

Beyond the right to work

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Impact Paragraph

The rationale of this study that focuses on how policies shape labour market outcomes of refugees in neighbouring countries to the conflict has by its definition a strong policy objective. The findings and policy implications as set out in Chapter 8 contribute to a more nuanced understanding on the role of the right to work, camp policies and the potential of economic inclusion as an alternative to the durable solution of local integration. Henceforth, this dissertation does not offer clear-cut solution but rather it aims to draw out the complexity and the interlinkage between different policies in shaping outcomes. As such, it contributes both to the evidence-base as well as policy discussions when it comes to a long-term perspective on refugee management systems.

The findings of this dissertation have implications for the realisation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to ensure that no-one is left behind. It is of the utmost importance that forcibly displaced individuals are not left out of the discussion underlying the realisation of the 2030 Agenda. In particular, the findings in this dissertation relate back to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹⁴⁴:

- SDG 1 on No Poverty – SDG 1.4;
- SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth – SDG 8.5, 8.7 & 8.8;
- SDG 10 on Reduce inequality within and among countries – SDG 10.2, 10.3; and,
- SDG 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – SDG 16.9 & 16.b.

An understanding on how this study contributes to societal and academic impact is however not straightforward. In the end, this research is only a small piece in the radar and I can only hope that my findings and policy recommendations are picked up by relevant stakeholders involved in global, national and local discussions on long-term, sustainable solutions towards labour market inclusion of refugees.

Outreach is one of the biggest tools for advocacy and raising awareness. Dependent on the audience, this may be in different formats.

Academic: Different parts of this dissertation have been presented at eight different academic conferences. These also reflect the multiple disciplines underlying this study. Some of the conferences thus focused on human development, others focused on forced migration and/or law, and some on the Middle East. The objective is

¹⁴⁴ For an overview, see <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

also to develop several journal articles on the basis of Chapters 4, 5 and 6, and potentially turn my PhD into a book publication. In addition, a follow up study was developed in collaboration with two Master students where we investigated women's economic empowerment of Syrian Refugee Women in Jordan. This study will also be developed into an independent journal article.

Policy: The fieldwork that took place in Za'atari Camp in the Summer of 2018 was presented to members of the Basic Needs and Livelihood Working Group in August 2018. Additionally, I wrote a blog on the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees arguing for a critical look at both the right to work and the need for social protection for refugees. This was published on the website of UNU-MERIT. In addition, a reflection of the potential of entrepreneurship was published by the School of Business and Economics, Maastricht University.

Next to blogs, a policy brief will be developed on the basis of the key findings and recommendations which will be shared with key stakeholders spoken with during my fieldwork – see also footnote 12. This policy brief will be shared in English and possibly, Arabic. Lastly, I am looking into opportunities to engage with some global, and I am looking into the possibility of organising a roundtable in Geneva on the right to work of refugees in the MENA region with practitioners and academics. This will be accompanied by a media campaign led by UNU-MERIT.

Society: Last but not least, the main discussions underlying this study have also been presented at the Pas Festival whose audience comprised both students and citizens in Maastricht alike. This hopefully contributes to a more critical reflection on the discourses portrayed in the media and in the policy arena.