UK, including language requirement and rigid requirements for education progression in the UK, and in addition to the lack of supporting network and guidance, elongated and delayed refugees’ pathways and opportunities.

These studies illustrate the importance of recognising how people navigate their perceptions of their futures in ‘active waiting’ as they live in protracted refugee situations (Brun, 2015). Furthermore, they show the reduced benefits of education that result from the gaps between access to education and complementing rights to work permits and inclusive environments and policies. Crucially, not only does education in this case create a false sense of hope, as noted by Bellino (2018), it also fails to help children prepare and cope with the difficulties they may face in their lives as refugees, an aspect that Winthrop & Kirk (2011) identify as essential to education for children affected by conflict. Furthermore, these findings also present an additional limitation in the field. While treaties and policies have advocated for the integration of refugees into nations’ policies and services, the definition of ‘integration’ remains malleable and much debated. For example, Jordan has succeeded in ‘integrating’ around 60 per cent of Syrian refugees into the formal education system. However, as described in Chapter 2, Jordan’s double-shift system segregates the two communities and continues to exclude Syrian refugee children from knowing
their surrounding communities. There remain disparities within debates on integration into a nation’s services, such as health, education, and employment, and discourse around the integration of refugees into society through forms of social inclusion, belonging, and connectedness (Bellino & Dryden-Peterson, 2018). An important area of research explores the inclusive and exclusive roles that education for refugees can take on, and the subsequent shaping of refugees’ identities and experiences (Pinson et al., 2010; Swartz & Arnot, 2014; El-Haj, 2015). Gitli et al., (2003) refer to this as the ‘Welcoming-Unwelcoming’ that schools can perform, inviting migrants into communities while also excluding them through exclusionary acts, such as segregation, discrimination, and bullying that refugees face.

The uncertainty students face is also linked to other issues in the field, such as the lack of coherent breakdown between decision-making between policy and practice. The translation of policy to school practices passes through numerous actors who are involved in decision-making prior to ever reaching pupils, thus demonstrating the importance of understanding the different actors in refugee contexts (Buckner et al., 2017). This is demonstrated in a recent qualitative case study by Karam et al., (2017)5, which analyses the decision-making processes of teachers and administration in a non-formal school in Lebanon for Syrian refugees, following the INEE Minimum Standards. The programme also involves hiring Syrian refugee teachers, though Syrian teachers are offered lower salaries than offered to Lebanese teachers. While the programme is initially guided by specific standards and objectives regarding the language of instruction, the curriculum, and the pedagogy, the study finds discrepancies between what teachers believed should be the language of instruction and the purpose of education, influencing the decisions made within classrooms. The study highlights that limited resources and support for teachers also influenced these decisions. For example, many Syrian teachers were not qualified to teach the Lebanese curriculum in English. This also relates to the gaps between policy and practice in relation to resources. The study shows that despite global standards being implemented, there is a need to examine the gaps between global policies and local challenges.

These challenges must also be contextualised and studied locally. A paper by Crul et al., (2019) reviews literature to provide a useful examination of how Syrian refugees are included across five different national policies in Sweden, Germany, Greece, Lebanon, and Turkey. It finds that the discrepancies across the five approaches, commitment to compulsory formal education, effects of

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5 The research entails 20 teacher questionnaires, nine interviews with teachers, and three interviews with administrators.
language, and the continuous use of temporary ad hoc solutions reveal the unpreparedness of nations to address the educational needs of children. The impact of the breakdown of goals between actors and influencers is also demonstrated in a longitudinal study by Dubus (2018), which interviews 110 participants over the course of three years. Participants were administrators of refugee resettlement programmes across three years, in the United States, Germany, Switzerland, and Iceland. The study examined what they perceived to be the goal of resettlement programmes, finding that while most participants described the purpose as lessening burdens on refugees, the priorities of integration, language acquisition, and being self-sufficient varied across individuals and countries. These studies thus portray the importance of reflecting on resettlement priorities and best practices, and the true goal of migration policies towards resettlement. The lack of coherency and reflection in policies, and their translation into programmes, shape refugees’ own perceptions of their futures.

**Belonging, Exclusion, and Living Together**
The second area of research in this field is equally important, examining the link between educational planning, exclusion, and refugees’ sense of belonging. In this area of research, belonging is linked to concepts of who has the right to belong, and whether individuals feel they belong, achieving a sense of emotional attachment towards a place and groups of people (Pinson et al., 2010). As growing tensions develop in response to rising displacement and displacement lasts longer, notions of belonging and citizenships in contexts of exile emerge as important aspects of education (Pinson et al., 2010; Aikman & Dyer, 2012; Burnett, 2013). The label ‘refugee’ influences children’s self-perceptions and aspirations, due to the powerful implications it has ‘both in its use to define human experience and a category of people, but also in terms of the identity and subjectivity of those who bear the label’ (Pinson et al., 2010, p.19). The contemporary images of refugees today are represented negatively through media, policies, and everyday discourse (Pinson et al., 2010; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014). This powerful discourse is important for schools, where negative attitudes may be perpetuated and reinforced by processes and actors within schools (Pinson et al., 2010; Taylor & Sidhu, 2012).

Much of the empirical evidence of issues found in the notion of belonging have been conducted in contexts of resettlement, or settlement in developed nations, such as in Germany, the UK, Australia, and Canada (Anderson, 2001; Hek, 2006; Correa-Velez et al., 2010; Simich, Este, & Hamilton, 2010). In the publication *Education, Asylum and the ‘Non-Citizen Child’*, Pinson et al., (2010) draw on a qualitative study with refugee and non-refugee children in the UK, to show how displaced children’s learning experiences in the UK are influenced by the surrounding levels of
authority, including government, authorities, schools, and teachers. Students appeared to be exposed to discrimination and exclusion due to their Otherness, and participants experienced a low sense of belonging and sense of security at schools. These experiences also raise concerns over how children’s identities are shaped; identity being a process of becoming through which one negotiates and perceives their identities, which can be interrupted by disruptions to one’s sense of belonging (Pinson, 2008). To address issues of violence and tensions, Pinson et al., (2010) argue that schools must nurture environments that ‘create human conditions for social unity and harmony’ (p.204) and encourage compassion amongst students, which is conceptualised as emotional responses that extend the boundaries of self to begin and see Others as part of our identities (Teuber, 1982). Thus, understanding of the Other through dialogue and offering voice to children becomes an integral part of nurturing social cohesion. This is similarly argued by Cremin & Guilherme (2016), who draw on Buber’s philosophy of dialogue to highlight the importance of an “epistemometological shift” to reduce violence by enabling groups of societies to no longer view the Other as an enemy or threat. Here, educational settings can allow for creative approaches to enhance cohesion amongst communities. This is exemplared in a case study where Cremin & Warwick (2008) also note that dialogue and creative approaches can help enhance empathy and cohesion in multi-cultural education settings, as found by a group of 11 young people who engaged in workshops at their college in the UK to facilitate transformative discussions on controversial issues. In schools, Pinson et al., (2010) argue that positive practices to achieve this might include encouraging a child to share their story of displacement, allowing their peers to connect and reflect on human rights and their encounters with real life challenges. However, it is noted that schools must be cautious of the fine line between leaving displaced children voiceless and lacking agency to share their stories, or reducing children to victims who are forced to disclose their past with others.

Notions of belonging in school are less explored in developing contexts, which may relate to limited resources and enhanced focus on providing access to education in these contexts. However, a small number of studies have sought to understand how refugees’ sense of citizenship and self are shaped by their school structures and sociopolitical arrangements in these settings. For example, Fincham (2012) examines how a sense of ‘Palestinianess’ is produced through educational sites in a camp in Lebanon, exploring the role of education in contributing to individuals’ sense of being ‘Other’ed. Importantly, the study shows that education is not the only learning site for displaced youth, but schools combine with surrounding arrangements to influence institutions to ‘produce and regulate their identities in daily life’ due to the experiences individuals
are faced in their surrounding political, social, and economic settings (Fincham, 2012, p.132). An additional recent study, also in Lebanon, explored Syrian refugee students’ experiences in school and argues for the central role that schools play in enhancing belonging, social cohesion, and hope for refugee children who are otherwise limited by their harsh realities (Maadad & Matthews, 2018). It conducted interviews with 98 individuals (teachers, students, and families) across different educational settings in Lebanon, and finds that while children and families were aware of their sociopolitical constraints and the uncertainty of their futures, and that many refugees spoke of despair, there were positive anecdotes about relationships formed with teachers and peer students, ones which created hope and a sense of normalcy for some participants. However, the study also raised issues of violence and bullying, discrimination by teachers, and the need for teacher training to understand the emotional needs of refugees who have been victims of violence.

A subfield of this research examines whether refugee children experience school belonging, which relates more closely to the perceptions that students attach to their schools, including their commitment to its rules and values, and belief in their schools (Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007; Due et al., 2016). These studies highlighted the importance of giving recognition to refugees’ socioeconomic backgrounds, developing positive relationships and dialogue with teachers and peers, and engaging in extracurricular activities. Together, the studies share a similar focus on the importance of the role of schools in facilitating the process of reflecting on the sense of self and Other, finding that dialogue within schools that enhances an understanding of the Other is central to reducing tensions and low school belonging. Furthermore, the studies also revealed additional factors that impact refugees’ belonging, experiences of school, and mental health and well-being, such as loss, violence, financial hardships, and disruption of normalcy that students are exposed to through conflict and displacement. These challenges raise the importance of the recognition of refugees’ pre-settlement experiences and the importance of understanding refugee’s emotional needs (Hart, 2009; Dryden-Peterson, 2016a). For example, Dryden-Peterson (2016a) argues that the ‘black box’ of pre-settlement experiences must be understood in order to best support refugees in resettlement, by being aware of how previous educational experiences have influenced their learning progress, psychosocial emotional needs, and perceptions of what is possible for their futures.

In addition to social belonging, other studies touch upon the importance of being self-sufficient, having dignity, and having positive mental health as key factors to achieving well-being and being able to belong in the nation of resettlement (Simich et al., Hamilton, 2010). The effects of exposure
to violence and trauma through conflict and displacement on mental health has been explored in many studies, highlighting the transformative role that schools can play in contexts of displacement to enhance well-being and prevent the exacerbation of poor mental health (Alfadhli & Drury, 2018; Maadad & Matthews, 2018). Here, the role of education and teachers in peacebuilding and enhancing social cohesion is crucial, as described by Novelli & Sayed (2016) and Novelli & Smith (2011). Ensuring that teachers are qualified, trained, and that policies help maximise the support and well-being of teachers in order to help them respond to the challenging and often overwhelming contexts is crucial. Teachers must be recognised as having among the greatest potential to improve students’ experiences day to day (Novelli & Sayed, 2016). In refugee contexts, the roles of teachers are evermore powerful, where children are in need of additional support and care due to the vulnerabilities that impact their mental health and support network (Winthrop & Kirk, 2004).

### 3.3 Conclusions

This chapter thus far has reviewed literature in the field of education for emergencies, first by discussing its progression through time and subsequently by introducing the subfield of education in forced displacement, to discuss the unique challenges that arise within these contexts. Amid the rising number of protracted refugee situations, the chapter also illustrated the pressing contemporary issues that face refugee-hosting nations and those affected by displacement. This included the discrepancies between policy and practice which portray shortfalls in national policies in responding to refugees’ uncertain futures, and representing the limited practices that impact refugee students’ sense of belonging through schools. Notably, these challenges showed that schools are recipients of the tensions and limitations posed by children’s surrounding arrangements and policies, such as the social, economic, and political circumstances of the hosting nation. Planning for education in emergencies must thus consider the contextual challenges as essential to resolution formation, including the form of displacement and whether children live within developing or developed countries, the type of space they occupy, the length of displacement, and other factors that can emerge in each contexts. These findings raised the importance of understanding how refugees’ experiences are shaped by their schools in relation to both the internal and external factors of forced displacement, as discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.
Chapter 4: A Review on Well-Being and the Capability Approach

The literature review in the previous chapter has portrayed the complex issues in the field of education in emergencies that stand as formidable barriers to achieving the comprehensive benefits granted by educational access for displaced children. The review found that while research has begun to explore refugee children’s learning experiences in relation to both their school structures and the broader factors in their contexts, there are important gaps that bar researchers from understanding more comprehensively how refugee students’ identities, emotions, and decisions are shaped by their experiences of schooling in displacement. This chapter introduces the importance of examining students’ well-being, and the use of the Capability Approach (CA) as a framework for conceptualising well-being.

4.1 The Well-Being and Experiences of Refugee Students

Whilst reviewing literature on children’s experiences in refugee contexts, numerous studies appeared to use the word well-being, though the term was often not conceptualised and clearly defined. A search for ‘refugee’ and ‘well-being’ reveals that a vast number of studies focus on well-being from a mental health perspective. Most recently, studies also draw on more psychosocial well-being (see McFarlane et al., 2010; Carswell et al., 2011; Rizkalla & Segal, 2018; Schiltz et al., 2019) social-emotional learning and well-being (Zwi et al., 2017), belonging and well-being (Correa-Velez et al., 2010), well-being in relation to post-traumatic stress and in relation to resilience against environments (see Yotebieng et al., 2019). These studies highlight the importance of the experiences that refugee children face, including the disruption of family well-being, exposure to violence and post-traumatic stress, poverty, loss, and resettlement, and the effects on their mental health and psychosocial well-being. A recent study also highlighted the distinct effects of these challenges on gender and age, finding that, for example, Syrian refugee girls were experiencing greater isolation and mobility constraints due to parental fears invoked by the harassment they experienced (DeJong et al., 2017). These studies contribute to an important area of research that focuses on understanding the links between displacement, mental health, and psychosocial well-being. However, by restricting well-being as a concept attached most closely with mental health, research does not examine more comprehensively how refugee children’s surrounding factors impact their experiences in schools, their identity formation, and the decisions and values they are able to navigate. Chase (2013) also argues that well-being in contexts of displacement requires an additional dimension that encompasses the importance of security,
pertaining to displaced individuals’ abilities to reflect on time and continuity, stability, and trajectories of their futures.

The multidisciplinary approaches to well-being with refugee children and youth within literature demonstrate the importance and complexities of identity development in these settings, but also raise the importance of a more comprehensive framework and nuanced approach to well-being. This is discussed in the next sections by elaborating further on the development of the term well-being and the usefulness of using the CA to understand refugee children’s values and perceptions of their freedoms.

4.1.1 Multidisciplinary Approaches to Well-Being

Literature refers to well-being as a challenging but important term, one that is increasingly emerging in policy discourse and multi-disciplinary research (McLellan & Steward, 2015). Within research, well-being has often been used interchangeably with terms such as “quality of life”, “happiness”, and “flourishing” (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Deci & Ryan, 2008; McLellan & Steward, 2015). This term appeared in recognition of health and happiness being more than “the absence of illness” (Camfield et al., 2009, p.69). While economical, sociologic, and developmental approaches have enhanced our understandings of well-being, its roots stem from the field of psychology. Within this field, well-being has been approached through two lenses: hedonism and eudemonism (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Plagnol, 2010; McLellan & Steward, 2015; Danker et al., 2016). A hedonistic approach emphasises the importance of feeling, happiness and pleasure to the well-being of an individual (Kahneman et al., 1999). The approach regards well-being as subjective and comprised of attributes that make life pleasurable, such as material goods (McLellan & Steward, 2015). Hedonism, used interchangeably with “happiness”, is most associated with subjective well-being (SWB) and understood as “experiencing a high level of positive affect, a low level of negative affect, and a high degree of satisfaction with one’s life” (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p.1). However, a second approach to well-being is eudemonism, drawing on Aristotle’s work on potential and virtue (Ryan & Deci, 2001). This notion challenges the paradigm of hedonism and pleasure, and views well-being as related to the realisation of choice, and thus the ability to realise and seek development and true potential (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Waterman et al., 2008). While aspects of these terms may overlap, one clear distinction between these two notions is that “if a person experiences eudemonic living he or she will necessarily also experience hedonic enjoyment; however, not all hedonic enjoyment is derived from eudemonic living” (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p.3). Notable frameworks and scales for well-being have been developed by scholars working within the field of psychology, drawing upon either one of or both hedonistic and eudemonic notions, such as Keyes’
(1998) five elements to well-being, Ryan & Deci’s (2000) Self-Determination Theory, and with students more specifically, Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of flourishing. These notions of well-being often build on a combination of psychosocial theories that study the concept of self in relation to society, together with philosophical and cultural theories arguing for the importance of analysing person’s relationships with the social world (Keyes, 1998).

Another area of well-being is driven by the field of economics and the economics of happiness, which initially focused on material living conditions and quality of life rather than subjective well-being as studied in psychology. For example, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was one of the key influential approaches to evaluating quality of life, measured in relation to nations’ growth of economies and market value of goods and services (D’Acci, 2011; Schreyer, 2016). Today, the complexities of the contemporary world have inspired the need to understand nations’ and individuals’ well-being beyond GDP, recognising the importance of equality and quality of life (D’Acci, 2011; Stiglitz, Sen, & Fitoussi, 2009; Diener, Tay, & Oishi, 2013). However, in addition to moving beyond GDP, authors have argued against the assessment of happiness, such as Stewart (2014), who notes that measures of happiness cannot displace development processes that search for justice and the expansion of people’s capabilities. These perspectives have led to multidimensional approaches to well-being that have become more mainstream, helping form the development of multidisciplinary indices and measures of well-being. Policymaking has involved the development of these indexes, such as the OECD Conceptual Framework of Well-Being, which acknowledges the importance of resources and evaluates the ways they translate into aspects of quality of life, such as security, subjective well-being, education, health, social life, and environment quality, while also examining material conditions of housing and income (OECD, 2017). Publications on well-being also represented the multidisciplinary focuses of well-being, such as the Measures of Well-Being by OECD (2015), Well-Being for All Concepts and Tools for Social Cohesion by Council of Europe Publishing (2008), the UNICEF on Child Well-Being by Adamson et al., (2007), or the Children’s Society (2015) Good Childhood Report in the UK. These

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6 Keyes conceptualises Social Well-Being through an evaluation of five elements, including: social integration the quality of one’s relationship to society, social acceptance as trust towards others, social contribution as one social value as a valid member of society, social actualisation as the belief in society and its potential, and social coherence as perception of quality of the world and knowing about the world.

7 The theory argues that personal well-being is achieved through the need for enhanced competence, relatedness, and autonomy.

8 PERMA’s model of flourishing explores education and its influence on students’ well-being through: positive emotions as hedonic feelings of happiness, engagement as the psychosocial connectedness to activities and organisations, relationships as social integration and feeling cared about, and accomplishment as making progress towards goals and having a sense of achievement.
The Capability Approach and Well-Being

Sen’s Capability Approach has been chosen as a framework for this study for its evaluation of individuals’ needs and values, and its contribution to social change and analysis of injustice. Sen’s (2001) CA emerges as one of the leading frameworks that emphasises the importance of choice and well-being, moving beyond traditional understandings of “quality of life” within the field of economics, challenging the sole use of measures such as Gross Domestic Product (McLellan & Steward, 2015). The CA seeks to overcome some of the gaps in the evaluation of well-being. It does not neglect some of the important underpinnings of psychosocial well-being, as it values the individual, their emotions, autonomy, and agency, while also recognising the value of resources to the quality of life. Thus, the CA draws on these meanings of each of the factors of well-being alongside each other by evaluating what kind of lives individuals are able to lead (Alkire, 2016).

Put most simply, the key purpose of the CA is to encourage the expansion of people’s freedoms to achieve that which they personally value (Comim et al., 2011). Sen’s definition of well-being is the ability to do that which one values, and therefore reach the states of being they aspire for. Using the terms functioning and capability, the framework seeks to explore the opportunities and freedoms an individual has. Sen defines functionings as an achievement, a set of ‘doings’ and ‘beings’ (Nussbaum & Sen, 1993; Saito, 2003; Sen, 2005). Capability, on the other hand, is the combination of functionings one can choose from, or “…a person’s ability to do valuable acts or reach valuable states of being” (Sen, 1993, p.30). Importantly, the process of choosing from a set of capabilities involves another important term: agency. Agency relates to one’s own role in shaping one’s own life through an active exercise of being and becoming (Unterhalter & Walker, 2007). However, the CA also acknowledges that personal agency is navigated within an individual’s approaches often combine the underpinnings of psychosocial subjective well-being and the value of resources and income, influenced by the field of economics. The publication, *The Oxford Handbook of Well-Being and Public Policy*, by Adler & Fleurbaey (2016b) demonstrates the expansive and rich frameworks and methodologies that influence evaluations of well-being today. The book notes that ‘inequality’ has come to the forefront of discussions of well-being today, driving new developments of thoughts and questions on what factors should be measured, what criteria should be focused on, and what research methodologies should be used (Adler & Fleurbaey, 2016b). Here, Alkire (2016) discusses the value of using the Capability Approach (CA) as a measure of well-being, which examines the extent to which individuals have the freedom to enjoy states of being that they find valuable. The CA has guided this research to understand Syrian refugee students’ lives in contexts of displacement, for reasons discussed in this next section.
political, social, and economic factors, thus recognising the role and power of Conversion Factors: the social, institutional, and structural arrangements that allow an individual’s potentials to translate into effective options (Hart & Brando, 2018).

Thus, Sen’s CA focuses on whether individuals can critically reflect and choose that which they value, and then exercise their agency to achieve valued states of being. Therefore, this framework assesses well-being by seeking to understand an individual’s ability and freedom to reflect on, choose, and therefore reach states of being of personal value (Walker & Unterhalter, 2007; Alkire, 2016). This multidimensional framework encompasses the importance of resources and utility, but also delves deeply into the values and quality of life that individuals are able to achieve (Alkire, 2008; Dang, 2014; Alkire, 2016). Thus, contrary to well-being approaches that measure either subjective happiness or income and needs-based satisfaction, the CA framework appreciates choice with regards to what people value and what choices they have (Sen, 1992; Robeyns, 2003b).

The CA framework is especially relevant to this thesis as it acknowledges the importance of context, experiences, and perspectives (Nussbaum & Sen, 1993; Robeyns, 2003b; Robeyns, 2016). Its purpose is to challenge disadvantage and inequality by understanding how individuals use and convert their resources differently (Alkire, 2016). In the 1979 “Equality of What?” lecture, Sen criticises the ways in which traditional concepts measure well-being and advantage, and argues that outcome measurements do not necessarily reflect satisfaction (Cohen, 1993; Unterhalter & Walker, 2007). The CA allows for “flexibility and adaptation to different personal capacities...and thus acknowledges that different people, cultures and societies may have different values and aspirations” (Comim et al., 2011, p.9). Moving beyond both the pure subjective measures that assess positive feelings, and the economic factors such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), this framework aims to prioritise a notion of well-being that allows people to choose what they are able to do and become (Unterhalter & Walker, 2007). It encourages researchers to select the dimensions of well-being based on the elements illuminated by the participants living within these contexts (Alkire, 2008).

4.1.2 Sen’s Capability Approach with Children
A search for literature that combines the CA, education, and forced migration shows a limited number of studies. Most recently, a study by Chase (2019) demonstrates the usefulness of the CA to understand how displaced individuals’ decision-making and perceptions are shaped by their surrounding political, economic, and social spaces. Drawing on longitudinal research with unaccompanied young men from Afghanistan who are seeking asylum in the UK, the study sought
to understand the states of being that individuals were able to achieve, and explore how these accomplishments resonated with their sense of well-being. The study also draws on some of the gaps identified in the first part of the literature review, by analysing participants’ values and aspirations compared to the policies and arrangements that they navigated. By exploring the capabilities that participants valued and prioritised, it contributes to understanding how individuals practice agency within their constraints and the ways by which policies and settings reduce or enhance their abilities to achieve the futures that they aspire for.

While not in contexts of displacement, the CA is becoming increasingly adopted within research with vulnerable children and youth, such as street children, children with special needs, gender-disparities in developing countries, and children affected by poverty (Raynor, 2007; Alkire, 2008; Biggeri & Mehrotra, 2011; Trani, Bakhshi, & Biggeri, 2011; Serrokh, 2011). These contexts differ from those within the fields of forced migration but provide informative insight into using the CA with children. The methodological choices, ethical considerations, and focus on student voice demonstrate appropriate approaches for research with children, especially those within vulnerable contexts. This section describes the relevance of using the CA framework with children, and provides an overview of current debates on the approach and examples of current studies.

4.2 Capabilities with Children and Youth
The CA is a powerful framework that can help understand children’s development, and the impact of their social arrangements on their becoming (Unterhalter & Walker, 2007; Biggeri & Santi, 2012). This is enriched by the understanding that the framework does not reject the importance of the macro-social environment and context, though it is grounded in individualism, as Sen recognises that “being free to live the way one would like may be enormously helped by the choices of others, and it would be a mistake to think of achievements only in terms of active choice by one self” (Unterhalter & Walker, 2007, p.9). This underpinning argument helps address the gaps discussed in the literature review in Chapter 3 through two important concepts: the CA values the importance of context, identity, and individualism, but also links these ideas to the wider surrounding ecological systems.

The recognition of the complex factors that affect human development is not new to research, as the ecological model of human development by Bronfenbrenner (1979) has provided a useful way of examining the factors that influence children’s and youth’s development. This has been used to inform an understanding of refugees’ experiences, such as in the mixed methods study by Dryden-Peterson et al., (2017), wherein Bronfenbrenner’s model is drawn on to understand how Somali refugees who completed their secondary in Dadaab navigated their ecological systems and used
their resources to complete their education and envision their futures. Similarly, Miller & Affolter (2002) use Bronfenbrenner's model to review children's well-being in post-conflict settings in relation to the influences of the nested layers of actors and relationships. As noted above, these complex relationships have also been navigated through a mental health perspective, as illustrated by Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, (2010), who develop an ecological model to illustrate the findings of a study of well-being with refugee youth in Australia (97 participants aged 11 – 19, examining three indicators: the individual, familial structures, school and friends (belonging, discrimination, performance, and attachments), ethnic community (ethnic identity of family), and the broader community (status of broader family and discrimination).

However, the CA examines the processes of development that children experience, and the impact of social arrangements, while also focusing on their individualism, agency, and abilities. By examining what individuals value, what their options are, and what they are able to achieve, the approach gives weight to both the individualism and agency, as well as the influences of the communities and systems that surround them. This process is demonstrated below in Figure 1, focusing on how children’s well-being is explained by the CA by drawing on a figure by Biggeri & Santi (2012). The figure helps elucidate the central position that educational institutions take on, the surrounding factors that limit or strengthen children’s capacities to convert resources into a capability set, and finally, practice the autonomy and willingness to achieve functionings.

Figure 1 Children’s Capability Conversion
This diagram places the child or youth at the centre of the development process, and examines their interactions with peers, teachers, their family, and their communities. Biggeri & Santi (2012) note that with children, a capability set is restricted by their social and physical environments, and the conversion factors which are mainly acted through their education systems (Otto & Ziegler, 2006). As described by Biggeri & Santi (2012), the figure illustrates the process of resource conversion and how it is affected by the different institutions, norms, and cultures. It begins with \( t \), the initial achieved functionings of a child at that time, and then shows how \( t+1 \) is the end result of an achieved functioning vector, based on the capability set and the conversion of factors. Most importantly, the feedback loops signify the ability for a capability set to be re-shaped at different points, and the ability for children’s agency to be reduced or enhanced.

This also helps illustrate the importance of *becoming* described in the literature review, and the development of children’s identities at different stages. Age is highly relevant to the development of capabilities, making it important to study the role of “assistance” and the effects of children’s environments (Unterhalter & Walker, 2007; Ballet et al., 2011). Schools may be enabling and can support children’s autonomy if the surrounding forms of assistance (such as teachers, parents, and social settings) encourage children to pursue and expand further capabilities (Ballet et al., 2011). Children’s development of agency is therefore dependent on the roles of school and social settings, shaped ways these settings are experienced by children.

The CA helps evaluate the decisions that children make, the aspirations they hold, and the values they express. Sen’s work has been criticised by scholars due to his concept of examining what individual’s ‘have reason to value’ (Sen, 2005). Scholars debate whether assessing the values people aspire for are necessarily favourable to their well-being (Alkire, 2016). Nussbaum (2003) furthers this point by arguing that certain freedoms and capabilities may limit or even be detrimental to well-being. For example, this thesis found that some female refugee students stated that they aspired be married prior to adulthood to help their families. However, a different perspective to this argument can find that, examining what values individual holds, and seeking to understand why individuals prefer these values, is an integral part of exploring injustice and the impact of social arrangements.

For example, aspirations and values can often limited by what is expected of an individual due to economical, cultural, religious, or societal restraints (Biggeri, 2007; Unterhalter, 2007; Vaughan, 2007). Stewart (2014, p.298) notes that the CA helps investigate that how capabilities are achieved is what matters, “in particular, whether goals are achieved by processes freely chosen by the person, or processes with which they concur”. Children’s abilities to aspire and form preferences are also
influenced by whether there is, in fact, the freedom to aspire (Hart, 2011), which the literature review has found to be more limited in contexts of forced displacement due to the lack of pathways towards the future for refugees. The CA can recognise the effects of these limitations on individuals’ true freedoms to reflect on what they value. This is referred to as adapted preferences, referring to how seeing how external circumstances shape what individuals hope for and influence what they perceive as possible (Nussbaum, 2001).

Adapted preferences may be limit individuals’ capacities if they are not able reflect and reasonably choose on the kind of life that leads to flourishing (Sen, 1999; Teschl & Comim, 2005). For example, as Nussbaum notes, the desire to pursue a college education, ‘is not a brute fact of Nature but is shaped by what you think about yourself, what amount of self-esteem you are led to have by your society, what your society tells you about the opportunities that are likely to be open to you, and so on.’ (Walker, 2003, p.172). This process of adapted preferences place schools in an important position. Educational institutions can provide or limit opportunities for children to accept or contest external inequalities, schools being “places both of freedom and unfreedom” as they influence students’ identity development (Walker, 2006, p.168; Huppert & So, 2013). They also raise the vitality of understanding children’s perspectives on what they believe is best for them and what is available for them, and to allow them to conceptualise what is valuable for their own lives and futures (Hart & Brando, 2018).

These examples also portray the importance of investigating the processes of Becoming within a specific period of time, which Comim (2003) argues is a third and important factor to the CA that examines the link between time and an individual’s capability formation at different stages of life. By examining children’s becoming, there can be an enhanced understanding of how aspirations and well-being can be reshaped at any point of the process that is illustrated in Figure 1. This is further argued by Teschl & Derobert (2008, p.54) who argue that the identity of the individual must become more central the CA, recognising that that the process of developing choice over time should be examined in relation to who the individual is and how they have made their choices, if their identity is “formed and influenced by their interactions with others”. Equally, examining processes and transitions can help understand the particular challenges that refugees face at different stages of time and how they influence their functionings, which I seek to develop in my research by understanding the particular challenges they face during adolescence and secondary education. In research design, time and becoming also shed light on a common critique of the CA, which is the struggle for researchers to differentiate and operationalise between capabilities and functionings (Chase, 2019). Nussbaum (2002) notes that the objective should be understanding
individuals’ capabilities rather than functionings, examining what freedoms individuals have, rather than just the outcome (Chase, 2019). Based on these factors, this thesis seeks to understand the capabilities that are valued by participants, but more importantly, it examines why students hold these values and explores any changes, transitions, or disruptions of perspective and choice that participants reflect on.

As shown above, the CA framework allows researchers to listen to children’s perceptions and understand the values they hold, and how these values change over time. In viewing children as active agents, researchers allow children to discuss their values and that which they prioritise (Ballet et al., 2011). However, these responses must be explored and reflected on. Thus, while individual values are key to the CA framework, the well-being of an individual is not always measured purely by what the individual values. We must understand the link between resources and achievements, exploring the factors that may limit these conversions. Sen emphasises the importance of reflection and discussion that develops an understanding of what limits an aspiration (Unterhalter, 2007). As described by Sen, “while exercising your own choices may be important enough for some types of freedoms, there are many great other freedoms that depend on the assistance and actions of others and the nature of social arrangements” (Sen, 2007, p.35) This thesis seeks to elaborate on this reflection by exploring how children’s social arrangements, both within and outside schools, influence their perspectives and their choices.

The Use of the CA Studies with Children and Youth

While qualitative research on children’s well-being in contexts of forced migration is very limited, the use of the CA in research with vulnerable children has begun to shape a new potential area in the field. The publication by Walker & Unterhalter (2007), and particular chapters from the publication by Biggeri et al., 2011, discuss children’s capabilities within education, and provide numerous examples of methodologies and approaches to using this framework within the field. Several studies use quantitative measures to analyse the relevance of capabilities with children. An example is Children’s Valued Capabilities, in which Biggeri (2007) uses a survey-based method to understand which opportunities (or capabilities) are relevant to a child during their lives. Biggeri uses a list of capabilities that have been cited as relevant to children through previous studies. Using children’s answers, these capabilities are marked in the list or added to. These capabilities were then quantified, defining the relevance of capabilities based on the number of times they were mentioned by the children. However, a particularly relevant and stimulating study for this project is Sen’s Capability Approach: Children and Well-being Explored through the Use of Photography, where
Kellock & Lawthom (2011) use arts-based methods with primary school children to understand well-being. The researchers seek to construct a list of capabilities supported by children’s perceptions of well-being. This study develops a table based on the issues that children discuss in relation to their well-being, and the capabilities in this study are therefore the result of “a thematic analysis of children’s visual products and discussions about them” (Kellock & Lawthom, 2011, p.145). The researchers seek to then understand these capabilities in terms of functionings, by noting whether they are achieved or not. In cases where these functionings have not been achieved due to lack of opportunity, the barriers are then discussed with the children. For example, if children have described that friendship is important to their well-being, but they have not had the opportunity to make friends in school, this functioning is not achieved and the barriers are explored. Amongst others, this study helped inform my own research by portraying the power of using visual methods to elicit the voices of children, and to ensure that their perspectives inform the research and the final capability list, demonstrating that which is valuable to them and what they are able to achieve. My research is driven by a similar determination to understand how children conceptualise their own well-being and capability sets.

To conclude, while the use of the CA with children affected by forced displacement is currently limited, the available literature portrays some of the potential strengths and benefits of adopting CA. Mainly, the studies currently using the CA with children emphasise the benefits of student voice and enriching our understandings of particular contexts. This is especially advantageous within a field where assessment of well-being for vulnerable children, within the scope of education, is extremely understudied with a small number of theoretical frameworks currently being explored. As described by Alkire (2016, p.616) in regards to assessing well-being, “the fact that a perfect measure has not yet poured through the open window is encouraging” as the multifaceted dimensions that attribute to well-being “...make it as difficult to measure as it is important”. Alkire extends this point further by encouraging researchers working with well-being to allow space for reflection and experimentation, which I aim to do in this study.

4.3 Conclusion and Conceptual Framework
By reviewing literature on education in emergencies, I argued that an enhanced focus on the contexts of forced displacement, especially protracted refugee crises, is essential in the face of the contemporary issues our world faces today. I demonstrated that while the field is yielding greater attention and focus, and policies have raised pressure to increase access and quality education for children affected by conflict, there are remaining gaps in understanding how schools interact with refugee children’s realities, including the policies, social, economic, cultural, and personal factors.
Furthermore, though the dual and conflicting power of education to reinforce or transform inequalities in society has been recognised and continuously discussed in research analysing links between conflict and education, there remains little research that looks in-depth at how refugees’ experiences are shaped by their schools, and whether schools enhance or harm their well-being.

These rifts inspired an understanding of how well-being is conceptualised, finding that Sen’s Capability Approach is a useful and multidisciplinary approach that allows for an understanding of individuals’ experiences. The CA emphasises the importance of social arrangements on the freedoms individuals have, and helps analyse the processes that persons navigate and that influence whether they are able to achieve what they aspire to. Its value has been demonstrated in research with youth and children in disadvantaged contexts, but remains extremely limited in contexts of forced displacement. However, I argue that the CA brings together some of the challenges in the field, by allowing individuals to reflect on how their educational settings interact with their everyday lives and realities, and how this jointly shapes their sense of self, their processes of becoming, and their decisions and attitudes towards the future.

The central purpose of this study is to understand how Syrian refugee students’ experience their educational settings in Jordan. As outlined in Chapter 2, the investments, efforts, and progress made to integrate Syrian refugees into Jordan’s formal schools continues to be challenged by high dropout rates and rising tensions within the nation. I explore the lived experiences of Syrian refugee students, and the influencers and perceptions of this phenomenon, through students’ voices and through the following question and sub-questions:

**Which capabilities do students identify as most important, positive, or detrimental to the development of their well-being?**

1.1 How do school settings help shape, enhance, or limit these values, and how are students’ capability development affected as a result?

1.2 How do factors around and outside of school settings interact with their capability development within schools?
Chapter 5: Methodology

This chapter introduces and justifies the research design and methodological choices of this study. Firstly, I introduce the epistemological underpinnings that have influenced the decision to explore refugee children’s experiences through notions of student voice. Secondly, I illustrate how the Capability Approach is operationalised in the study to guide the design of the research and analysis methods. The chapter concludes with final notes on the complexity of my own position as a researcher in this study, and conclusive reflections on ethical dilemmas.

5.1 Epistemological Influences
The purpose of this study was to understand how children perceived their school settings and the ways in which they influenced their sense of well-being. Adopting an interpretivist stance that underpins this study acknowledges that while an external reality or truth to the world may exist, this reality is made sense of, given meaning to, and developed through the perceptions of those experiencing it (Blaikie, 2007; Egbert, 2014). Unlike a positive stance that argues that there is a single and objective reality to be discovered, an interpretivist approach acknowledges that individual perceptions can be used to understand how the reality of the world is experienced differently (Clark, 2005). In the literature review chapter, this appears especially relevant for evaluating subjects unknown to us, such as how forced migration, and how the current responses to them are experienced by those affected by it.

5.1.1 Phenomenology
The underpinnings of this interpretivist stance have also allowed this study to further adopt qualitative, phenomenological approach: the study of a phenomenon through the perceptions of those affected by it (Creswell, 2012; Martella et al., 2013). This overarching paradigm seeks to describe the lived experiences of a phenomenon, seeking to develop rich descriptions, analysis, and understanding of experiences to explore how people interpret their realities (Bazeley, 2013). This approach guides the methodological choices that focus on understanding Syrian refugee students’ experiences in a double-shift system in Jordan across four formal schools, through their own perceptions, examining how they form meanings of their realities of learning and growing up in displacement. However, interpretivist and phenomenological approaches have received their own critique. For example, these forms of research have been criticised for over-emphasising the value of experience and narrative, causing such research to be dismissed for being too self-indulgent and distant from any sense of objectivity (Davies et al., 2004). I argue that, as shown
through the literature review, studying contexts in-depth and the ways these are lived and made sense of by those experiencing them are significant to policymaking and research, especially in subjects which may be less commonly experienced by global populations, such as displacement and conflict. I also seek to mitigate the limitations of interpretivist and phenomenological approaches in the study by referring to the broader literature and relate the experiences of children to the acknowledged social, political, and economic factors that influence their experiences.

Phenomenological studies are often approached through qualitative, engaging, in-depth methods to help elicit the voices and perceptions of participants (Somekh & Lewin, 2004; Cole & Knowles, 2008). Determining which research methods are appropriate are also guided by the researcher’s choice between direct and indirect phenomenology. Using the form of direct phenomenology, a researcher is considered an outsider to the phenomenon, aiming to remain detached from participants (Somekh & Lewin, 2004a). The researcher uses direct language to ask questions, and participants express their experiences using direct everyday language. By contrast, indirect phenomenology asks the researcher to immerse themselves fully into participants’ worlds and become an insider to the research. Indirect phenomenology seeks to study the experiences of participants beyond the surface, exploring profound meanings participants may hold in the “background” or subconscious mind (Somekh & Lewin, 2004a). Indirect phenomenology in education commonly uses creative research methods, such as arts-based methods, and is commonly driven by the phenomenological characteristics that draw on qualitative and ethnographic research (Svensson, 1997; Somekh & Lewin, 2004). This challenging task requires the researcher to engage with participants’ experiences using spontaneous and open data methods, stimulating participants’ memories and reflections.

In this research, I find that the study falls between the direct and indirect forms of phenomenology. The study seeks to elicit conversations with students about a phenomenon they have experienced, which is unknown to those outside of it: learning as children living in protracted refugee situations. The study also seeks to focus on students’ perceptions and their emotions, and explore their experiences in-depth. However, the limited timeline of this research (which took place over the period of just under three months), the purpose of this research, and my own stance as a researcher does not allow this study to adopt a fully indirect phenomenological approach. I do not perceive myself as insider to the subject, nor fully detached as an outsider. I describe this in detail in the final sections of this chapter.
5.2 Students’ Perceptions: A Qualitative Enquiry Across Schools
This study is driven by the importance of understanding students’ experiences and own perspectives. As such, the study took form as a qualitative enquiry into the phenomenon of Syrian students’ perspectives on their capabilities and well-being in second shift schools. It sought to draw on methods that delve deeply into students’ reflections and ideas, seeking to share their voices across double-shift school settings. To conduct this research, four school settings were chosen, as described in the next section.

Sampling: Schools and Rationale
This study was comprised of four school settings, with a focus on one classroom in each school. The chosen schools included two boys’ and two girls’ schools, helping identify nuances relating to gender and well-being. At each school, participants included 18-21 students. All 80 student participants were attending grade 7 or 8, and were therefore of the ages 13 – 16. Additionally, one teacher was interviewed at each school.

Table 1 provides an overview of the four schools selected for this study. These school names will be used throughout the findings and discussions chapter.

Table 1 The Selected Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Family income</th>
<th>Family education levels</th>
<th>Travel to school (means of transportation)</th>
<th>National Aid</th>
<th>Commodities at home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SM-1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60% more</td>
<td>45% completed higher education, 72% less than secondary education</td>
<td>64% walk, 19% through transport owned by school, 5% public transport</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>66% have internet, 18% own a car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM-2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Lower income</td>
<td>11% completed higher education, 15% completed secondary education</td>
<td>24% walk, 33% through transport owned by school, 9% public transport</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>44% have internet, 8% have car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF-1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Lower income</td>
<td>11% completed higher education, 15% completed secondary education</td>
<td>24% walk, 33% through transport owned by school, 9% public transport</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>44% have internet, 8% have car</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Table 1 shows, each set of schools, one boys’ and one girls’, were at opposite spectrums. Two schools were in more affluent contexts, and two in lower affluent communities. This information was provided by the Ministry of Education in Jordan, and the data represents the average income, transport means, and quality of life both Jordanian and Syrian communities. This allows for a comparison between these cases and an understanding of how these varying factors impact the experiences and well-being of Syrian refugee students. I also chose to understand how boys’ and girls’ experiences of school may be shaped differently by conditions such as distance to school, and the educational levels of families. This may help shed light on how issues surrounding safety on the way to school, families’ perceptions of the value of education due to their education backgrounds, and average income of these communities can impact children’s perceptions and likelihood of remaining in school. Furthermore, commodities such as internet and car can shed light on children’s abilities to participate and be mobile in Jordan. It is important to note that most Syrian refugee families in Jordan live under the national poverty line and may thus experience similar levels of financial circumstances despite community affluence. While this study acknowledged that this data did not represent Syrian refugee families only, it helped shed light on the communities that children navigated.

To select these schools, I analysed the dataset provided by the Ministry of Education, which included a list of all schools in Jordan with a vast number of useful fields, including socio-economic factors, household living conditions, household education, enrolment rates, and district information. To navigate this dataset and select appropriate schools, I filtered the information using the fields that are relevant to the study. The process to select schools included:

- Filter the dataset to include double-shift secondary state schools only, hosting Syrian refugee students during the afternoon only
- Order dataset by district
- Order by household income
- Order by national aid funds received
- Order by parental education level
- Order by number of Syrian refugee students per school
- Eliminate fields that are irrelevant to the study
- Select two schools (one boys’ and one girls’) at each ends of the spectrum

The QRF was the main point of contact and the medium of communication between myself and the MoE throughout this process, guiding the procedures of selection and access clearance.

Secondly, only secondary schools were selected. The purpose of this study is to elicit understanding of children’s perceptions of well-being. A central part of this study is to discuss challenges that adolescents face and explore their experiences, to understand their reflections on continuing education and dropping out. As Syrian refugee children’s dropout rates in Jordan are highest during secondary education, selected students were in their early years of secondary education. At this age, students may begin to become more aware of the challenges of entering adolescence and the impact this may have on their ability to continue education. It is important to recognise that this small sample does not lead to a generalisation of knowledge (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2014). Rather, it stems from Sen’s framework and seeks to understand how resources can be converted into different functionings and capabilities by individuals (Sen, 1992).

A comparison across these schools allowed for an exploration of how students’ needs and well-being are also shaped by certain socio-economic backgrounds, gender, and individual agency. The number of schools was justified by the time permitted in Jordan, and the intention of engaging with students in-depth, comparing gender differences, and allowing for multiple voices across a particular age group to be listened to. Across these schools, the smallest classroom size included 18 students, the largest 45. As the research is purely qualitative and values individual experience, a sample size larger than 80 may have undermined the quality of the study and a focus on the individual. Additionally, it was not possible to select fewer than 18 – 20 students per classroom, as teachers preferred for the research to include the entire classroom, or for the class to be divided into two groups during the time of research. To conclude, student participants of this study are:

- 80 total participants: 40 female, 40 male
- 40 attending grade 7, 40 attending grade 8
- All students were aged 13-16 (many students had missed out on at least 1 year of education)
- All students had been in Jordan for at least three years
Prior to developing research methods, I also sought to ensure I had an appropriate grasp of the context and of schools’ schedules, backgrounds, and processes within. Thus, in addition to selecting schools, I ensured that I engaged with descriptions of schools through a review of the literature and analysis of a dataset provided by the Queen Rania Foundation. Further understanding of school contexts was provided through school observations and teacher interviews during fieldwork, as described in the next sections.

5.3 Student Voice and Visual-Based Methods
This study chose to understand refugee children’s experiences through their own voices and perceptions. Most importantly, acknowledging the importance and value of listening to children draws on the 1991 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), most specifically, its treaty 12 which “assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child”, and treaty 13 which clarifies the right to freedom further by noting that expression “include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers” (UNICEF, 2010). Today, research that engages with children as agents who are able to construct knowledge has inspired a shift in research being conducted from on children to with children (Thomson, 2008; Harcourt & Conroy, 2011). Thus, children’s rights to express are not only responded to, but their experiences and views are also seen as valuable research (Thomson, 2008). These also align with the notions of instructive and phenomenological stances, and recognise that the perceptions and views students share may inform research of realities that are otherwise not visible to the eyes of adults (Kellet et al., 2003). Student voice has thus become important inputs for research, policymaking, and evaluations (Lewis & Lindsay, 1999; Alderson & Morrow, 2011). Researching student voice has been explored through numerous research methods. In the next section, I argue that visual-based methods are extremely valuable for exploring children’s experiences, especially in disadvantaged and vulnerable settings.

5.3.1 Engaging with Student Voice through Visual Research
As the notion of “voice” gains more attention in research, visual research methods have emerged as useful, ethical, and child-sensitive methods tools to help researchers’ attempts to understand those whose voices have been unheard. Researching students’ experiences should allow children to explore their own perceptions and feelings and communicate them. The research methods involved must also recognise that not all children are the same and that the knowledge produced by each child portrays the ways in which the world is encountered differently (Greene & Hogan, 2005) The development of methods to elicit these findings are continually shaped by important reflections on issues such as power dynamics between the researcher and participant, and the
complexities of voice and representative truths (Lather, 2007; Arnot & Reay, 2007; Thomson, 2008). These are discussed in the next section on limitations and ethical considerations. These have influenced debates on whether visual research methods have successfully addressed these issues which are numerous and ongoing. However, researchers working with children and young adults have demonstrated the power and potential of visual-based methods.

Visual methods have been adopted in many forms. Researchers using these methods can use already-available images as sources for engaging students, or they may ask students to produce new material throughout the research process (Margolis & Pauwels, 2011). Research with children using visual methods seeks to allow participants to express themselves through a child-friendly, more natural form of engagement (Prosser & Burke, 2008). These may take the form of photography, video, or other forms of visual objects (Kellett et al., 2003; Emmison et al., 2013). The process of creating and working with these images allows children to express themselves, their experiences, and their interpretations using methods that are appropriate to different age groups and stages of linguistic development (Kellett et al., 2003; Prosser & Burke, 2008). These methods allow participants to enjoy the process of research and knowledge-production, using methods they may are likely to be more confident engaging with (Cole & Knowles, 2008; Prosser & Burke, 2008). For example, using photographs to elicit discussion allows children to engage in a more relaxed environment, avoiding the persistent eye-to-eye contact usually required during interviews (Prosser & Burke, 2008). Furthermore, they can be valuable for researching with children who may need support for communication, such as children with low literacy or for subjects that are difficult for children to translate into words (Cremin et al., 2011).

The use of visual-based methods to help understand children’s views has been incorporated across disciplines and have formed a significant area of research. These methods have been used to engage students in difficult subjects and using different forms of visual methods. For example, the use of disposable cameras is commonly adopted to ask children to capture photos of their lives, surrounding spaces, and things that they value or experience. This has been used to examine children’s lives across numerous settings, such as children as caregivers (Aldridge, 2012), children’s sense of self in informal settlements (Benninger & Savahl, 2016), and street children in Kampala (Young & Barrett, 2001). Other forms of visual-based research including drama, drawing, collage-making, community-mapping (Leich, 2008; Thomson, 2008; Butler-Kisber, 2008). Visual-based methods to understand children and youth’s experiences of schooling are valuable to research, such as in studies by Cremin et al., (2011) and Hill (2013) that explore engagement and students’
experiences in schools, and a study by Burke & Grosvenor (2015) which explores young people’s values by asking them to imagine their ideal school. In a study that shares some of the methodological choices of my own research, Kellock & Lawthom (2011) use visual-based methods and photography to understand young children’s well-being in the UK. For this study, I was also particularly inspired by A Guide for Researchers: Young Lives Longitudinal Qualitative Research by Crivello, Morrow, & Wilson (2013), which explores children’s experiences of poverty using several visual-based methods such as map-making, diaries, and drawings. These studies portrayed the informative and powerful insights shared by children, and the ways in which they can translate to inform policy and practice.

The study aimed to share the voices of its participants, drawing on the fundamental idea that children’s opinions and experiences are valuable to our understandings of their realities. The study also sought to involve participant students through engaging, participatory, and reflective methods. Many studies examining student voice align with Participatory Action Research (PAR), which involves children in the entire research process: developing research questions, developing methods, and analysing the findings. This process is also hoped to empower children with a sense of hope for change (Kellett et al., 2003; Alderson & Morrow, 2011). However, this study does not share the objectives PAR, recognising that the PhD research at this stage does not, on its own, carry the power to drive social change nor did it seek to empower participants to seek change for matters that affect them (Alderson & Morrow, 2011). This is part influenced by being cautious of my positionality in the research, as discussed in the first part of this chapter. Initially, the study sought to engage students through more open-ended methods, where their own production of images, drawings, and artwork guide the final direction of interviews. However, engaging with the realities of the field, as discussed in this chapter, helped develop a more time-sensitive and appropriate design that includes diary based on visually-designed questions.

This study’s research design entailed three main parts: visually-designed student diaries used in interviews with students, interviews with teachers, and classroom observations. The key focus of this study is student voice, making student diaries and the follow-up interviews the main sources of data. Teacher interviews and classroom observations were used to help formulate enriched descriptions of the context, its activities, and the relationships within the cases. These are discussed in this section.

5.3.2 The Limitations and Considerations for Research Children’s Perspectives
While researching children’s perspectives has become a valuable area of study, there are important critiques that must be considered. Most importantly, researchers have outlined the importance of ensuring that children truly consent to the research directly, and not just through parents, while being reminded that they are able to withdraw at any point (Due et al., 2016). Furthermore, studies have highlighted the importance of using ethical research methods that seek to create knowledge in ethical and critical ways, which allow children’s perspectives and voices to emerge (Alderson & Morrow, 2011; Lawrence, Kaplan, & Dodds, 2015; Kaukko, Dunwoodie, & Riggs, 2017). Although this has led to the emergence of visual-based methods, these methods are not without their shortfalls. Firstly, as these methods seek to allow children to express themselves, researchers must be aware of the importance taking the time to building rapport and trust, while also protecting participants from attachment and harm (Due et al., 2014).

Furthermore, researchers warn about the difficulties of attempts to reveal the authentic voices of children (Spyrou, 2011; Due et al., 2014). Arnot & Reay (2007) argue that researchers must distinguish between different types of talk and acknowledge that “voice” may be constructed through rules of communication within a particular pedagogic context. Students learn rules of communication through their educational experiences and learn to speak through “...a common pedagogic voice, the language of learning created by school pedagogic” and therefore they “...speak in the voice of pedagogy” (Arnot & Reay, 2007, p.323). It is thus important to reflect on why children may say and share particular aspects of their experiences, which is further challenged in displaced contexts where children may be ashamed or afraid (Lawrence et al., 2015). The use of different data methods helps understand children’s perspectives more authentically, by allowing for cross references between data sources to reveal any gaps, weaknesses, or misunderstandings (Due et al., 2014). Secondly, researchers can involve children during the interpretation stages of data, to ensure that the meaning of the meaning is confirmed by both the researcher and children (Bland, 2012a; Due et al., 2014; Berman et al., 2016). This study involved the use of visual, written, and oral data to seek to strengthen the conveyance of children’s perspectives.

By using several forms of arts-based methods and ensuring that instructions for completing these activities allow for openness and freedom, I sought to elicit discussions that grasp meanings beyond the surfaced language of daily pedagogic practices. The research questions and methods also sought to allow a child to express their story, rather than elicit a specific message. Using these multiple sources of data may thus enrich our understanding of how children self-identify by undertaking these questions from various angles (Cook-Sather, 2007). The combination of data
sources within the analysis process also offers further rigour (Harcourt et al., 2011). However, after entering the field and gathering data, I also remained aware of the points brought forward by Arnot & Reay (2007) by discussing the complexities and continuously reflecting and questioning the purity of student voice and forms of talk, as shown in the next chapters.

5.4 Ethics and the Realities of the Field
In conducting this study, I faced ethical dilemmas and challenges which required my ability to reflect and act quickly. As other researchers have argued, that while institutional guidelines provide useful and important considerations for conducting ethical research, the rigidity of these guidelines expose a ‘privileged’ understanding of ethics (Hugman et al., 2011). Guillemin & Gillam (2004, p.264) argue that there are two forms of ethics in research: procedural ethics and ‘ethics in practice’. Procedural ethics refer to ethical processes set by bodies such as the British Education Research Associate (BERA), which can force researchers to follow a ‘ticking of the boxes’ rather than to engage with the challenges in the context (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Kaukko et al., 2017). However, ethics in practice are the day-to-day ethical issues that arise during the research. These issues require the researcher to reflect and respond to “ethically important moments”; the unforeseen and challenging circumstances that may require a quick response (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004, p.276; McEvoy et al., 2017). This is especially true in conducting research with refugee children, where the realities of lived experiences of forced migration create particular vulnerabilities and complexities that require an understanding of the context and the individual (Kaukko et al., 2017). Many researchers in the field have argued that the realities of working in contexts of displacement and in other contexts with vulnerable communities reveal vast gaps between procedural ethics and ethics in practice (Due et al., 2014; Habib, 2019).

Despite my attempts to be prepared for ethical considerations in this study, I faced a number of challenges and issues that required my ability to reflect, assess, and respond to dilemmas quickly. These challenges also helped me re-examine the presumptions I held prior to conducting the research. As a Syrian who is both an insider to the Syrian conflict, but an outsider to the experiences of forced displacement, I recognised the sensitivity of my positionality within the research during the initial planning stage. Based on the theoretical underpinnings of researching student voice, and the interpretivist approach that encourages the study of realities through the experiences of those affected by a phenomenon, I sought to allow children’s voices and perceptions to inform the study. These choices were reflected in my initial research design methods, and my own preparation to seek to remain detached as a researcher, to an extent, though
I was aware of the implications of being a Syrian myself throughout this study. The realities of conducting fieldwork created two major challenges, as discussed in these next sections.

5.4.1 Changes in Research Methods and Complications of Access
With the support of the Queen Rania Foundation, I was provided with approval to conduct research at four schools in Jordan. Due to this valuable collaboration, the Queen Rania Foundation was a medium between myself as a researcher and the Ministry of Education (MoE) throughout the initial stages of planning the research. I was not involved in the initial stages of contacting the Ministry of Education (MoE), though I was asked to draft a document in Arabic summarising the purpose of my research, including the research questions and proposed research methods. This was later slightly revised based on requests from the MoE. I was granted permission by the MoE and provided with an official document, which I was then asked to take to the four schools that were selected by myself and Queen Rania Foundation based on my sampling criteria. Based on this permission, I booked my flights to Jordan and prepared to leave Cambridge. However, I faced numerous challenges after this initial process.

Arriving and Access
I aimed to prepare to conduct my fieldwork on time, prior to the start of exam period, Ramadan, and the summer vacation. I called the Jordanian embassy in Jordan and was also reassured by the Queen Rania Foundation that I am able to enter Jordan (prior to the Syrian conflict, Syrians were easily able to get visa on arrival). However, two days before my flight, I received a statement that a background security check and official permission by the Ministry of Interior would be required to allow me to enter Jordan. This took a couple of weeks, and I was forced to reschedule my flights and also shorten the number of weeks allowed in schools, as the official permission granted by the MoE allowed access to schools from January – April, and I arrived in Jordan in February, allowing just under three months to collect data.

After arriving to Jordan, I also spent two weeks continuing the process of receiving access, for which guiding information was not available online or over the phone. I was asked to visit each district council, share the MoE documentation, and then request permission to access schools within the district. Following this, I was asked to visit the schools, and ask for permission to the school by speaking to the head teacher. While all schools and district councils approved my requests to access schools, I also experienced encounters that put me at unease, such as feeling forced to engage and ‘chat’ with those providing access, despite comments and questions made by
two members, a male district officer and a male school principal, that reflected negative power and gender imbalance.

The next process entailed creating a schedule at each school that allowed me to conduct research, while seeking to minimise any negative effects on children’s learning by ensuring I do not take children out of valuable teaching time with subjects that students struggle with. With the help of teachers, I created a schedule where I conducted research with students during repeated days of revision, the infrequent sports classes, and during any breaks or subjects that teachers perceived students to currently be excelling at most. I was not able to conduct research with students after school due to safety issues and children’s responsibilities, as many were involved in domestic or informal labour. Upon arriving to the schools, I also realised that the visual-based methods initially proposed for the research were not feasible with the time I was left with.

The initial research design was comprised of visual-based methods that allowed children to take photographs, to draw in response to questions, and to create collages. However, after having one less month to do fieldwork, and after arriving to the schools and seeing the quick and chaotic nature of the double-shift’s school hours, I quickly realised that these methods would not allow for in-depth conversations and insights. The intention of these initial methods were to leave the questions and activities open to participants, with less guidance, to allow the students’ voices to be elicited with less input by the researcher. However, as detailed in section 5.6, Research Methods and Links to Capabilities, I redesigned the research methods to reduce the time needed to create the material for activities. The methods also entailed more guidance and direction to help respond to the research questions within the time allocated, while still attempting to allow children’s perceptions to be transparent and authentically communicated.

5.4.2 Perspectives of Research Positionality and Responsibilities
Initially, I had hoped to remain detached within the research to allow children’s perspectives and experiences to dominate the findings of the research. Furthermore, I sought to ensure that a detachment would help not cause harm or distress by ensuring that students are aware of the purpose of the study, my intention to leave, and therefore reduce attachment and false hopes (Roger Hart, 1992). The importance of ensuring that children do not form unhealthy attachment with the researcher has been affirmed by literature in the field, and I also sought to follow the advice by Due et al., (2014), in conducting research towards the summer holidays, when students would be transitioning into a new routine. Despite reminding participants of the study’s short duration, I was aware that my presence had both positive and negative implications. Teachers
noted that the students would ask every day about whether I can visit more, students would try to spend additional time with me during their breaks and after school while we waited for transportation, and the last days of my fieldwork were filled with emotional words with students asking that I return, and gifts they had made or purchased to thank me for being kind to them. I had to navigate the appropriate response to these gestures, being careful not to promise a return, while also portraying the value of their time and conversations with me for me as both researcher and as an individual, recognising that many of these students felt invisible and victimised.

During the beginning of my time at schools, I was also taken aback by the realisation that while the purpose of my time with students was to understand their experiences, I quickly became a subject of research for the students. Being a Syrian researcher was a persistent point of intrigue for the students, and students frequently commented that if I am to research their lives and get to know them, they should be given time to get to know me and ask me questions. This was especially common with female students, who were interested in my life, my choice to not yet be married, whether I live alone, and what motivated me to leave Syria to become a researcher. While this relationship still allowed me to guide the research as an outsider to students’ experiences, there were frequent exchanges and questions that created a complex interplay between my identity as a researcher and my presence as a female Syrian exemplar. For example, my presence as a 27-year old female Muslim who was not veiled and who was able to travel and work, encouraged female participants to speak to me about their desires to not be veiled, to have greater mobility, and to refuse arranged marriages. In these instances, I was forced to reflect and respond quickly. I sought to remain honest with children in describing my choices, and to use these conversations as opportunities to emphasise the importance and potential of education. However, while doing this, I also remained cautious that my words inspire reflection but did not direct students to specific behavioural change, in fear of putting children at harm due to cultural and societal practices at home.

Numerous other incidents required me to decide which responses may put children in least harm. For example, many students described being harmed through corporal punishment, naming their teachers, and asking if I can report them. Furthermore, students continuously asked whether I can help change their circumstances within school or help their families with migration status, seeing me as a Syrian who is able to travel to Europe, which many children described to be one of their dreams. As noted by Hugman, Pittaway, et al., (2011), it is important to reflect on whether participants consent to research in desperation or help and change. However, since my arrival and
until the last day, I reminded students that I do not have any authority or ability to help, and continued to ensure that children consented to each exercise in the research. Furthermore, I was not able to report teachers or incidents that students were exposed to, as I believed that this would not benefit students and may even cause harm, due to the political tensions, lack of training, and lack of evaluation. This also became especially challenging when a participant shared that she experienced suicidal thoughts. However, I chose not to report this, having considered the cultural stigma and lack of understanding around mental health, the teachers’ and head teachers’ remarks on this particular student, which included ‘don’t believe her stories – she is full of lies’ and their intention to expel this student from school. I did, however, share some of these reports with the Queen Rania Foundation, and also sought to support this student by giving her additional time during the fieldwork.

These examples show the importance of reflexivity in the field and the importance of re-evaluating what causes least harm in each context (Due et al., 2014). However, they also raise the importance of research training and the development of protocols that better support researchers to respond to signs of distress or need for support (Berman et al., 2016). All other elements of protecting participants through anonymity, confidentiality, data protection, and the assignment of gatekeepers, were followed for this study.

5.5 Operationalising the Capability Approach
The next sections demonstrate how I used the CA as a framework to shape the research design. As shown in the theoretical review in Chapter 4, the CA has guided studies that have sought to understand children’s values and well-being within their social arrangements. The process for choosing the capabilities for this research, should research choose to have an initial list, is an important part of this study. There are numerous approaches to doing so, as described in chapter 4. However, as Robeyns (2003) argues, it is important that researchers are transparent in their steps to choosing capabilities, explaining the rationale behind the formation of the list, and making this clear and visible to the reader. The CA’s versatile nature inspires freedom in the way it is used, making the level of transparency and reflection provided by the researcher crucial to the richness of the study.

5.5.1 Open or Defined List? Debates on Nussbaum vs. Sen
As discussed in the literature review, the Capability Approach helps give focus to the individual, and whether they are able to achieve lives they perceive to be worth living. Approaches to understanding these values or ‘capabilities’ are often approached by either a pre-defined list, as
argued by Nussbaum (2001), or through Sen’s more open-ended approach. Sen’s approach to the framework is influenced by a theoretical assertion that deliberately leaves the framework open to finalisation does not provide a defined and ready list to be applied (Alkire, 2002; Unterhalter & Walker, 2007). This is Nussbaum’s particular criticism to the approach, as she argues that a defined list is essential to social justice and social inequality (Nussbaum, 2011). However, as Sen’s approach to the framework is constructed by the notion of “choice”, he rejects a final and universal list as he believes it denies social progress and discussion (Sen, 2004). While a definite list is not applicable to Sen’s work, scholars have often adopted this framework by proposing an initial and changeable list of capabilities relevant to the study (see Alkire, 2002; Robeyns, 2003a). Sen does not disregard this approach and states, “I have nothing against the listing of capabilities but must stand against a grand mausoleum to one fixed and final list of capabilities” (Sen, 2004, p.80).

Nussbaum critiques Sen’s open approach and argues that the framework should adopt a definite list, though the list can be abstract and adaptable to the context. Nussbaum (2011) thus develops as The Central Human Capabilities, a list of ten capabilities that are identified as essential to well-being and justice (Nussbaum, 2001; Alkire, 2002). Nussbaum argues that the framework must adopt a definite list, though the list is abstract and therefore requires adaptation or further specification within different contexts. However, Nussbaum’s approach to the framework is supported by a theoretical basis that relates to universal social justice and the importance of individuals achieving these ten capabilities, rather than focusing on social choice and freedom (Robeyns, 2003a).

This study values the importance of freedom and choice that Sen’s framework provides, as it seeks to understand the understudied well-being of children living in protracted refugee situations, whose experiences are not entirely understood. However, I have also opted to develop a pre-defined list, which can be changed, adapted to, or removed from based on the findings with students. I have done this for two reason, discussed in the next section.

5.5.2 Selecting Capabilities
The process of choosing capabilities is Alkire (2008) suggests that researchers may choose to select capabilities using the following:

1. Existing data
2. List based on public consensus
3. Participatory processes
4. Assumptions based on theory or experience
5. Expert analysis based on empirical data

Researchers can choose capabilities through any of the above, and the advantages and limitations to each of the above must be considered. However, researchers are encouraged to cross-reference across these options in order to enhance the capability list and reduce the narrowness of one method (Kopinak, 1999; Biggeri & Mehrotra, 2011). For this study, I combined the first and third methods proposed by Alkire's (2008): existing data and participatory processes for the initial capability, and the fourth and fifth points for the final list. Existing data draws on the literature on displaced children in refugee and protracted situations, as well as the context in Jordan and the experiences of Syrian refugee children within Jordan's double-shift system. There are two prominent reasons for choosing to use existing data. As the study uses participatory research methods with adolescent students, a preliminary list guided by literature also influences the research design.

While Biggeri et al., (2006) advocate for a completely open approach, which allows children to conceptualise the dimensions of capabilities without any interference, I found this option less feasible for my study. Scholars have argued that while it is important that children select and reflect on their values, we must also examine which capabilities are important for their futures (Robeyns, 2003; Biggeri & Mehrotra, 2011). Therefore, it is important to situate children's discussions of their well-being in what we already know is important for their well-being, while also allowing their voices and experience to inform and enhance understandings of these values.

The constraints imposed, including the sensitivity of the research, the nature of the PhD timeline, and my novice skills as a researcher, are also all factors which came into play in deciding between an open list or an entirely defined one. Using participatory research methods with children and young adults may leave the researcher with little control over the direction of interviews and discussions. For example, without sufficient guidance, participants may focus on capabilities which are irrelevant to the purpose of the study and context, some of which may be based on imagination (Biggeri & Libanora, 2011). Therefore, existing data gives the study structure based on a comprehensive review of the context. The second reason to use existing data is its value in the field, which must not be overlooked. The existence of important and enlightening research in contexts of displacement has portrayed some of the important capabilities that education can provide for children affected by conflict, such as a sense of normalcy, social opportunities, and the
ability to aspire (discussed in the literature review). This data has impacted the responses initiated by organisations and policymakers to address the implications of forced displacement on refugee students' needs. Exploring it is not only useful to forming a preliminary list, but is also stimulating and necessary for the study. I seek to challenge this preliminary list, and therefore the literature involved, by exploring whether they are representative of the realities described by participants.

At a later stage, the capabilities selected for the final list of capabilities were based on both existing data and on participants' inputs. The third method, participatory processes, was used for two purposes. This allowed the study to remain true to Sen's approach by valuing the individual through a more open approach, where participants' diaries and discussions reshaped the capabilities list. The initial list was added to or removed from based on the weight and value given by participants. Secondly, as discussed above, similarities and contrasts between existing data and participants' input was extremely interesting and helped highlight the importance of understanding context, listening to student voice, and expanding the literature currently available.

Through the process described above, the below list was used to guide the initial design stages of the research, entailing dimensions that appear relevant and valuable to children’s well-being for this particular context. These capabilities were based on an understanding and assessment of numerous studies relating to children’s well-being and experiences in contexts of displacement, including research available on Syrian refugee children’s education within Jordan. The initial capability list included:

1. Social relationships: the ability to make friends, gain a sense of belonging, and to give and receive social support
2. Participation: the ability to participate in society, in social and public life
3. Education: the ability to be educated and to continue education
4. Physical safety: the ability to remain safe within schools, on the way to school and within communities
5. Care: the ability to be cared for and to care, protected and concerned for
6. Freedom from economic and non-economic exploitation
7. Respect: the ability to be respected
8. Moving beyond the past: the ability to look beyond the past, the trauma caused by conflict and displacement, and the ability to think about the futures
In Chapter 11, I present the final list of capabilities which is based on students' discussions, revealing what values are most relevant for Syrian refugee children in double-shift schools and how these capabilities are contextualised and understood in their contexts.

5.6 Research Methods and Links to Capabilities
This study drew on several research methods with children, including visual methods that allow for written and visual material, and follow-up discussions, to enhance findings and strengthen the authentic interpretation of students’ data. Additionally, while the purpose of this research is to understand students’ perceptions, teacher interviews and classroom observations are also used in this study to provide an enriched understanding of the school, context, and to provide additional sources of understanding the subjects raised by children. This section describes these methods, their purpose, and their relation to the research questions.

5.6.1 The Diary
This chapter gave a rationale for the use of visual-based methods. I designed a diary for each student that included five main activities or exercises, followed by blank pages to give children the option of sharing additional information. The diaries were used to elicit conversations with students, prompted by pre-defined open questions. The questions provided in Appendix C were used to lead conversations with children. However, I continued the interviews and conversations more naturally with students according to the subjects they raised. These interviews are audio-recorded and used as the primary source of data for this study. All names were changed for confidentiality and anonymity, and the data stored was locked in my room in storage and encrypted on a hard drive.

To cross-reference findings across different data sources and methods, and enhance the validity of children’s voices, visual and written data provided in the diaries were used as a secondary source, which validated, added to, and clarified points discussed in the interview. Each of the five activities were designed using the preliminary set of capabilities defined for this study, and thus each activity related to one or more capability. Below, I discuss each activity, its purpose, the capabilities that have guided its design.

This can be summarised in Table 2 below. The visual format of these diaries are illustrated in Appendix B.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Capabilities</th>
<th>RQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1: About Me</td>
<td>General introduction about children</td>
<td>Social relationships, participation, and freedom from Exploitation</td>
<td>Main RQ and RQ2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 2: Build a School</td>
<td>Participants describe what they believe comprises good schools rather than bad schools</td>
<td>Social relationships, education, care, participation, respect, physical safety, and freedom from exploitation</td>
<td>Main RQ and RQ1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 3: My Life and Memories</td>
<td>Participants to identify moments that are memorable to them, describing how they felt about them, and future events they hope to achieve.</td>
<td>Education, moving beyond the past, aspiration, and social relationships.</td>
<td>Main RQ and RQ1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 4: A Trip</td>
<td>Participants choose what they would do if they had freedom of mobility.</td>
<td>Social relationships, participation, care, and moving beyond the past</td>
<td>Main RQ and RQ2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 5: Well-Being and Wishing</td>
<td>Participants rank their well-being from 1-10, and describe current wishes and future needs to improve well-being.</td>
<td>Education, care, physical safety, and moving beyond the past.</td>
<td>Main RQ and RQ1,2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Researchers have acknowledged the importance of seeking to give back to participants, especially children living in vulnerable contexts (Due et al., 2014). I hoped that giving each child a personal diary, which they can own and engage with, would bring value and an enhanced sense of self value. Students were also allowed to keep their diaries after the research, as I scanned all diaries. Many students chose to keep their diaries. The format of this diary also helped me ensure that consent with children is continuous, respecting children’s right to consent and to withdraw from the research at any point (Due et al., 2014; Kaukko et al., 2017). This was additionally important, as schools did not allow me to reach out to parents for consent due to a lack of this practice in the nation. At first, I introduced myself and explained the research to students, and asked children to notify me or their teacher if they would like to not engage in the research (see Appendix A). However, throughout each activity, I reminded children that they are able to: choose not to partake at all in the project or during a specific activity, write in the diary but not partake in the interview, or partake in both the diary and follow-up interview by raising their hand once they complete their diary activities. This also allowed children to choose to avoid any specific activities that they do not wish to engage with, which took place with one student during one particular exercise.

**Activity 1: About Me introduction**

Activity 1 links to the capabilities: *Social relationships, participation, and freedom from Exploitation.*
This introductory exercise sought to create an ice-breaker that allowed students to become familiar with the format of the diary and interviews, and begin to personalise their diaries and connect to it as an item of their own. This activity asked students to fill in the gaps, answering questions relating to: name, age, number of years in Jordan, friendships, and hobbies. These purpose of these questions was first to attain important details about the students, such as age and time spent in Jordan, and then to begin and understand how students reflected on their lives and identities. The follow-up questions linked briefly to the above capabilities, by discussing hobbies, age and disruption of school, interests, social relationships, life before and after school hours, and feelings about school hours.

**Activity 2: Let’s build a school: What makes a good school? What makes a bad school?**

Activity 2 linked to the capabilities to any and all of the eight capabilities, giving students full freedom to add new capabilities of their choice. However, it especially related to: *Social relationships, education, care, participation, respect, physical safety, and freedom from exploitation.*

This activity provided students with two school drawings, labelled as “good school” and “bad school”. Empty spaces were provided within each of the school outlines. Based on students’ values, dislikes, and ideas of school, students were asked to fill these spaces with words that define a good and bad school. To provide guidance, one word, “friendship”, is given as an example in a good school. Students were informed that they can cross this example out if they do not deem it applicable to their vision of a good school.

The follow-up interview questions explored what children value about education, what they deemed to be important, positive, harmful, or negative. The discussions also sought to understand whether they regarded any of these aspects to be familiar to their own educational setting.

**Activity 3: My life and memories (timeline)**

Activity 3 links to the capabilities any of the eight capabilities, and encouraged students to provide additional capabilities. However, its initial design linked to *Education, moving beyond the past, aspiration,* and *social relationships.*

Students were given an outline of a timeline, and were asked to write down five or more memories that were special to them, noting down the event, and how they felt at the time. Students were asked to write down their feelings about the year 2017. The timeline also extended into the future.
Students are asked to write what they expected to be doing and what they aspired to be doing at the ages of 18 and 25.

The follow-up interview questions related to why these events have been chosen, asking students to further express their feelings and the implication it has had on their lives. Students were also asked to further discuss their aspirations and expectations of the futures.

Activity 4: A trip with those dearest to me
Activity 4 linked to the capabilities: Social relationships, participation, care, and moving beyond the past. It also prompted imagination, and was open to the addition of new capabilities.

Students were given a visual of a school bus, with four free spaces for text. Students were asked, if they could describe up to three trips they would wish to take using this bus, choosing as many people to go with, to any place in the world, and for however long. This activity drew on the imagination, and students were able to choose trips that were in the past, present, or future world. The activity sought to understand their interests in aspects outside of school, the relationships students valued, and their reflections or attachment to their current contexts, and their ability to move beyond thinking about the past. The follow-up questions related to these aspects, eliciting further discussion regarding why students have chosen the selected places, times, and people.

Activity 5: Well-Being and Making a wish
Activity 5 linked to any of the eight capabilities, and encouraged the addition of new capabilities. Its initial design was based on the capabilities education, care, physical safety, and moving beyond the past.

Students were given two envelopes, “I hope for” and “I hope to get rid of”, each with five empty papers. Students were first asked to reflect on their own perception of their well-being. Well-being here was described as a scale of 1-10, 1 being the lowest, ten being the ultimate level. Above the “send away” envelope, they were asked to write down the number that reflected their current sense of well-being. They were then asked to write down up to five things that currently affected their sense of well-being, and that they wished to change or remove from their lives. Above the “make a wish” envelope, they were asked to write down the number they expect or hope to reach by the next ten years. Students were asked to write or draw up to five things they wished to achieve or have in the future, which they believed may help them reach the level of well-being they had noted down.
The follow-up discussions were based on students’ input. The purpose of this activity was to first understand how they perceived their well-being and what aspects they identified as detrimental to their well-being. Students were also asked whether there were aspects of their lives that they believed were positive contributions to their current state of well-being. Secondly, students were asked to discuss their level of future well-being, the ways they may achieve it, and the importance of these achievements. The idea of the scale exercise was also inspired by a desire to engage with the scale data collection method and compare this to a more qualitative and in-depth approach to understanding students’ reflections on well-being.

To conclude, all students were given the diary. One activity was conducted during each visit. After students completed an activity, they were asked to raise their hand if they wanted to partake in an open interview about their answers. I responded to each student that raised their hand by giving them at least five minutes per activity, discussing their answers on a one-on-one basis, except in settings where students preferred to talk about a specific subject in a group with their friends.

5.6.2 Classroom Observations and Reflective Journal

Classroom observations helped provide a thick description of the contexts (Bernard, 2006). Prior to beginning the activities with the children, I sought to spend as much time in the classroom with students as possible. For children, time is an essential element to help build trust, and the create an ability to feel relaxed and be able to express ideas with a researcher or stranger; a significant factor for refugee children who may distrust strangers (Greene & Hogan, 2005; Sieber, 2009). While the research is focused on children’s experiences, I aimed to conduct classroom observations to ensure that analysis of my data is questioned, reflected upon, and compared with additional data resources (Hugman et al., 2011). These observations provided the needed space to question our ideas when conducting analysis, seeking further clarification if needed (Bernard, 2006). The form for the observation notes is provided in Appendix E.

Despite my plan and the approval to conduct classroom observations once a week at each school across three months, and noting down observations in my reflective journal, this proved much less possible in reality. Teachers did not appear comfortable with my attendance in the class if I kept a diary, and were also reluctant to allow me to sit in their classroom. Teachers who were most welcoming were the same two or three teachers, and were often described by students as their ‘favourite teachers’. Thus, classroom observation data was more limited. However, the observations I was able to keep included: students’ and individual’s engagement with their peers,
teachers, learning material, as well as any notable classroom incidents. Additionally, I also noted down significant moments, dilemmas, or challenges I faced as a researcher.

5.6.3 Teacher Interviews
I also conducted a total of five teacher interviews. The initial design included one teacher at each school, whom the schools opted to choose. However, one additional teacher asked to be interviewed, thus making a total of five interviews. All teachers selected taught grade 7 and 8, and were therefore the teachers of the participants of my study. These teachers teach only the afternoon school shift, and had all been at the school for at least three years.

To deepen our understanding of the contexts, teacher interviews were conducted in addition to classroom observations and using the available dataset. Interviews with teachers, questions (see Appendix D), related to the challenges they faced as teachers in supporting Syrian refugee students, the challenges they believed Syrian refugee students faced within their educational contexts and life at home, parental involvement, parental educational backgrounds, and the values they believed students attributed to their educational settings.

The interviews were semi-structured, giving teachers the freedom to redirect questions based on their own experiences (Cohen et al., 2011). The purpose of these interviews was enriching the description of the contexts. These interviews provided a greater understanding of the classroom and school structure, enhancing the data available using the datasets. Furthermore, as the study allowed student voice to shape the direction of research, interviews did not influence the analysis of children’s experiences, but were useful to the discussion of findings and to understanding any specific or special school-related elements that students may mention. As the sensitivity of the research makes questioning students ethically challenging, teachers also helped me become aware of students’ pasts, challenges at home, and any other aspects that students may not share but that the researcher should remain aware of throughout the research process.

Additionally, the interviews were used to assess whether there are similarities between children’s self-identified needs and teachers’ perceptions of the possible challenges. This helped portray how some of the challenges facing children are invisible to teachers and adults and may have been completely overlooked, or whether teachers were aware and able or unable to respond.

5.7 Analysis and Comparison
This study required a multi-dimensional analysis process to include the varying forms of data collection methods. As each school data included interviews with teachers, administrative data,
observations, and multiple visual-based methods, the process must respond to individual activities, in addition to analysing the combined methods (Keats, 2009). Deciding upon the sequence of data analysis and method of comparison when analysing oral, written, and visuals is also important.

For this project, I considered using the products of the visual-based activities, treated like text, as the primary source of data, and therefore using the audio-recorded conversations and observation notes as secondary and tertiary data sources (Prosser, 2007; Bland, 2012). However, I finally chose to use arts-based methods to elicit conversation and to allow the discussions to become the primary source of data. Images remained an important element in analysing children’s experiences. Yet, in analysing images separately from the verbal and oral texts, any preconceptions may have blurred the interpretations of these visuals (Bessette, 2008). In addition, children’s images may be ambiguous, with the need to receive further input from children. An adult’s perception and interpretation may then alter the true message of the visual, defeating the notion of student voice (Bessette, 2008; Bland, 2012). Therefore, the written, oral and verbal forms of text were all analysed, but all visual data was interpreted through the analysis of discussions, and the combination and comparison of all data (Bland, 2012b).

The analysis process must be completed within a sequence that allows for an understanding of both the individual and of shared meanings. For this study, I chose to design an analysis sequence that explored:

1. Themes emerging from data for each child within each activity [in relating to capability list, and in addition to new themes]
2. Collective themes emerging from each activity
3. Themes emerging from children’s entire diary (combining all activities, observations, and discussions).
4. Themes emerging from data across all activities and diaries.

The aim of my research was to understand each child’s needs and valued dimensions of well-being, as well as the collective understandings of well-being (Greene & Hogan, 2005; K. Walker, 2007). The individual perceptions, themes of each activity, and shared themes of the entire project were crucial in understanding both the individual and collective identities. As previously discussed, the project values the significant experiences of the individual and the ways in which each child identifies their needs, values and choices. This rich and in-depth understanding sought to portray
the diverse needs of children, shedding light on the importance of the different lived experiences (Greene & Hogan, 2005; Blaikie, 2007). However, the shared meaning was also fundamental to the phenomenological approach adopted in this project (Somekh & Lewin, 2004b). Shared themes provided an overall enriched understanding of the phenomenon, as lived by Syrian refugee children in Jordan. The themes emerged from the initial capability list, which helped to create the initial coding list (see example in Appendix F). Ultimately, new themes help informed the final capability list.

All data methods were cross-referenced in this study: students’ visual entries were supported by interviews and classroom observations. Discussions were analysed first, followed by a comparison of the written commentaries, observations, and visuals to portray the main themes emerging from each student’s stories. This analysis process was conducted and repeated for each student and each activity. These emerging themes were them combined to portray the particular meanings constructed within each child’s diary, as well as themes emerging from the entire project through the combination of activity themes.

5.7.1 Thematic Reading of Data
Thematic analysis was used for all types of data in this study. Thematic analysis allows the researcher to identify the themes that emerge throughout the process of reading the data (Bernard, 2006). The process caters for the need to understand complex and across diverse data or cases (Jupp, 2006). While this process reduces the difficulty of organising and understanding data, thematic analysis is often criticised for its inability to capture the in-depth and rich understanding of the stories behind the emerging themes (Howitt, 2010).

However, as the data of my research is presented through a descriptive, visual and written portrayal of children’s experiences and perceptions, I sought to enrich the categorised themes through engagement with children’s stories. In addition, I hoped to share students’ voices through both individual stories and emerging themes, by illustrating both shared experiences and singular cases. Therefore, any particular, distinct or uncommon expressions, words or artwork characteristics were brought forward, discussed and analysed, rather than eliminated as a result of not fitting under a particular theme (Howitt, 2010). The analysis was conducted through the following thematic analysis process shown in Table 3 (Bernard, 2006; Howitt, 2010; Cohen et al., 2011):
Table 3 Process of Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transcribe</th>
<th>Writing up interviews, discussions, and observation notes</th>
<th>Scanning artworks/diary pages</th>
<th>Organising data by activity and student names</th>
<th>Placing appropriate data in one document to be read from</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>General reading of document</td>
<td>Initial understanding of oral data</td>
<td>Initial comparison to visual and written texts</td>
<td>Initial notes on common features, unique features, and comparison to observation notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging Themes</td>
<td>Creating of themes</td>
<td>Step dependent on searching individual or collective identity via: 1) Reading of one activity at each school 2) Reading of individual diary at each school 3) Reading of all project – combined activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparing emerging themes</td>
<td>Compare</td>
<td>Do themes relate to the Capabilities list initially used? If so, group sub-themes under the appropriate Capabilities themes. If not, does the capability need to be removed or redefined?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme Clustering</td>
<td>Reducing themes by grouping sub-themes into new themes</td>
<td>Noting down experiences and values that do not fall under specific themes. Adding these to the list if found through shared meaning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabulating</td>
<td>Tabulating themes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I present an exemplar of the coding themes in Appendix F.

5.7.2 Understanding Multiple Contexts and Capabilities
The analysis process described above was conducted separately for each school. Sen’s capability approach guided and helped structure the analysis across the study by engaging with a thematical analysis of capabilities which compare with an initial capability list, shaping a new and final list. During analysis, I compared emerging themes from children’s data to the pre-defined capabilities list. The list was then removed from or added to according to children’s needs within each school. The capability framework enriched our understanding of the differences and similarities across the four schools, and the ways in which certain functionings were identified as more or less valuable within and between each. Thus, the aim of understanding the differences and similarities between these schools was to engage with elements that children may find more valuable to their wellbeing.

5.7.3 Language
All data was conducted and collected using Arabic. As a native Arabic speaker and a Syrian citizen who can understand the terms and dialects, the research is advantaged by a familiarity in language
and the understanding of culture between participants and the researcher, which can be an important limitation to research in refugee contexts (Due et al., 2016). I chose to transcribe, read and analyse the data in the original language. This decision stemmed from two main concerns commonly found in the translation of data: meaning loss and redundancy. The translation of data may impact the findings of research and thus the trustworthiness and authenticity of voice (Fryer et al., 2012). Terms and expressions may not translate as powerfully into a different language. As this research is strongly related to expression, voice and storytelling, it was important for analysis to be conducted using the original language, in which meaning is best preserved. In addition, translating all data may require a very long time with little advantage. Thus, only data which has been presented in this thesis has been translated, such as quotations from interviews, discussions, and written data. This translation was conducted by me and compared to translation completed by another translator. This was completed through a back-translation process, where data was translated into English, and then translated back in order to understand whether any meaning has been lost or blurred (Bernard, 2006). While a translator is qualified and experienced in the linguistic aspect of the translation process, they are also much less aware of the research (Sutrisno et al., 2014). Therefore, my role in translating, while also comparing all translations to those completed by the qualified translator, helped reduce errors and ensure the validity of final translations (Squires, 2008; Sutrisno et al., 2014).

5.7.4 Presentation
The findings of this research are presented in multiple chapters in Part 1 and Part 2. They are organised according to the sub-question: the first two chapters cover factors found within schooling, as questioned by sub-question 1, and the remaining two address the factors that students identify outside of their schools. While the chapters each present the themes which are relevant to the research sub-question, I also make any distinguishes between the four schools throughout these chapters. By doing this, I am able to portray the importance of context, school initiatives, and gender-based needs.

Throughout these chapters, the findings are portrayed through students’ oral anecdotes and descriptions, and are further supported through their visual input and their written material from the diaries. Furthermore, classroom observation and teacher interviews are used to support students’ perceptions. These sources of data are used to clarify, confirm, or raise interesting contradictions to discussions with students.
12:30 PM.

The bell rings, marking the beginning of the day for thousands of students.

Thirty minutes of coexistence have ended as students from the morning shift head home.

The second wave of students line up and sing the Jordanian national anthem.

A Qur’anic verse is read, and then, in a unified voice and with the help of a chaotic tune, a short song praises the importance of education.

The bell rings once more.

Two girls have not worn the school outfit and one student has worn a coloured veil. She says her mother had not yet washed her only white veil. They are asked to stand in the corner.

Buckets and mops are handed to them.

The rest queue and walk in. Four hours of school are about to begin.

Observation: 07 March, 2017
PART 1

To Be Educated: Perceptions of Well-Being Within School Structures
Introduction

The findings of this study are discussed across four chapters, presented through Part 1 and Part 2. These findings bring together both visual, written, and oral materials from conversations with students, as well as observation notes and teacher interviews across all four schools. Part 1 introduces the first thematic groups, focusing on the experiences of children within schools by introducing their perspectives. This part includes two chapters, which introduce the factors that students perceive as positive, essential, or negative to their learning experiences, and the effects these have on the capability of being educated.

It seeks to address the main research question and its first sub-question:

RQ: Which capabilities do students identify as most important, positive, or detrimental to the development of their well-being?

1.1 How do school settings help shape, enhance, or limit these values, and how are students’ capability development affected as a result?

The themes described in this chapter are evident throughout all five activities but are especially emphasised and discussed in-depth throughout activity 3, “What Makes a Good School? What Makes a Bad School?” and activity 5, “I hope to / I would like to get rid of”
Chapter 6: Learning, School Structure, and School Environment

Chapter six focuses on students’ experiences within school and the findings which are most relevant to aspects of learning, being taught, and gaining knowledge. Having access to education introduces the capability to learn, which is central to the development of other capabilities. Throughout this chapter, students discussed factors within their classrooms and school spaces that enhance or limit their ability to study, to learn, and think about the future or their aspirations. It also presents other capabilities which are reduced or enhanced through participants’ learning spaces. This chapter introduces these discussions under the following themes: teaching quality, teacher to student interaction, classroom size and structure, and school facilities and policies.

6.1 To Be Taught and To Learn

During activity 2, students were asked to make note of the events that were important to them within their lifetimes. Many students marked the day they returned to school in Jordan as one of the most important days of their lives. After missing out on years of education, students described how returning to school, making friends, and learning again began to restore a sense of stability and normalcy through further discussion.

“Leaving Syria made me so sad, but being able to go to school again… That’s the day I started to feel more happy again.” Souhail

Beyond granting all children the right to education, the benefits and importance of providing access to education for refugees are wide and recognised in literature, enhancing children’s ability to be settled and regain a sense of belonging and normalcy by creating opportunities for social participation, personal development, and routine (Hek, 2006; Alderson & Morrow, 2011; Taylor & Sidhu, 2012). However, the findings of this study also demonstrated the complex relationship between education and well-being, and the effects of positive and negative factors on students’ identities. This section introduces key findings portraying the ways students’ learning is affected by factors within schools.

Throughout the study, many students talked about the importance of having positive relationship with their teachers. During activity 3, when students engaged in an exercise that asked students to differentiate between good and bad schools, many participants focused on teachers and the
characteristics they believed distinguished ‘good’ teachers from ‘bad’. Three main elements of teaching were identified as important: conveying knowledge, their treatments towards students, and engaging students fairly. Students discussed the importance of their relationships with their teachers and the forms of interactions that took place. Words including ‘respect’, ‘positivity’, ‘kindness’ were used to counteract words such as ‘harsh’, ‘yell’, ‘insult’, and ‘hit’.

The ways teachers spoke and interacted with students were central to whether they were perceived as good or bad teachers by participants. Some of students’ descriptions included positive narratives that highlighted the impact of positive interactions between teachers and students. However, over 90 per cent of participants expressed that they felt humiliated, made to feel ashamed, or demeaned by their teachers and gave detailed accounts of corporal punishment, verbal abuse, and discrimination. These examples will be discussed first.

6.1.1 Corporal Punishment - Acts of Discrimination?
Despite corporal punishment becoming banned in Jordan in 1981, its use within schools continued to be reported (UNICEF, 2017b). While both female and male participants experienced corporal punishment in their schools, this appeared to be more frequent in boys’ schools. Students described the use of corporal punishment as a negative aspect of their schools, noting that a good teacher is one who ‘does not hit’, ‘is gentle’, ‘encourages us rather than punishes us’.

‘Things I Want to Get Rid of? ~ Mahmoud
While the prevalence of corporal punishment exists across schools in Jordan, there may be an additional and distinctive emotional impact for refugee students. Participants in this study perceived the use of corporal punishment as acts of discrimination that were directly linked to their Syrian refugee identities.

Hamzeh, male: “Some teachers here are racists. They say bad words to us and they hit us. A teacher once hit me because he thought I skipped school, but I was sick.”
Me: “Why do you feel that this means they’re racists?”
Hamzeh: “Because they discriminate between Jordanians and Syrians… There were people from the morning shift that told us that they never get hit.”

“They always hit us. Some teachers here don’t like Syrians. They teach during the evening shift so they can release their anger on Syrians.” Akram, male

A high number of participants spoke of corporal punishment and its severity in their schools. Some participants described the injuries they sustained and many noted that this is one of the worst aspects of their schools. While I did not witness corporal punishment during classroom observations, which may have possibly been neutralised by my presence as an observer, I frequently saw teachers carrying rulers and sticks. On three occasions, when looking out a window during classroom breaks, I also saw teachers hitting students with these sticks to call them back into their classrooms.

6.1.2 Verbal Discrimination
The sense of being discriminated against was also seeded in how students perceived their teachers’ usage of language. Students used their visual diaries to note that good schools had teachers who were ‘kind’, ‘patient’, ‘respectful’, whereas bad schools were taught by ‘angry’ teachers who ‘used bad words’, were ‘racists’, and where ‘prejudice’ existed.

Delving into these concepts further, students shared specific examples of words that made them feel discriminated against and victimised.

“Some teachers here hurt their students with their words. They make us feel like something is wrong with us Syrians even if we haven’t done anything wrong. Like, they tell us that we smell bad, and that…that just upsets me so much.” Nour, female

“There is a teacher who once said to us, “you Syrian girls have no sense of respect. I met many Syrians and there’s just no respect.” Sidra, female
Hala, female: “Some teachers make fun of us. If we talk using our Syrian dialect, they start saying ugly things. They say ‘You’re Syrians, not Jordanian’ and they start talking about nationalities.”
Me: “What do you mean by talking about nationality?”
Hala: “I hear them talking about us. They talk about how we’re Syrians. They say bad things to us in front of the entire classroom.”
Me: “What do you feel when you hear this?”
Hala: “We all get very sad. They treat Jordanians better than they treat us and they prefer them over us.”

“The teachers shame and demean us… they spit on us.” Fahd, male

“They always curse at us. They say, ‘get out of my face’, ‘you all smell bad.’” Roula, female

Strikingly, students appeared aware of the economic constraints their teachers faced, perceiving these limitations as poor incentives for how teachers communicated with them. Evening shift teachers who teach only Syrian students are employed on short-term contracts, without the benefits offered to teachers in morning and normal school shifts, such as medical insurance and paid vacations (Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016). Additionally, many teachers selected for the evening shift schools have less experience, and while also teaching subjects outside their own expertise. Students felt that these factors fueled discrimination and reduced their teachers’ motivation to teach and show interest in them:

Kareem, male: “They treat the morning students better. The teachers give better lessons.”
Me: “Can you explain what you mean by that?”
Kareem: “The teachers in the morning shift are better paid and they don’t give our teachers as much money for the evening shift, so the teachers don’t explain things to us”

“Sometimes a teacher might be stressed out about something, like money for example, and then they take it out on us. They say bad words to us or hit us.” Amr, male

“There are teachers who don’t like to teach. They just want the classroom time to end quickly.” Nizar, male

Students felt that this affected their ability to learn, and that they were not receiving the full curriculum.

“There are teachers who come in and don’t teach us. They write the title of the lesson on the board and then sit down and use their phones.” Adham, male

“A bad teacher is a teacher who doesn’t teach in his specialty. Like here, one of our teachers was an accountant and now he’s teaching science and we don’t understand anything.” Souhail, male

A conversation with a teacher at the SM-2 school shows how the salaries and contracts impact teacher performance:
“The teachers’ salaries here are very low compared to the morning shift teachers. The salary we get is no salary. It doesn’t motivate some of the teachers. Some of the teachers will say, ‘why should we work harder for what we’re getting?’ We know our contracts can end any day too. It determines how stressed the teachers are and how much the teacher is willing to give.” Teacher, SM-2

The teacher also commented on the challenges students face in preparing for the lessons, noting:

“Most teachers in this school are not specialised but we do not have enough teachers in the right subjects. It makes it difficult for both the students and teachers.” Teacher, SM-2

In a conversation with a teacher at the SM-1 school, he touches upon this point by noting that some teachers are less qualified, noting that it should be addressed by the Ministry of Education:

“They should be paying more attention to the students’ needs here. For example, let’s make sure that the teachers here are specialised in the subjects they are teaching. I’ll be honest, there are teachers here who shouldn’t be teachers. Like the science teacher… he is here because he needs a job but he isn’t interested in being a teacher nor is he qualified to be one.” Teacher, SM-1

In addition to the lack of specialised training, the chaotic nature of overcrowded classrooms, the 30 to 35 minute duration of the classrooms, created difficult teaching circumstances for students. During a classroom that I observed, the teacher was not able to control the classroom and continue the lesson due to children’s behavior. One of the students returned to me and said “Who does he think he’s teaching? He’s only talking to himself.”

**Encouragement and Engagement**

In addition to issues of verbal and physical discrimination, students faced difficulty in learning, asking for help, and feeling encouraged. As noted above, Jordanian students may face similar challenges due to the pedagogical approaches adopted in classrooms. However, it is important to also examine how these practices affected refugee students, who struggle with additional disadvantages such as disrupted education, learning a new curriculum, and lack of support at home (Dryden-Peterson, 2016a). Furthermore, students felt that *racism* contributed largely to why they were not taught or encouraged sufficiently.

Many participants, especially female students, felt that teachers’ engagements with students were not equal. This appeared to influence how students perceived themselves; many students
categorised themselves into either a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ category in their conversations depending on their nationality, paper marks, and own experiences of interacting with the teachers.

“There are teachers who teach well but they discriminate too often. ‘She’s pretty, she’s Jordanian, or she has good marks.’ They don’t like to talk to a girl who isn’t good. They like to talk to the good girls, the girls who has good marks.” Sandra, female

“…and the teachers don’t respect us. There is no interest in the students. They only care about the students’ behaviour… this student is good, this student is bad.” Rand, female

“A good teacher likes all the girls in the classroom. She likes the entire classroom and doesn’t give extra marks to the girls she likes more.” Zahra, female

“There should be equality between students. They shouldn’t treat us different because ‘you’re Jordanian, you’re Syrian, you’re Iraqi, and you’re Palestinian.’” Akram, male

In a group discussion at one of the girls’ schools, the participants felt that they were often told that they were the ‘bad’ class, and therefore felt that they were perceived not only as bad students, but also as ‘bad girls’. Two students noted:

“They tell us that we are the worst grade in the school. They tell us that we cause problems and that we talk to boys. If our marks aren’t good, it means that we are bad girls and we like to talk to boys.” Lina, female

“I don’t feel encouraged here. They keep saying things like ‘there’s no hope or use in these girls.’” Roula, female

A striking example also shows the negative implications these issues may pose to girls’ school attendance where gender-based stigma within cultures and treats to notions of family honour (Hattar-Pollara, 2019) remain prevalent:

“Once we were in class without the teacher. I put my headphones on and listened to music on my phone. The teacher came in and insisted I was talking to a boy. I told her to look at my phone and see that I wasn’t talking to anyone but she refused. She called my parents and they wanted me to quit school. My mom said ‘I don’t need be hearing people talk about my daughter in our community. You should stay home for your own good.” Alia, female

The effects of corporal punishment, verbal abuse, and negative disciplinary approaches also reduced students’ likelihood to seek additional support due to fear of being further humiliated against:

“There are teachers here who get so angry… we feel scared to ask questions. We worry she will yell at us.” Sausan, female
“…if you don’t understand them and you ask, they say, ‘the other students understood the lessons. Why didn’t you understand?’” Sandra, female

“Some teachers don’t respect us. Like if a student answers a question wrong, she embarrasses her… she doesn’t say “don’t worry, you tried”. No, she mocks her instead.” Farah, female

**Effects on Learning, Aspiration, and Well-Being**

Negative interactions within the classrooms were also combined with teaching approaches which were perceived as poor. This combination appeared to impact students’ abilities to progress with their learning. Students noted that they struggled to do well in exams and understand the lessons:

“Many teachers don’t go in-depth when they explain. They don’t teach us anything. They just talk without explaining it to us.” Lilas, female

“The teachers don’t teach us well here because they don’t explain things. They give us exams even though we don’t understand the lesson.” Reem, female

Many students feel that not being able to understand the lessons in Jordan and follow the curriculum is detrimental to their futures and their ability to complete their studies.

“They don’t explain things to us and we don’t understand… how is someone supposed to reach university if they don’t understand school when they are a kid?” Qusai, male

“2017 is bad because there is nothing to make it a good year. The teaching quality at this school is very bad.” Jad, male

This is coupled with feelings of discouragement due to changes in their own learning attainment, where some students expressed that they were not able to attain the same level of marks or results compared to the past:

“When I was in Syria, and even when I was first in a private school here, my average grades were around 90 per cent, but now I struggle to get a good mark.” Basheer, male

“My marks were so good in Syria and now they’ve completely dropped!” Fadi, male

Students also reported being unsure about the prospects of their education. During several of our conversations, Adam said that he is no longer sure whether he will be able to continue school because he cannot understand the lessons.
Adam, male: “I don’t feel hopeful about the future of my education. I want to get rid of this school. I don’t hate studying, I like it and I want to become something in the future, but there are things that make you hate studying. For example, the way certain teachers are with us and not being able to understand the lessons… I am finding English and mathematics so difficult.”
Me: “Do you mean you feel you don’t like school anymore because it’s difficult?”
Adam: “Yes because it’s difficult. I don’t like studying anymore. I would be hopeful about the future if we left and studied in another country where education is better.”

Furthermore, interactions within the classrooms not only limited students’ abilities to learn but also appeared to affect their desire to learn. For example, students commented on how their educational spaces reshaped their desire to learn and study:

“She must be kind to the students, not just yell at them and insult them. It breaks students from the inside and makes them hate studying.” Sara, female

“Good treatment makes you want to learn more. It gives you a desire to want to be something in the future. But if you’re treated badly and insulted by your teachers like this, of course you’re going to hate school. You just stop studying.” Adam, male

Significantly, discussions with students unveiled a strong link between poor teaching strategies and discrimination and the disruption of aspirational development. Rand, who was previously suspended for skipping a lesson, stated on several occasions that she was no longer considering staying in school:

Rand: “I’m thinking this is my last year in school unless I move to a different school. I wanted to become a surgeon one day, but I’m done with school. I can’t handle it anymore.”
Me: “Why do you feel this way?”
Rand: “Every time something happens, we’re threatened, suspended, and talked about.”

Similarly, many students who expressed an aspiration to continue to their secondary education and pursue a higher degree also noted that it is strongly correlated with the hope of moving abroad:

“I would like to study abroad because schools are much better there and they give you hope that you can finish school. They don’t tell you that there’s no point in school. Some people say there’s no point in education for us Syrians, but I want to study.” Feras, male

“I want go to France to continue my education. My future would be better there and I would be hopeful that the future is beautiful. People always talk about how good education is in France.” Basheer, male

Many of these students felt that if moving abroad proves not plausible, the hope to continue school would be diminished:
“I want to stay in school but if I stay at this school I won’t. If I live in another country, I’ll continue my education for sure.” Abdelkareem, male

“There is hope that next year might be better because we might get to go to America. If I go there, I’ll be a better student. There is no hope for anyone here to be good.” Iyad, male

The phrase ‘not if I stay at this school’ was commonly used throughout the study, highlighting how students felt about the likelihood of continuing their education in Jordan. In contrast, students expressed high aspirations and hopes for ‘becoming something’, ‘succeeding’, and ‘learning’ if they were able to move abroad to in Europe, America, Canada, or Australia. Students explained that their relatives and friends who had travelled to these countries had recounted how advanced the education systems were. Others had become interested in moving to these countries after reading about them or watching geographic TV programmes.

In activity 4, Saeed also showed that numerous factors influenced children’s desires to travel to Europe, such as better quality of life for their families.

I hope I can go to Germany or America or Canada where my life can be better and my family can be more happy.

I want to travel and finish studies abroad so I can learn to help my country.

I would like to travel with my sister and dad and some of my friends, because they are the only ones that matter to me.

I would to travel to new places, to go on adventures, and to see nature across the world.

‘Trips with Those Dearest to Me’ ~ Saeed
As a final note, one of the reasons some students appeared to change educational systems was due to a false misperception that their education in Jordan is not transferrable or certified should they return to Syria. This issue was reiterated by one of the teachers when we discussed why she felt some students were not motivated to learn:

“Some of the students tell me that if they go back home [Syria], their schooling here will not translate to anything. There is no truth to this at all.” Teacher, SF-2

While the certification of education creates opportunities for refugees’ futures (Dryden-Peterson, 2017), these findings show that uncertainty and insecurity continue to reduce these advantages despite access to education. The realities of students’ schooling experiences, as well as the misconceptions of their education’s accreditation, appeared to stir a discontent with their current circumstances and fuel a state of limbo, or as noted by Brun (2015, p.19), being “stuck in a present they do not want to inhabit, awaiting a future they cannot reach”.

**To be free and dignified**

Being exposed to harassment, discrimination, and corporal punishment also reduced other important capabilities. Several students spoke of their reduced sense of freedom, respect, and sense of dignity. Students raised these issues as key barriers to achieving basic rights that yield to positive well-being.

Roula, female: “To be in a good state of well-being I need get rid of the humiliation I face in my life. I struggle with this so much.”
Me: “Where are you being exposed to this humiliation?”
Roula: “At school. The teachers keep talking about us badly, they insult us, they wish ill upon us. They say things like ‘May God help us get rid of you’.”

“My life’s motto is to be free and proud, with my head held up high.” ~ Roula
“The first thing I have to do to reach a 10 in state of well-being is to get rid of this school. I don’t understand anything they teach us. It’s just insults and yelling.” Souhail, male

“My well-being right now is at 4 because I am at this school. One of the first things I have to do to be better is to change schools. They are harsh here. They mock us and insult us.” Raneem, female

“To reach a better state of well-being, I would like to be in a school where they aren’t always angry at us, where the teachers don’t hit us or yell at us.” Oday, male

Tens of other examples reiterate these findings. Additionally, they felt that being beaten went against the values of freedom and morals they were taught about.

“You’re coming here to study… not to be beaten.” Hamzeh, male

“There are teachers who do the opposite of what they teach. Like the Religious Studies teacher who talks about being good but insults us, hits us, and swears at us. Is that ethical?” Basheer, male

The examples in this chapter also demonstrated how school spaces reduced students’ capabilities to achieve bodily integrity and freedom. Fadi, one of the top students in his grade, commented on this:

Fadi: “I want to get rid of violence and being beaten and I want a life with freedom”
Me: “Do you feel like you are not currently living freely?”
Fadi: “No. Everyone hits us. We are beaten at school all the time.”

As portrayed in this section of the chapter, teaching pedagogy and disciplinary approaches largely contributed to the reduction of these capabilities and to reduced well-being.

**Positive Examples and Students’ Needs**

While most discussions entailed negative descriptions of teachers, several students felt that at least one of their teachers have supported their learning and the development of their aspirations. Across schools, these were often the same teachers named by all students. Students described these teachers as ones who validated the importance of aspiration, who used positive language within the classroom, and who encouraged them:

“There are teachers here who do encourage us. There are teachers who make you want to study. If you have them as teachers, you feel you have to study to become something… so I can be good and think about the future.” Iyad, male
“There are teachers who encourage me. There are a few here who try. They tell me that education is my weapon and that I have to work harder.” Sara, female

Additionally, students noted that these teachers are dedicated to addressing students’ learning needs:

“We have some good teachers too, like the Arabic teacher. He doesn’t just care about the money. He teaches us because he wants us to understand and learn… He wouldn’t take money for something he didn’t do.” Basheer, male

“A good teacher teaches well and treats students well, like our maths teacher. If I have a new theory I want to talk about, he gives me time and helps me.” Iyad, male

“A good teacher thinks about how to make sure all her students understand the lesson. She has a special approach: she thinks about particular students and what they need to understand the lesson better. A bad teacher doesn’t care if some students don’t understand.” Hadia, female

Overall, students expressed that positive teaching approaches related to ‘kindness’. Within girls’ schools, students also noted that they wished their teachers showed greater interest in their lives and provided opportunities for personal interactions:

“She smiles and joke with us. That’s what makes her stand out. She doesn’t just teach and teach the entire time. She might give us two minutes to chat with her so that we don’t get bored of the subject.” Susan, female

“In Syria, they used to ask us how we are or how our weekends were. They used to joke a little bit to get us interested in the lesson. Here, a teacher comes in and doesn’t even say hello…and the lesson starts with her insulting students. They even call us words like ‘animals.’” Sandra, female

“A good teacher is gentle and she smiles. She gives students warnings if they break a rule. But here, they insult you and shame you.” Sima, female

The desire for teachers who were more ‘kind’ and less harsh with their disciplinary approaches was also re-iterated by male students, several of whom expressed that they would prefer to be taught by female teachers:

“It would be better if there were female teachers because they are more gentle and patient.” Jihad, male

In my own observations, teachers which students commonly referred to as ‘good teachers’ were ones who adopted a more interactive approach, encouraging participation and discussion.
Furthermore, these teachers appeared to have a closer relationship with their students, knowing more about their lives and displaying care and interest:

“I focus on engaging them and encouraging discussion. My relationship with them is strong. We play football, we joke, and we talk. I have known them for years and I know all about them. I take their problems seriously.” Teacher, SM-1

“I try to break the cycle of boredom. Sometimes I teach them directly, but other times I try to encourage them to read to the class themselves. Although I feel they don’t like that because they’re nervous or shy. I also try my best to treat them in a way that helps me gain their attention. We laugh during the class and we joke. We talk about something else then return to the lesson. We know each other now. Now, if I am having a bad day, they feel me and ask me if I am ok and they try to give me a less hard time.” Teacher, SF-1

These two teachers were commonly discussed by children as their favourite teachers, noting that they motivated them and treated them kindly.

“I think what motivates them to come to school most is social activities. I’ve organised a football club after school to keep students engaged and make them feel like they’re participating. They never skip on that day. Teaching them is challenging but I try to understand their circumstances. Students have stopped school for 2-4 years. We had to re-establish the very basics, like basic mathematics. It’s also challenging that they’re absent because they have to work. They say that there’s no one else in the house that can work because their dad is in prison or passed away. I try to understand their circumstances and get to know them. I try to follow up on what their lives are like at home and what their families are like so that I can support their learning accordingly.” Teacher, SM-1

Thus, some of the teachers interviewed reflected on the importance of displaying care, showing understanding of students’ circumstances, and engaging students through different methods and activities, while also portraying the positive relationship and bond they have formed in seeking to understand students’ needs. These were some of the same teachers identified by students as teachers who influenced them positively.

**To Follow a Segregated School Structure**

The second section of this chapter demonstrates how students’ current school structures, including the duration of lessons and the classroom size, impact students’ learning and schooling experiences. These issues included attending school in the afternoon, the length of school hours and subjects, and the newly-implemented regulation requiring students to attend school six days a week (Saturday – Thursday). The majority of students referred to school hours as problematic for their studies, safety, and life at home.
The majority of participants expressed their wish to attend school in the morning hours. Students felt that they are more “awake”, “energetic”, and “focused” in the morning.

“A good school is one that is during the morning. It is known that people are more energetic and awake in the morning, instead of waking up at 12 PM and coming back home after 5. It feels like going out to socialise instead of going to school.” Basheer, male

Afternoon school hours appeared to affect students’ abilities to focus and take their studies more seriously. Additionally, returning home late reduced the time students had to review their lessons and to make use of their mornings:

“I don’t study when I get home and I am finding it difficult to get used to these school hours. I used to be the first person up in the house and now I am the last to get up. The school hours have changed my study routine and my marks keep going lower.” Basheer, male

“I don’t like the timing of our school hours because it’s changed our whole routine. We come back during sunset in the winter, and the mind shuts down in the evening and you can’t study.” Susan, female

“We come back late from school and we also have to come in on Saturdays. There is no time to study for exams. I am not studying. I come back from school and only have time to eat and sleep.” Kinan, male

These school hours also appeared to have had negative effects on their lives at home:

“We don’t have time to study. We get home and we don’t have time to study or play… but Jordanians get to study and play for the rest of the day… they can study with flexibility” Mamoun, male
Importantly, the implications were different for girls and boys. Many girls expressed that these school hours pose security threats, especially during the winter, where returning home in the dark may be dangerous.

Raneem, female: “The afternoon school hours don’t suit some of us girls. I wish we could change it.”
Me: “Why do you feel it doesn’t suit girls?”
Raneem: “If the bus is late, we might be alone, and there are a lot of guys around the school.”

“Coming back around sunset as a girl… it’s so bad. Some girls don’t have money for a bus. They have to walk alone too and so they get home even later.” Sandra, female

This is particularly problematic in relation to the direct link between girls’ low school attendance and the commute to school in conflict-affected settings (Burde et al., 2017). Thus, returning home later in the day appears to heighten these risks. Furthermore, schools are also expected to provide protection to students through spaces where children are less likely to be exploited into labour (Anderson et al., 2011). However, students appeared to be involved in school duties like cleaning and helping staff (discussed in next sections).
Additionally, for many participants, schools did not eliminate their involvement in labour or duties but caused further stress. Talia, whose mother did not live in Jordan, commented on how the school hours affected her life at home:

“I wish I could come home earlier. I could plan my day better and cook, clean the house, and then study. Right now, I don’t have time to study.”
Me: “Do you often have to do these when you get home?”
Talia: “I have to cook for my dad and brother every day. I do everything at home and try to take care of them but it’s difficult because I get home late.”

Several female participants also expressed that returning home late, in addition to needing to help their mothers with household chores, resulted in having no time to study. Male participants, on the other hand, stated that they went to work either before school or after school to help support their families. For example, one student would immediately leave to work at a café after school, returning home after 1 AM.

The structure of double-shift schools also leads to reduced school hours for both Jordanian and Syrian refugee students. However, the short duration of classes (around 35 minutes per subject) may be further detrimental for refugee students, who have experienced years of disrupted education and are seeking to learn a new curriculum. Furthermore, participants noted that poor time management in the classroom. For example, Basheer states:

“Teachers often come in late and then spend the first 15 minutes taking attendance, trying to get the students to sit down and be quiet. Then there are 20 minutes left and it’s not enough.”

Students noted that they were not able to fully engage with the lesson due to the limited time. The overcrowded and short nature of the classrooms also appeared to pose challenges for teachers. After I conducted classroom observations in one of the classroom for the first time, where the teacher spent much of the time using a loud voice to calm the classroom down, with little progression on the actual lesson plan, he spoke to me and noted:

So, what did you think of the class? I have over 40 students. The goal is to get them to be quiet, not necessarily engaged. All that matters is that they are quiet and calm.

Notes: Teacher After Classroom Observation

During classroom observations, I also noted that teachers generally entered the classroom five or more minutes late. Classroom attendance was taken during each classroom session, where 40 – 50
student names were called out. Additionally, the first few moments of classroom were generally chaotic. The process of taking attendance was lengthened by students’ loud and disruptive behaviour, in addition to the time taken to move desks from one classroom to another to accommodate everyone. The number of students per classroom also posed numerous challenges for students, who noted that students in the backseats were not able to hear teachers clearly, that they felt invisible as they were less likely to be noticed, and that they felt the classroom was too chaotic due to the sheer number of students.

“We don’t hear the teachers. The girls talk during class and those of us sitting in the back can’t hear the lesson.” Raneem, female

“There is no calmness in the classroom. It is chaotic the entire time through.” Iyad, male

“The seats are broken, the board is bad and we can’t see it, and we can’t hear anything.” Kareem, male

Several students felt that teaching should time should be longer, rather than its current 30-35 minutes. Many students expressed their desire to return to normal, full-day school hours:

“The teaching time is too short… it should be at least 45 minutes.” Omar, male

“I wish we could attend both shifts, morning and afternoon. I want there to be at least 40 minutes of lesson time. Not if it’s during the evening school though, because we would get home even later.” Raneem, female
Qusai, noting that a good school has: good teaching, calm students and schools, respectful teachers, loyal administration, respectful students, teachers committed and loyal to teaching, no corporal punishment, and a long school hours.

To address this problem and provide additional teaching time, attendance on Saturdays has become mandatory for Syrian refugee students. However, this proposal is challenged by numerous factors and is not implemented seriously within schools; few students attended on Saturdays, and as a result, teachers did not prepare lessons for Saturdays.

“They tell us we have to come on Saturdays so I do, but we are not taught anything.”
Rama, female

While additional attendance on Saturday is aimed to be beneficial for students, students found this challenging due to the sudden change in school hours:

“We are used to coming to school at 12:30 all week and then we have to be up at 7 AM for school on Saturdays. It’s too difficult.” Qusai, male
Going to school six days a week also reduced students’ capability to enjoy leisure time and to spend quality time with their families. In a group discussion with Sandra and Sara, the participants discussed the negative impact of the afternoon school hours, in addition to school on Saturday, on their life at home:

“I wish they would cancel school on Saturdays. We don’t have time with our families anymore. My relationship with my family has become very minimal.” Sandra

“Yeah. We don’t have time to study either. All the students from the morning shift get to spend time with their families and they have extra time to study but we Syrians don’t. Why?” Sara, female

“They should give us time to breathe, sit with our parents, study. We don’t have time to talk to our parents anymore or do anything with them. We used to love Friday evenings because we could stay up together watching shows, but now I can’t because I have to wake up early for school. All I have is Friday.” Sandra, female

This was re-iterated by one of the male teachers interviewed, who noted that this new rule contradicted children’s needs and well-being:

“What upsets students most is that they have to attend school on Saturdays. Why? They’ll say to you, ‘I want to sit with my family, I want to go out and have fun.’ The administration here has no consideration for their needs.” Teacher, SM-1

Attending school on Saturday also made students feel they stood out negatively compared to Jordanians:

“Everyone can easily identify us as Syrian refugees. They see a student coming to school at 12 or leaving school at 4 PM and they would know we’re Syrian. Last Saturday, I came to school with a cab and even the cab driver said ‘School on Saturday? You must be a Syrian then.’” Sara, female

Thus, this policy may have negative implications on students’ safety, as harassment and bullying can be easily targeted at students attending specific school hours or school days. As raised by Wanjiru (2018), policies placed by governments which allow for oversights such as this can encourage discrimination between groups in society. Similarly, Pinson et al., (2010) note that clear and identifiable signs of Otherness expose students to aggression. While this policy aimed to benefit students’ learning, it appeared to reduce many of the capabilities that are essential to their well-being. Furthermore, by placing additional pressures on teachers to cope with these responsibilities, many students stated that they were not given new lessons on Saturdays and thus
the day was often void of purpose. This is reflected in my one of my observations and exchanges with teachers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation – Teachers’ Frustration</th>
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<td>While sitting with teachers during one of the school breaks, a sense of anger and stress fills the room. The head teacher has asked teachers to begin new lessons on Saturdays, instead of using this time for sports classes, as is usually done. One of the teachers says in frustration, “I am not giving them a class on Saturday! She is not allowed to do that.”</td>
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In addition to the demands of teaching refugee children, who may need additional support, teachers are asked to teach six days a week despite the lack of financial compensation in comparison with the salaries of teachers who are employed for the morning and traditional school shifts. During my time in the classrooms, teachers often shared their frustrations with me regarding their responsibilities. During one of the classrooms, I entered the classroom to conduct a classroom observation, and the teacher, who had been angered by students’ behavior, said “take them all week. I can’t teach them anymore. Thank you!” and walked away, leaving me with a classroom of students. I sought to persuade the teacher to return, but after her refusal to do so, I was forced to use this time for the research. There were also frequent teacher absences, yet no substitutes for students. During this time, I observed that students were also not managed by the head teacher, and usually spent their time in the small playground area.

6.2 To Be Respected, To Be Dignified: Facilities and Hygiene
The third and final section of this chapter focuses on the effects of poor school facilities on two of the main capabilities: students’ safety and sense of dignity. First, this section describes the key facilities currently lacking across these schools. Secondly, it describes how negative disciplinary approaches, in addition to poor school facilities, allowed students to become more vulnerable to exploitative disciplinary measures, and how students perceived these as discriminatory, disrespectful, and demeaning.

Nearly all students spoke about the poor state of their schools’ water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities, such as bathroom hygiene, cooling and heating facilities, lack of drinking water, and the deteriorating condition of classroom seats.

“A good school would have fans and a heating system. Most of the seats are broken. And I haven’t been able to use the bathroom in this school for five years, they are too dirty.”

Kinan, male
Most urgently and commonly, students discussed the unhygienic state of school bathrooms. This problem existed on an equal level across all schools and was mentioned by nearly all students during activity 3. According to students’ experiences, which is further supported by literature, cleaning staff were not always employed during the evening shifts.

“The bathrooms aren’t clean at all here. I never ever use them. No one would ever accept using them.” Rima, female

“You can’t imagine how dirty the bathrooms are. They’re not usable. We come in the afternoon after the morning students have gone and left it dirty.” Zahra, female

Both male and female participants stated that they avoided using the bathrooms. During our discussions, three female students also noted that they were not able to use the bathroom even during their menstrual cycle. This may increase the likelihood of students attending schools during these days, as a study in Nepal showed that more than 50 per cent of female students were absent during menstruation (UNICEF, 2012).

Lack of clean and drinkable water at schools also posed another harmful challenge. Students noted that they did not have access to free drinkable water. Many students said that they brought a water bottle from home, while others said they simply did not drink water during school hours. While free drinkable water appears to be inaccessible to both Jordanian and Syrian students, financial circumstances may leave Syrian refugee students unable to purchase bottled water from the school canteen.

“There’s no drinkable water at the school. What if you brought a water bottle from home and it’s finished, but you don’t have the money to buy another one?” Jamil, male

One student noted that some students use the tap water in the bathroom for drinking. In addition to the poor and unhygienic state of the bathrooms, tap water in Jordan is not safe to drink and would therefore be harmful to students’ health.

“A lot of students drink from the bathroom’s water which is dirty because they don’t have the money to buy water. I just don’t drink water when I am here.” Akram, male

Students also highlighted other issues about their classroom spaces which may be detrimental to their health and ability to focus on the lesson. In particular, the lack of cooling and heating facilities in their schools came up:
“This winter was very bad. It was cold and there was no heating in the classroom.” Adam, male

While this issue may affect students attending both school shifts, some students believed that Syrian refugees were discriminated against because they were not provided with heaters, which they claimed were otherwise available to Jordanian students in the morning.

Shams, female “There are no heaters in this school. They have portable heaters for the morning classrooms but they store them away when they leave.”
Me: “How do you know this?”
Shams: “The students from the morning shift told us that.”

Additionally, some students felt humiliated by the lack of proper facilities. For example, several students talked about how the lack of cooling facilities, such as fans during warmer months, leads to foul-smelling classrooms. Several students, mainly females, expressed the embarrassment and sadness teachers they felt when teachers commented on the classroom’s smell.

“They tell us that we smell bad. It makes me very sad. Of course it will smell if it’s warm and there are 40 students in a small classroom!” Lilas, female

6.2.1 Disciplinary Approaches
Throughout this study, students frequently expressed how they perceived their schools as spaces that allowed for harsh, discriminatory, and punitive treatment. Students felt that they were disrespected by two key issues: the unjust exploitation of students, and the punitive responses to breaking rules. These issues were also linked with the poor availability of facilities described above, for many students voiced their discontent for being forced to clean their schools. Students felt disrespected and humiliated by being forced to clean and wash the school and classroom floors, as well as clean the toilets.

Girls, Cleaning, and Care
When describing a good school, the majority of the students, especially female participants, noted that students would not be forced to clean their schools in a ‘good’ school. Students felt that this involvement was unwarranted and did not affirm the identity of a student coming to the school to learn.

“A good school is clean and there is someone hired to clean it. Not the students. If the students are going to clean it, of course they’re going to not like school.” Lilas, female
In addition to the humiliation students felt, students also missed out on classroom time. Generally, students were required to clean on specific days each week, alternating between grade levels. However, any student who broke a school rule would immediately be taken out of the classroom in the morning and would spend much of the school day cleaning. This was supported by my own observations, where students, especially those receiving punishment, were always seen outside their classrooms with water buckets and mops. In my observation notes, I noted down “every time I walk into the school, at least three girls from grade 7 are cleaning the school floors.”

The dialogue used between teachers and students, and during conversations with me, revealed a lack of training and understanding in how to best support refugee students and recognise their needs. During an interview with a teacher at SF-1, I sought to understand the challenges that both she and her students faced. The teacher felt that many of her students did not value their education. However, the conversation also portrays a limited perception in how to best recognise and address students’ needs:

Teacher: “I think this is a transitional period for these students because they have no stability. And there’s another thing… Syrians don’t continue their education. Some girls in grade 7 and 8 are already engaged-to-be-married, so they know they won’t continue their studies. And some of them are waiting to emigrate to other countries so they don’t care either.”
Me: “What do you think some of the challenges are that affect their well-being and their studies?”
Teacher: “I don’t think they are affected by anything… they don’t feel anything (laughs).”
Me: “Can you explain what you mean by that?”
Teacher: “It doesn’t feel like they care. Sometimes you feel like you [the teacher] are trying hard and they [the students] don’t even bother.”
Me: “Do you think there are elements that they enjoy about their education?”
Teacher: “Cleaning [laughs]. It depends on the students. Some of the hardworking students want to attend their classes, but a lot of them will come into the school and immediately say they want to start cleaning.”

Furthermore, on one distinct occasion, I was present while teachers and the head teacher sought to discipline some of the students for leaving the school during classroom hours. As reflected in my observational notes:
The dialogue between teachers and students, and the harsh disciplinary approaches, appeared to gravely affect students’ well-being. After these students returned, one of the sisters talked about experiencing suicidal thoughts, a very low state of well-being, and a loss of desire to continue her education if she remains in this school. When talking to Rania during the last day about whether she has started to feel better (discussed in depth in Part 2), she says:

Rania: “No, I don’t feel better. And how do I say this… I am scared. I have to be scared if I talk to someone in class. I have to think, ‘oh I would get suspended or punished’. But this is my last year in school. Either I’ll transfer schools or leave school completely. I am tired of it.”
Me: “Would you like to continue your studies?”
Rania: “Studying is important and I would like to become a surgeon. But I am tired and I’ve had enough. Every time something happens, I receive threats from the school. They never forget if you’ve done anything bad, even if you’re trying to be better. I was praying and one of the teachers came up to me and said ‘Stop trying to look like you’re a good girl. You’re not fooling anyone.’”

The use of negative words and perceptions by teachers and society highlight dangerous consequences. The perceptions teachers expressed such as ‘no hope’ and ‘bad girls’ may affect students’ lives at home and parents’ perceptions. This is especially damaging for girls, as their participation and mobility may be limited by their families who are more likely to conform to
societal pressures if their sense of honour is threatened (Sommer et al., 2018). For example, a study in Lebanon shows that Syrian refugees girls’ mobility was controlled by their brothers, mothers, or fathers due to fear and insecurity (DeJong et al., 2017). This was illustrated by Rania’s reflections, which reveal how she and her parents have begun to change their approach:

Rania: “My parents didn’t talk about marriage before but now with all the trouble I’ve gotten into, our relatives keep telling my parents that they should just have me married. First, I used to tell them ‘no, I want to keep studying’ but now I am thinking about it too.”
Me: “Do you feel like it’s becoming something you want?”
Rania: “No I don’t feel like it but they keep talking about it.”

The perceptions which were communicated to children by their teachers and communities may impact students’ sense of self and aspirations. For example, both male and female students noted that their teachers and surrounding communities instilled a feeling of desperation and destitute around the potential of their education, such as in Akram’s comments: “they say ‘You Syrians… why aren’t you good at school? and I think, but I was good at school when I was in Syria” or Feras’, “they say there’s no point to your [Syrians’] education”. Such comments misinform students on what they are able to do and how students form preferences for their futures, thus reducing their ability to practice reasoning (Nussbaum, 2011). Similarly, as shown in the beginning of this chapter, students’ sense of self may be diminished and negatively shaped by words which carried connotations of racism, discrimination, and personal attacks, and as characterised by Davies (2004, p.79), suffer from ‘identity hurt’ through a detachment between a sense of self and the identities by which children have been labelled. This detachment can also reduce belonging, as Chase & Walker (2013, p.752) note that shame can epitomise “the threat to any social bond between a person and their social environment. Finally, discrimination and violence inflicted by teachers towards refugee children does not allow schools to help disrupt the ‘cycle of abuse’ that children who have been victims of war and trauma have faced (Maadad & Matthews, 2018, p.13).

**Boys, Cleaning, and Care**

While cleaning the schools was a punishment amongst girls’ schools, male participants were more commonly asked to volunteer:

“They take a few students from the lesson to clean… It’s very wrong.” Iyad, male

Students felt that those who volunteered were not interested in their studies, and were therefore looking for an opportunity to leave the classroom.
Basheer, male: “There should be people employed to keep the school clean. They shouldn’t ask for student volunteers” Basheer
Me: “Do they choose students from the classroom?”
Basheer: “They say ’who would like to help me?’ The lazy students are looking for any excuse to get out of the classroom. They choose to miss out on their lessons and it’s wrong.”

During my time at the boys’ schools, I saw students who missed classroom time to help clean the schools, tidy books and folders, and sell food in the canteen.

6.3 Conclusion and Discussion
This chapter explored students’ perspectives, while also considering teachers’ comments and classroom observations, to examine factors in schools that are positive or negative to students’ well-being and experiences. The chapter focused particularly on four aspects which consistently appeared as important schooling experiences in students’ descriptions. Firstly, this included disciplinary and pedagogical practices adopted in schools that can harm students’ sense of dignity, respect, and abilities to learn. Secondly, the pedagogical structures that limited their learning and engagement, including lack of positive and personal interactions, overcrowded classrooms and short teaching time, and lack of encouragement. Students also discussed the structures and regulations that affected their experiences outside of schools, such as the afternoon school hours which exposed female students to risks, and the reduced time at home to revise lessons and spend quality time with their teachers. Finally, participants reflected on the school facilities that limited their sense of respect and dignity, including unhygienic facilities and lack of cooling systems, which exposed students to further humiliation and sense of discrimination.

Students’ depictions of the above factors provided a view into the consequences of school practices and structures which limit the benefits of access to education. Students’ lived experiences of discrimination, violence, and humiliation negatively influenced many of their capabilities, including: to learn, to be cared for, to be safe, to be respected, to be safe from economic and non-economic exploitation, and to aspire. This chapter also portrayed some positive examples where learning and attending school appeared to expand students’ well-being and capability expansion, including to aspire, to make friends, and to gain a sense of normalcy.

Significantly, both sides of these experiences offered an opportunity to understand students’ needs and expectations of good schools and good teachers. Students’ reflections on care, engagement, and learning, highlighted the importance of being respected, of being cared for, of being encouraged through positive words and teaching, of building positive and personal connections.
with teachers, and of being accepted. With relation to facilities, students expected their schools to provide facilities and resources that respected their needs as students, such as hygienic bathrooms and appropriate desks.

The chapter also shed light on teachers’ experiences. These included the overwhelming nature of overcrowded classrooms, the demanding nature of teaching a curriculum within reduced school hours, the insecurity created by temporary contracts, and the lack of understanding of Syrian refugee students’ needs, backgrounds, and circumstances. These findings raised the need to understand teachers’ well-being more in-depth, especially in relation to how their states of well-being may impact students.
Chapter 7: Participation, Friendships, and Belonging

7.1 To Participate
Chapter six examined the fundamental capability and purpose of school, to *learn*, and how access to learning was navigated by participating students. The second chapter discusses a second fundamental capability, *to participate*. To participate in society is one of the key capabilities identified in literature on well-being (Walker, 2006; Biggeri & Santi, 2012). Participation in school takes place in two forms: participation through learning and participation through student engagement. This section explores the extent to which school spaces allow for meaningful and positive participation according to participating students’ perceptions.

7.1.1 Facilities and Learning
This section demonstrates how the availability and use of facilities within school impacted students’ experiences of participation. Throughout the research, students noted that they felt excluded because they were not allowed to use school facilities in the second shift, including the computer rooms, science laboratories, libraries, and arts spaces.

For example, at the SM-2 school, the activities took place in the school’s library. Students were excited to use this space for the activities, noting that it was the first time they had been allowed to use the library. Similarly, students across all schools talked about their desire for spaces to practice their hobbies, like reading, writing, and drawing. Students also said this affected their learning, as they were not provided with opportunities to use facilities in classes or engage in group activities. They gave examples of the participatory and interactive approaches they wished were incorporated into their learning:

“Trips, sports, activities like drawing or clay, and group activities with teachers…anything more engaging.” Shams, female

“I wish there was an activity in the school besides sports. For example, I wish they’d give us a project to work on, but they don’t give us things to do.” Amr, male

“There should be activities that help us learn. Like we can learn about how to plant things and have a garden.” Raneem, female

“A lot of us here love programming. They should let us work on projects together so we can be more engaged.” Fadi, male
These examples are significant as they show that students place value on learning and engagement. Further into these discussions, students described how lack of engagement is coupled with feeling discriminated against. Notably, many students felt that not being able to engage in activities showed evidence of being viewed as less worthy or equal of the treatment their Jordanian peers receive:

“There are no sports, there are no activities, there are no trips. They think that we shouldn’t go out or do anything.”  Roula, female

“Trips… why are they allowed to go and we can’t? I feel like they’re the privileged9 and we are nothing.” Iyad, male

“They don’t take us out on trips. We beg them to take us somewhere, and sometimes they say if you behave for one week, we’ll take you somewhere. But we tried that. We stayed quiet and well-behaved for a week and they didn’t take us anywhere.” Sara, female

Based on discussions with children and teachers, I learned that refugee students in Jordan are not normally allowed to take part in school trips. The teachers claimed that this is a decision by the Ministry of Education. One teacher also noted that Syrian refugee students generally come from poorer backgrounds and may not be able to afford school trips. However, the reasons for not being able to partake in school trips were not clear to students or teachers, and nearly all participants discussed feeling victimised for not being able to take part in school trips:

Sami, male: “They take Jordanians out on school trips but we’re not allowed because there are rules against us going anywhere.”
Me: “Do you know why you understand why you can’t go school trips?”
Sami: “No. They just tell us that they can’t take us.”

“There should be trips. The morning shift students go on trips and we’ve been here for four years, but we’ve seen nothing and we’ve gone nowhere.” Rasheed, male

The lack of awareness regarding why students were not allowed to partake in school trips and other activities that were otherwise available to first-shift students also appeared to exacerbate the sense of exclusion, as students felt victimised and uncared for. This resonates with McLeod's (2014) argument that vulnerabilities that allow for a sense of Otherness are often fuelled by differences between groups in society, or, between the rights of refugees and citizens. Hadia,

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9 This is a translation of an Arabic saying that says “they have a feather on their head” to describe people who receive special treatment.
during our conversation about good schools and bad schools, asked me to look at the walls of the room, dressed in posters and drawings from students in the first shift, and said:

Hadia, female: “We don’t get to draw, do projects, or do anything except listen to the lesson. The morning students are treated differently in this school.”
Me: “What makes you feel like they are treated differently?”
Hadia: “Look at these walls [she points at drawings on the walls]. These are all drawings and posters by the students from the morning… we’ve never worked on anything. There’s nothing in our names on the walls.”

Some Translations of Salam’s Good vs. Bad School

Students in the second shift may not have had the opportunities to engage in arts activities, as providing education for Syrian refugees was approached through a sense of urgency to increase the lesson time of basic subjects (Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016). However, this limited nature of participation, in addition to not being able to fully comprehend the political and practical rationale behind these limitations, impacted students’ well-being. Additionally, students’ limited interactions at home further limited their sense of participation:
“I feel like there’s nothing in this country to make me happy. It’s just depressing. We don’t go anywhere. It is very rare that we go out. I just sit at home and stare at the wall.”

Luna, female

Hadia, for example, also expressed how she and her community navigate the limited social lives they experience at school and at home (discussed in Part 2, Chapter 8):

Hadia: “The first thing I would like to get rid of is boredom. I think this is the biggest issue that people face. I want to replace it with something useful.”

Me: “What do you mean that it’s the biggest issue people face?”

Hadia: “Boredom is the biggest thing people suffer from. Every time you ask them what’s wrong? they say ‘I’m bored. I’m bored.’”

Me: “Do you know why you feel bored?”

Hadia: “I can’t go anywhere. I want to go see the places I read about in our textbooks. I want to go on a school trip. I like gardens, but I haven’t seen one here in Jordan in 4 years. There are no trees and no water in my area. It’s always the same view. It’s always school to house and house to school.”

The lack of normalcy and limited participation within schools and within communities may also be detrimental to refugee students who have experienced trauma, loss, and isolation from friends and family. This can be seen in a conversation with Fahd, who expressed his desire to go on school trips and have a more social life, and who felt that being able to see new things may have helped him think less about the painful memories of his time in Syria during the war:

Fahd, male: “I want to go on a school trip. I want to go anywhere, anywhere that would change my life and make me forget the fear and terror that I lived through back in my country…the sounds I heard and things I saw.”

Me: “Do you feel like you think about it often?

Fahd: “Yes. And I think about it a lot on Friday when I am alone and not at school. I want to go somewhere fun to help me forget.”

In this example, however, it is important to note that school appeared to help Fahd think less about the trauma he experienced.

Teachers commented on the restrictions that affect Syrian refugee students, and how they can impact students’ restrictions and feelings:

“They’re not allowed to take breaks or access snacks. This upsets students a lot, but it’s a rule set by the Ministry of Education for Syrian refugee students. We’ve also received an order from the Ministry that they are not allowed to go on trips. We don’t know the details, we just receive the statements.” Teacher, SM-2
In an interview with at SM-1, the teacher reflected on the importance of school spaces to refugee students whose participation in the community and freedom is otherwise limited:

“When the Jordanian students get to go on trips, the Syrian student says, ‘why do they get to go and we don’t?’ Do you see this small space (pointing to a small football area)? This is their only space to breathe. Look at them, they’re all here. But in a few minutes, they’ll start to hit each other and have to leave because the older students come to play and there is only this small area.” Teacher, SM-1

This comment by the teacher at SM-1 was reflected in students’ diaries, as nearly all participants at this school wrote down ‘the football area’ as their favourite place to go with their friends in activity 1.

Importantly, the teacher at SM-1 also reflected on the sense of powerlessness that teachers experienced in trying to support refugee students, as well as students’ desperation for opportunities of participation and answers to why their activities are limited. His comments represent the overwhelming responsibilities that teachers in the afternoon shift navigate, and the effects of the dire conditions on both teachers’ and children’s well-being:
"I swear that every time I go home, I space out thinking... If students beg for a whole month for me to take them on a school trip and I can't do anything, what do I say to them? You [the researcher] come here a couple times a week. I have been with them every day for two years, they are used to me and I've seen them grow up. What do I say to them when they ask me every day? I have no answers for them.” Teacher, SM-1

He adds that organisations need to be more involved in helping reduce the pressure on the governments and the schools:

"Not enough is being done, but you see, there aren't enough resources. There is so much pressure on the Ministry of Education and on us too. If a student comes to me with a problem, how do I help him if I have no access to counsellors? The organisations don't care or pay attention. There is no one to help at all. Last time, students in grade 10 asked if they could go to Aqaba. We tried so hard and did everything we can to get them to go on this one trip. We lowered the costs for the students and we negotiated the policies. They came back from Aqaba crying from happiness. They haven't seen anything of this world yet. They said they didn't expect to get all the way to Aqaba.” Teacher, SM-1

Like the above example, during my last day at the Luna school, a teacher announced that the school was granted permission to take the class on a school trip. The teachers noted that it was an exceptional, one-time case. The news was received with a powerful sense of joy and enthusiasm from the students. These examples demonstrate the care and effort that teachers invested to increase participation by negotiating the limitations set by exterior influencers. Throughout this research, the teacher at SM-1 showed continuous dedication, care, and concern for his students, both throughout his conversations with me, and in his engagement with the students. He spent time after school playing football with the students, he sought to organise engaging activities for them, and he knew students’ circumstances and lives on a personal level. Nearly all male participants remarked on their admiration for him throughout the research.

7.2 To Develop Social Relationships and Be Cared For
Schools also provide opportunities for students to create social relationships and feel cared for. This section discusses the ways students reflected on their interactions with students, the relationships they have formed, and the social interactions they have been exposed to within and around their educational spaces. These friendships were seen to have two very important influences on their lives: create positive social interactions and compensate for life at home.

7.2.1 To Create Positive Interactions
Being able to make friends appeared to mark a moment of positive change for many students by helping them to begin to feel settled in Jordan. Students talked about the grief they felt leaving
Syria, their families, friends, schools, and homes, yet being able to meet new classmates and form friendships is an important and positive functioning for nearly all participants.

“The day I started school again was a very happy day because I started to make friends after leaving Syria.” Raneem, female

“In 2014, I felt settled in Jordan because during Eid¹⁰ that year, I played with my friends and we got to hang out in nice places.” Mamoun, male

“2016 was a very nice year because we moved to this school and I met many more friends.” Salma, female

These friendships show meaningful impact on students’ lives, well-being, and learning. Students used words like ‘brothers’, ‘sisters’, and ‘dear’ to describe their feelings about their friends.

“I love my friends because they are half of my life and like sisters to me.” Sara, female

Many students, especially female participants, used their empty pages to write comments about the importance and value of friendships with their classmates at schools.

¹⁰Eid is a religious celebration usually celebrated with family and loved ones. Numerous students mentioned Eid during the study and the way it has changed due to not having loved ones around in Jordan

‘My dearest friends are: S, M, S, M, R’ ~ Raneem
These relationships were described to impact their time in Jordan and how they dealt with the challenges they face. For Farah, the care and support she exchanged through friendships helped her during a difficult time when her father was leaving the country:

“Last year was difficult, but one thing that was nice was being in school and having my friends. If one of us is upset, we’re all sad. If one is happy, we’re all happy. It was very nice.”

Students also felt that these relationships helped them with their studies, benefitting positively from peer support:

“There are things at school that motivate me, like my friends. If I get a low mark, they help me study better for next time.” Bashir, male

“The friend I talk to a lot here is Talia. When I don’t understand a lesson, she helps me study. As soon as I sit with her I feel like the way she explains things makes everything easier and I learn better.” Sandra, female

These relationships also helped students building meaningful relationships, which allow for care, valuable attachments, and hope for the future:

“I hope I never have to be away from my friends in this school… I have friends here I’d never leave no matter what.” Farah, female

“I hope that in the future, I see all my friends have graduated and have degrees and that they are living a life they like. That would make life better.” Sandra, female

While many students had formed meaningful friendships that helped them regain a sense of normalcy, a small number of participants expressed disinterest in engaging with their classmates. Yasmine, a participant who generally isolated herself from the students as well as the project, preferring to sit in the back of the classroom alone, chose to engage in two of the five interviews and noted:

“I come into the classroom and sit alone. I don’t like to be around anyone even though they are nice. I feel bad if I ever see one of them is sad, but I just don’t like to be around anyone.” Yasmine, female

Yasmine’s engagement with Activity 2, shown below, the timeline, related to numerous findings in this research, including not being able to move from the past due to experiencing loss, as well as tensions between the two community, isolation, and lack of support.
During this research, Yasmine stated that she prefers to stay alone both at school and outside school. During the interviews and in her diary, she noted that she feels ‘depressed’, ‘sad’, and struggles with ‘complexities’. She links these to the circumstances and loneliness that war and forced displacement have inflicted upon her and her family, including the death of her father in Syria and being away from extended family. In her diary, she writes ‘I used to like studying and had great marks, but now I don’t like to study because of mental health issues. She also notes, ‘I remember things I saw and they have caused me to have mental health issues. In discussing social life, she says:

“I have changed. My mood has changed and I get angry. I used to be normal and cheerful. Sometimes I say to my mom, ‘let’s go out’. She says ‘this country is not ours. There is nothing for us.’ Maybe if I go out I might feel a little bit better.”

This example reveals the low well-being the participant experienced, but also highlighted the importance of parents’ well-being and feelings after resettlement. This is discussed in Part 2, Chapter 9.
Similarly, despite the opportunity to make new friends, several students expressed their inability to enjoy these relationships like they did in Syria:

"Even though I have new friends, I can't get over my old friends and my smile now is no longer genuine." Sandra, female

“The past was better. I had friends, friends from my own neighbourhood. I want to go back to where I lived. Everyone likes their own town.” Amr, male

Additionally, a few participants noted that they felt their classmates ‘did not understand them’ (Akram, Sandra, Aziz, Yasmine). Often, these students were also ones to express low well-being and general feelings of sadness. Akram, a male student, adds:

“I wish I had a real friend, a friend who is there when it’s good or bad.”
Me: “Do you feel you don’t have a friend like that right now?”
Akram: “The people I know here are only ones you can joke around with. If someone is feeling sad because they’re going through something, they avoid you and leave you alone or they start to tease you.”

These discussions demonstrated the negative effects of loss and trauma, and students’ need for psychosocial support. Students who preferred to be isolated appeared to feel ‘not understood’. Like Farah noted, some of the students were aware of the changes in their own sense of well-being.

7.2.2 To Compensate for Life at Home
For many students, the meaningful relationships outside of home helped compensate for the isolation and difficulties experienced due to forced migration. As described in above sections, students felt a sense of boredom, isolation, sadness from thinking about the past and felt a desire for more trips and opportunities for social engagement. For male participants, friendships also provided further social interaction outside of school:

“I met Abdelrahman at school and now we are like brothers. We started playing football together and watching matches and going to cafes.” Qusai, male

However, female participants were less likely to be able to engage with others outside of school. Due to cultural norms, a threatened sense of security, and distance from extended family, female participants felt they were alone and had few opportunities to participate in social activities outside of school (further discussed in Part 2). For example, Sandra notes:
“My family has no one. We don’t have friends in this country and we lost everyone. I have friends at school but I can’t go out with them. My mom prefers it if I have no friends, she worries about me… of course she has these fears after the things she has been through.”

Phrases such as: “we have no one in Jordan”, “we don’t go anywhere”, “girls don’t go out”, were frequently used to describe female participants’ lives in Jordan. For many, school spaces provided the only form of social participation:

Rima, female: “I have good friends at this school. One of my friends is the dearest thing to me. I talk to her about everything.”

Me: “Do you think having friendship at school is important?

Rima: “Yes. I don’t know anyone outside of the school. We don’t mix with people, not even our neighbours.”

“At home I feel very sad because I’m bored and I can’t talk to anyone… I would be sad but then I come to school and see my friends. Here, I let go of my worries.” Salma, female

Despite these friendships, both males and female participants expressed a desire to know more people, be exposed to more social situations, and to gain more friendships:

“In the future, I want to meet more people. I want to have more friends.” Nizar, male

“I wish there were more and more people for us to meet.” Kareem, male

Students often referred back to their lives in Syria, where they were surrounded by extended family and friends (discussed in Part 2, Chapter 9). In addition, a sense of limited participation was exacerbated by negative instances of social interactions, described in the next section of this chapter.

7.3 Harassment, Belonging, and ‘Other’ness

Despite friendships formed within classrooms, the positive forms of participation within schools were also counteracted by exposure to violence, harassment, and a sense of Otherness around school spaces. Thoughts on harassment and prejudice account for largest accounts of students’ experiences, mentioned by every participant of this study at least once.

7.3.1 Boys, Trouble, and Violence
The words ‘trouble’ and ‘problems’ were mentioned very frequently by participants to describe the interactions between Jordanian and Syrian communities. The 30-minute window between the morning and afternoon shift is a perilous time gap for refugee students. ‘Trouble’ takes place in numerous forms, affecting girls and boys differently. Nearly all male participants discussed being exposed to oral and physical violence throughout this half hour. Participants also noted that if a fight was not over within that time, Jordanian students may wait until the second school shift is to pick the fight up. As a result, Syrian refugee students described their engagement with Jordanian students as forms of racism, prejudice, and harassment:

“Most of the problems happen before school when the Jordanian students leave their shift. But sometimes they also wait until our school shift ends so they can continue the fights.” Omar, male

“There’s a lot of racism. When the morning shift students see us they say ‘there’s a Syrian, come on let’s go over’ and they start beating us up.” Rasheed, male

“Racism is something we see every day here.” Akram, male

Feeling discriminated made students feel isolated, unwanted, and frequently targeted.

“I wish we didn’t need anybody. Our life here is full of injustice. Syrians here aren’t liked.” Moe, male

“Racism here is bad. You say ‘how are you’ and you pick up the ball to play (football), and he starts yelling at you and saying bad words to you.” Mamoun, male

These frequent accounts of harassment expose students to many forms of violence and abuse. Many male participants talked about being forced to give their pocket money to Jordanians:

“When we leave school, they wait for us and try to force us to give them our money. If we don’t respond, they start hitting us.” Adham, male

During our discussions, students also noted that the school lacked a system for protection, as their teachers remained uninvolved:

“They come, beat us up, and take our money. They upset us and then walk away. The teachers tell us there is nothing they can do about it.” Mamoun, male
Students also noted that these forms of harassment were also extended by the parents of Jordanian students:

Kareem, male: “There are many people who don’t like us because we are Syrians. They say bad words to us.”
Me: “Many people around school, you mean?”
Kareem: “There are many people who talk to us badly. Sometimes the parents of the kids from the morning shift and the neighbours wait for us to curse us at us and break our toys.”

Some participants also felt that due to their refugee status, they were forced to concede to these ‘troubles’ and varying forms of harassment. Basheer noted:

“When I leave school with my friends, there’s always some Jordanian who is going to talk badly to us and curse at us. We try to stay quiet but sometimes we can’t. My dad says ‘be quiet, son, we are just guests here’, but I am here to study, not to cause trouble.”
Basheer, male

In some incidents, students experienced such severe harassment that they transferred schools. At one school, five of 20 male students transferred from the same school to their current school:

Ali, male “About five of us here transferred from that school. There were always problems and bullying just outside the school.”
Me: “Do you feel more safe here?”
Ali: “A little bit. There are problems here, but they’re less bad.”

Notably, students often used the words ‘my country’ and ‘their country’, portraying how harassment affected students’ ability to belong:

Adham, male: “I want to go back to my country. This isn’t my country and I don’t feel stable here.”
Me: “What makes you feel like you can’t gain stability here?”
Adham: “This isn’t my country. The people and their words make me feel this way.”

Adham: “If things were ok in Syria, I wouldn’t be here. I don’t like this estrangement, nobody likes it.”
Me: “Do you feel estranged?”
Adham: “A lot… this isn’t my country.”
Me: “What makes you feel this way?”
Adham: “The people. They don’t want us here.”

“I want injustice to stop existing. When a person is not living in their own country, they face injustice by everyone all the time.” Qusai, male
Students referred to Jordanians as ‘they’ and ‘the people’, noting that Syrians were unwanted by Jordanians:

Akram, male: “They don’t like us. There’s a lot of racism.”

Kareem, male: “I wish racism, prejudice, and injustice didn’t exist.”
Me: “Do you feel you face these things?”
Kareem: “Of course I feel them. I feel them at school and in people’s sense of awareness. I face injustice from everyone. Every Syrian is victimised here.”

Participants felt that their refugee status in Jordan provoked these injustices. However, they struggled to comprehend why their refugee status and Syrian citizenship lead to these tensions. Aziz, whose last wish during the project was that he would like to voice to the world ‘a Syrian is just like every other human being. We are not different’, talked about his feelings of being called a “refugee”:

Aziz, male: “Racism is the biggest problem here. If I were in Syria, there would be no problem. I wish I could get rid of the word refugee.”
Me: “When do you hear the word refugee?”
Aziz: “They always call us using that word. Always. Around school and even in my neighbourhood. They only know me as refugee, they don’t know my name. It’s an ugly word.”
Me: “What do you think the word refugee means?”
Aziz: “I don’t know what it means but I don’t like the word. I always hear it from Jordanians everywhere I go.”

Students felt they were ‘not liked’ by others in Jordan without justification or reason, not reflective of their true identities:

Kareem, male: “The kids in the morning school don’t like us. Do they like us? (he asks Akram).”
Akram, male: “It’s always the Syrians. What have we done? I always hear bad words because I am Syrian but now I just ignore it because I know they’re looking for me to respond.”
Me: “What kinds of things do you feel affect you?”
Akram: “They say ‘You Syrians… why aren’t you good at school’? but I was very good at my school in Syria.”

Adham: “I don’t want to stay in this country. The people here don’t like Syrians. They speak to me in bad ways. Like if we get in a fight, they say to me ‘You are Syrian. You’re rotten.’ Words like that and words I can’t even repeat to you.”
Some students were aware of the negative implications of the discourses around being a refugee, and felt the effects of these through their own identities and struggles, or as noted by Zetter (2007), “labelling refugees as outsiders reinforces their own sense of alienation, so they too politicise their own identity in various ways to reflect prevailing discourse”. For example, Basem also raised the point that Syrian refugees received better treatment earlier into the conflict, felt that the global perception of Syrian refugees has negatively impacted the way Syrians are seen today.

Basem, male: “When I first arrived in this country, the treatment was okay. But now people have ruined our reputation and nobody likes us.”
Me: “Who do you mean? Who has ruined your reputation?”
Basem: “Don’t you see the news about Syrian refugees in Germany and other countries? They blame us for everything and nobody can stand us anymore.”

Rami, like others, struggled to understand why Syrian refugees in Jordan are treated discriminatorily, despite the historical experience with Palestinian and Iraqis refugee communities:

Rami, male: “I want to live a life without trouble, there is so much trouble around us.”
Me: “What kind of trouble do you mean?”
Rami: “We always get into fights with people, with the kids and with everyone.”
Me: “What do you think causes these problems?”
Rami: “Because they are Jordanians and we are Syrians. They don’t like us.”

Fahd, overheard this conversation and said:

“I don’t know why they don’t like us… Why don’t they talk to Iraqis like this? We’re just like them.”

7.3.2 Girls, Harassment, and Safety
Female participants were less likely to experience physical violence but experienced harassment and bullying around their school spaces instead. Most frequently, female students appeared to be harassed by boys. These incidents mainly took place right after school, where boys would wait for female students to leave their shift:

“I wish boys stopped harassing us. They wait outside of the school and they really upset us. Sometimes they even come into the school and they say bad things to us.” Salma

Rania: “I don’t prefer to meet Jordanians. I have met Syrians and I have met Jordanians. Syrians are nicer.”
Me: “Why do you feel that they are nicer?”
Rania: “I have fought with many boys and that’s because we are Syrian. Every time we are outside school, there are boys who try to talk to us and say bad things to us.” Rania
Students noted that these boys attended either the morning shift or other nearby schools. In a long discussion with Sandra and Sara, both participants discuss the injustice they face as Syrians by those who harass them. Importantly, Sandra and Sara note that being Syrian refugees exposes them to these risks, as remarked directly by their perpetrators:

“We get in fights with people from the morning shift. We try and stay quiet, even if we are upset. They’ve been through this before… there were Palestinians and they’ve seen what it’s like. Why do they treat us this way? You’ve all tasted this pain… why are you [Jordanians] making our pain bigger, making everyone feel this pain too?” Sara

“They start saying things like ‘you are refugees’ and bad words. Sometimes we can’t stay quiet. The boys try to bother us because they know we are Syrian, and that’s why they say bad words to us and harass us.” Sandra

“Yeah. They say things like ‘You are Syrians. You are alone. There is no one to protect you.’” Sara

A student also noted how Syrian students also felt judged and victimised by female students from the first shift:

“A girl from the morning shift told us she saw one of us Syrian girls holding a guy’s hand. She said, ‘that’s why you Syrian girls have come to our country…to have fun with guys.’ If one Syrian girl does something bad, they judge all of us.’ Salma

These forms of harassment appear to have noticeable negative impact on female students’ well-being. During activity 5, where students were asked to list down five things they wished to get rid of to improve their well-being, most students marked harassment as one of their top choices. Discussing these discussions on well-being and happiness, students often brought up harassment as one of the main factors that lower their well-being:

“The thing that upsets me most in Jordan is how people speak to me.” Susan

Shams: “Our life? Our life is not good.”
Me: “What do you think makes it difficult?”
Shams: “This year the most thing that’s bothering me is around school… the boys harass us a lot. It’s worse this year.”

“I think a lot about what I went through in Syria, but I think about it most when someone in Jordan upsets me. If they had gone through what we went through, they wouldn’t talk to us like this. I hope they never live through it and never taste the hardships we live through.” Rima
Rima’s reflections of her well-being are important, as she notes that exposure to these incidents of harassment and injustice reduce one of the most prominent capabilities: the ability to move beyond the past.

Notably, several students noted that these issues have worsened over the last years, as they and have their peers have entered adolescence. Additionally, many students recounted experiences of harassment which included both verbal and physical abuse. Two participants discuss kidnapping as one of the risks surrounding their journey home from school and within their neighbourhoods. In this case, Dalia attends school where she walks to school or travels by public transport not owned by the school.

Dalia: “When children are being kidnapped, of course life is bad. I wish that would change.”
Me: “Is there kidnapping around you?”
Dalia: “A lot of kidnapping happens around our neighbourhood area.”
Me: “Who gets kidnapped mostly?”
Dalia: “Girls, most of all. And small kids. They kidnap them and either return them eventually or they don’t.”

At the second girls’ school, Salam notes the importance of the bus transportation provided by school.

Salam: “There is a kid here who waits outside for me every day. It really upsets me. He tries to talk to me. He says very bad things to me.”
Me: “Have you told anyone about this?”
Salam: “No because they never do anything about this. He’s from the school next to us.”
Me: “How do you get to school?”
Salam: “By bus. If I were walking, he would take me away.”
Me: “What do you mean ‘take you away?’”
Salam: “He would kidnap me. It has happened to girls here. Guys take them home and they keep them there for a while.”

Like other students, Salam felt that she cannot look for protection from school staff, as they appear to not get involved. In other cases, female participants shed light on the risks of sexual abuse, such as Sandra who recounted several stories affecting her and her friends:

Sandra: “There is no safety here. There were boys who tried to harass me and hurt me. I can’t leave the house without a phone.”
Me: “Do you mean it’s not safe around school?”
Sandra: “There are boys who always wait for us on the steps just outside school. They always harass us with words, but once, some new boys tried to hurt us… but I had my phone on me and I called my uncle. But it’s dangerous for us to walk home. Many of
my friends at this school have been threatened...the boys tell them that they will hurt
them or kidnap them.”
Me: “What do you think the risks are? Do you feel it’s more than words?”
Sandra: “There is a very high risk that we could get hurt physically. This whole area isn’t
safe. Boys can hurt you and walk away unseen. It happened to me once. A 14-year old
boy started saying things to me and I told him to go home. He started to swear at me
and then he came and touched me in an improper way. I pushed him away. He’s
younger and smaller than me and I ran to my friend’s house.”

The level of harassment and fear that female participants expressed appeared to be equally
prevalent across both more and less affluent settings. However, students at SF-2 reported
experiencing higher risks, as they were more likely to walk home than students at SF-1. This
portrays the importance of enhancing safe transport to school.

Students’ descriptions of these forms of harassment are vital to understanding the effects that
these risks may pose to students’ lives and well-being. Throughout the study, and especially activity
5, female participants noted that they wish to get rid of ‘fear’, ‘worries’, and ‘anxiety’ they felt. In
some of these discussions, harassment appears to be one of the clear triggers of these fears:

“There are many places in Jordan that are dangerous for us girls. I am scared for myself
but also scared for my sister. What will happen in the future? What will happen to my
sister? I worry about her if she goes out. I worry about my family. I wish I could get rid
of these fears.” Sara

Rand, talked about how her well-being was affected and mentioned that ‘sometimes she wishes
she could die’ (further discussed in Part 2). She notes:

“I now know things I didn’t know before… things that would shock you. The boys
around school really scare me, but it’s not just boys. Once, this old man talked to me
and said ‘come inside my house’. Imagine! So, I keep experiencing very bad things.”
Rand

Importantly, these narrates also touch upon the choices that parents may be forced to make
because of harassment, such as choosing to remove their daughters from school (Spencer, 2015;
DeJong et al., 2017):

“When we came to Jordan, our parents started to feel worried about us and became
afraid that someone will hurt us or do something to us. We didn’t know these things
and we first came to know them in the camp. You can say that our innocence is gone.
I wish I could back to the past so I could live the childhood and innocence that was
taken away from me.” Sandra
Finally, several participants noted that this fear is worsened by school regulations banning the existence of mobile phones in school spaces:

“We’re not allowed to carry phones, even if we hide them in our bag. If the bus is late or my mom wants to check on me, she can’t.” Sidra

“They don’t let us carry phones and some of us walk home… I used to know I can call my uncle if someone was harassing me, but now there is no one to protect me.” Sandra

7.3.3 Thoughts on Integration
Jordan’s response plan to Syrian refugee children allows refugees to integrate into the formal education system. However, the true meaning of integration in refugee contexts remains debated, as hosting nations adapt this term according to resources and policies. The success of integration, for example, may be measured according to language acquisition, employment, and a varied definition of social integration (Dubus, 2018). Since 2012, a new UNHCR policy advocated for the integration of refugees into host nations’ educational systems to promote social cohesion and make better use of already established systems, a shift away from original policies which sought to teach refugees the curriculum of their original country of origin (Bellino & Dryden-Peterson, 2018). While such policies in Jordan and Lebanon allowed Syrian refugees to integrate into the national educational system (Dryden-Peterson, 2016b), the segregated double-shift challenges the social integration of refugees and limits these benefits. However, there appears to be little debate on the ways in which Syrian refugees can be better integrated within society, despite the eight-year existence of this system.

Due to the lack of research and discussion around the lack of integration, the study sought to understand how students feel about the possibility of being integrated in school with their Jordanian peers, and how they experienced their current segregated system. Responses varied across individuals and schools. Many students felt adamant that integration would cause further problems and expose them to more bullying and harassment, preferring the current school structures:

Omar: “It’s better if us Syrians are alone. It’s better because there’d be no trouble.”
Me: “What do you mean by trouble? Where do this trouble occur?”
Omar: “They’re in school and outside school… they say bad things to us. I don’t like mixing with Jordanians because they hurt us and upset us.”

Kareem: “Very few of the people I know are Jordanian.”
Me: “Do you wish you knew more Jordanians?”
Kareem: “No, because they cause me problems and upset me.”

Notably, some of these students had only experienced single-student integration, where they were the only Syrians in an otherwise fully Jordanian school. These students faced heightened instances of bullying, thus showing the limitations of this approach:

“I used to be in a different school where we were integrated, but this is better. I was the only Syrian in the school and they used to bully me a lot. Their words used to upset me.” Hadia, female

“There are always problems. Bullying every day. Especially when I was at my previous school where everyone else was Jordanian.” Moe, male

Other students portrayed mixed feelings regarding the possibility of integration. Students appeared to feel uncertain about whether integration is a desirable concept. Laila, for example, shows feelings of both curiosity and fear:

“Sometimes I think I prefer if we’re integrated, but I keep thinking, maybe this is better. You’ll always feel you don’t belong here.” Lilas, female

Noura, like many others, says that she has not actually met Jordanians and is therefore ambivalent towards the prospect:

“I don’t know anyone in Jordan that isn’t Syrian. I don’t mind the idea but I never tried.” Noura, female

Aziz expressed his fear of Jordanians, and felt that he must resolve it in order to improve his well-being:

“I want to get rid of this fear towards Jordanians. I am always scared that something bad will happen or that there will be a fight. I don’t know why they don’t like us.” Aziz, male

Some students felt a desire to meet more Jordanians. These students felt a general desire to meet and know more people:

“I prefer to get to know more Jordanians and more people in Jordan.” Sausan, female

“I wish there were more and more people for us to meet.” Kareem, male
“I’d prefer it if we’re integrated and we’re all together in one school. I think it would be better to get to know each other.” Sima, female

Qusai, who had had the opportunity to become friends with other Jordanian students, expressed his desire for integration and touched upon how these friendships positively affected his well-being:

“In 2015, I started to feel settled in Jordan because I made friends here at school. I also made four friends and they’re Jordanian. We’ve become like brothers and we play together.” Qusai, male

In particular, a group of students in one of the girls’ schools were more receptive to the idea of integration. This school had recently engaged with an initiative, the *Generations for Peace* programme, that brings together Jordanian and Syrian students to attend school together a couple of hours, once a week (Generations for Peace, 2018). During these hours, students spent their time doing extracurricular activities together, such as cooking and arts. Most participants at this school expressed a desire to be integrated and to have opportunities to form friendships with Jordanians.

“I do want to go to school with Jordanians. We have this programme here at school and the Jordanians were very nice to us.” Talia, female

“Maybe I want to get to know more Jordanians. We have a programme here at this school where we get to meet Jordanian students. It’s every Monday and Wednesday. Honestly, they are nice. Not all of them, but many of them are.” Maya, female

This programme at SF-2 helped show a positive example of the school case, where its participation in this initiative helped change the perspectives of children. This resonated with a teacher’s own findings of the differences, who noted that the programme had changed the ways Jordanian and Syrian children engage during the overlap of the shifts:

“I think it’s been an incredible programme. The kids now tell me that they’re making friends with Jordanians. They used to dislike each other and sometimes hit each other, and now they’ve started to greet each other.” SF-2

These findings revealed that segregation between school shifts has created a sense of fear and intimidation between the two communities. However, opportunities to meet in safe and engaging spaces may help enhance social cohesion, which also raises further points of consideration regarding the continued implementation of the double-shift system.
7.4 Conclusions and Discussions
This chapter shared the remaining findings of the study that presented how students perceived their school spaces, focusing on the factors which impacted their abilities to participate, to be cared for, to belong, and to be safe. These findings shared positive and negative influences on these capabilities, including the friendships that students formed with their peers. These appeared to allow students to feel cared for, to regain a sense of normalcy, to be supported in their studies. They also helped students overcome the sense of isolation experienced outside of schools. However, some students were not able to form friendships and preferred to be isolated. These students expressed that they felt depressed, anxious, and/or sad.

While schools provided opportunities to have friends, some students perceived certain limitations and practices within schools to limit their abilities to participate and belong. In particular, Syrian refugee students experienced high levels of harassment, violence, and bullying during the switchover between the two shifts as well as right after school. These students stated that they felt unsafe, and their sense of belonging in the country was greatly reduced. This also appeared to affect boys and girls differently, as girls experienced sexual harassment and a greater sense of risk to sexual violence. They were also less likely to engage in activities outside the house. However, boys experienced higher levels of violence, harassment, and bullying around school spaces. Both male and female participants expressed anxiety, fear, and an extremely low sense of belonging. Students also expressed symptoms of poor mental health due to these factors. This was not helped by the fact that the double-shift system has created little opportunity for the two communities to engage in positive and safe spaces. As a result, many students felt intimidated and afraid to meet Jordanian students, though some expressed an interest in being able to be integrated.

Finally, certain limitations appeared to limit students’ creative learning and abilities to engage in activities that enhanced their sense of participation and leisure experiences. These were influenced by policies, such as not allowing Syrian refugee students to go on school trips, as well as schedules that did not allow for Syrian students to engage in extracurricular or creative activities. The study also portrayed positive examples of care and support, such as teachers who used their own time and resources to try and challenge these limitations and create more positive experiences for their students.
PART 1

SUMMARY

The chapters above presented the findings which focused on aspects of within schools that impact students, seeking to help respond to the main research question and the first sub-question:

RQ: Which capabilities do students identify as most important to the development of their well-being?

1.1 What factors within schools help shape, enhance, or limit these values, and how are students’ capability development affected as a result?

Together, the two chapters portrayed the positive and negative influences that educational structures may have on several of students’ capabilities, including to learn, to be safe, to participate, to be cared for, and to be respected, amongst others. These capabilities appeared to be both expanded and limited through school practices. Students were provided access to schools and opportunities to participate in learning after years of disruption, to form strong friendships, to be cared for by teachers, and to aspire. Yet, as shown in these chapters, school practices such as corporal punishment, discrimination, violence, school hours, segregation, lack of facilities, and numerous other factors limited the expansion of these capabilities.

Table 4 below seeks to help respond to the main research question and sub-question 1.1. The first two columns respond to the main question by outlining what students identified as important to their well-being, and the relevant capabilities. The remaining columns demonstrate these factors were positively or negatively experienced within their schools, and what the implications of these experiences on students’ experiences.
### Table 4 Summary of Part 1 Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Within School Settings</th>
<th>Important Capabilities</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Effects on Well-Being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-to-student interaction</td>
<td>To be taught and to learn</td>
<td>Instances where teachers showed interest, support, and care in students’ personal lives and learning.</td>
<td>The use of corporal punishment.</td>
<td>Positive interactions with teachers inspired stronger sense value of education, in addition to feeling cared for and believed in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be cared for</td>
<td>Instances where teachers showed kindness, patience, and allowed for personal interactions.</td>
<td>Verbal abuse, discrimination, and criticism.</td>
<td>Students felt discriminated against expressed feeling sad, embarrassed, and victimised. Students’ identities were negatively shaped by discrimination, and their aspirations and desire to learn were reduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be respected</td>
<td>Lack of commitment shown by teachers to teach full lessons and provide support.</td>
<td>Teachers’ well-being emerged as important influence well-being.</td>
<td>Negative perceptions of students passed on to parents and families appeared to have impact on parents’ faith in value of education for their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To aspire</td>
<td>Instances where teachers showed interest, support, and care in students’ personal lives and learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School practices and facilities</td>
<td>To participate</td>
<td>Being able to enrol in education and regain the right to learning and participating.</td>
<td>Disciplinary approaches such as engaging student in cleaning schools, selling food, and helping tidy.</td>
<td>Being able to access and remain in education appeared important to many students’ reflections of their well-being, aspirations, and hopes for the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bodily integrity</td>
<td>Being able to access education appeared to protect some of the students at risk of engaging in informal labour and/or girls at risk of being involved in early marriage.</td>
<td>No school trips for Syrian refugees or extracurricular activities.</td>
<td>Not being able to engage in extracurricular activities or trips reduced students’ sense of belonging, participation, and inclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be free from economic and non-economic exploitation</td>
<td>Lack of safe and hygienic facilities.</td>
<td>Students’ bodily integrity, dignity, and self-respect were reduced due to lack of hygienic practices and harmful disciplinary practices.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be respected and dignified</td>
<td>Lack of access to water.</td>
<td>Negative disciplinary practices, including corporal punishment and being forced to clean, exacerbated these feelings.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be cared for</td>
<td>Overcrowded classrooms.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>School hours and structures</td>
<td>To learn</td>
<td>Some students grew accustomed to the afternoon shifts.</td>
<td>Short school hours and teaching time.</td>
<td>Many students struggled to comprehend lessons fully and to do well on their exams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be safe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social aspects of school</td>
<td>To be cared for</td>
<td>Many students preferred attending school in the morning due to being able to engage in work, help with domestic responsibilities, to see family, and to revise lessons.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To have leisure time</td>
<td>Returning home late and being easily identified as a Syrian refugee due to unique hours exposed students to violence and harassment.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To belong</td>
<td>Not being able to spend time with family at home and on Saturdays reduced students’ abilities to feel cared for by family.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To form friendships</td>
<td>Friendships viewed as one of key important values to student, helping compensate for isolation at home, helping students deal with trauma, and providing support for learning with peers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be cared for</td>
<td>Generations for Peace programme helped students feel more safe, increased belonging, and encouraged students to meet more Jordanian students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social aspects of school</th>
<th>To belong</th>
<th>Being able to form friendships with Syrians helped many students due to a shared understanding of conflict, displacement, and hardships.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To form friendships</td>
<td>Issues of bullying and violence around schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be cared for</td>
<td>Segregation from Jordanians and not being to meet Jordanian communities in positive spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Initiative Generations for Peace at one of schools appeared to show positive results.</td>
<td>Negative exchanges between teachers, staff, and students reduced sense of being cared for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to form positive relationships with teachers helped students feel cared for.</td>
<td>Students exposed to harassment and violence around school spaces, between and after shifts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surrounding spaces</th>
<th>To be safe</th>
<th>Many students reported that their homes were near schools and they had access to school buses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To belong</td>
<td>Students exposed to harassment and violence reduced students’ safety and well-being. For girls, sexual harassment impacted families’ trust in sending students to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To have leisure time</td>
<td>Exposure to harassment and violence reduced students’ safety and well-being. For girls, sexual harassment impacted families’ trust in sending students to school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of spaces for sports and other activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surrounding spaces</th>
<th>To be safe</th>
<th>Lack of leisure activities and spaces exacerbated sense of isolation and lack of freedom.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To belong</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To have leisure time</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
PART 2

Aspiration, Autonomy, and Protection: Influencers of Well-Being Outside School
Introduction

Part 2 of this study presents the findings of the study which pertained to students’ lives outside of school, to understand how factors at home and around schools may influence students’ learning and well-being.

Chapter 8 focuses on students’ psychosocial well-being by examining their pre-displacement experiences and the ways they influence their current perceptions. Chapter 9 explores students’ experiences post-displacement by conceptualising their well-being in relation to the effects of displacement and uprooting and changes of dynamics at home, and the implications of becoming refugees. The themes of these chapters highlight the importance of three stages of forced displacement: pre-conflict experiences, displacement in Jordan, and plans for resettlement.

Part 2 seeks to address the main research question and its second sub-question:

RQ: Which capabilities do students identify as most important, positive, or detrimental to the development of their well-being?

1.2 How do factors around and outside of school settings interact with their capability development within schools?

This part draws on all five activities described in Chapter 5 - Methodology, but finds that activity 1, activity 2, 4, and 5 were most relevant.
Chapter 8 The Past, Trauma, and Well-Being

8.1 To Move Away from the Past
In Part 1, the findings showed that despite negative experiences, some students viewed returning to education as an important factor in helping them move on from the past. However, students also noted that numerous important factors reduced their capability to move away from the past, influenced by the trauma they faced pre-displacement as well as the challenging implications of displacement. This chapter will focus on aspects outside of schools which contributed both positively and negatively to students’ abilities to move beyond the past.

‘If only the past could one day return’ ~ Salam

8.1.1 The Effects of Loss and Conflict on Present Experiences
The violence and loss that students experienced in Syria both prior to their displacement and throughout, continued to affect students’ well-being and capability development. According to students and teacher interviews, students were not provided with any form of psychosocial support to help deal with the trauma and loss. This section describes how students perceived the loss, violence, and change in family dynamics affected their well-being. Furthermore, it shows how these emotions impacted students’ interactions with their peers in the classroom.

Family, Friends, and Loss
Students frequently depicted the importance of having a close relationship with family and relatives and talked about the effects of having lost some of these relationships. Many students had lost their fathers, brothers, extended family, and friends through the war:

“I wish I could go back to my memories with my family. My cousins passed away in the war and some left. I wish I could meet with them again.” Kareem, male

In activity 5, where students were asked to rank their well-being and discuss their reasons, loss of family members was commonly identified as a significant reason for low well-being. Students reflected on their sense of well-being and coming to terms with loss:

“My dad passed away and he was the dearest to me. I keep remembering it. I sit alone and think about everything that’s happened.” Yasmine, female

“After what’s happened to us in the war, of course we can’t just forget and be happy. And my dad passed away… I still haven’t been able accept that.” Raneem, female

Amr, male: “I drew this [‘tired’, image below]. This is how I feel since my father and brother passed away”.
Me: “Did they pass away in Syria?”
Amr: “Yes. They were both in prison. My dad was tortured for 10 days. My brother was shot.”

Several examples also show how students experienced loss without opportunities for closure, goodbyes, or ability to mourn with their loved ones due to displacement:

“I wish I had the chance to say bye to my dad before he passed away. They took him away and we never saw him again.” Susan, female
“I had a very bad year. My best friend in Syria died because of a bomb. We used to WhatsApp every day and he stopped answering... and then his parents gave me the news.”
Kareem, male

“My grandmother died and I couldn’t say goodbye to her.” Fadi, male

“I have friends who died in the war.” Reem, female

Furthermore, one significant example shows how conflict-affected loss and distressing news may continue post-displacement:

“He [father] was imprisoned in 2013 in Syria and we know nothing about him. Sometimes news is sent out to tell us he’s alive, sometimes they tell us he’s dead. I don’t know if my dad is dead or alive.” Nayef, male

Additionally, students talked about their journey through displacement, the hardships they faced, and the numerous moves made before they arrived at their current locations. These appeared to disrupt their schooling experiences, as many students moved between schools or were not enrolled for a period of time, and also had impact on students’ psychosocial well-being:

“We spent four months in the Zaatari camp before arriving here. It was so difficult there and I am glad we moved.” Lisa, female

“I missed out on two years of school when I was in Aleppo. It was a very difficult period, I saw so many terrible things.” Sima, female

“I didn’t go to school the first two years in Jordan. I was scared and I didn’t want to interact with people. I’ve recently started to like school.” Sandra, female

“We moved between three different places in Jordan. I’m better here now that we’re not in the camp. I didn’t study or do anything. We would just sit in the caravan we were given.” Shaza, female

In a group conversation at school SF-M1, a conversation with male participants revealed that some students felt anxious about the future:

Fadi: “Miss, I am scared of the future.”
Iyad: “Yes me too. They are saying that there are going to be problems because of global warming.”
Maf: “I’m also scared of the future. I think bad things will happen to us.”
Moe: “I wish I could go back in time. There is only war and corruption now. It will only get worse in the future. I don’t feel hopeful about the future.” S4

Other conversations also reflected the helplessness that students felt:

“My well-being won’t improve. There are things that just can’t be solved.” Rania, female
“My well-being is 2 because we have nobody and the things I want will never happen.”
Salam, female

“I’m not liking life… I don’t feel hopeful. There are too many problems” Dalia, female

Effects of Violence and Conflict

Students also reflected on the violence they were exposed to Syria and the trauma it inflicted:

“I want to get rid of the bad memories, like the war and the things I saw in Syria. These things I still think about.” Wesam, male

“I was in shock for a very long time after I moved here. I saw someone die in front of me in Syria. I was in danger but I managed to get away. The fear stayed with me wherever I’d go, but I started to get better when we moved here and I saw my uncles.” Alia, female

“I remember so many things. There was a genocide in our area. You’d leave the house and see corpses and blood everywhere. I remember we would sleep and suddenly be woken to terrible noises and shelling. I remember how my uncle died.” Sandra, female

Students often reflected on the violence and loss they experienced. Many of students’ diaries were filled with words and drawings about Syria:

‘Syria, the ache in my heart.’ ~ Souhail
Two of the teachers interviewed stated that they felt their students’ mental health were clearly affected by the Syrian conflict. In the first conversation, the teacher also touches upon the responsibilities and challenges that face teachers in addressing these needs without the help of counsellors or appropriate training:

“The events in Syria have affected them to the biggest extent possible. Sometimes, if they see a police officer near school, they almost go into a state of hysteria. We had a student once that started crying and saying, ‘please don’t turn me in!’ The problem is that we Arabs take things very lightly. If a child has a mental health issue, we say, ‘what does that even mean?’ and ‘oh but everyone has problems’. But when you talk about children affected by war, each of these children has seen violence. If you ask them about their country, they will only talk about blood, death, destruction, and torture. They’ll tell you about their relatives who were hurt in Syria. These scenes make up 75 per cent of their thoughts. If a student comes to me with these problems, how do I help them if there are no counsellors or therapists to help?” Teacher SM-1

“I think they don’t feel safe. By that, I mean permanent safety. They might come and say everything is alright right now but they feel like the fear might return. Anything might happen. I think for children of war, it’s impossible for them to feel they’ve gained stability or to feel like there’s safety, even when there is.” Teacher, SF-2

As mentioned in the first interview, stigma around mental health remains a prominent barrier to addressing the needs of children and adolescents in the Middle East (Gearing et al., 2015). However, this research finds that students’ own perceptions of their mental health showed alarming feelings of distress, fear, anxiety, and sadness. Numerous students talked about how they
did not fully comprehend the root to their feelings, but noted that their ‘personalities’, ‘moods’, and ‘emotional states’ had changed.

“I am at 3 [well-being ranking in activity 3]. I want to get rid of the dark days we’re living. I want to get rid of the sadness and war. I try to think and understand why I’m sad but I can’t figure it out. I feel like my heart is very sad but I don’t know why.” Rima, female

“I try to stay positive but I feel sadness inside me. I don’t know why.” Basheer, male

Raneem, female: “I feel afraid and worried.”
Me: “Why do you think you feel that?”
Raneem: “I am afraid of the future. I am worried that something might happen to my siblings or my sister. I only have my sister and brother and mother.”
Me: “What are you worried might happen?”
Raneem: “Anything… for something to happen to them. It makes me worry a lot.”

“I wish I could get rid of this sadness inside me. I try to get rid of this negative energy in me by walking, running, screaming. I don’t know how to get rid of it.” Sara, female

“My well-being is 2. I feel like the world’s problems are on my shoulders and I am only 15.” Susan, female

“I am tired. I am actually tired of life.” Luna, female

“I wish I could get rid of this sadness and pessimism that we live in. I wish life would change and we could be happy again. For life to be full of happiness and love. Life has completely turned upside down… People were happy and living a good life, and now everyone is sad their lives are full of so much struggle.” Laila, female
At one school, Yasmin, who rarely engaged with classmates or spoke, initially asked to participate in the project privately through the diary and without partaking in interviews. Halfway through the project, Yasmin raised her hand and asked to participate through the interview process. Throughout the remaining time together, she repetitively stated that she felt she suffered from depression, both in our conversations and in her diary:

“I wish I had a strong personality and that I was happy but I am not strong. Sometimes I ask my mom to let me go out and she says ‘yes go on, go out’. Then I think, I have to get dressed and stuff? And so, I don’t go out. I have developed mental health issues. I don’t know. I have changed. I’m more angry. I used to be normal and calm. I used to be normal.” Yasmin

Numerous conversations with students also portrayed that students’ mental health was affected not only by the violence and loss experienced in Syria, but by the circumstances they faced as a result of displacement:

“I want to be done with sadness and depression. I’ve been through very, very hard things. When we first got to Jordan, I became very sad with how people treated us. They didn’t welcome us, they kicked us out. I come into the classroom and I sit alone. I want to get away from the emotional state I’m in. I am sad. I want to be like those girls [points to girls laughing]. I don’t want to be sad anymore.” Yasmin
“I want to get rid of this anxiety in me. I worry so much at night that I can’t sleep.” Salam, female

“I want to get rid of the pain and sadness in me. I want to get rid of the worry and the fear I feel for myself and for my family. I always have to watch out. ‘When I get out of this cab, what will happen? There are so many bad boys out there today. ‘Will something happen to my sister?’, ‘Lock the door’. We have no men in the house so I worry that something might happen. I wish I could change this life and time we live in, I want a life where there is no injustice and no torture, death, war. I would change so many things if I could. I would make life better.” Sara, female

While both male and female participants touched upon issues of mental health linking their pre-displacement and post-displacement experiences, female participants were much more likely to elaborate on these issues. However, tensions between students’ interactions in school were a common problem in boys’ schools. Throughout my research at the schools, I witnessed numerous fights break out in the absence of teachers. This was also discussed in a conversation between a teacher at SM-1 and the students. In this exercise, it was difficult to grasp the names due to the quick flow of the conversation.

Teacher: ‘Why do you guys create problems between each other? Why is there so much violence between you and your classmates?’

Student1: There are rebels and protestors. The problems reach us even here.
Student2: There’s racism between Syrians. He’s from Aleppo, that one is from Homs, that one is from Damascus. Like, you’re from Aleppo so we don’t want to be friends with you.
Student3: Yeah he says to you, ‘I’m Homsi… I did this and I did that. And you sat and did nothing to help us’
Student4: We argue with each other but we make up. But sometimes we fight for months.
Student5: It happens most with people from Daraa. They start saying ‘You guys created this problem.’
Student6: Yeah. I’m Homsi, and I met someone who started saying things like ‘You guys are the ones that created the problems in Syria… You did this, you did this… You destroyed Syria. There’s racism everywhere except if it’s your relatives.’

These findings show that the Syrian conflict has exacerbated not only sectarian divisions (Jenkins, 2014), but has also created tensions between opposing sides of political stances. In addition to social tensions and violence between refugee and non-refugee communities in Jordan, students appeared to struggle with daily violence and tensions within the Syrian communities. Boys appeared more vulnerable to these tensions, which may relate to the higher involvement of men in fighting and advocacy in conflict. While literature has highlighted the importance of education

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11 The levels of violence and support for the revolution varied across cities in Syria
12 Daraa, where the protests and revolution started
and peace education to help communities reconcile with the effects of violence, and to evade drivers that may lead to the abruption of new conflicts (Davies, 2004), there is little focus on how male children and youths may be particularly vulnerable to these tensions.

8.2 Conclusion
This chapter presented some of the findings that focused on students’ experiences around and outside of school spaces, identifying some of the factors which appeared to reduce or enhance students’ well-being. Most critically, this chapter highlighted that many students showed signs of poor mental health due to the violence, loss, and disruptions that students experienced throughout the conflict and their journey of becoming refugees. Some of these examples showed that access to school, and making friendships, has helped students regain a sense of normalcy. However, many students expressed feeling sad, scared, depressed, anxious, amongst other negative emotions. Furthermore, many students noted that they were not able to understand how and why their personalities were changing, but they felt aware of the negative feelings that affected their current identities. They expressed that they had no outlet for their negative feelings. Lastly, this chapter also showed that many students, especially male participants, had not reconciled with the causes and effects of the conflict in Syria, which appeared to cause tensions within classrooms and schools. These findings highlight the importance of access to services to help students deal with conflict-related trauma. In the next chapter, the findings show that the experiences of becoming refugees can also increase the effects of conflict-related trauma.
Chapter 9: Displacement, Life at Home, and Autonomy

9.1 To Gain Stability in Jordan
In activity 2, the timeline for ‘My Life and Memories’, students wrote and expressed that leaving Syria was ‘the hardest’ and ‘the ugliest’ day of their lives, but they also noted that arriving to Jordan meant being safe and moving away from the dangers in Syria. Similarly, returning to school was mentioned as a crucial step to regaining a sense of normalcy.

“I am glad we’re here. It’s very sad to leave your family but Damascus was too scary.”
Lilas, female

“The day I left Syria was a very sad one, but when I started school again, that’s what helped me become happy.”
Souhail, male

However, Syrian refugees in Jordan must confront poverty, limited work permits, and constricted mobility, as described in Chapter 2 – Context. This section talks about students’ awareness of these restrictions, and the ways in which the development of the capabilities to move beyond the past and think about the future, to be cared for, to learn, and to aspire were affected as a result. The next subsections will focus will be on political restrictions and life at home, social participation and being cared about, and aspiration.

9.1.1 Poverty, Restrictions, and Being Free
Numerous students lightly touched upon financial difficulties, while some avoided explicitly using words such as ‘poverty’. Students often used words like ‘we are not comfortable’ and ‘you can guess what I’m saying’ while describing that life at home is difficult. For instance, one student notes:

‘There are some things that are better not talked about. Financial things. Silence is better. The lives we’re all living here…there is no balance in the world. There is only poverty for us.’
Iyad, male

However, some students described their spaces at home and the difficulties they faced:

‘The houses we live in aren’t right. There’s mould and when it rains, our house gets flooded.’
Sara, female

“Life has taken a totally different turn. We used to be happy, have a big house, now we are struggling and everything is difficult. People who used to be financially comfortable are no longer okay.”
Laila, female
“I wish we could change our house. It’s so small and we’re having such a difficult time. We are six people in two bedrooms. I have no privacy. I can’t study because I get so distracted with everyone around.” Hadia, female

“Everything in my life isn’t going well. We are in a very bad financial and social state. Our lives need to be changed completely. We are not comfortable in our lives.” Alia, female

“There are so many problems at home. Like problems with our rent. My siblings can’t find jobs.” Yasmine, female

“Our life in Syria used to be good. My dad worked. Here, my dad doesn’t work and my brothers left school to work.” Laila, female

Importantly, while Hadia notes that her space at home impacts her ability to concentrate on her studies, she also says on another instance:

“My house is very small and we’re really struggling. That’s why I study as hard as I can. When I grow up, I want to have a job so I can buy a big and beautiful house.” Hadia, female

This example resonates with a study on how Palestinian children used their limited spaces in camps as incentives to challenge and change their circumstances by focusing on the value of education and its benefits of enhancing mobility (Marshall, 2015). Throughout this study, the effects of poverty on education and aspirations emerged into two conflicting themes: confiding to poor negative coping strategies, or seeking to challenge these circumstances.

**Boys, Finances, and Work**
The findings of this study resemble literature on boys’ involvement in labour in refugee communities and in Jordan (Van Esveld & Martínez, 2016). Due to poverty and illegal informal work opportunities, many boys in this study were involved in work. This research finds that involvement in work occurred either between school hours, out of school terms, or as a replacement for school.

“I’ve been working at a café for 4 years.” Amr

“I work after school and help electricians. I work from 8 to 11 PM.” Jamil

“I work at a bakery from 7 AM until school, and then I work after school.” Sami

“I work at a grocer’s. I work before school and after school.” Iyad

“In the summer I work in a clothes shop and at the supermarket.” Samer
Two teachers at the boys’ schools commented on how this issue affects school attendance:

“The difficulty with the evening shift students is that they are often absent. You ask them why they didn’t come to school and they will say, ‘I was late at work.’ Legally, they’re not allowed to work and they should be focusing on their studies, but they tell me that they have to try and help cover their living expenses at home.” Teacher, SM-1

“Many of them have to work and they’re absent. Some will come in but they’re very tired because they have been up all night working at a restaurant.” SM-1

Several other students noted that they were forced to leave school for a period of time to support their families. This appeared to be more common where fathers were absent or away:

“My dad was in Syria for a long time, so I had to leave school for a year and become the sole earner of the house.” Basheer

“My dad left to Germany. I left school for one year to earn money for my mom and siblings here in Jordan. I worked until he was able to send us money again.” Kinan

In addition to the disruption this caused on Kinan’s education, he also expressed the difficulty he faces in returning to school after leaving:

“This is such an ugly year. I told you that after I left school, I had to come back and return to a lower grade. I’m not studying and I don’t know any of these students… I have no desire to study. I became depressed after my dad left and then I got used to working. Returning to school was very difficult for me.” Kinan

Another student who previously left school to work expressed wishing to return to school again. This raises a question of whether education is not able to provide Kareem with a sense of purpose that reaffirms its value:

“I’m back at school but I wish I could work at the café again. I prefer to help my family.” Kareem

Many students noted that they wished they could work in order to help their families, but noted that their fathers encouraged them to remain in school:

“I would like to work during the break. I’d do any kind of job.” Wesam

Jad: “I like to go work at the café but my father says that it’s time I focus on my studies.”
Me: “Why do you like to work there?”
Souhail: “I want to help my family.”
“I’ve told my dad I want to work after school but he won’t let me. He tells me to focus on my studies.” Wesam

“My parents both motivate me and want me to stay in school.” Ahmad

During a conversation between the teacher at SM-1 and his students, the teacher conversed with his students to understand their perspectives around the value of school compared to work. This conversation also led discussing whether students felt like they would continue their education. Notably, parents’ encouragement appeared to be an important factor in these answers:

Teacher: “Do you prefer to work or study?”

S1: “I want to study and only work when I get older. My parents encourage that.”
S2: “I want to study and my parents’ financial situation allows me to do that”.
S3: “I study and when we have our holidays, I work. I think it will be difficult for me to continue my education because of our circumstances at home.”
S4: “Even if I can’t continue, I want to try my best to stay in school”
S5: “Of course I want to continue my school, but we can’t go to university in Jordan. It’s impossible here in Jordan. It’s too expensive for our families.”
S6: “My dad says to me, ‘if you’re not going to do well in school, just leave it because we have to spend the money on your education’.”
S7: “My dad encourages me and helps me review my studies. He tells me that I have to get good marks. He tells me about his friends who graduated from university and how their jobs make their lives better.’
S8: ‘My dad said he would rather sleep on the street than see me quit school.’

These examples are significant as they also portray how families’ well-being at home, their financial circumstances, their educational backgrounds, and norms and beliefs influence children’s prospects and perceptions of their aspirations and future pathways. Interestingly, the data on SM-1 school reveals that its location is in a less affluent community, with lower average income and education levels. However, students’ answers show a variety of attitudes and support.

**Girls, Culture, Marriage**
The effects of financial hardship affect boys and girls differently. The findings of this study resonated with studies in Jordan finding that early marriage was a common poor negative coping strategy (UN Women, 2013; UNICEF, 2014). Due to financial hardships, lack of safety in Jordan (discussed further in next section), and cultural norms, many female participants were experiencing pressure to be married.

Several students commented on their desire to remain in school and marry at a later age, but felt they must accept the prospect of marriage to reduce the financial burdens on their families:
Alia: “My siblings left school a long time ago to work and my mum works at a shop. Next week I will be getting engaged.”
Me: “How do you feel about that?”
Alia: “I am not happy. I feel like I’m being forced to do it because they [family] told me that once you commit to someone, we will be able to rest. My siblings can become responsible for themselves and not worry about me.”

Notably, divorce or other forms of family dynamic changes appear to increase the risk of girls being forced into early marriage. Many of the participants who were pressured into marriage were living without their father after losing them in the war or being separated due to family divorce. A teacher at a boy’s school commented on the challenges of divorce for refugee children:

“Some students have additional problems. If parents get divorced, ok, they get divorced, but where do the children go? If we talk about children of this nation, there are solutions and there’s support… but when you talk about Syrians coming to this country as refugees, as harsh as this term is, where do the children go?” Teacher, SM-2

Sima, top student of her class according to her teacher, often talked about the pressure she faced from both her mother and father, now divorced and living in two different houses:

“I want to study and become an optometrist, but can I hold on to my dream? I am worried that I’ll give up in the end. If there wasn’t pressure from the family that would be ok, but no, they have to pressure me and they have to put their stamp on it. I want to be able to think only about the future and my dreams.” Sima

She comments on the value she holds for studying and her fear of giving into the pressure:

“The thing I hate most is the idea of leaving school. I love studying and I want to study. I am scared of leaving it. If I leave it, that’s it. Getting married now? No. I would never be able to accept that.” Sima

Her story also shows the effect of pressures of early marriage on well-being:

“My well-being is 1 [out of 10]. I won’t reach a high well-being. Do you see all these things I wrote in ‘get rid of’? [figure 4.1 below]. I need all of these things to change so I can live a happy life. A happy life would be one where nobody pressures me, where my opinion matters. My dad has to be content, my mom has to be content, but what about me? I have to be content too. They think I am young, but why? I have an opinion. I tell them, ‘How does that work? Am I too young to think but old enough to get married?’” Sima
This study finds that several female students who were pressured into early marriage had mothers or relatives who had experienced similar arrangements, and were therefore in environments where family members may regard it as acceptable:

“Personally, I want to become doctor and help people, but I don’t think it will happen because I’m going to get engaged. My mom doesn’t want me to get married early because she was married early. She doesn’t want the same things that happened to her to happen to me, but my dad thinks it’s a good idea.” Susan

Many students did not perceive these practices as acceptable or desirable, and several participants wrote down ‘marrying someone of my choice’ and ‘marrying after I finish my undergraduate degree’ as two of their wishes to achieve positive well-being. However, students commented on how this may be unlikely, due to cultural norms where dating and choosing a partner are not always accepted:

“I think all girls should say no to marriage when they’re young. It’s important that girls have a degree before they get married.” Basma

“I want to be in love when I get married.” Rand
“I want to marry someone of my choice.” Maya
Me: “Do you think that’s something you’ll be able to do?”
Maya: “No, that’s unlikely. It’s not acceptable in our culture but I am still hopeful.”

Practices of child marriage are often perceived as cultural, an opinion which was permeated by one of the teachers interviewed, who believed this to be more common amongst Syrian communities than Jordanians:

“These girls know they won’t finish school. They’re engaged. I think it’s a normal thing for them in their [Syrian] culture.” Teacher, SF-2

Furthermore, during one of my conversations with teachers while I was walking outside the classroom, a teacher stated that I should have chosen to do this research with Jordanian children. She said “these Syrian girls are just going to get married. It’s a cultural problem and we don’t have this issue during the first shift, so I think there’s no point in even talking to them”. However, cultural norms and acceptable practices in these contexts appeared to be exacerbated by the circumstances of forced displacement, such as poverty and lack of stability:

“I want to go to university. I want to choose the person I marry. These are things I want, but I don’t know if it will be possible because it’s not just about marks. It’s about finances too.” Maya

“My mom doesn’t want me to get married but she’s being pressured by our relatives. They tell her that it’s the best solution for our situation right now.” Sima
Notably, several female participants noted that their parents, especially mothers, had initially resisted the idea of early marriage for their daughters, as seen in the worlds of Susan “my mom doesn’t want me to get married because she wants me to continue my studies. She doesn’t want me to make the mistakes she did, because she was married at 15”. Moreover, reports have argued that while child marriage was a common practice in Syria, its precedence is four times higher now amongst Syrian refugees than it was pre-conflict and has increased more than twofold in Jordan since 2014 due to the instability, poverty, and safety concerns that families experience as a result of displacement (Bartels et al., 2018; Selby, 201; Arab & Sagbakken, 2019). These ideas are displayed in the words of a teacher interviewed:

“When I ask the mothers why they want their daughters to be married young, they say, ‘this way we’ll be at rest. You live in your country and you’re comfortable… we don’t know where life is taking us.” Teacher, SF-2

Thus, while cultural aspects of child marriage continue to threaten the protection of girls, these findings shed light on the importance of how forced displacement can encourage these practices. For example, the notion of early marriage in contexts affected by poverty may also be influenced by a belief that investing in girls’ education is not prioritised when girls are less likely to participate in the labour market in comparison with boys (Burde et al., 201; Marshall, 2015):

“I want to stay in school but it’s going to be difficult. We have no money and a woman is less likely to work.” Laila
Finally, studies show that early marriage in conflict-affected countries increases when girls at risk of sexual harassment in order to protect ‘family honour’ (Spencer, 2015). This study shows that parents may be concerned by the sexual harassment affecting female participants, as well as issues relating to boys and misbehaving that are reported by teachers. These ideas are also challenged by some of the students, and numerous female students noted that they would like to study and work before getting married:

“It’s better for girls to get married after they finish university and start working.” Lisa

“I want to get married after university, not after I finish school.” Raneem

Sandra was previously engaged, and stating that she initially accepted the idea of marriage to please her family. After a few months, Sandra says she went against her parents’ wishes and broke the engagement off in order to continue her education. After this experience, Sandra says:

“My dream is to become a lawyer because women have been deprived of their rights. Here, it’s a man’s world. A man can work. A man can meet people and talk with whomever. I’ve seen so many woman breaking down, their rights taken away from them. I’ve seen girls forced to get married so that they are no longer a burden. I want to raise awareness and tell people that there is no shame in a woman working. I hope that every girl continues her education and achieves her dreams and defends herself, because if she doesn’t stand up for herself, her rights taken away from her.”

Other students commented on how they have seen their mothers enter the workforce in the absence of their fathers, and how they wish to work in the future:

“I wish I could get to the future more quickly so I could help my mom at home. She is struggling financially and when she tells me that she’s upset, I feel so sad and upset inside. I want to study more so I can help her. I always tell her, ‘I am going to work so I can give you a mansion to live in and let you relax.’” Sara

“We’ve seen so many mothers lose their husbands in the war. They had to start over and go to work. I tell my mom that if I get married now, what will happen to me if I get a divorce or lose my husband? I would be a girl without a degree or rights. A girl has to be able to work for herself and her children.” Sandra

Finally, during my time at school, teachers spoke to me about the fact that girls were often absent due to their families’ not valuing their education. She noted that, Sara, was often absent as her mother asks her to stay home to be responsible for taking care of her siblings. This did not match Sara’s own comments, who noted during her research that, “I am the strongest woman in the world. I will be the strongest woman in the world. I will not let anyone stop me from going to
school and continuing my studies”. These findings showed that, in some cases, the effects of conflict and displacement which created disruption in family dynamics, financial hardships, and changes in gender roles, helped inspire female participants to pursue careers and seek independence.

9.2 Jordan’s Economy and its Effects on Aspiration

Numerous students perceived education as a key and valuable asset to their futures, and words such as, “Education is a weapon. Staying in school is our hope for better days” (Sara) was not uncommon. However, most participants believed that continuing school and university is much more likely if they left Jordan, perceiving other countries to present more economic opportunities and better quality yet cheaper education (discussed in Part1). These realities tainted some of the students’ aspirations and hopes for the future:

“There is no future here. Even if I manage to pass my exams here, what would that lead to? If nationals to this country can’t afford university, how are we supposed to? It doesn’t make sense.” Kinan, male

“What is the point of going to university? If the country’s own citizens who graduated from university are cab drivers, what will we be?” Souhail, male

As seen in these examples, these challenges exist for all communities in Jordan. However, the restrictions imposed on Syrian refugees in Jordan affected many students’ feelings about their futures. These conversations raised a key issue that has been identified within the field: the disjunctions between students’ learning and aspirations, and the opportunities that appear available to them in the future (Dryden-Peterson, 2016b). Most students who shared their desire to pursue higher education and a career also expressed the little hope they had in doing so, due to lack of access to work permits and basic rights, lack of financial security to access higher education, and the lack of sense of attachment and security.

“Syrians can’t do anything here. They can’t rent a car, they can’t work, they can’t do anything. It’s like being imprisoned and the rules keep getting more strict. That’s why it’s difficult for anyone to feel content. It’s not our country.” Iyad, male

“I wish I could travel because a future here in Jordan is bad. There’s nothing for us here.” Amr, male

“I’m not hopeful about the future because I am not in my country.” Sami, male

In an interview with a teacher, he noted that students express these concerns and awareness of limitations during class.
“A lot of them also don’t have hope because they say, “We’re Syrians. What will we do after we finish? We’re not allowed to work in Jordan. What’s the point of studying?””
Teacher, SM-2

9.2.2 Family and Being Cared
Students’ well-being and aspirations are seen to be impacted by the level of social life and participation students practice outside school. Conversations with students revealed that two important factors were valuable to students’ lives: maintaining close family structures and practicing interests and hobbies.

Nearly all students talked how their lives at home had been disrupted because of the war and through displacement, impacting their ability to feel cared about, participate in society, feel secure, and regain a sense of normalcy and stability. One form of this change in dynamic is the result of being distant from family and changes in family dynamics.

All participants talked about the importance of extended family, identifying not being able to see them as a cause for their distress and low well-being:

Luna, female: “There’s something I can’t seem to ever forget: when I had to say goodbye to my uncles and grandparents and they cried a lot. I used to be their favourite. I thought it might be nice to be here [in Jordan] but it’s not. We’re not happy at all. The first Eid we weren’t happy, and now, every Eid we’re not happy. We don’t go out. We don’t do anything anymore.”

‘I was so sad and depressed when I left Syria. I will never be able to forget that situation my entire life.’ ~ Luna

“I want all of us [relatives] to be in one country so that we can go back to the way our lives were.” Susan, female

“Life isn’t good. It’s been five years since we’ve seen the people we love.” Rami, male

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13 Eid is an important Islamic holiday, commonly celebrated with family gatherings.
“So many died, so many travelled. We are displaced. Everyone is in a different country.”
Reem, female

Students frequently used the words ‘we have no one’ to describe their lives in Jordan, noting that this isolation reduced their sense of participation and ability to feel enjoyment in their current lives:

“I wish I could be with all my relatives that have left. There is no one left for me here.”
Reem, female

‘Maybe we could be happy if my family were here. We have nobody.’ Rima, female

In the below example, Salam talked about how she does not believe she can reach a state of well-being higher than five out of 10 in the future, and links this to not being able to achieve greater participation:

Salam, female: “I wish I could get rid of insomnia and anxiety. I can’t sleep. I stay up all night thinking.”
Me: “What keeps you up? What do you think about?”
Salam: “Everything. I think about my aunts and how we used to visit them and go out. I think about all the things we used to do and how I’d have fun. I think about our life here… Our situation isn’t good. We feel like we are alone and we’re in a bad financial state.”
Me: “Why do you feel like you can’t reach more than 6?”
Salam: “Because the borders are closed and I don’t think any of our family will be able to join us. Nobody visits us. Even at home, I have no one I can talk to.”

At home, many students also talked about how their relationship within the family had changed. For some, this change was due to the loss of fathers or brothers through injuries in the war. For others, a parent may have left to seek resettlement in other countries:

“At home, many students also talked about how their relationship within the family had changed. For some, this change was due to the loss of fathers or brothers through injuries in the war. For others, a parent may have left to seek resettlement in other countries:

“The thing that affects my well-being most is that we are alone here. My mom left, our relatives aren’t here, and there is no tenderness or warmth in our house anymore.” Saeed, male

“There is no stability until we are with my mom again. She’s in Europe. I organise my time and I cook and do everything around the house. I take care of my dad and siblings.”
Talia, female

Furthermore, the effects of awaiting immigration decisions can impact refugee children’s well-being and create a sense of uncertainty about the futures (Anderson, 2001; McCarthy & Marks, 2010), as can be seen in the below examples:

Kinan, male: “I don’t understand myself. I feel like I don’t want to study, but I do want to study. How? I don’t know what happens to me when I’m in class.”
Me: “What do you think happens?”
Kinan: “I lose my concentration entirely. I think about our travel plans. Every day I think, ‘today might be the day we get our papers’ and then I get completely distracted. If I were going to Germany to join my dad, I would be motivated to study.”

While many students wished to move countries to find settlement in better conditions, a few students noted that they do not want to move again:

“I feel sad. My dad wants us to all move to America and I don’t want to. I don’t want to move once again and meet new people all over again.” Farah, female

As shown in this section, the prospects of continued migration can have great impact on students’ ability to focus on their studies. A teacher noted that the likelihood of further migration may have distracted certain students from focusing on their studies:

“Some students don’t care about their studies right now because they know they’re going to move to another country. This is just a transitional period for them.” Teacher, SF-1

**Parents and Shared Well-Being**
A significant finding of this study is that students’ well-being is greatly impacted by their parents’ states of well-being, which appeared to have changed significantly since arriving to Jordan. Many students felt that the time and communicative spaces they previously experienced with their families, as well as the warmth and care they received, were no longer there:

Roula, female: “I want to go back to how we were as a family. We were so connected and close. We lived together and there were no problems in life. There was no distance at all.”
Me: “Do you feel like you’re not as close now?”
Roula: “Yes, they’re both so busy. They’re always worried and working.”

“Socially, we are not okay. If a mother is not content, nobody can be content.” Alia, female

“My mom is so tired and sad. We have no one. We don’t have neighbours, relatives, anybody to visit or spend time with. We only have each other and we argue because of the state we’re in. We are all tired. My mom is sad and my siblings left school to work. I sit in my room alone and my mom is always worrying about what’s going to happen to us. We don’t understand each other anymore. There’s no love or warmth in the house like there used to be.” Alia, female

Furthermore, many students expressed the anxiety and sadness they felt in seeing their family’s and friends’ sadness. Students were aware of the trauma and financial and social difficulties that their families have undergone, and were therefore negatively affected by their family’s emotional well-being:
“I want my mom’s heart to be at peace. She’s always busy and worried. She’s always awake thinking. She doesn’t eat. It hurts me to see her that way.” Sara, female

“I didn’t sleep until 9:30 in the morning yesterday. I stay awake and I worry. I think about everything. My family, our troubles, my studies, everything.” Susan, female

“I wish I could take away my mother’s pain. My mom is so sad that she’s away from her family.” Luna, female

“I wish I could take away from my friends’ pain. So many of them are sad and depressed.” Luna, female

“I want to get rid of worries, pain, tiredness, depression.” Salam, female

“I want to see my mom less sad. I don’t like to see her sad, and she has been sad since my dad passed away in the war.” Yasmine, female

“I haven’t seen their smiles since that terrible day [leaving Syria].” Sandra, female

A conversation with Sandra, when she talked about things she witnessed in Syria, also portrayed how students’ well-being and ability to move beyond the past can be limited by these current circumstances:

Me: “Do you feel like you’ve begun to move past that?”
Sandra: “No, to be honest. Life here always reminds us. Our neighbours don’t talk to us and we don’t talk to them. We are alone. My mom is so sad and she doesn’t joke with us anymore. Everything is so expensive and there are so many worries.”

She then adds:

“We used to be a very close family. We used to love each other a lot and understand each other and talk a lot. We’d always be together and talk the whole time. We couldn’t do anything without each other.” Sandra, female

**Being Cared About**

A further effect of family’s low well-being and poor financial state is the limited care that children as a result. While many students noted that their parents encourage them to study, most also noted that their parents could not help them review their studies due to: parents’ lack of time and availability, their limited educational backgrounds, and their poor states of well-being.

“I don’t think I can continue my studies because there is no one to support me at home. Not financially or emotionally. My parents can’t help me review my lessons.” Kareem, male
“If it weren’t for my dad, I wouldn’t study. He helps me understand the lessons.” Fouad, male

“My sister helps me study because she finished school.” Iyad, male

A teacher at a school comments on this issue as a common challenge for teachers:

Teacher, SM-2: “I think that their emotional states really affect them. What I most struggle with is their moodiness. They swing from one state to another. One day, they’ll come in happy and excited to engage with the lesson, with their homework completed and their lessons reviewed. The next, they will come to class in a poor mood, unwilling to engage or be responsive.”
Me: “Why do you think that is?”
Teacher, SM-2: “I don’t know. I feel it’s because they’re not cared about. The parents are absent and they aren’t interested in their children. If their parents were interested, they would know that if their daughters received a poor mark this exam, they have to work hard for the next one. I don’t feel like there’s any interest in their education. I don’t mean all of the parents, but I do think the majority of them don’t check how they’re doing in school.”

Furthermore, at a boy’s school, a teacher perceived there to be a lack of encouragement and interest from parents, identifying that as a factor contributing to students’ low marks:

“Most students in my class aspire to attain high marks. They want to do well, but many can’t. It might be due to financial circumstances or social circumstances. But I think that for many, it’s because their parents don’t encourage them. We haven’t met many of the parents in the four years their boys have been here. It might be because the fathers are absent and the mothers are shy to visit due to the culture. We have parent-teacher meetings but many don’t show up.” Teacher, SM-2

Many students also expressed that they did not feel like they could go to their parents for advice or support, as they were aware that their parents were burdened by their circumstances:

Rania, female: “I want to get rid of loneliness. I want someone I can talk to.”
Me: “Do you feel like you have no one to talk to at home?”
Rania: “I sometimes talk to my sisters, but I can’t talk to my mom. She already has so much on her mind. I want someone I can talk to about everything.”

“You can’t talk to your parents about things. I feel I am always down but you have to try to be as positive as you can in front of them. You’re forced pretend that we’re going to get through this. They’re already under so much stress.” Sara, female

9.2.3 Participation and Practice
In addition to breakdown in family dynamics and close relationships, the capability to participate was greatly limited by the lack of opportunities to engage with others or exercise activities in Jordan. This is demonstrated in children’s discussions of being able to get to know others and
engaging with them. In activity 1, some students left the questions ‘favourite place to go: ___’ as either empty or as ‘home’. Similarly, many students left the question ‘hobbies: ___’ empty. When Basem skipped the question regarding his favourite place to go, he noted:

“I didn’t write anything. I don’t go outside. Where would I go?” Basem, male

In addition to the change in a family’s combined well-being, Luna talks about the limited participation she practices:

“I feel like it’s only depression here in Jordan. We don’t go out, we don’t do anything. There is nothing to make us happy. I sit at home and stare at the walls by myself. And at home, my mom is always tired.” Luna, female

For girls, this problem grows twofold as their engagement outside the house was greatly limited by the combination of the lack of safety in Jordan, limited social opportunities, and cultural norms. For example, many girls talked about how they did not engage in activities outside of their homes:

“I don’t know anyone outside of school. I don’t leave the house because it’s safer at home.” Dalia, female

“I don’t like to leave the house at all. They harass me in the neighbourhood.” Yasmine, female

“No one is allowed to go outside because it’s not safe.” Rand, female

Rand, who has previously noted that has been exposed to sexual harassment, illustrates the disconcerting effects of harassment and the lack of available support:

Rand: “I want to go somewhere very far away. I want to get away from this entire planet.”
Me: “Why do you feel like you want to get away?”
Rand: “I’m not liking this life. I feel disgusted. Sometimes there are days where I wish I could die.”
Me: “What’s making you feel this way?”
Rand: “Every day I see something new and shocking. Every day. I’m learning about things I didn’t know about.”

In some of the examples, female students noted that their families do not allow them to go outside of the house:

“I don’t go out of the house. I don’t engage with people. I’m older now so I can’t.” Nour, female
“My brother doesn’t let me go out or do anything.” Raneem, female

Both boys and girls said they do not know Jordanians in the country, and expressed their desire to meet more people:

“I don’t know a single Jordanian here.” Jamil, male

“I want to see more people, meet them and learn from them. It would make me very happy and it would encourage me to study and think about the future.” Saeed, male

“I wish there were more and more people in our lives. That would help me.” Kareem, male

The tensions and harassment that students experienced, much of which was discussed in part 1, was seen to limit students’ participation and cause fear for both parents and their children.

“I want to be away from evil people. There are people who wait for me in my neighbourhood. They threaten me and say things like ‘I have a knife on me and I want to kill you’.” Bashir, male

“Once, I was walking home with groceries and I got harassed by neighbours. They said to me, ‘are you Syrian?’ and I said yes and asked them why. They said ‘if you’re a Syrian then come here’ and they started beating me up.’ My mom worries about me all the time now.” Rami, male

In many of these discussions, students often expressed anxiety and fear when talking about the impacts of harassment:

“Kids are being kidnapped in my neighbourhood. Girls most of all. They either return them or they don’t.” Dalia, female

“I am at six out of ten because I am here, living with my family safely. But the thing that scares me most is Jordanians.” Aziz, male

Importantly, in positive instances, students who met more people in Jordan expressed that they had begun to gain a sense of stability in Jordan:

“Last year, I feel like we became used to life in Jordan. We know more people. I met four people. They’re Jordanians and they are like my brothers and we started to play together a lot.” Qusai, male

To Practice Hobbies and to Be Free
Despite students not being able to practice their right to participation more fully, numerous students valued certain skills and hobbies and wished to be able to achieve them. For example,
almost all students talked about their appreciation of books, writing, and drawing. In one instance, a student noted that a reading group organised by her community in her neighbourhood has been one of the key elements to improved well-being:

“I feel like my well-being is at eight. The things that keep me positive are school, my friends, and a reading project I’m involved in in my building.” Talia, female

Similarly, many students, especially male students able to use outdoor spaces, said they played football and aspired to become successful players in the future. Numerous students talked about the things they wished to pursue:

“I want to be able to practice my singing. I have a great voice.” Feras, male

“I love to read history and law books. I want to be able to visit a bookstore and pick out any book I want.” Luna, female

“I love programming and working on my own ideas.” Fadi, male

“I want to learn a new language. I want to learn French.” Farah, female

Some students talked about hobbies they had lost the ability to do things due since being displaced:

“I have so many hobbies that I can’t pursue. I love volunteering and I used to help in Syria but I am not allowed to do that here.” Lilas, female

“I loved playing the piano and now I can’t practice anymore.” Raneem, female

“There is no space for us to play basketball or do anything anymore.” Fadi, male

Additionally, many students talked about the desire for the capability to be a child and to enjoy life noting that their childhood was taken away from them. These link to the core of the capability approach in its view that a state of well-being allows individuals to enjoy a life they value:

“I’m not liking life.” Dalia, female

“I wish I could return to the childhood that I didn’t get to live. I feel like it was never even part of my life, I grew up too quickly, understanding everything in life even when I was too young. I wish I could go back to the past and not know about these things. I want to go back to the past when we would laugh, play, do anything, and for people to see that it’s about childhood and innocence.” Sandra, female

“I would like to live a better life in another country and enjoy every minute of my life. I want to live every moment and not let it pass by me.” Basheer, male

“I wish I could return to the childhood that was taken away from me.” Maya, female
‘I wish I could go to Germany and live there with my relatives because that would motivate me a lot. It would motivate me to study and achieve what I want in the future. I hope I can discover things nobody has discovered, like nature scenes, and I hope I can go diving in the ocean.’

‘I want to climb mountains and go on adventures and go to space. And God willing, if I get money, I will give those in need. I hope I can go to my aunt’s in Germany because my life has become very sad.'

‘There is no tenderness here and I don’t know anybody in Jordan. My sister needs care and someone to cook for her and someone to help her with everything because she is still young. I want my life to get better. I don’t want anything more. I hope that can all become true, God willing.’

‘And I don’t want to be a king, a minister, or anyone famous. I just want to achieve what I want for my family and I want to feel the taste of life because my life is so difficult.’

Lastly, the capability to be free was frequently talked about in relation to being mobile, to travel, to see the world, and to learn about others. The words ‘discover’, ‘adventures’ and ‘see’ were used very frequently.

“I want to see the world. I don’t want there to be a single place I haven’t visited. I want to get in a car and be able to see new places.” Shaza, female
“I want to own an airplane so I can travel wherever I want.” Roula, female

“I want to see the places I have seen on National Geographic. I want to discover the mountains and scenery.” Feras, male

“I like to discover and learn new things.” Lilas, female

“I want to go on a trip, like to Petra. I just want to go on a journey or an outing.” Nour, female

“I want to discover new places like mountains and the Romanian theatres.” Qusai, male

These discussions also resulted in students talking about where they wish to resettle and live. While much of the literature finds that education and political planning seeks to help refugees return to their home countries, numerous students talked about their desire to make informed decisions and choose the country they would resettle in. Notably, while some students talked about their desire to return to Syria, many others wanted to resettle elsewhere:

“I don’t want to return to Syria. It doesn’t have the things I want anymore.” Iyad, male

‘I don’t remember Syria because I was too young.” Feras, male

“It is all destroyed. We lost our homes. My relatives and friends left. There is nothing left for us to return to. I want to start over somewhere new.” Aziz, male

“The future for me is in Germany. There’s no future for me here. If I pass, and I know I can pass, there is no money for me to continue my studies.” Kinan, male

In his journal, Basheer wrote:

“Of course, I think about my country every day. I think about my grandparents and my neighbourhood every day, but when my dad says, ‘let’s go back to Syria’, I hesitate and feel conflicted. I grew up here. I was eight when we left Syria and I’ve studied here for four years.” Basheer, male

The majority of students stated that they did not want to remain in Jordan in the future. However, they expressed the desire to be able to discover a new home, one they are able to choose.

Me: “Do you feel you want to return to Syria?”
Rima, female: “No. I don’t know where I want to be.”

“I would like to live somewhere else. Anywhere as long as it’s not here.” Souhail, male

“Where do I want to be in the future? Of course you don’t want to live somewhere you’re not a citizen in. And also you want to live somewhere where there’s work for you.” Lilas, female
“I hope that in the future, my family can choose one place and be together again.” Saeed, male

9.3 To Aspire and Be Recognised
Despite the limitations and perceived likelihood of continuing school, most students talked about their aspirations and their desire to attain a university degree and pursue their careers.

“My aspirations are to finish school and graduate top of my class.” Ramez, male

‘Wishes’ ~ Salam, female
“I hope they give us the right to be educated.”
“I hope I can achieve what I have in mind so I can become a teacher.”
“I hope that my family will be happy.”
“I hope that I can continue my education and go to university.”
“I wish for the teachers to be kind to us.”

9.3.1 Aspiration and Resilience
Students aspired to pursue careers, including becoming doctors, engineers, architects, teachers, scientists. Notably, this study found that the circumstances and hardships students experienced inspired redirected aspirations for some of the participants. For example, many students felt determined to pursue a career that allowed them to contribute to society through careers that allowed them to seek justice:
“When I was a child, I used to dream of becoming a spy or actor or something like that because I was inspired by the movies. After what I saw in Syria and the people in need of help, I realised I wanted to become a Doctor.” Basheer, male

“I used to think that maybe I would be an artist. Now, I would like to become a lawyer and defend women’s rights. I would like to support her to become something grand in life and I want to return the sense of childhood that was stolen from all Syrian children. I want to become famous and powerful so that I can stop wrongdoings from happening. I know that I can’t do it on my own, but if an idea starts and people accept it, they might help me and maybe we’ll help each other rebuild our country.” Sandra, female

“After what we went through, I am going to work and make money and help people in need.” Saeed, male

“I have seen so many disadvantaged people going through terrible things. My aspirations are different now. I want to spread happiness in the world. I want to help those in need. My ultimate goal is to become a lawyer and I want to work on the most critical cases. And I am going to come back to Jordan to give money to every person in need.” Hadia, female

“I want to be a teacher so that I can help the generations after mine in Syria.” Sara, female

“I want to invest useful things so that I can help people.” Amr, male

“I want to become a police officer so that I can defend my country.” Nayef, male

While many students expressed their desire to work in humanitarian work, this study also found an exception where a student repetitively talked about wanting to join armed groups and use weapons, stating that this interest emerged after armed groups entered his neighbourhood in Syria:

“I want to join the military. I love it. I want to become a powerful commander. You’ll see me on the news… you’ll see. I want to fight.” Khaled, male

Being able to aspire was an important capability for many students, including those whose well-being ranked low. Despite the challenges discussed, these students felt that education was crucial in creating opportunities for a more positive future.

“If I get to become a social media manager, then I think I can reach 10/10 well-being.” Lilas, female

“I keep thinking about how I once saw students graduating from this school. I felt like something was pulling me towards them and I wanted to become like them. That’s what motivates me most.” Roula, female

“Right now there’s no happiness but we don’t know what the future holds. Right now, every new day is worse than the past but this might just be a phase. It’s been an ugly seven
years. Enough of this now. I am going to study and I am going to change things.” Sandra, female

“If I could become an architect, I could help Syria and think about a better future.” Hamzeh, male

“I want to only think about the future. I want to only focus on what I want to become.” Sima, female

Students often expressed their desire to become independent, lead their own lives, and become ‘rich’, ‘own a big house’, ‘help their families’, and finding a partner and having kids in the future.

9.3.2 To Be Remembered and Recognised
Students’ aspirations extended beyond completing education and achieving successful careers. Many students presented a new capability to the list: to be recognised. Students valued being remembered and being known for generations to come.

“I want to become a scholar in any kind of subject, so that if I die, people will always remember me and know my name.” Souhail, male

“I want to be an active and productive person. I want to have interests. I want to have accomplished things so that generations after mine remember me.” Roula, female

“I want to be an architect and be known for helping Syria.” Luna, female

“I want to become a famous actor so that people recognise me and like me.” Fahd, male

“I want to be the founder of a chemical or mathematical theory and be recognised for it.” Fadi, male

Importantly, the desire to being known for good purposes may also link to the discrimination and injustice students feel, as many students in this study felt they were disliked or known for bad reasons:

“I don’t know what they have against us. Refugees are just like any other people.” Aziz, male

9.4 To Reflect on Well-Being and to Be Heard
An important finding of this study is students’ desire for their voices and emotions to be heard, recognised, and cared about. At the end of the project, participants were reminded that the empty pages at the end of the journal may be used for any messages they wished to share. As an example, students were invited to give their opinion about the project. These pages revealed three valued
capabilities: to reflect on choices, have the right to communicate, and to be heard. The letters also revealed that partaking in this research allowed them to practice autonomy and freedom by sharing their stories.

9.4.1 To Reflect
The capability to reflect was important to students, valuating the time they had to reflect and better understand themselves and their experiences. Importantly, these letters show that students’ agency was enhanced by the project through the conversations that occurred and students’ ability to identify means to express themselves:

“I liked this project because I learned about myself more.” Fatmeh, female

“This project was very positive because it made us think about ourselves and we talked about life. It made me feel like I have to work on myself and improve myself.” Amr, male

“I loved this project. It is so great because it makes you write. It makes you think about yourself.” Nour, male

“I loved writing. I want to publish a book that talks about all the difficult things I have been through.” Talia, female

“You have given us the chance to think about our lives and goals. I feel more hopeful. I am thinking about what I want to do with my future.” Basheer, male

In these next two examples, both student had previously conversed with me about the benefits of writing and researching. Fahd, below, had initially said at the beginning of a project that he does not think he is a good student and he does not have hobbies. Throughout the project, Fahd wrote many letters and notes, and on his last page, said:

“I learned that I like to write and that I am very good at it. I think I want to be a writer.”

During the first few days of the research, Alia asked questions about how I received a scholarship as a Syrian and why PhDs and research are important. At the end of the project, he wrote:

“I liked this project a lot because I learned more about life. I have started to think about my future. Maybe someday I can be a researcher like you.”

Similarly, Nayef wrote:

“I liked this project. It made me hopeful. I hope I can go to university and do what Miss Hiba is doing.”
The conversations we engaged in, both through the project, and as well as students’ own questions, inspires a sense of reflection, thoughts about possibilities, reminders about the value of education, and a reinforcement of children’s individualities. Throughout my time with the students, students questioned me on my choices: why I was not yet married, why I chose to do this research, how I attained a scholarship, whether I worked hard in school, amongst many other subjects. This allowed students to engage in conversations with a neutral, and perhaps more positive individual, about everyday decisions and prospects. Furthermore, the project gave students a breather from the chaotic and quick nature of their learning, with activities conducted over weeks that inspired time for reflection and for thinking about their own interests, hobbies, and ambitions, sometimes leading to a redirection of their own sense of self and aspirations.

9.4.2 To Express and Have the Right to Be Heard

Many students wrote letters, asking the world to listen to them. While I sought to remind students that this project is unable to lead to changing their circumstances, students’ expressions also portrayed the importance of being heard, engaged, and of seeking support.

“To those who read my letter. You may not feel us, but we are very tired and we live very difficult and unjust lives and environment. We wish we could change our lives.” Alia, female

Students stated that they recognised that this is child’s right and a need:

“I loved this project so much. I can’t express how great it’s been. I loved being able to write, I loved the activities and the different questions. I felt like I was able to express myself, and that’s a very important thing.” Adham, male

“From the first minute you came in, you gave us hope. The idea of the journal and of being able to express the things we are facing. Even if this doesn’t lead to anything and nobody helps us, it gives me hope to talk. The idea of expressing your opinion is important. If you stay silently sad, it’s bad. I want to be able to say my opinion.” Basheer, male

These reflections illuminated the importance of refugee students being helped through beyond resources, and of being spoken to and seen, as emphasized by Luna:

Do not judge us for our appearances. Try to speak to us and help us, not through money, but through your feelings towards us. Talk to us. That can help us feel hopeful about our lives. Luna, female

Importantly, students expressed that this project gave them hope, comfort, or a form of outlet. These letters portray the value of allowing students to be engaged and given opportunities to express themselves, to help students reflect on the trauma and challenges they face, as well as to
be understood. Notably, many of these letters include words ‘we liked you because you were kind to us’, reflecting students’ need to feel cared for, heard, and feel dignified and respected:

“I never liked talking about my feelings, I keep my anger in. But through this project, I found writing and talking helpful.” Akram, male

“Thank you for coming in and trying to understand how children of the war feel. You were kind to us. Nobody has come close to us before. Nobody has spoken to us in five years. Nobody.” Akram, male

“Here, I have written the story of my life. I have never told anyone. But I wanted to be able to express things to someone.” Nour, male

“I’m thankful for Miss Hiba. We loved this project. We love you very much. We had a great time.” Sedra, female

“The project was perfect. It was more than wonderful because when I attend the session, I feel like I am in a different world because I have an opinion and the freedom to discuss things.” Salma, female
Hadia

‘The project is unique. It’s the first of its kind because nobody has ever come to ask us for our opinion on anything. I think that is something very beautiful and it made us feel like we have an opinion in this world.

Even if this project doesn’t reach many, it’s beautiful and I hope this project reaches all refugees and all people. Expressing your opinion is a form of freedom and I know that it’s the right of every child and being to express their opinion.

This letter is about the project, and also to say that I am a kind person with a beautiful heart. We love everyone and I love everyone that thinks about us, even if we do not see them. I thank you all.’
“I love this project and the amazing Miss Hiba, because she let us talk about what is inside our hearts. She heard about the wrongdoings that happen at school and she was very gentle and patient with us. I love this journal because I could write about myself and about people I love. I will remember Miss Hiba because she was kind. I will remember every day we spent on this project.”

9.5 Summary

Becoming displaced and leading lives as refugees poses numerous complexities that shape students’ prospects of learning and reduce the expansion of their well-being. This chapter showed that through students’ own circumstances, as well as Jordan’s socio-political structures, participants experienced both resilience as well as reduced capabilities. While the findings showed that arriving to Jordan and being able to re-enrol in schools helped students regain a sense of normalcy and safety, many factors inflicted by displacement reduced students’ capabilities due to circumstances at home, such as:

- Families’ well-being and mental health
- Financial hardships and poverty
- Isolation and limited opportunities to participate and form bonds

The study found that gender is a crucial factor as the experiences of male and female participants varied. Female participants were more isolated, involved in domestic work, and experienced pressures to accept child marriage, while male participants were often involved in informal labour to help support families. Furthermore, the findings highlighted the importance of understanding context and individual circumstances, portraying how the effects of divorce, separation from family, and mental health issues impacted students differently.
The chapter also portrayed the importance and value of aspirations, reflections, and voice, and the ways in which students’ resilience and well-being may be enhanced through opportunities to critically engage with life choices and decisions. Students’ hopes for the futures and for improving their well-being were greatly dependent on being able to complete their education and pursue careers. Many students expressed that, due to their experiences, their aspirations had been reshaped by a desire to help contribute positively to society. However, a key issue presented in these findings is the lack of link between access to education and career prospects for Syrian refugees in Jordan, such as work permits and finances to access higher education. Lastly, students expressed that being able to partake in this research, to voice their experiences and opinions, and to take time to reflect on their lives and choices, were part of an extremely important exercise for them.
PART 2

SUMMARY

The two chapters above focused on the factors that exist around their school spaces and outside of schools, such as at home, on the way to school, and their surrounding communities. These chapters sought to understand how children’s capabilities are shaped by these factors, and the ways in which they affect children’s abilities to achieve their capabilities. The findings of these two chapters addressed the main question and the second sub-question:

RQ: Which capabilities do students identify as most important, positive, or detrimental to the development of their well-being?

1.2 How do factors around and outside of school settings interact with their capability development within schools?

Table 5 below presents a summary of the factors that impact students’ capabilities, identifying which capabilities were reduced or enhanced through these settings. The findings also showed that students’ experiences during conflict, throughout their journey to displacement, and after becoming displaced, are important stages that impact children’s mental health, perceptions, and abilities to move on from the past. Furthermore, the findings portray the importance of reflection and its impact on choice, options, and aspirations.
## Table 5 Summary of Part 2 Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Outside School</th>
<th>Important Capabilities</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Effects on Well-Being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overcoming past trauma</td>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>Friendships made at schools helped students to begin to regain a sense of normalcy well as feeling cared for.</td>
<td>Students’ mental health and ability to move past trauma faced in Syria was challenged by effects of displacement and hardships faced in Jordan.</td>
<td>Many students expressed feeling anxious, afraid, sad, depressed, and unable to sleep.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The experiences faced through conflict and displacement inspired many students to aspire to pursue careers that help fight injustice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social relations within communities</td>
<td>To belong</td>
<td>Programmes such as <em>Generations for Peace</em> appear to have positive influence on transforming social tensions.</td>
<td>The majority of students had not yet met any Jordanian children.</td>
<td>Students’ sense of belonging appeared extremely low.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To have friendship</td>
<td></td>
<td>Violence, harassment, and bullying were very common experiences for Syrian refugee children.</td>
<td>Students’ well-being, safety, and mental health was strongly reduced by lack of exposure to harassment and violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be safe</td>
<td>Some students, especially male participants, had formed friendships outside of schools with Jordanian children.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students felt labelled, discriminated against, and victimised, and lacked medium for expression and voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To have voice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students’ ability to feel cared for was reduced by parental absence, parents’ well-being, and lack of quality and positive time spent with family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and life at home</td>
<td>To be loved and cared for</td>
<td>Policies in Jordan help refugee families settle together.</td>
<td>Parents’ well-being emerged as a limitation and important influencer on students’ well-being.</td>
<td>Students felt isolated and expressed loneliness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To belong</td>
<td></td>
<td>Many students separated from parent due to resettlement or death, and most students separated from extended families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial circumstances</td>
<td>To be free from economic and non-economic exploitation</td>
<td>Some parents appeared to encourage children despite financial challenges.</td>
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<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To aspire</td>
<td>Many students engaged in informal labour due to financial hardships.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To have leisure time</td>
<td>Many female students experiencing pressure to get married due to financial hardships.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Children not able to engage and participate in hobbies, trips, outings, or quality time outside of home.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for future, rights, and freedom</td>
<td>To aspire</td>
<td>Children’s abilities to aspire strongly reduced by lack of sense of stability and financial opportunities to pursue higher education and careers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be recognised</td>
<td>Students expressed desire to participate, to aspire, and to contribute positively to society. However, limitations of being a refugee and lack of clear opportunities to pursue careers reduced students’ hope of accomplishing these values.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To participate</td>
<td>Students unable to belong to a home due to lack of stability, and lack of hope of returning to a safe Syria.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To be mobile and to travel</td>
<td>Students were given the right to education.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To belong</td>
<td>Plans for resettlement affect students’ sense of stability.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of opportunities to work in Jordan influence students’ aspirations trust in value of education.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Limitations of refugee status, including the freedom to travel and be mobile.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 10: Understanding Findings Through Students’ Summaries of Their Well-Being

The chapters in Part 1 and Part 2 drew on students’ data to answer the research questions by identifying factors within and outside schools that influenced students’ well-being. These chapters were formed through a thematic analysis of the factors that appeared to positively and negatively influence students, and the identification of relevant capabilities that were affected as a result. In this chapter, I bring these findings together to showcase examples that demonstrated the importance of two key points when seeking to examine refugee students’ well-being, and these included:

- Individuality and the effect of contextualised circumstances on mental health
- The stages of displacement and associated challenges

This chapter also sheds light on the limitations and benefits of asking children to rank and discuss their well-being. To do this, the findings in this chapter mainly draw on Activity 5 to show how students discussed their own well-being ranking and emotions. However, findings from the remaining data are also taken into account to provide a comprehensive analysis of the context.

10.1 Students’ Own Views of Well-Being

During the last weeks of fieldwork, students engaged in Activity 5: “How Do I Feel?” in which students to rank their own well-being as of year 2017 as well as what they expect their well-being to be in the future. After writing these numbers down, students were also asked to write what they would wish for or would like to achieve in one envelope, and what they would need to change about their lives or get rid of to improve their well-being, in another envelope. This exercise was followed by in-depth conversations on how students perceive their well-being, their mental health, and their sense of hope towards the future.

The tables below provide a summary of students’ ranking of their well-being. Table 6 provides the average well-being students wrote down for year 2017, and what the average expected future well-

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14 Not all students participated in this activity (mainly due to absence). Therefore, the number of students partaking in this activity at each school varies from between a minimum of 12 students to 18 at the most (SM-1).
being. The tables show that, on average, students ranked their current well-being at 5/10 and their future well-being at 8.8.

Table 6 Average Well-Being Rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Current Well-Being</th>
<th>Future Well-Being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 1: SM-1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2: SM-2</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 4: SF-1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3: 2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 provides a breakdown of these numbers. The first two schools, SM-1 and SM-2, are the boys’ schools, while the remaining two schools are the girls’ schools, SF-1 and SF-2, in order of grade 7 and 8. The below sections delve into students’ reflections of their well-being beyond these numbers.

Table 7 Breakdown of Current Well-Being Range

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>0-3</th>
<th>4-5</th>
<th>6-7</th>
<th>8-9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School 1: SM-1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 2: SM-2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 4: SF-1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School 3: SF-2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.1.1 Discrepancy Between Ranking and Words and Limitations

Numerous points emerged when seeking to understand the numbers that students ranked down for their well-being. The findings showed that students’ discussions sometimes contradicted the range written within the scale, or appeared vague in the absence of further explanation. For example, the average current ranking is around 5/10. When students were asked about what they think being in the middle of the scale means, many students used words like “there isn’t anything good or bad” and “normal” or “Aadi”\(^{15}\) to describe their feelings on their current lives. These responses sheds light on whether students’ perception of their well-being may have adapted to meet reality or the ‘normality’ of their lives, and whether students have thus developed adaptive preferences. This links to the point by Wilson-Strydom & Walker (2015), which argues that if an individual living in poverty states they are happy, their statement does not imply that they are no longer a cause for concern. They note that students must not only be asked if they are happy, but

\(^{15}\) The word Aadi translates to ‘normal’ but is often used within conversation to normalise negative situations. For example, Yasmine says that while her well-being is very low, she also says “I've started to say Aadi, we've gotten used to this life.”
“whether they have genuine opportunities to choose and do what they have reason to value” (Wilson-Strydom & Walker, 2015, p.313). In some cases, the rankings of well-being written in the diary demonstrates a higher and more positive outcome unrepresentative of students remaining diaries and conversations. For example, Luna stated that her current well-being is 8, but within the same conversation, she said would like to be “rid of depression, sadness, and the worry” she faces every day. She stated that her sadness is related to her experiences in Jordan and how “life here is full of depression, there is nothing to make us happy. I am tired of life”. The discrepancy between the number Luna wrote down and conversations may be attributed to numerous reasons, one of which appeared later in the conversation where Luna says “I get so sad but I don’t like to let anyone sense it. I don’t like to tell anyone how I feel or that I am sad. I don’t want them to worry. Everyone is already in pain”.

Similarly, other conversations with students demonstrated students’ lack of support to reflect on their experiences and comprehend their well-being and mental health. For example, Rima stated that her well-being is at 3 and that her “heart is sad, sad, sad but I don’t know why”. Similarly, Akram noted that “I don’t know why, I’m angry all the time and my heart feels sad. I hit the wall sometimes because I’m so angry”. These reflections showed the importance of counselling and support to help students navigate the effects of trauma.

Finally, when looking at the breakdown of numbers in this activity, it is apparent that in some cases, students in the same classroom were more likely to note down the same number of current well-being. While it can be argued that students may share a similar well-being at a school based on how well schools are able to enhance well-being, it is necessary to consider other factors that influence students’ expressions (discussed further in Limitations), such as whether children may replicate what others around them have said or seek to give the ‘right’ answer.

As Activity 5 drew on numerous research methods with students, the limitations of numerical approaches were reduced. The next sections provide an overview of the findings of this activity and the role of mental health.

10.1.2 Individual Cases, Risk Factors, and Mental Health
Despite the higher ranking that most students expected for their futures, there were several cases that ranked their current and future well-being as either the same or with minor differences. Many students noted that there is “no hope” or “nothing will change”. For example, Dalia noted “I don’t expect things to change. There are too many problems”, or Salam ranked her current well-being
as two and said that she will not achieve more than five out of ten in the future, because “I will not achieve the things I want. We have nobody”. Salam discusses not being able to forget the violence she witnessed, not being able to accept that the borders are closed, the grief and isolation she feels being away from relatives, and the financial hardships facing her family. The accumulation of stresses and poor mental health has been recognised as a barrier that prevents refugee children from recovering from the challenges they face, including post-traumatic stress disorder and depression (Bronstein & Montgomery, 2011; Pieloch et al., 2016). Studies investigating the psychological well-being of children argue for the need to understand individual cases, contexts, and students’ experiences through more qualitative terms in order to acknowledge the diversity of students’ developmental needs, emotions, and perceptions (Pieloch et al., 2016; Mohamed & Thomas, 2017). Importantly, this research demonstrated key examples where students’ individuality and circumstances played a significant role in their capability development and well-being.

While mental health is not the focus of this study, it emerged as an important capability. For example, students whose families had experienced separation due to death, divorce, re-settlement in other countries often reported lower well-being than their peers. Furthermore, students who lived in homes affected by separation were less able to concentrate on their studies. As shown in students’ anecdotes, many students suffered from symptoms of sadness, depression, and anxiety due to their personal circumstances. These examples demonstrated the importance of understanding individual cases of well-being and students’ needs. Additionally, the achievement of this capability appeared to have a strong influence on other capabilities.

The study also highlighted the importance of understanding refugee children’s well-being through a gender-based lens. In some examples, female participants appeared to be responsible for additional domestic duties due to having to support their preoccupied parents. In addition, the effects of financial hardship and negative cultural norms, such as early marriage, were more likely to emerge as a coping mechanism for these circumstances. For male participants, several noted that they worked between school hours, summers, or had intermitted their school to support their family in cases where their fathers had passed away or were resettled in a different country. While there were cases in this study where male and female participants living with both parents also experienced these responsibilities, separation from family appeared to heighten stress and reduce well-being. These examples raise the importance of understanding the impact of gender, age, and
mental health on students’ well-being and individual needs. A summary of some of these cases is provided in Table 8 below.

Table 8 Examples of Descriptions of Poor Mental Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Circumstances</th>
<th>Extracts on their Well-Being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amr</td>
<td>Amr lost his father and brother during the war. He writes in his journal and also spoke about the sadness he feels.</td>
<td>I am tired. I have been tired since the day I lost my brother and dad. I think about them a lot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinan</td>
<td>Kinan’s father is now resettled in another country, with the aim of one day being able to bring Kinan and his family. Kinan missed one year of school in order to work and support his family in Jordan. Kinan states that he felt depressed after his father left and feels out of place after returning to school. He notes in another discussion that he is not able to study or think about the future because he lacks a sense of security and stability until he is able to move countries and join his father.</td>
<td>I became depressed after my dad left. I left school to help support my family and worked for a year. Returning to school was very difficult and I have no desire to do anything. This year is such an ugly year. I lose my concentration entirely. I think about our travel plans. Every day I think, ‘today might be the day we get our papers’ and then I get completely distracted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yasmine</td>
<td>Yasmine expresses the sadness she feels over the loss of her father during the war. In the study, she expresses both in her diary and in conversations that she believes she is depressed and has low mental health. She notes that she is not able to make friendship or laugh like her peers, because she feels she has ‘complexities’ and mental health issues and is not the same person she once was. She feels traumatised by the journey made to Jordan and the ways in which they were not welcomed. She discusses financial hardships that affect her family and her mother’s inability to pay rent, and her mother’s constant worry and sadness.</td>
<td>I have developed mental health issues. I don’t know. I have changed. I’m angrier. I used to be normal and calm. I used to be normal. I wish I was strong and happy, but I am not. I have been through so many difficult things. My dad died in the war. Then we came here and everyone treated us so poorly. We lived in a camp and slept on the floors. I have changed. Life has changed. If we move back to Syria, there is no one. Everyone we know is in different countries across the world or they’ve died.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sima often discussed the effects of her parents’ divorce, including:
Pressure to accept marriage proposals: pressured by her mother, father, and other relative.
Lack of sense of stability due to parents being separated across countries and fighting for custody.
Her ranked well-being: 1/10

My well-being is 1. I can’t sleep and I am so sad. There is nothing good in my life.
They [parents] got divorced when she came to Jordan, and now she [mother] is thinking of getting re-married. So, what do our relatives tell her? They tell her ‘you have this daughter, let her get married’.
I am so scared of getting married. I think it’s very likely that it will happen. I am so afraid of having to leave school.
I am the only child and constantly stuck between them [parents] and their problems. They tell me to choose between him and my mom. He is in another country, we are here. What does it mean to choose?

Nour’s mother left their family and now resides in a different country. He lives with his father and sister

Saeed’s ranking of his well-being is 2/10
Saeed discusses feeling depressed, tired, and lonely

My mother left us. My life in Jordan is so sad and I am tired of living it. Life is so hard and I just want to feel the taste of life.
The thing that affects my well-being most is that we are alone here. My mom left, our relatives aren’t here, and there is no tenderness or warmth in our house anymore

Rima lost her father and brother during the war.

She ranked her well-being as 3/10
She notes that she thinks about the violence in the war, but also about the discrimination she faces.

I try to think and understand why I’m sad but I can’t figure it out. I feel like my heart is very sad but I don’t know why. I think it relates to the past, the war, and my father and brother dying. About leaving our house and living through these difficult days.
Sometimes I think that our life here makes the memories worse, the things they say about us, but I also try to tell myself that at least we are safe.

These examples portray the vitality of understanding individual cases and links between refugee students’ circumstances at home and the impact on their well-being, and therefore, learning. Across all schools, several students ranked their well-being between one to three out of 10, and their diaries and discussions revealed the effects of family separation, loss, and trauma. Single parenthood in these studies also appeared to combine with other challenges, like parental stress.
and economic insecurities, creating further risk factors for refugee students’ mental health, as also shown in a longitudinal study\textsuperscript{16} by Zwi et al. (2017). While most cases were linked to the loss of, or the separation from, family members, there were also cases where parents are not separated but are unavailable due to financial pressures. For example, the below table shows an example of Rania’s low mental health due to not having the support and care both at home, to achieve the functioning of feeling cared for and to help navigate the negative experiences she faces such as harassment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9 Financial Hardship and Refugee Children’s Mental Health</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rania</td>
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It is argued that the well-being of refugee families and children may be expected to improve over the years due to access to services such as education, such as in the research by Zwi et al. (2017) which found that most of children’s well-being reached a normal range by the third year of settlement in Australia. Yet, despite this, the same study notes that there were a small number of students who showed persistent poor social-emotional outcomes, emphasising the importance of investigating mental health and individual refugee students’ needs. Importantly, it has also been noted that studying the mental health of refugees has mostly been examined in high-income and developed countries (Reed et al., 2012). This challenges the understanding of refugees’ well-being, as the socio-political context of the hosting country is strongly correlated mental health (Porter & Haslam, 2005). This is evident throughout this study, where findings have shown that the social, political, and economic dynamics of the nation strongly impact Syrian refugee students’ experiences. Many students in this study continued to display low well-being despite being in school for at least three years.

\textsuperscript{16} The study was conducted between 2009-2013.
10.2 Stages of Displacement

Another finding of this study is that the challenges students face fall under different stages of displacement, which studies argue are important considerations when assessing refugee children’s mental health (McCarthy & Marks, 2010; Bronstein & Montgomery, 2011). The effects and trauma faced pre-displacement and during the war, the experiences of being uprooted, and the realities after settlement, create different, and possibly cumulative, stresses and limitations. The findings of this study illustrate three different stages of migration and the correlated challenges that impact students’ capability development, including: pre-displacement, displacement journey, and displacement.

The students in this study navigated these three stages without counselling, support, and in many cases, sufficient support by teachers, guardians, or parents. As a result, some discussions with students revealed that they continued to suffer some of the effects of all stages. For example, some students described how the harassment and discrimination they faced at their school and in Jordan reminded them of the trauma they faced in Jordan; Rima, who lost her father in Syria, noted that “I think a lot about what I went through in Syria, but I think about it most when someone in Jordan upsets me.” Other factors, as shown in this chapter, affected students’ mental health and whether they are able to move on from the past, such as the isolation and segregation they experienced in Jordan, the absence of parents, the lack of support or care shown by teachers, and the ways in which these linked to being away from family in Syria.

Figure 2 Students’ Reflections of Stresses Across Migration Journey
To summarise, an important part of this study was focusing on individual students’ experiences and how their personal traits and circumstances influenced their abilities to achieve functioning and positive well-being. This helped shed light on the specific needs and areas that schools and policies may be able to respond to, such as: the importance of refugee students’ age, family circumstances (separation, loss, divorce), the three stages of migration, and mental health relating to how students’ respond to these stages.

10.3 Conclusion and Limitations to Understanding Well-Being

The Activity How Do I Feel? helped summarise how students’ experiences affected their well-being. It also provided an opportunity for students to describe their well-being through their own words, ranking, and final descriptions. While this exercise provided rich findings and helped bring the findings of this study together, this last section of the study highlights the limitations of this activity.

The activity shared some of the characteristics used in Happiness approaches to well-being (discussed in literature review), which assess well-being by looking at a person’s experiences often by asking individuals how they satisfied they are with their lives using scales. The limitations of these approaches have been raised by researchers, including Robeyns (2017) who notes that while happiness is an important capability, it examines well-being through mental states and does not consider other accounts of well-being. Furthermore, accounts of well-being analysed through the notion of happiness do not take into account adaptive preferences, where individuals may state they are happy despite not having achieved (Robeyns, 2017). However, unlike these approaches, students’ well-being ranking is also compared to interviews and written statements. During the analysis process, this activity was used as only one source of data to help understand how students perceive their lives and well-being. This data was organised in an overall structure that uses the CA to understand what students’ experiences are and the factors that can influence their perceptions and wishes.

Furthermore, while the activity used a numerical approach as the first step to provide a useful overview and summary of students’ interpretations of their well-being, students were also asked to write down their wishes and feelings on small papers. These were then placed in envelopes, and students asked to reflect on their words and engage in more in-depth conversations. This process also helped raise important considerations when using numbers and words to understand students’ well-being, as this study found both discrepancies and a lack of clarity between numbers alone, and numbers when combined with words.
Chapter 11: Well-Being Within and Outside of School, Students’ Reflections and Implications

The findings presented in Part 1 and Part 2 demonstrated the clear link between students’ experiences within their school spaces and those outside. By discussing the complex and important links between the multi-layered factors affecting students’ well-being, this chapter argues that students’ well-being is shaped by factors which permeate through school spaces, reflecting on the role schools may take on in either recognising and responding to these challenges, or in continuing to replicate them. The chapter presents a discussion on how students reflected on their well-being, focusing on what these reflections mean and how factors, which are internal and external to school, shape students’ well-being.

11.1 Internal and External Factors Influencing Well-Being

The findings chapters in Part 1 and Part 2 portrayed how students’ experiences and freedoms are influenced by factors within and outside of school. This chapter interprets these findings using the CA concepts by discussing how students’ conversion of resources and development of capabilities is affected by the institutions and cultural norms that limit or enhance children’s freedoms and opportunities (Biggeri & Santi, 2012). Below, I discuss the findings of this research using the CA’s terms. I describe how these conversion factors are experienced by children, and what emerge as the most important factors that influence students’ well-being. This discussion is followed by a final description of students’ well-being according to their perceptions and the final capability list.

Resources

Students’ discussions highlighted the importance of resources and commodities, including family income, family education levels, and the resources available within their schools (such as spaces for sports, access to WASH facilities, temperature-regulating systems, the condition of desks, and access to lab or technical spaces). While the CA chooses to focus on what individuals are able to achieve and their capacities, rather than resources or commodities, Sen does not deny the importance of resources in expanding opportunities and equality. The study was not able to delve into families’ lives and backgrounds, in depth, but many students shared how these factors impacted their lives. The study also focused on the resources that are provided through formal schools for Syrian refugee students to examine how the funds and resources which have been invested into educational opportunities for Syrian refugees translated into students’ experiences, learning, and futures.
The study found that many students shared the same level of educational resources within their schools. The sampling process sought to select schools within the two spectrums: higher-income areas and lower-income areas. It is important to note that through conversations students and teachers, all areas where refugees resided appeared to experience poverty. However, there were a small number of examples where students appeared to receive more support by their parents than their peers. For example, some of students’ reflections on resources at home pointed to the importance of families’ pre-conflict social class, including income level and education level. These mainly referred to:

- Students who noted that their fathers or mothers completed higher education, and therefore valued its importance and wished for their children to complete their education, in comparison with students who noted that their family had not attained higher education and who may have placed less value on its worth.
- Students who noted that their parents were able to help them with their studies, in comparison with students who stated that no one at home was able to help them understand their lessons.
- Students who noted that their financial situations were less limited due their fathers having access to higher-paying jobs in Jordan.

The relevance of families’ resources and capabilities on students’ experiences are discussed further in section 11.2.1, while resources within schools are discussed in the next section.

Conversion factors
One of the core goals of the CA is that it sees resources as means for achieving ends (Sen, 1999), therefore recognising that they are not sufficient indicators for measuring well-being. This section provides a discussion of students’ capability sets, and the importance of conversion factors: factors that impact whether students are able to use their resources for capabilities and convert these capabilities to achieved functionings. These factors allow individuals’ potentials to translate into effective freedoms and opportunities (C. Hart & Brando, 2018). The findings of this study show that students’ well-being and capability development is shaped by numerous conversion factors, which can be summarised into: structural, cultural, psychological, interpersonal, socioeconomic, and gender. The CA defines these factors as either personal or socioenvironmental.

Personal Conversion Factors
Personal characteristics include age, sex, personal skills, and genetics and physical conditions, while socioenvironmental constraints include public policies, laws, institutions, traditions, and social norms (Hart & Brando, 2018). Some personal characteristics were deliberately limited through the sampling method, such as selecting participants attending grades 7 and 8, to understand how students reflected on their futures as they began to consider their prospects and opportunities towards the final years of their secondary education. Similarly, gender emerged as a fundamental conversion factor in this study, showing a distinguishing difference in how boys and girls convert their resources and reflect on their futures. However, as shown throughout this chapter, the experiences of girls and boys differ due to the dictating social and cultural conversion factors.

Socioenvironmental Conversion Factors
Socioenvironmental conversion factors, and their impact on students’ well-being, learning, and perceptions of their futures comprise a large and pressing part of this study. This study mainly focuses on the conversion factors that take place within school spaces. However, the findings revealed that efforts to understand the process by which schools limit or strengthen refugee students’ capability set, cannot be fair and comprehensive if they exclude other influencing conversion factors that may impact school establishments, teachers, and students. These include a nation’s policies on migration, its economy, and other cultural and social influencers. I provide an overview of the factors affecting Syrian refugee students, as shown in Part 1 and Part 2, in the Figure 3 below.
The process is presented in the figure above, which places refugee students’ well-being within a system of overarching and nested factors that were found to be relevant in Jordan. By analysing students’ perceptions in relation to these factors, this study provides a unique focus on well-being in relation to the links between these systems. In Chapter 2, the Context chapter, I discussed the political, social, geographical, and economic challenges facing Syrian refugees in Jordan. By speaking to students, this study showed how refugee adolescents reflected on these conversion factors, and how each conversion factor shaped their perceptions of self, their learning experiences, their aspirations, and their well-being both independently and in combination with other factors. To discuss these findings, the factors are grouped in this chapter under the following categories: structural, socioeconomic, cultural, psychological, and relational.

**Structural factors**

The structures in Jordan, which existed prior to the Syrian conflict and were overstretched following the influx of Syrian refugees, commonly entered students’ conversations. These structures relate to the economy, the educational systems, and the migration laws of the country. For example, as seen in Figure 3, students’ experiences are shaped by the education system’s resources and strategies, such as the training of teachers, the segregation of shifts, the timing of
school hours, and the safety and cleanliness of school spaces. Furthermore, students reflected on governmental policies that impact their families and their own well-being, such as restricted mobility and economic circumstances.

Socioeconomic factors
Most students shed light on the effects of socioeconomic factors and the changes they have gone through during their experiences of forced migration, as seen in Part 2 Chapter 9. These included discussing the limited spaces they have at home, the poverty at large in the country, and the severity of poverty for refugees, including the hardships that face their families to find employment and afford rent and living costs. These examples were shared in Part 2, Chapter 9. These factors appeared to affect how students perceived their own prospects in the future, in which education plays a role in helping refugees challenge adversities or conform to them (Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Magee & Pherali, 2017). For example, the discussions showed that students’ learning and well-being were limited by the effects of limited spaces, lack of privacy, unavailable parents, and risks of being forced to accept negative coping mechanisms such as early marriage. In other examples, students held onto the promise of education, which some referred to as “a weapon”, and aspired to use it to defy their circumstances.

Cultural factors
Students also discussed the impact of cultural factors, including: practices and limitations related to gender, religion, and social practices. These included factors which they deemed important to them, as well as factors which may limit their well-being, and they included marriage customs, gender roles, the ability to practice their religion and to spend religious holidays with family, and values held relating to families and relationships. The cultural practices and norms within students’ schools also emerged as conversion factors, including the form of pedagogy, teachers’ attitudes and practices, the use of corporal punishment, and involving students’ in responsibilities at school.

Psychological factors
The findings of this study also portrayed the feelings, emotions and mental states that refugee children may experience through the stages of forced displacement. Students recalled the memories of the violence they witnessed in Syria, the effects of losing family members or friends, being separated from family, and losing out on education. The later stages of displacement, including finding shelter in Jordan, enrolling in schools, and participating in new
communities, were also represented in students’ reflections and experiences. Importantly, these anecdotes revealed the importance of addressing mental health needs, as seen in Chapter 10.

**Relational factors**

The importance of belonging, care strong bonds, family, and friendships comprised a large part of this study. Students reflected on the relationships that affected their well-being positively: including their relationship with family, friendships at schools and outside of school, and bonding with teachers and members of all communities. The study demonstrated the negative effects of harassment, bullying, and discrimination on students’ abilities to achieve these capabilities. Furthermore, a chapter in Part 2, Family and Being Cared For, also demonstrated students’ experiences of changes and disruption in parental and familial relationships.

The conversion factors detailed in the above section influences students’ capability sets and what functionings students may achieve. By speaking to students, this study sought to understand how students used their schooling experiences to reflect on the surrounding conversion factors and to explore which values students held for their lives, and why. In positive views of schooling, education allows students to select these values through a process of reflection and critical thinking (M. Walker, 2006). The CA stresses the importance of understanding the influences of social arrangements, not only the kind of life individuals lead, but also on the options individuals choose from within their capability set as a result. This allows for upfront analysis of the impact of social arrangements, policies, forms of discrimination, and cultural norms (Robeyns, 2003b). It emphasises the importance of evaluating whether individuals have chosen a life they have reason to value by understanding whether the selection process has involved the freedom to think and reflect (Walker, 2006; Sen, 2009). Thus, the study sought to not only understand what students’ expectations for the futures are, but also to examine the extent to which they have the support and freedom to reflect on their opportunities.

Table 10 below provides a summary of the factors influencing students’ decisions and freedoms. First, it provides a list of the capabilities which students have identified as important. Secondly, it provides which resources and factors have help expand these capabilities, and which factors, internal and external to schools, limit the conversion of capabilities.
Table 10 Syrian Refugee Students’ Capability Expansion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capability Category</th>
<th>Desired Functioning</th>
<th>Resources and Capability Expansion</th>
<th>Limiting External Conversion Factors</th>
<th>Limiting Factors Internal to School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Learn**           | To pass exams and complete secondary education | Free access to education and resources within schools | Cost of transportation  
Curriculum new to students  
Catching up after disrupted education  
Lack of parental support at home  
School absence due to poverty, informal labour, domestic responsibilities, marriage  
Reduced motivation due to poverty, prospects of resettlement, and lack of opportunities in Jordan | Teachers lacking adequate training and skills  
Short teaching time  
Overcrowded classrooms  
Lack of student-centred pedagogy, including different forms of learning and arts-based subjects |
| **Bodily integrity**| To be safe from corporal punishment  
To be free from violence in and around schools by other students  
To be free from sexual assault  
To access quality WASH facilities | Formal school spaces, most close to students' homes | Physical violence outside of schools due to social tensions  
Sexual harassment on the way to school  
Violence and sexual harassment in neighbourhoods | Use of corporal punishment  
Bullying and violence within classrooms (mainly boys’ schools)  
Lack of hygienic facilities at schools |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love and care</th>
<th>To be cared about by family, teachers, and friends</th>
<th>Policies allowing families to stay together</th>
<th>Disrupted families: migration, death, separation</th>
<th>Harassment and discrimination by teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Access to teachers</td>
<td>Reduced parental support and caring: parents suffering from stress, depression, and pressure due to trauma, loss, and financial insecurity</td>
<td>Negative interactions between teachers and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Access to spaces to make friends</td>
<td>Separation from relatives and friends</td>
<td>Teachers’ lack of awareness of students’ needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bullying and harassment between Syrian and Jordanian students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social relations</td>
<td>To form friendships with all communities in the nation</td>
<td>Schools providing access to friends</td>
<td>Neighbourhoods do not provide safe interactions between two communities</td>
<td>Segregation between school shifts, unable to meet and interact with Jordanians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To know others and to communicate</td>
<td>Bonds with other Syrian refugee students helped form strong friendships</td>
<td>Separation from family and friends</td>
<td>Instances of negative interactions between teachers and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To see relatives and family and enjoy social interactions</td>
<td>In one school, opportunity to meet Jordanians through a programme</td>
<td>Instances of lack of positive interactions between communities</td>
<td>Reduced time with family due to double-shift hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reduced quality time with family due to financial pressures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect and recognition</td>
<td>To be respected, to be dignified, to be protected from discrimination and bullying</td>
<td>Access to friends and teachers who show respect and recognise individuals</td>
<td>Children feel they are known as ‘refugees’ and not recognised as individuals due to perceptions of forced migrants</td>
<td>Verbal discrimination and abuse by teachers displaying lack of respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Respect and recognition through friendship</td>
<td>Lack of respect by communities through harassment and bullying outside of school</td>
<td>Many teachers appear to sow lack understanding of refugee students' individual needs and recognition of individual potential/needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of policies and rights to be recognised and respected through opportunities to access employment</td>
<td>Lack of respect by school staff and management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Verbal abuse by students outside of school between shifts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Free from economic and non-economic exploitation** | To be free from domestic responsibilities, early marriage, labour inside and outside of school | Access to education which may reduce likelihood of exploitation | Engaging in informal work due to financial pressures  
Pressure to accept early marriage as a negative coping mechanism | Students being asked to clean school grounds, classrooms, and being asked to help sell items at canteen as well as engage in tidying school |
| **Participation** | To be able to participate in society by contributing to it meaningfully, to be able to influence, to be remembered | Access to education which increases chances of continuing studies  
Access to schools which increase participation in society | Policies banning refugees from engaging in work  
Financial hardships which reduce students’ aspirations to continue education and pursue careers | Lack of opportunities to engage in Jordanian community, including segregated schools  
Lack of opportunities to be known by teachers and Jordanian students  
Lack of ability to join activities such as school trips |
| **Aspiration** | To have the support and right to aspire, to think positively about the future, to reflect critically on opportunities and prospects | Access to education  
Access to teachers who may influence students’ aspiration development positivity  
Parental support may enhance students’ aspiration  
Individual agency | Poverty and reduced aspiration as a result of adapted preferences  
Lack of opportunities for work and education in Jordan  
Lack of support from family members  
Effects of discrimination by communities on aspiration, due to lack of belonging. | Poor marks and reduced learning due to effects of school disruption and migration  
Lack of support and encouragement from teachers  
Lack of opportunities to continue higher education |
| **Practical reason and development of individuality** | To be able to reflect and think critically about choices, to be able to have freedom to choose to practice religion, to travel, to form and practice hobbies, to choose country for resettlement, to choose whom to marry, to engage in activities | Faith and religion important part of culture and schools  
Some communities appeared to have activities such as reading club | Lack of freedom of mobility due to migration policies  
Pressure of marriage arrangements due to poverty  
Lack of spaces and finances for children to develop hobbies and additional skills | Lack of opportunities to engage in extracurricular activities and subjects  
School trips not allowed  
Lack of school spaces and hours for sports and arts |
| Mental health | Schools helped some students begin to move away from the past.  
Teachers who may provide support for children.  
Friendships, especially between Syrians, appeared to help students. | Lack of finances for counselling and therapy for children affected by trauma.  
Insecurity, lack of stability, financial hardships affect families and children’s mental health.  
Effects of violence and discrimination within the community.  
Mental health remaining a taboo subject in Jordan. | Effects of violence and discrimination by teachers and students on children’s well-being.  
Lack of teacher training to help identify students’ mental health needs. |
|---|---|---|---|
| To have voice | To share experiences, to give opinions, to speak about their rights, and to be heard.  
Meeting others through school.  
Engaging in research. | Labelling of ‘refugee’ leaves individuals unheard and Othered.  
Reduced parental support and time. | Systems and teachers not permitting individuality, needs, and voices of students. |
This section summarised the factors discussed in Chapter 2, *Context*, in relation to students’ reflections on how these impact their well-being according to the findings presented in Part 1 and Part 2. It argued that students’ well-being and learning is shaped by factors existing across multiple systems: structural, socioeconomic, cultural, psychological, and relational, all of which permeate into classroom settings and learning experiences.

11.2 The Influence of the Well-Being of Teachers and Carers

The above findings also revealed the importance of understanding the well-being of those caring for refugee children. While the study is driven by the importance of understanding refugee children’s well-being, the findings revealed the imperative role that the well-being of children’s parents/guardians and teachers enacts in supporting children’s capability conversion. As highlighted by Kellock & Lawthom (2011), children’s abilities to convert capabilities is not independent of the decisions their parents and teachers make. This study was able to identify particular examples and challenges posed by families and teachers that innately impacted refugee children’s well-being.

11.2.1 Families’ Well-Being

The relationship between family and children’s well-being is well-established: well-being is seen as “directly related to their families’ ability to provide their essential physical, emotional, and social needs” (Pollard & Lee, 2002, p.65). In a review of literature on the indicators of child well-being, in *Positive Indicators of Child Well-Being: A Conceptual Framework, Measures, and Methodological Issues*, positive relationships with families emerges as an essential indicator for well-being, including communication, support, warmth and care, and quality time (Lippman et al., 2011). In a document post-conflict settings, Miller & Affolter (2002, p.7) also note that “the child’s well-being is embedded in the welfare of his or her family; parents’ well-being is embedded in income-earning opportunities and relationships with peers; the efficacy of local institutions is embedded in regional networks and national policy environments; etc.” I contribute to this important area of research further by sharing how families’ well-being in refugee contexts, where these factors are disrupted, lost, or changed, influence children who are forced to respond to these new dynamics. For example, refugee students described their relationships with their parents and siblings to have drastically changed since moving to Jordan, and that due to financial, social, and mental stresses, students were no longer able to experience the same level of care, support, and leisure time they once had with them. Furthermore, the study displayed the importance of understanding parents’ well-being and its effect on their ability to enhance their children’s well-being. For example,
numerous students expressed that they felt anxious, afraid, and sad because they witnessed the worry and hardships that their families face, and the effects on their parents’ emotional and mental health. Students raised an additional concern when reflecting on how their parents’ expectations of their children’s futures had changed; some female students noted that their parents no longer rejected the idea of early marriage, while several male students were asked to engage in informal work. The decisions made by parents, such as to seek further resettlement options, to separate, to consider negative coping mechanisms, and to pass responsibilities on to children, were also described to affect students’ abilities to attend school and focus on their studies.

These examples portray two simultaneous challenges: children’s well-being and parents’ well-being. Parents’ mental health and abilities to cope with their lives in Jordan was very commonly mentioned by students, as seen in Part 2, where students noted that their parents appeared sad, depressed, afraid, or worried. When discussing students’ current and expected future ranking of well-being during the last activity, many noted that being able to see their parents smile, happy, financially comfortable, and safe are some of the key perquisites for achieving their own well-being. Thus, families’ well-being appeared to affect several of students’ capabilities, including: to learn and aspire, to be cared about, to have social relations, to be free from economic and non-economic exploitation, to move beyond the past and achieve positive mental well-being.

Table 11 below summarises some of the students’ key reflections on how their families’ well-being influenced their own capability expansion and well-being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Families’ Capabilities</th>
<th>Desired Functioning</th>
<th>Reduced Functioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>To be financially secure, to feel safe, to be able to protect family</td>
<td>Syrian refugees not given work permits, leaving families vulnerable to many threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>To be able to travel freely within and outside of Jordan, to be able to reunite with family and friends, to be able to resettle</td>
<td>Policies preventing refugees from traveling outside of registered area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental well-being</td>
<td>To have positive mental health, to be able to deal with stress, separation, and hardships</td>
<td>Extreme levels of financial hardships, loss, separation, and conflict-related trauma appear to affect a high number of students’ parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social relations</td>
<td>To be able to engage in society, contributing meaningfully</td>
<td>Lack of opportunities to engage in labour market, to participate with Jordanian communities socially due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The study also found that particular disruptions in a family’s well-being and dynamic may affect a child’s well-being, such as divorce, loss of parent or sibling, and separation of family due to plans for resettlement. These factors have been noted in other studies within contexts of forced displacement, such as the paper by Zwi et al., (2017) which argues that single parenthood, family disruption, parental stress, and economic insecurities form risk factors against the well-being of refugee children. These findings highlight the need to understand how to identify and address the needs of children who may be more vulnerable, discussed in Chapter 10. Similar experiences of the disruption of family cohesion, security, and support and the negative impact inflicted on refugee children’s well-being were reported in a review by McFarlane et al., (2010), which found low family well-being as one of the key disturbances for refugee children’s well-being. Furthermore, a study by DeJong et al. (2017), which examined the well-being of Syrian refugee adolescents in Lebanon, found that stresses which parents influenced adolescents’ abilities to receive support. The authors also raised the importance of enhancing support for refugee families. However, this area of research is extremely scarce, and the findings of the report and this study highlight the importance of enriching our understanding of the link between parents’ mental health and children’s abilities to expand their capabilities in refugee contexts.

11.2.2 Teachers’ Well-Being
Teachers’ experiences and well-being in refugee contexts appears less dominant in literature compared to children’s and parents’ well-being, despite its important influence on the lives of both teachers and children. The role of teachers is magnified within contexts affected by conflict, where children may be in further need of support due to the disruption of family dynamics (Kirk & Winthrop, 2007). The need to increase funding for teacher training in refugee contexts has been heavily focused on in recent global strategies, in order to help teachers respond to cultural, linguistic, learning, and emotional needs (Dryden-Peterson, 2011; UNHCR, 2012). In a recent review, Teachers of Refugees: A Review of the Literature, the authors (Richardson et al., 2018) found that most research focuses on children and youth in emergency contexts, and argued that little data exists on teachers teaching refugees outside of the camp system. There is also little data available on the experiences and voices of teachers in refugee contexts, and evaluation of their needs and

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17 The authors presented a framework for the development of psychosocial indicators of well-being for refugee children by reviewing research and drawing on a study that conducted qualitative interviews with 26 participants (refugee children, refugee parents, and counsellor-advocates) in Australia.
well-being, and a comprehensive understanding of the link between teachers’ and children’s well-being in refugee contexts remains limited in research.

In this study, teachers’ states of well-being and capabilities appeared to play significant impact on whether school spaces enhance students’ capability sets. For example, the findings in Part 1, Chapter 6, highlighted that students were aware of their teachers’ unique contracts, which lacked the same level of security and financial benefits afforded to other teachers in Jordan, seeing this as one of the reasons they were treated poorly by some of their teachers. While this study did not focus on teachers’ capabilities and well-being, it was evident through discussions with both students and teachers that teachers lacked the training and support needed to respond to Syrian refugee students’ needs. Teachers’ capabilities appear restricted by long-enforced conditions in Jordan, such as poor teacher training and teacher-centred pedagogy, as well as regulations applied after the influx of refugees, including teachers being hired without appropriate degree and training specialties and on less secure contracts. Table 12 below summarises teachers’ capabilities, as viewed in this study through students’ and teachers’ reflections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher’s Capabilities</th>
<th>Desired Functioning</th>
<th>Reduced Functioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support</strong></td>
<td>To be given the skills and training to meet refugee students’ learning needs in these contexts</td>
<td>Lack of adequate training, Not teaching area of specialty, Lack of previous teaching experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Being able to feel cared about by policies, ministry of education, teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security</strong></td>
<td>Having the financial stability and security, having incentive to teach well</td>
<td>Being employed on short-term contracts without benefits, Lack of stability and training, reducing security and confidence, Not being able to respond to students’ needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mental well-being</strong></td>
<td>Feeling positive, content, and driven to teach</td>
<td>Feeling overwhelmed due to high demands, Lack of opportunities to engage with teachers outside of afternoon shift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social relations</strong></td>
<td>To feel confident and linked with the community, to have positive relationship with students, teachers, and parents</td>
<td>Lack of opportunities to engage with teachers outside of afternoon shift, High responsibilities creating negative interactions between teachers and students, Lack of support by parents reducing interactions between teachers and students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To conclude, this study found that children’s well-being may be greatly impacted by their teachers and parents or guardians. The stresses, needs, and challenges that face parents and teachers in refugee contexts have been addressed in literature, yet the exact relation between these factors and the effects on their own well-being and capacities and, in turn, the development of children’s capabilities and well-being, remains largely understudied.

11.3 Understanding Students’ Well-Being and Functionings
The sections above have described what capabilities students conceptualised as important to them, and what aspects of schools, their spaces, and their lives appear to negatively or positively impact whether they will achieve their valued functionings. These next sections provide important points of consideration that must be acknowledged when examining students’ well-being, including the importance of time, individual aspiration, and disrupted processes.

11.3.1 Time and Process of Becoming
One of the key contributions of this study finds its exploration of time as an important concept when looking at what children have been able to achieve, and which capabilities students identify as more relevant. This is raised in Comim’s paper (2003), arguing that the link between time and an individual’s becoming leads to different valued capabilities at different stages of life, for children express different values at different age groups (Walker, 2006). Comim (2003) argues that adding Becoming as a third category to the CA, with beings and doings, is a valuable exercise to understand how age plays part in the process of decision-making and the extent to which children can reflect on the options of lives they may wish to lead.

This study has shown that adolescence is a particularly interesting and important age period, and engaging with refugee students at this age helps provide a distinct and valuable insight into the particular challenges faced during these years. This study intended to understand students’ values common dropout age of Syrian refugee students in Jordan, acknowledging that these values are continually changing and being reshaped. These changes in values are reflected throughout this study, where students expressed how their own capabilities and values were changing within matters of months. For example, the pressure of early marriage as female appeared to increase around adolescence, as seen in students’ discussions, such as “first, I used to tell them ‘no, I want to keep studying’ but now I am thinking about it [marriage] too” (Rania) or “personally, I want to become doctor and help people, but I don’t think it will happen because I’m going to get engaged” (Sidana). Furthermore, students in this study were just beginning to reflect on their opportunities to access higher education and the labour market are important areas of this study, many of whom
noted that they were in the process of deciding whether they would be continuing their secondary education, engaging in informal work, or considering early marriage.

These examples portray how socioenvironmental factors and pressures may limit capability development differently within specific age groups, which educational policy-making and planning may be able to respond to by seeking to address the specific challenges that face students of specific age groups and backgrounds. Furthermore, the process also allows for an enhanced understanding of how gender can affect children’s experiences and capability development at different points in time.

11.3.2 Adaptive Preferences, Agency, and Aspirations
Adapted preferences emerge here as an important notion: how the development of identity and individuals’ choices are influenced by external circumstances. As children begin to face new challenges, such as in examples where female students are pressured to accept forced marriage, their perceptions of their futures may be limited to what society informs them is possible. The CA recognises that external circumstances can shape what individuals hope for and influence what they perceive as possible, therefore informing or deforming their choices. This leads to adapted preferences (Nussbaum, 2001). Adapted preferences may limit individuals’ capacities if they are not able reflect on and reasonably choose the kind of life that leads to flourishing (Sen, 1999; Teschl & Comim, 2005). For example, as Nussbaum notes, the desire to pursue a college education, ‘is not a brute fact of Nature but is shaped by what you think about yourself, what amount of self-esteem you are led to have by your society, what your society tells you about the opportunities that are likely to be open to you, and so on.’ (Walker, 2003, p.172). This process of adaptive preferences place schools in an important position. Educational institutions can provide or limit opportunities for children to accept or contest external inequalities, schools being “places both of freedom and unfreedom” as they influence students’ identity development (Walker, 2006, p.168; Huppert & So, 2013).

The findings of this study showed that forced displacement can disrupt and change the values that children originally held, influencing the becoming of children as they enter adolescence and adulthood. There are points in this study where discussion with students showed that their capability development was disrupted by adaptive preferences. For example, in the above examples, pressure to consider early marriage is evident in numerous external factors, including teachers’ perceptions as seen in how students’ self-perceptions are influenced by the words of their teachers and communities. In contrast, several powerful examples in this study reflected one of
the CA’s core concepts: agency. With the recognition that “the identity of an individual human being is not simply determined by what they are, but also by the capacity to transform themselves” (Padron & Ballet, 2011, p.165), agency emerges as an important notion that can guide identity formation and the expansion of capability conversion. This study found that while most students resigned themselves to the circumstances that limited their capabilities, some resisted these environments and sought to challenge their boundaries.

Table 13 below summarises some key examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspiration</th>
<th>Circumstances</th>
<th>Positive Perceptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nearly all children stated that they strongly wished to complete their education and one day have a profession, but many also expressed that they did not think this was a realistic expectation and anticipated dropping out of school instead.</td>
<td>Some students were achieving high marks and were determined to continue their education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Moving beyond the past | Many students expressed symptoms of poor mental health resulting from the loss and violence they experience throughout the war. Most students had lost family members or friends and witnessed violence. | Some students used their pre-settlement experiences to enhance their sense of resilience. As shown in Part 2, several students wished to grow up to contribute positively to the world through knowledge, philanthropic work, and promoting justice. |

| To be free from exploitation | Due to poverty, social norms, and challenging living conditions, many female participants were experiencing pressure to consider early marriage. Several students were already engaged or involved in work. | Some students sought to challenge these limitations within their homes and refuse these arrangements. Some refused early marriage, resisted pressures, and many sought to remain in schools despite having jobs. |

It is important to also note that agency itself may also be enhanced or limited. In the above examples, students’ agency may have been enhanced through advantaged resources or personal traits, additional support from parents or teachers, or interactions with friends. While these examples show the positive impact of agency on challenging negative environments, they also highlight the need for schools and communities to seek to enhance this notion within students as a form of empowerment (Biggeri & Libanora, 2011).
11.3.3 Resilience and Enhancing Capabilities
As shown in the literature review, approaches to well-being vary and often draw on either hedonistic or eudemonistic theories. As the CA allows for multiple well-being accounts to emerge due to its openness (Robeyns, 2017), the findings helped illustrate the complexities of refugee students’ experiences. The CA also represented the importance of functionings being contingent on achieving more basic ones (Uhm et al., 2011), drawing upon the importance of the hierarchical arrangement of human needs or how “one need usually rests on the prior satisfaction of another, more pre-potent need” (Maslow, 1943, p.370). For example, the importance of income and needs-based theories is evident in students’ discussions relating to the worry, insecurity, and urgency that they experience due to unemployment and poor finances. Many students described being “uncomfortable” in their lives due to financial hardships, and noted that the combination of their temporary status as refugees in Jordan, the poverty they experienced, and the limited economic opportunities for them impacted their likelihood of continuing education.

However, the findings also presented a sense of constant tug and pull between limited resources and hardships, and achieving capabilities. Despite limitations, most students were able to use their limited spaces to form friendships, to create games and play within their school settings, to seek to learn, prepare for their exams, attend their lessons, and imagine careers they may one day pursue. They were interested in being happy, being free of sadness, being able to achieve freedom to be mobile, belong, have career plans, being seen as children, and contributing positively to the world and helping others. Thus, students were able to realise their aspirations and think beyond basic needs and capabilities. The importance of understanding refugee students’ development is presented in a study in Thailand by Thoresen et al., (2016), where the authors find that while refugee families’ needs linked more clearly to the basic or lower needs shown by Maslow’s hierarchy, refugee children participating in the research recognised the importance of these factors but placed more emphasis on the importance of needs pertaining to self-realisation, including to learn, gain confidence, to live without racism, to be happy, and to have dreams and aspirations. Similarly, a study by Marshall (2015) shows that despite the economic and spatial limitations that challenge Palestinian children residing in camps, children, mainly girls, used these limitations as a drive to achieve educational attainment and seek for further mobility and opportunities.

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18 The study sought to understand how parents and children examined children’s well-being and needs. It interviewed 20 refugee children between the ages 12-17, 16 parents/guardians, and 20 key informants.
19 Research was conducted between 2010-2012 with girls and boys aged 10-13 residing in the Balata Camp. Students’ experiences of their spaces, mobility, and daily practices were examined using creative activities, focus groups, journaling, and photo-related methods.
These examples in literature and through this study show that though the basic needs of refugees and displaced children may become disrupted and not fully achieved, children may use the limited resources available to them to seek to achieve basic-level capabilities. This process can be described as resilience (Thoresen et al., 2016). A small but growing area of literature argues that despite the negative experiences facing displaced persons, a large percentage of refugee children appear resilient or able to overcome the impact of adversities (Bronstein & Montgomery, 2011; Mohamed & Thomas, 2017). Similar to the conversion factors shown in my research, these studies have also highlighted that resilience is often linked with protective and risk factors which may influence how children respond to adversities, including the level that children are able to have freedom to practice religion, live amongst family, and experience peer support, belonging, and educational attainment and positive school experiences (see Bronstein & Montgomery, 2011; Majumder, 2016; Mohamed & Thomas, 2017; Zwi et al., 2017). The importance of faith and hope emerged in students’ descriptions of their future well-being, where most students described hoping to reach a well-being around 8-9 in the future. Students’ discussions of hope revealed the importance of faith to them and its place in helping them remain more positive about the future. This is resembled in a study by Majumder (2016) which found that refugee participants in the study cited faith as an important factor to increasing mental well-being and resilience. The importance of being able to practice religion is also evident this study, where several students noted that being a part of Qur’an schools, memorising the Qur’an, and learning more about religion after school (usually classes organised by their neighbourhood) provided a sense of relief, pride, and accomplishment.

A number of other protective factors also appeared to help students remain hopeful, such as friendship, the importance of education, and being with family. These emerged in students’ reflections where having access to friends, education, and family, allowed students to challenge their limitations and to aspire for better futures. When discussing the future, students reflected on the importance of achieving functionings that include: belonging and participating, having the rights and resources to complete education, accessing opportunities for employment, achieving positive mental health, and seeing their families live happily and in more comfortable financial and social situations.

11.4 Role of Education in Refugee ‘Realities’
While the benefits of enhancing aspiration and agency are important, it is important to consider Nussbaum’s (2001) argument which suggests that adapting aspirations to meet reality can also be positive, giving the example of an individual who comes to accept that they may not be the best
sports player in the world. Enhancing aspiration for refugee children is coupled with harsh realities and statistics representing their opportunities. Only 23 per cent of refugees attend secondary education and only one per cent attend university (UNHCR, 2018). These bleak perceptions of the future are evident in both teachers and students’ reflections, and conversations suggest that many had adapted their preferences to accept and internalise these realities. However, schools are spaces that can challenge realities and contribute towards equity, human rights, and social justice, or reinforce inequality (Magee & Pherali, 2017; Datzberger & Le Mat, 2019). Studies focusing on empowerment and poverty see hope and aspirations as essential concepts to battling, and potentially overcoming, the traps of poverty and negative cycles (Hage, 2001; Appadurai, 2004). In these studies, agency is seen as a capability that can deliberately be enhanced by nurturing the capacity to aspire (Appadurai, 2004; Conradie, 2013). At the most basic level, education can nurture aspiration and agency by giving individuals access to knowledge and skill development and opportunities to imagine possibilities for their futures (Walker, 2006). However, in contexts affected by conflict, Winthrop & Kirk (2008, p.659) argue that beyond academic achievement, “schooling should act as a forum to exercise the child’s own agency”. Similarly, Appadurai (2004) argues that aspiration must also be embedded into our culture and strengthened through communities to help push individuals to contest their conditions.

As seen in this study, this task is challenged by the limiting surrounding social, political, and economic structures in which the education systems are embedded (Bellino & Dryden-Peterson, 2018; Datzberger & Le Mat, 2019). However, small but significant examples in this study, including being able to express voice through this research, positive interactions between teachers and students, opportunities to meet Jordanian students in safe spaces, and access to extracurricular activities appeared to create positive and empowering changes in students’ some of students’ perceptions.

To conclude, this thesis shows that education can play a role in diminishing or enhancing students’ agency and aspirations. Crucially, capabilities and their relevance vary according to students’ ages. This study showed that as students entered adolescence, they began to reflect on their futures and were exposed to pressures relating to early marriage and labour, some of whom considered dropping out of education due to the formation of adapted preferences. These findings shed light on the importance of understanding the process of capability development for students and the role of education in positively contributing to its expansion.
11.5 The Capability List: Students’ Reflections on Values, Spaces, and Relationships

Finally, and while being mindful of the complex process of capability development and functioning achievement that has been described in this chapter thus far, this section provides a summary of the final capabilities that students identified as essential to their well-being.

1. **Learning**
   To be able to learn after the disruption of education, to be able to aspire, to complete secondary education and pursue higher education, to be able to understand the lessons, to be able to pass exams, to be able to learn within inclusive and safe environments.

2. **Bodily integrity and safety**
   To be safe from corporal punishment, to be free from sexual harassment and violence, to be free from violence and bullying, and to be able to access clean bathrooms and have appropriate heating and cooling techniques.

3. **Love and care**
   To be able to receive and give love and care, to be cared for by teachers, to be able to spend quality time with family, to be able to feel loved for by parents, to be able to communicate and see family, and to be protected.

4. **Social relations and belonging**
   To be able to have a friend, to be able to meet children from all communities, to be able to belong within the community, to not be judged, and to be seen as equal, and to form positive relationships with teachers.

5. **Being Free from Economic and Non-Economic Exploitation**
   To be free from domestic responsibilities, to be free from early marriage, and to be free from informal work, and to be free from labour at school.

6. **Respect and recognition**
   To be respected, to be free of physical and verbal abuse, to be treated with dignity, to be respected at schools by accessing clean spaces, to be able to be confident and to feel self-worth, and to be recognised as children.

7. **Mental health**
   To be able to be mentally healthy, to not be scared, to not be anxious, to not remember violence, to not be depressed, to sleep well, to not worry about family and others, to be able to be free from the trauma presented by the past.

8. **Aspiration**
   To have the support and right to aspire, to think positively about the future, to be able to reflect on opportunities, and to be able to think about careers.
9. **Participation**
To be able to participate in society by contributing to public and social life, to have positive influence, and to be remembered.

10. **Leisure**
To be able to engage in leisure activities, to be able to practice hobbies, to be able to engage in school trips, to be able to engage in extracurricular and other activities in schools like sports and arts.

11. **Practical Reason and Choice**
To be able to reflect on the practice of faith, to have freedom for mobility and to travel, to have freedom to think and reflect on choice of home and settlement, and to choose whom to marry.

12. **Voice**
To speak out, to share experiences, and to spread their messages, to be able to speak for their rights.

These capabilities shared some of the traits that emerged in other studies undertaken with children using the CA, especially those presented in the books by Unterhalter & Walker (2007) and Biggeri et al., (2011). For example, studies which took place in disadvantaged contexts, such as street children’s capabilities by Anich et al., (2011) and gender inequality by Raynor (2007), shared some discussions on how limited capabilities affect children’s well-being and how students’ perceive capabilities, including being cared for by parents, being safe, affiliation, and participating. Many of the capabilities that researchers appeared to use in these studies, such as the initial codified list developed for the study by Biggeri (2007) were extremely relevant to this study. Furthermore, the final list in this study shares elements of Nussbaum’s (2001) list of ten human functional capabilities, mainly: affiliation, bodily integrity, emotions, play, practical reasoning, and control over one’s own environment. While there are many debates on what constitutes children’s well-being (Camfield et al., 2009), the overlap in capabilities across studies with children is not surprising when taking stock of the broad agreement on the indicators which are considered essential to the quality and rights of children’s lives.

However, the list of capabilities in this study provides two important contributions: it conceptualises these capabilities through refugee students’ experiences in developing countries, and links these capabilities to the fundamental role that schools can play in responding to the internal and external factors. As attempted by others, such in the study by Kellock & Lawthom
(2011), this research defined these capabilities through students’ own conceptualisations. By doing so, the capabilities shown in this study provide an enriched understanding of Syrian refugee students’ particular needs and experiences within the context of Jordan. For example, while freedom from economic and non-economic exploitation has been identified as a capability for children by other studies, its meaning for this study relates to the effects of forced migration on children’s likelihood of engaging in domestic or informal work, as well as the labour students are involved in at school due to poor schooling practices and the lack of staffing in the double-shift system. This creates opportunities for interventions, policy and research to address particular issues in these contexts. Using Sen’s approach to understand refugee students’ individual and collective needs, rather than a basic list such as Nussbaum’s, therefore provided a useful and powerful approach to studying refugee children’s well-being in-depth. This approach also helped highlight the importance of considering the relevance of capabilities according to age, and how these capabilities may shift according to time, gender, and culture (Biggeri, 2007; Camfield et al., 2009).
Chapter 12: The Well-Being of Syrian Refugee Students in Jordan, Conclusions and Reflections

Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted.

Edward Said, 2000

This study has sought to share the experiences of Syrian refugee students, who have been forced to live in exile in Jordan for most of their young lives. It shared their voices and their experiences in schools and in Jordan; the reflections of children only a few years away from becoming adults and leading lives in spaces they cannot identify as their own. Through students’ anecdotes, teachers’ reflections, and my own observations, this study illustrated how Syrian refugee children experience their school settings in Jordan, and the importance of thinking about the lived experiences of refugee students. The aim of this study is to encourage researchers and policymakers to rethink the temporary structures and solutions devised for refugee students, and how they influence refugee children’s shaping of self, especially against others, and well-being. This chapter presents final conclusions and reflections, with closing remarks on the considerations that educational planning and assessment must examine in contexts of protracted refugee crises.

12.1 Summary of Results
The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that are important for enhancing refugee students’ well-being within protracted refugee contexts in developing countries like Jordan, and to understand how these factors are strengthened or reduced through the spaces that students navigate within and outside schools. The study sought to answer these questions:

RQ: Which capabilities do students identify as most important, positive, or detrimental to the development of their well-being?

1.1 How do school settings help shape, enhance, or limit these values, and how are students’ capability development affected as a result?

1.2 How do factors around and outside of school settings interact with their capability development within schools?
Through students’ own perceptions and reflections of their experiences, the study helped identify students’ needs and values, and the influences of their social arrangements on achieving these factors. The study found that students’ well-being was shaped by factors that are both internal and external schools, but found that schools play a significant part in responding to these intrinsically intertwined conversion factors. These are summarised in Table 14 below.

**Table 14 Factors Influencing Students’ Well-Being**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors Within Schools</th>
<th>Factors Outside Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The types of relationship students have with their relationships, and whether students are able to have positive and personal interactions with their teachers, receive support to help learn, be engaged, be respected, to be encouraged to enhance aspirations, to be safe, and to have voice.</td>
<td>The financial circumstances resulting from forced displacement impact whether students are able to learn, to aspire, to be safe from economic and non-economic exploitation, and to achieve positive mental health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The practices that exist within schools, whether they are respectful, discriminatory, violent, or exploit students.</td>
<td>Life at home and families’ well-being as a result of conflict and displacement, such as loss, separation, psychosocial well-being, plans for resettlement, which influences whether students are able to feel cared for, to have leisure time, to be supported in their learning, to belong, and to achieve positive mental health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The structures within schools, and whether the hours, days, timetables allow for enough learning support, to engage in extracurricular and creative learning, expose students to vulnerabilities of being <em>Othered</em>, allow students to have leisure time at home, allow students to take on other responsibilities, and allow students to remain safe.</td>
<td>Ability to overcome conflict-related trauma, which may be exacerbated through experiences of displacement, affecting whether students are able to achieve positive mental health, as well as all other capabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School facilities and spaces and whether they allow for safe learning, allowing for hygienic practices, safe infrastructures, bodily integrity, and opportunities for activities and sports.</td>
<td>Policies and rights afforded to refugees in the nation, which impact whether students are able to aspire, to gain stability, and to belong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The social arrangements of schools and whether students are able to form friendships, engage with other communities, be cared for, be respected, to belong, and to be safe.</td>
<td>The social arrangements that impact whether students feel isolated rather than integrated, to belong, to have friends, to be safe, and be cared for.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Importantly, this study demonstrated that schools are at the heart of students’ lived experiences of displacement; schools are able to inspire hope and transform limitations, but they also have the capability to re-inforce negative attitudes and deepen vulnerabilities. The significance of these findings is discussed in the next section.

12.2 Reflections and Implications: Well-Being Enhanced through Schools?
The study illustrated the lived experiences of students in Jordan’s double-shift schools. It found that while the benefits and importance of education for refugees and conflict-affected children, which are well-detailed in literature, are evident and valued by participants, they are also immensely threatened and challenged by the arrangements, resources, and practices through which they have been implemented. Mainly, the study raised two prominent areas that continue to challenge these efforts: the short-term approaches to education that exacerbate uncertainty, and the adoption of practices that overlook the importance of social cohesion and belonging.

12.2.1 The Missing Link Between the Role of Education for Uncertain Futures
Generations of refugees live in protracted refugee crises as the average number of displacement continues to rise. However, this study has shown that refugees, especially in developing nations, continue to live in ‘waiting’ for an unknowable and unpredictable future, lacking any sense of security (Dryden-Peterson, 2017; Schiltz et al., 2019). While education attainment can bring certainty to children’s lives (Dryden-Peterson, 2017), education for refugees cannot continue to be planned through short-term solutions. The double-shift system in Jordan may have emerged as a hopeful solution for a transient presence of Syrian refugees, but today it continues to segregate communities eight years later.

This study has demonstrated the complex role that education plays amidst the adversities and challenges that face refugee children. The study highlighted the effects of the political, social, and economic factors which permeate into school settings and taint students’ experiences of learning. For example, limited work permits, mobility rights, poverty, and participation in the community challenged the benefits of education. Participants in this study experienced opposing states of living; students aspired to learn, to succeed, to work, to participate socially and economically, and students expected to leave school, to work, to get married, to remain isolated, to wait for a home they may not return to. This state of limbo was deepened by their state of Otherness imposed by policies, surrounding attitudes, and unchanging states. Students’ lived experiences of these realities tamed their hopes, leaving them skeptical and “uncertain whether, when, and where they might be in a position to put down roots and construct a sustainable future” (Bellino & Dryden-Peterson,
2018, p.543). Thus, education for refugees must help students’ reflect and engage with uncertainties created by displacement, recognising that the purpose of school changes within contexts of waiting and uncertainty (Davies, 2006), and thus the needs of learners in these contexts must be understood and addressed.

Furthermore, the benefits of education cannot overcome alone the realities of forced displacement. Alongside educational planning, refugee-host nations must consider policies that allow refugees to lead lives of dignity, success, and independence. While countries like Jordan have committed to increasing work permits for refugees, the slow and limited implementation of these goals continue to present bleak realities for generations of children. These represent the critical effects of gaps between educational attainment and pathways to the right to work and participation, which Dryden-Peterson (2017) calls the “disjunction” of refugees’ trajectories. In this study, while participants were “integrated” into Jordan’s formal curriculum, their experiences were also shaped by the scarce educational and economic opportunities available to them outside their current spaces, and the overwhelmingly limited engagement between refugee and non-refugee communities. Thus, these disjunctions must be addressed to realise the educational needs and aspirations of refugee children and youth. Sensitive approaches to these solutions must also be taken by examining more closely the interactions between the layers of nations’ migration policies, school processes, and students’ experiences. Lastly, the gaps between these interactions create discrepancies between access to education and its purpose for refugees due to the lack of alignment between policies, implementation, and daily experiences in schools (Buckner et al., 2017; Karam et al., 2017). For example, the study by Karam et al., (2017) shows that in a non-formal education programme for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, which follows the INEE Standards, teachers felt that they did not understand the purpose of their education due to the limited future opportunities, and that they were the main decision-makers regarding the purpose of students’ education, which subjects to focus on, the language used, and the objectives of students’ learning. These studies thus raises the following questions for policymakers and researchers: the purpose and objectives of education for refugees, what should be taught, and who is responsible for making these decisions?

12.2.2 Belonging, Individuality, and Context
It cannot be denied that providing refugee students with access to formal education may help enhance students’ aspirations and shape pathways for the trajectories for their futures, and that Jordan’s double-shift system has helped Syrian refugees access the formal education, which responds to some of the SDGs and UNHCR’s calls (UNHCR, 2012; UNHCR, 2018) to integrate
refugees into nation’s educational systems and to provide children with their rights to learning. However, this study identified the importance of examining whether students’ schooling arrangements do in fact qualify as integration, and whether they exacerbate harmful practices and attitudes or transform them.

**Belonging, Inclusion, and Practices**

The study described the ways in which the double-shift system in Jordan, its practices and processes, overlook important factors that shape refugee students’ learning, identities, and prospects. Practices such as the segregation of shifts, the afternoon hours, and the six-days-a-week policy, appeared to expose students to further vulnerabilities. While these policies were set to help refugees access learning and account for their disrupted educations, they also expose students to visible differences from others, differences that leave students vulnerable to being *Othered* (Pinson et al., 2010; McLeod, 2014).

Moreover, the study showed that social tensions and divisions which are influenced by the political, social, and economical factors in Jordan seeped into school experiences. All students experienced high levels of discrimination and violence, both between teachers and students, as well as between the two communities around school spaces. Students described being victims of negative impressions representing refugees in the media, in their neighbourhoods, by their teachers, and by students. This study illustrated the effects of tensions, discriminatory labelling, and lack of belonging. The forms of participation students are able to access can impact the development of their sense of self and their place in society (Ebbeck etl., 2010), as shown in this study through students’ reflections of their states of mental health, reflections on their current lives, and expectations of their futures. Students’ experiences of tensions in Jordan and their schools showed alarming negative impact on students’ well-being, and many students expressed feeling anxious and afraid, or as noted by (Asseily, 2014, p.221), “when people don’t feel safe, fear colours their every interactions with the world around them: their relationship dynamics, outlook on life and plans for the future”, also leading to isolation.

The study thus highlights the importance of peace education (discussed in Literature Review), teacher training, a deepened sense of inclusion within schools to address the social tensions and negative attitudes that divide refugee and non-refugee communities in Jordan, as well as the trauma inflicted by experiences of conflict. Opportunities for students to engage in positive spaces for dialogue may help students, as seen by the effects of the *Generations for Peace* programme.
Concerning the power of positive language, Asseily (2014) discusses the social challenges in post-conflict Lebanon and argues that simple changes, such as a shift from inflammatory or derogatory language used by teachers to an absence of the former and the inclusion of positively-charged words can reduce the fears and sense of victimisation that students experience in schools.

Lastly, other practices which exist in schools in Jordan reduced students’ well-being, such as the use of corporal punishment, poor teacher training, and the lack of learner-centred pedagogy. As noted in Harber & Sakade (2009), education is not always inherently good, and what is learnt, how it is learnt, and the violence that can exist within schools through the values taught and the expectations placed, may alienate children and do harm. These factors and practices, which were also found in this study, may impact both Jordanian and Syrian children in the nation. However, the study showed that these harmful practices were perceived to be exacerbated in afternoon schools due to the negative attitudes teachers held, the overstretched resources, and the chaotic settings that existed in the overcrowded afternoon schools. These findings highlight the importance of understanding how negative practices in developing countries particularly impact refugee and vulnerable children.

To conclude, this study highlighted the importance of a shift from a focus on access and learning outputs for refugees, to examining more closely refugee students’ experiences and how identities, well-being, and aspirations are shaped through their educational spaces. It examined the effects of national policies, hardships presented by forced displacement on the lives of children in the community, and highlighted the role of schools in responding to these challenges. These findings portrayed the importance of more comprehensive policies that help create bridges between access to education and prospect futures, as well as a focus on belonging, social cohesion, and inclusion.

12.3 Contributions of Research
The study contributes to understanding the well-being, the experiences, the challenges facing refugee children in conflict-affected and protracted refugee settings. As stated the Queen Rania Foundation in the 2017, I was the first PhD researcher to be granted access to conduct research in Jordan’s afternoon schools for Syrian refugee students. Thus, this study was the first of kind to examine the lived experiences of Syrian refugees in Jordan’s double-shift systems, which provides a discussion on policies of ‘integration’. Furthermore, the study is unique in that it studies students’ well-being and mental health in developing countries while the majority of research currently examines contexts limited to developed countries (Reed et al., 2012).
The study also contributes to the use of the capability approach framework in education, and in particular, with refugee children. The CA has been used to examine children’s well-being within schools, and authors have argued that the CA offers a valuable framework for understanding children’s needs, well-being, and experiences within and outside schools (Robeyns, 2006; Unterhalter & Walker, 2007; Wilson-Strydom & Walker, 2015; Hart & Brando, 2018). Additionally, researchers have also proved the value of using the CA with vulnerable children, such as in the valuable studies contained in the *Children and the Capability Approach* by Wilson-Strydom & Walker, 2015, which study the well-being of vulnerable street children, as well as children affected by poverty and disability. Similarly, other studies have examined the well-being of children in contexts of poverty, disability, and gender powers using the CA (Unterhalter, 2003; Trani et al., 2011; Biggeri & Santi, 2012). An approach similar to the objectives of my own study, the capability approach has also been used to understand children’s own perspectives of their well-being, such as the work of Kellock & Lawthom (2011), which integrated the CA with visual-based methods in the UK.

However, the use of the capability approach with refugees and forced migrants is overwhelmingly limited. A journal paper by Josefsson (2016) reviews the capabilities identified by Nussbaum (2001) and discusses the challenges that shape asylum-seeking children rights and capabilities using the CA lens in a review of literature. Most recently, a study by Chase (2019) showcases an insightful use of the CA to understand how unaccompanied young asylum-seeking men from Afghanistan perceive their well-being, examining how forced migration shapes what individuals are able to be, become, and do. Some of the discussions share similarities in finding that a sense of security, belonging and connection with others, ability to put down roots, and the ways in which individuals’ aspirations may be adapted by the realities of displacement and what appears possible. However, there appears to be vast gap in studies that use the CA with forced migrants and children by engaging with their experiences. Furthermore, no published studies appear to use the capability lens to understand refugee children’s well-being within or around schools. This PhD research was able to combine the importance of understanding refugee students’ well-being through a capability lens, the ways in which schooling experiences shape students’ being and prospects, and the importance of listening to student voice. It contributed to the study of the CA by providing a discussion on how the capabilities identified within research, such as Nussbaum’s (2001) list of ten capabilities and other capabilities identified by research with children, compare to the values of refugee students, contextualising capabilities through students’ lived experiences. Finally, and importantly, the study showed how the process of *Becoming* in children is disrupted in contexts of
conflict and displacement, and it illustrated the importance of understanding refugee children’s decision-making processes and how the values are formed or disrupted at different stages of displacement and children’s age, and due to different challenges.

The study illuminated the voices and stories of Syrian refugee students, drawing on the importance of student voice and the perceptions of those directly affected by educational structures. Students were able to clearly articulate their needs, wishes, hardships, and emotions, and, through their contribution, the study was able to illustrate some of the effects of school settings in protracted refugee situations. The factors identified within and outside school contribute to the literature on refugee children’s needs to enhance their well-being and learning, portraying the complexities between these relationships and the importance of reviewing the national policies, schooling processes, and individuals involved. The study thus illuminates the importance of including refugee students’ voices in research and the evaluation of educational policies for policymaking. It contributes to CA’s argument that individuals should be able to choose and articulate the values that are important to their well-being, and shows that refugee children are able to reflect on, be aware of, and communicate needs and choices.

Finally, the study used the CA, in combination with the research design methods that focused on student voice. This helped shape a mechanism that allowed participants to reflect on their lives, a concept which is central to the CA. The study demonstrated how providing refugee children with these opportunities allowed them to make sense and connect with their feelings about their circumstances and their futures, and in some cases, to redirect their choices and views of their limitations. These changes illustrate the importance of giving children opportunities to express their voices, to reflect on their choices, and to imagine alternative realities to inspire agency and true freedom to choose states of being that they value.

12.4 Limitations and Future Directions
There are limitations this research which inspire considerations for future research. Firstly, due to the chaotic, overstrained, and rapid timetables of the double-shift systems, my time with students was limited and at times sporadic. The study sought to understand both collective experiences and individuals’ reflections. While I aimed to provide enough time for all students to engage in in-depth conversations, there were occasions where I was forced to shorten discussions to allow room for other students to contribute. This may have influenced whether students were able to share their individual stories more in-depth and provide a more enriched understanding of their capability development. Upon reflection, it may be useful to reduce the number of participants to
engage more in-depth with students’ individual circumstances and stories. However, engaging with an entire class was also essential as it was not possible to take students out of their classroom due to the lack of space available and the ethical considerations this may create for students who may have wanted to join. In future research, it may be valuable to find methods to engage with a smaller number of students.

Secondly, as the capability approach seeks to understand whether individuals are able to achieve what they want, it would be valuable to conduct longitudinal research that follows refugee children and youth over time to understand how their capabilities change, and examine achieved functionings. This research sought to overcome these limitation by engaging students with their perspectives of the past, present, and future, to understand how their values are changing. This provided an informative lens to how students’ preferences and choice are being shaped, and though it does not allow the researcher to examine what functionings children will achieve, it follows the rationale that capabilities should be focused on.

Thirdly, while I aimed to select two schools in more affluent locations, and two less affluent schools, the selection process, which was guided by the Ministry of Education and the Queen Rania Foundation, did not allow me to better understand the exact resources schools had and clear distinguishes within the demographics. The differences across schools are not very clear throughout the study and to the researcher’s eyes, partly due to the fact that the data provides an average of all families’ socioeconomic factors, and does not explicitly examine Syrian refugee families’ circumstances. Limited differences may also be because refugees in Jordan reside within similar, and more under-resourced and underprivileged areas in Amman. However, to better identify the communities’ income and education levels’, the schools’ resources, the exact sizes and ages of schools, it would have been useful to interview teachers or create surveys that provide a greater understanding of these details, and to engage with families to understand their backgrounds.

Fourthly, the study found that two perspectives and notions of well-being are extremely important and relevant to students’ experiences: families’ well-being and teachers’ well-being. While teachers were engaged in this study and were able to reflect on some of the challenges they face, the interviews were a much smaller part of the project due to a focus on student voice. The findings of this study show that understanding how teachers’ well-being within nations like Jordan, and the pressures, challenges, sense of security they experience, and how these factors influence their
students, is an important area of study. Furthermore, the study did not engage at all with parents’ and families’ well-being, despite its clear importance to children’s experiences. Thus, more research is needed to understand how the well-being of teachers and families may be enhanced, and how engagement between carers and teachers may help improve children’s well-being. Despite these limitations, the study was able to explore some of the effects of the well-being of carers and teachers on children’s experiences through students’ own reflections. Finally, a future direction for the study could involve the valuable perspectives of Jordanian students to help better illustrate notions of Other and the effects of refugee crises on refugee-hosting nations’ citizens, helping contribute on policy planning for social cohesion between communities.

12.5 Ending Note and Researcher’s Reflections
This PhD journey that now ends began because of my own experience of conflict. The perplexing position I have occupied as a Syrian researcher in Cambridge has been a tiring, challenging, and moving experience. I left home in 2014 determined to help the millions of children displaced from a peaceful country I once knew. My time since has been divided by two unparalleled realities; I have spent sleepless nights and frantic days worried for the safety of my own family and friends at home, watching the news, and fearful of the future, all while experiencing the stunning lands, exchanges, friendships, and endless learning that Cambridge University and the UK have offered me.

Conducting this research has left me constantly aware of this dual reality, of its privilege, challenges, and humbling opportunities. I am forever affected and inspired by the students I met and grateful for what they have taught me. I remain certain that I will continue to remember their faces, voices, smiles, and that I will carry their stories with me, despite their qualms of going unnoticed by the world. Their reflections, anecdotes, and conveyance of their experiences have constantly proved to me to the value of researching student voice and children’s experiences. While at times, I was despained by students’ perceptions of their futures, there were many moments where their aspirations, strength, and kindness inspired a sense of hope and purpose for conducting such research. I continue to hope that my temporary presence in their lives has helped, if only a little, and not harmed.

My time in Jordan has also helped inform me of the challenges facing governments, teachers, and communities dealing with the influx of refugees. The exchanges I experienced in cars on trips to and from schools, or with teachers sharing their coffee breaks with me, Jordanian friends whom I met and grew close with during my time in the country, and all those I came across in the
community, portrayed to me the complexities of providing for refugees living in contexts already overwhelmed by the poverty, limited economies, and overstrained structures, and the importance of remembering the unyielding pressures and responsibilities that the world has left only a small number of nations to deal with.

For years now, there has not been a day where I have not slept and awakened to pursue research on a topic that both troubles and drives me as a Syrian and as a researcher. This journey has been a privilege and an honour, one that has entailed frightening visa applications, scholarships, and a continuous sense of uncertainty towards the future. However, the support and confidence that the systems and individuals have shown by granting me these rights, have allowed my identity as a researcher and individual who wishes to contribute positively towards society, to prevail over the negative connotations of the migration of those arriving from conflict-affected countries. I pray that all children and individuals are allowed the same opportunities to transform their lives, and to belong to the communities, spaces, and the bonds that we can inhabit on this Earth.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Introducing Research to Students

I introduced myself to students to the classroom at each school, and gave them each a diary to show them the research plan and ask them to think about whether they would like to partake in the research.

My name is Hiba Salem. I am a Syrian student studying in England and I am here to do research at your school. The reason I am here is because it is important for researchers to listen to what students have to say about their schools and their experiences in school. I know that all of you had to leave Syria and came to Jordan to start school again, and you can help research find out what it’s like to study somewhere new after moving, and what you think of your schools and life in Jordan. This project will look at what you like about school, what you don’t like, what your dreams and thoughts about the future, how you feel about your experiences, and anything about you that you want to share.

I will be here for just under three months. For the first two weeks, I will be around the school and will sometimes sit in the classroom with you. After that, I will start the project using this diary. You can each have a diary of your own, and you are welcome to take it home now for the next two weeks to think about whether you would like to do take part in this project. You can change your mind at any time. If you choose to take part in the project, I will change your names to protect your identities in the research. I will also record any conversations we have, but only I will get to hear them, to help me write my final document. I will save all of the recordings and the diaries in a safe, locked space.

I will not be able to help you change anything about your schools or life outside of school through this research or through my time here. The only thing I can do is to listen to your stories and write what I learned from you.
APPENDIX B: The Diary (Translated into English for this purpose)

This diary was designed by me in Arabic, printed, and bound with one copy for each student.

Front Cover

This diary belongs to:

____________________
Activity 1: About Me

About Me

I am ____ years old

I have been at this school for ___ years

My home is_____

I am with my friends, I like to go to ________

My closest friends are ________

Three hobbies of mine are:
Activity 2: My Life and Memories

My Life and Memories

me at 25

2017

me at 18

I was born
Activity 3: Let's Build a School

Let's Build a School!

What things would you find in:

a bad school?  a good school?

Friend
Activity 4: An Outing with Those Dearest to Me

An outing with those dearest to me:
Activity 5: My Well-Being and Wishes

I hope for...  I wish to get rid of...
APPENDIX C: Introducing Activities and Guiding Questions with Students

Activity 1:

Introducing activity:
- This activity can help you start your diary and introduce yourself to the research. You can start by filing each of these questions out, and then, if you want to participate in the interview, raise your hand and I will come to you with the recorder.

Guiding questions for interview:
- Can you tell me your name and age?
- You say you have been at this school for ___ long, where were you before? What was it like?
- So how long have you been in Jordan? Did you come to Amman first?
- Are these friends you mentioned from school? or do you have friends from outside the school too?
- What do you like to do with your time?
- Do you have the time and space to practice these hobbies?

Activity 2:

Introducing activity:
- This is a timeline where you can write down some of the most memorable events to you. What are the things that you remember and think about most? How did you feel when they happened?
- Can you write down how you feel now, in 2017?
- Write down where you think you’ll be at age 18 and what you’ll be doing
- What do you hope to be doing when you are 25?

Guiding questions for interview:
- Why did you choose these events?
- Can you walk me through them, one by one?
- How did you feel? Is that something you still think about?
- In 2017, you feel this ____. Can you tell me why?
- Where do you see yourself at age 25? Do you feel hopeful that you’ll get there? Do you think that’s what you would like to do?

Activity 3:

Introducing activity:
- In this activity, we will talk about what you think makes a good school good and what things make a school bad. What are the things that you think are
important to have in school? How do they make the school good? Why are they important? What things make a school bad? Why are they bad for students like you?

- You can fill as many boxes as you want with one or two words in each to describe the elements that make a school good or bad. I gave an example here, ‘friends’ in a good school, because some people might think that friends are an important aspect of school. You can also cross this out if you don’t think it matters.

Guiding questions for interview:

- Can you talk me through what you wrote down in each school, and tell me why you chose these?
- Are some of these things, in either examples of a school, part of your schooling experience? Which ones do you think you enjoy most or least?
- What would help make your school better?
- How do you think it helps students if [X] exist in a good school?
- How do can students be negatively affected by [X] in a bad school?

Activity 4:
Introducing activity:

- This activity shows a magical bus that can take you, along with five people of your choice, on a total of three trips. The bus can travel across time and take you to a place of your choice in the past, the present, or the future. You get to choose if you want to stay in the present for all three trips.
- Can you write down what three trips you would take and you would choose to go with you? You can use your imagination to decide how long you want to be there for and what you would do there.

Guiding questions for interviews:

- Can you take me through your trips? Where did you go?
- Who did you choose to go with you? Why did you choose them?
- Did you travel across time? Why do you think the [past, present, future] is interesting?
- How long did you stay there and what did you do?
- Is that something you wish you could do in reality? Why do you you would like to travel to [X] destination or time?

Activity 5: (completed over two sessions)

Introducing activity:

- This is going to be the last exercise of this diary.
- This activity is for you to talk about how you feel and what you think you want, need, and wish for to be well, content, or happy.
- First, I want you to imagine a scale of 1-10 of happiness and choose which number you are think you are at in your present time. If one is the lowest level of happiness, and you feel very sad, and 10 is very happy and satisfied, what number would you choose? Please write this down on top of the write envelope.
• Inside the write envelope are blank papers. Can you write down up to five things that you think you would like to get rid of in order for this current number to be better? What are the things that currently make you feel sad, that you want to change? If you feel like there aren’t any, don’t write anything down.

• Now, imagine yourself in ten years. What number do you think you will be at? Please write this down on the top of the left envelope.

• Inside the left envelope, please use the blank papers to write down what you wish for, what you hope to achieve, and what you would like to have and do so that your future number is achieved.

• Finally, I just want to remind you that there are many empty papers on the bank of your diary. If you want to leave a note or message to talk about anything we haven’t covered during our time together, please take your time to do that over the next two sessions.

Guiding questions for interviews:

• Let’s start with the first one. Why did you put down [X] number? Do you feel like this all the time?

• Why do you think you feel like this? Can you take me through the papers that you wrote down?

• Why do you feel this needs to be changed or that you want it to be different? *These questions lead to more open-ended conversations*

• Let’s talk about the future wishes. Why did you put down [X] number? Do you think this is achievable? Do you think the number could change?

• What did you wrote down for the things you want and hope for? Why do you think these are important? What can help you achieve them? *These questions lead to more open-ended conversations*
APPENDIX D: Teacher Interview Schedule

Explain purpose of research
Allow teacher to ask questions
Assure confidentiality and anonymity, ask for consent to partake in interview and to turn recorder on.

Interview with teachers to provide an enriched understanding of context.

1) How long have you been at this school?
2) Do you teach in both shifts (morning and evening). If so, can you tell me a little bit about how these shifts differ? For example, what are some of the main challenges that teachers face in teaching Syrian refugee students?
3) How do you deal with these challenges? For example, what are some of the strategies and approaches that you use in the classroom?
4) In your opinion and based on your experience, what are some of the challenges Syrian refugee students face in relation to their education and their ability to continue school?
5) Do your students appear to enjoy group activities and exercises?
6) Do Syrian refugee students routinely complete the homework you assign?
7) What do you think are some of the main things children value about their school and education?
8) What do you think are some of their needs, at home and within their schools, which are essential to maximising their wellbeing?
9) Do you think these needs different between boys and girls?
10) In what ways do you think the school, community and familial care better support these students?
11) In your opinion, how do you think the students currently feel about their futures, or how do they perceive the prospects of their futures?
12) Is there anything you think I have missed, or is there anything you would like to add?
APPENDIX E: Classroom Observation Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District:</td>
<td>Shift gender:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom:</td>
<td>Teacher gender:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Classroom description:**
- How many students are present in class today?
- What is the class agenda today? (Review schoolwork, new lesson, group activities, etc.).
- What materials are being used in class today?
- What is the general tone of the classroom today? (Calm, disorganised, chaotic, etc.)

**General student description:**
- How do students appear? (general and distinct clothing and physical appearance)
- Describe any incidents where children may appear to suffer from, or explicitly complain of, particular levels fatigue, illness, hunger or any other ailment.

**Student-to-student behaviour description:**
In cases of group work, describe the general classroom atmosphere: noise level, distribution of participation, and classroom or table arrangement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Describe incidents where children have chosen to lead the group work. Describe incidents where children have instead shown limited participation (and state names)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are there any children that are constantly by themselves? Describe incidents (and state names).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Describe incidents where children have fought, yelled, cried or otherwise expressed anger or unhappiness. Explain why (and state names).</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do children seem to prefer and work or speak with the same partners?</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do any of the children generally display flat affect (neutral facial expressions and limited reaction) within classroom learning and within engagement with others? Describe incidents (and names)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**Student-to-teacher behaviour description:**

What general tone does the teacher use with their students? Describe changes in tone.

What is the general affect of the students with the teachers? (Laughter, quietness, enthusiasm, embarrassment, etc.).

Do some students participate more, expressing their opinions or answering the teacher’s questions more than others? State names and describe incidents.

What is the level of engagement between the teacher and their students (reading followed by questions, or constant question-and-answer) what methods are used for discussion? (raising hands, yelling answers out, etc.)

Do students understand instructions and follow them? Do students appear to understand the content of the lesson?

What techniques of encouragement does the teacher use (verbal praise, reward system, etc)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What strategies of discipline does the teacher apply in the classroom?</strong> (verbal warnings, mark reduction, additional work, etc.).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do students speak with a similar or different tone/accent with teacher in comparison with the way they speak between each other?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Describe incidents where the teacher has clearly responded to a child’s need by offering further support, time or explanation to the student. Explain why.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Describe incidents where the teacher or exercise has evidently excluded particular students, and describe who and why.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX F: CODING THEMES EXAMPLAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To be respected:</th>
<th>“They tell us that we smell bad, and that...that just upsets me so much Nour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-to be discriminated against verbally</td>
<td>“you smell bad, get out of my face”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“They make us feel like something is wrong with us Syrians even if we haven’t done anything wrong” Nour</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They keep saying things like ‘there’s no hope or use in these girls.’” Roula</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“They say, You Syrians... why aren’t you good at school?” Akram</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“They make us feel like something is wrong with us Syrians even if we haven’t done anything wrong” Hamzeh</td>
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<tr>
<td>-to be physically abused in classroom</td>
<td>They always hit us. Some teachers here don’t like Syrians. They teach during the evening shift so they can release their anger on Syrians.” Akram</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“A teacher once hit me because he thought I skipped school, but I was sick.” Hamzeh</td>
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<tr>
<td>-to be bullied or Othered by community outside of classroom</td>
<td>They always call us using that word. Always. Around school and even in my neighbourhood. They only know me as refugee, they don’t know my name. It’s an ugly word.” Kareem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to be engaged in negative practices in schools</td>
<td>There are many people who talk to us badly. Sometimes the parents of the kids from the morning shift and the neighbours wait for us to curse us at us and break our toys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“They take a few students from the lesson to clean… It’s very wrong.” Iyad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To participate</strong></td>
<td>“Trips, sports, activities like drawing or clay, and group activities with teachers...anything more engaging.” Shams</td>
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<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in school</td>
<td>They take Jordanians out on school trips but we’re not allowed because there are rules against us going anywhere.” Sami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation outside of school with family, community, and friends</td>
<td>“I can’t go anywhere. I want to go see the places I read about in our textbooks. I want to go on a school trip. I like gardens, but I haven’t seen one here in Jordan in 4 years.” Hadia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Yes. I don’t know anyone outside of the school. We don’t mix with people, not even our neighbours” Rima</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>