

Cultural, Economic and Political Reasons Controlling the Informalities Spreading: Jordan as a Model

Diana Dumour¹ Numan Abu-Hammad^{2*}

1.Faculty of Engineering, Department of Architecture, Applied Science University, Amman, Jordan

2.Faculty of Engineering Technology, Al-Balqa' Applied University P. O. Box 630 605 Amman (11163), Jordan

* E-mail of the corresponding author: abuhammad@bau.edu.jo

Abstract

Although informalities were always claimed to be illegal, informal settlements are consistent feature of the urban landscape in Amman as in many other cities all over the world. It is important to study and rearrange the human activities that caused the physical aspects of the informal places rather than relating the cases with legal factor, considering the architectural manner caused by humans is a reflection of community behaviours and the circumstances that led to the morphology of the shapes that forms the visual aspects of a place. Those forms that may seem to be an anti-civilization act from the point of view of many citizens could be the main reason of belonging and place attachment for others, reflecting the culture and the framework that keeps the community together. In Jordan, the mixture of people caused by several political conflicts, especially Arab-Israeli war is the main cause lead to the existing informal settlements, while in other cases the economic condition of people became the reasons of the continuity and expenditure of those informal areas

Keywords: Informality, Poverty, Refugees, Culture, Jordan

Introduction

Many factors interfere while discussing the primary reasons behind informality spreading, starting with regulations and rules of urbanization, ending up with poverty. However, many other issues effecting informalities spreading, caused by a combination of several factors. The complicated and interfering reasoning of informalities spreading made it difficult to discuss them separately. Critically looking at the minor causes of informality, the current study aims to discuss the four main reasons, i.e., social, economical and political in addition to legal reasons (Figure 1)

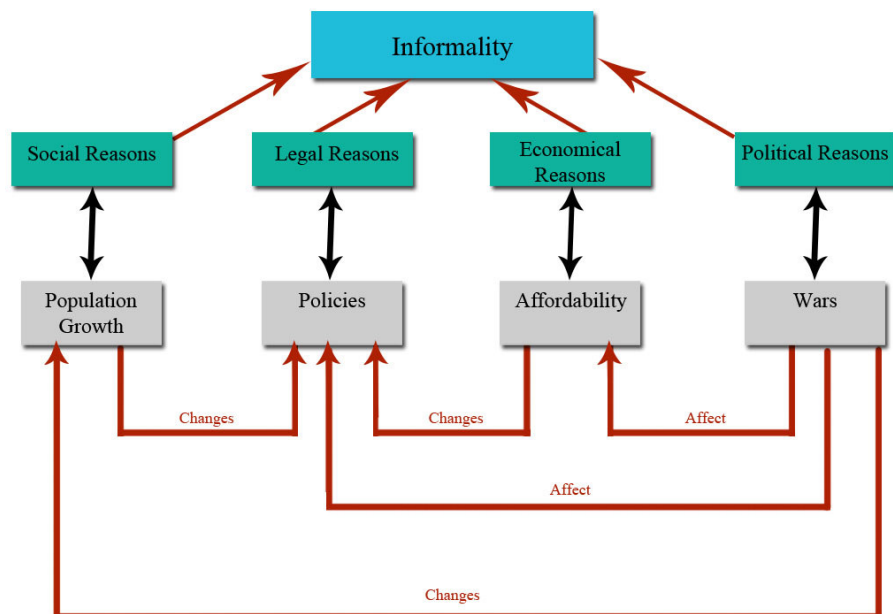


Figure 1. Reasons of informality.

Cultural reasons

Some specific groups within the large society have different culture where each group's members are united by common values, beliefs and unique patterns of practiced behaviours. "People largely govern themselves by informal rules which develop over time to fit their own circumstances" and "the development of those rules cannot be understood in isolation from formal rules. That is, informal rules evolve to undermine, accommodate, complement or reinforce formal rules" (Razzaz 1998)

Those rules and values could be non-material and/or material. Non-material such as beliefs, emotions, goals, and social acts explains the material values. While material values that are expressed in objects such as artefact and constructions, which become documents to describe the non-material values of the communities, its past, present and future aspirations. Both types of values are what form the community's identity, and characterize it

Architecture is a product of the material values, where home is the most important entity for documenting, imaging and indicating a community's life. In general, people who share certain values, prefer to live together in one residential setting to form one social group, conformably, culture influence the clustering and organization of households in a built environment. In addition, cultural values are recognized in different societies through their home layouts, and the way people live in it; or what we call: the lifestyle. The framework that can be used for understanding the relationship between culture and home and the variability between them, the lifestyle cultural component with its associated production of activity system, which is a non-material cultural value that is affected by social variables such as family structure and kinship, social interactions, and beliefs and norms as socio-cultural dimension

Activities that take place at home are universally similar, but they vary in their cultural meaning. Accordingly, if a culture has changed, and home form and composition are sustained, home layout becomes meaningless and unusable tool to explain or interpret certain community behaviour or living pattern.

Within this context, Informality may be a result of an entire culture that guides people towards this type of urban practice, in other words; Culture affects the way of living for a group of people based on shared concepts, customs and skills that are communicated, transferred or passed from one generation to another through language or other means. This type of informality is usually identified by the households made by temporary assembled construction materials, that could fit in several places regardless the surroundings that usually those types of settlements doesn't respect (Figure 2)



Figure 2. The Turkman – Building with temporary assembled construction materials, Amman- Jordan.

Culture's dimensions

Culture consists of five dimensions, which can have physical impacts on the urban and architectural context especially in the informal areas: norms, myths, symbols and agreed signs, rituals, and finally objects

1 Norms:

Are the pattern of behaviour that are normal or expected (Oxford University Press 1999) which dictate and regulate an acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in a certain situation. Those norms may change the image of the place, according to the appropriate and inappropriate behaviours, for example; using the entry gate as a socializing place may be acceptable in a certain group, so they install seats, or build higher thresholds for the entrance doors to be used as a sitting places, while in other cultures, this behaviour is not appropriate so they build higher fences, or they use indirect entrances for their households. Another example would be the social centres, that may be considered as an essential in certain areas, therefore the frequent usage of such centres, for instance, may show a direct impact on the roads network leads to those social centres, while in other cultures, that refuses the social centres concept, especially partaken by women, may results in eliminating such building from the urban tissue

2 Myths:

are very old stories and often explain natural or historical events, while sometimes it may be an idea, a belief or a story which is untrue or impossible (Oxford University Press 1999) but express key values of a society which could guide a group of people to certain behavioural patterns. In this matter, we can talk about statues and

artefacts that represent a myth like Remos and Romulus story that tells the beginning of Rome, and became the theme of many statues. In other cultures, some religious beliefs are mixed with myths, and then form a part of the Non-Material values that guides the community, and eventually the results are statues that affect the image of the spaces (Figure 3)



Figure 3. Buddha statue.

Temples and religious buildings that reflect the general conception of the society. In Romania some Gypsies converted to a new trend of Christianity called (Pendi Costali) and new types of churches have appeared, those churches have no Icons and religious drawings, and they became a different type of religious constructions (Figure 4)



Figure 4. New Pendi Costali Churches.

3 Symbols and agreed signs:

Those are recognized by a community to have common meanings or stand for something. It could be a movement, a mark or a ward which have a message for the person who sees it (Longman 1987) or it could be a type of shape, or a mark, a board, or a notice that give a piece of information, an instruction or a warning represents an idea or an aspect of life (Oxford University Press 1999), for example, in Pendi Costali churches, the Dove represents the Holy Spirit (Figure 5)



Figure 5. The Holy Spirit symbol in the Pendi Costali Churches (Toflea- Romania).

Another example would be Gypsies, where in their culture, a girl who has her hair styled with 3 ponytails is not married and a girl who has two ponytails hair is married (Figure 6)

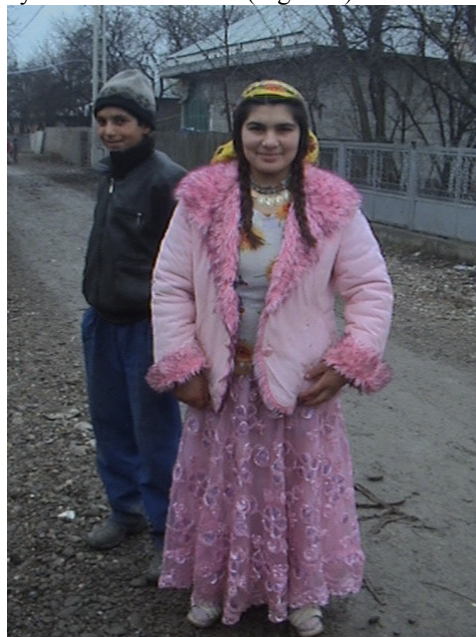


Figure 6. Married Gypsy women's hairstyle (Munteni- Romania).

Those signs may be meaningful in a culture but insignificant among other groups, and it may represent a communication techniques that keeps this feeling of belonging alive, belonging to a specific unchangeable geographic area, or a specific group regardless its changeable place

4 Rituals:

Are actions, ceremonies or processes which are usually repeated in the same pattern, or include objects that are done according to a particular pattern or tradition (Oxford University Press 1999), and those actions are periodically repeated to provide meaning and involve the use of cultural symbols. Those rituals sometimes needs special places and constructions, like praying places, gathering places, or constructions associated with special meanings, myths or symbols. Gypsies in Romania who wants to convert to Pendi Costali must have a special ceremony in the church, where "Brothers" as they call themselves pray for the new member, and they give him a

document with the religious duties, then the new member should attend the prayers for a specific period of time. In the other hand, pendi costali believers gather Thursdays in their church to collect donations and they also gather Tuesdays and Sundays to pray. For Muslims, praying five times per day is a religious ritual too, that forms a community's lifestyle, which demands the construction of Mosques in Muslims areas (Figure 7)



Figure 7. Alnaser area – A Mosque in an informal area (Amman- Jordan).

and its accessibility became a must and controls the roads' network in many cities. In all cases, the holiness of the places built for religious rituals sometimes made it easier to informalize them, as the states' actions towards those places will defer, and the religious tendency will protect those places from demolishing which may cause serious problems within the urban tissue

5 Objects:

Which are things that can be seen and touched (Oxford University Press 1999), then are given meanings within a culture as a material product that are presented within the built environment. The best example is households, and their layouts that results from the different expressions of cultural values, that relate to the differences in ideas, backgrounds, interests, and dreams of the group, which are transferred in the built form where members live. (Greir 1988) Those homes are material values that indicate cultural changes and transformation. For example, in Saudi Arabia houses should have two separated entrances; one is for women or as they call it (family entrance) and the other is for men (Figure 8)



Figure 8. Two prototypes of villas in Shams ArRyadh project – houses that reflect Culture (Riyadh- Saudi Arabia).

On the other hand, handicrafts represent certain values and needs within the social group, those artefacts forms an immortal proof of culture, wooden objects, metal objects, jewels, clothes, furniture, paintings and sculptures are some that could be mentioned within this context (Figure 9)



Figure 9. The Romanian Cultural days in Jordan– Objects that represents Culture (Amman- Jordan).

Examples of cultural informality

1 Gypsies:

Cultural groups are distinguished from the large culture by geographical or social context (Figure 10)



Figure 10. Gypsies' costumes (Munteni- Romania)

For example Gypsies that generally travel in family groups (Figure 11) are associated with professions such as hawking and peddling, acting as tinkers (Figure 12)



Figure 11. Gypsies' Caravans that they use for travelling (Munteni- Romania).



Figure 12. Gypsies that work as tinkers (Munteni- Romania)

and street performers. The most common of all, as fortune-tellers, their lifestyle is based on travelling from a place to another for living. While in some other countries, in certain periods, they may be subjected to profound legal oppression like punishment for vagrancy such as whipping, imprisonment and dismissing from the settlement. Most Gypsies could not claim a legal settlement, so their treatment under the law is more problematic and varied

2 Bedouins and Nomads:

That continued to exist especially in the deserted areas. The geographic and climatic circumstances forced them to survive by changing the place according to the water existence. To ease the displacement process the construction materials were light while lack of resources encouraged the use of organic local materials

Bedouin tent is shaped like a cube or prism and does not resemble a pyramid. Tents and pyramids are held to be metaphorically opposed mental images, the tent signifying the absence of hierarchy and graded authority, while the second signifying the presence of both. In non-pyramidal structures, authority is derived from sheer physical power, with one person dominating over others rather than a graded system where roles are subordinated in hierarchical structure

In Jordan, new efforts were being made to convert nomads to a sedentary lifestyle; permanent homes were built by the government and in terms of occupation: "Bdules" in Petra for example were given new job opportunities such as policemen, soldiers, guards, traders, drivers, labourers and guides, aiming at changing the function of bait Esh-sha'r (Figure 13)



Figure 13. Kan Zaman – A Model for the bedwin tent "Bet Alshaar" (Amman- Jordan).

from functional to symbolic use, but those efforts didn't have the expected positive results, as because they didn't fully accept the new lifestyle as for them the sense of the place has a different meaning; they believe that bait Esh-sha'r is a necessity, because it is part of the heritage and expresses several functions and meanings. Such as: authenticity, hospitality, freedom, assurance, nostalgia, dignity, simplicity, movability, beauty and psychological comfort. This explains Bedouins attachment to bait Esh-sha'r and its availability adjacent to structured rooms especially in occasions like weddings, funerals, and Tribal problem solving as a symbol of honour and dignity

Economical reasons

Poverty dominates the international development agenda of the 21st century. The improvement of the health and living conditions of millions of slum dwellers around the world is a primary concern of the current Millennium Development Goals for reducing poverty. Up to the 1980s poverty was largely associated with the rural areas in developing countries; but the situation has changed with the dramatic increase in the numbers and proportion of the population living in urban areas, and a corresponding increase in the level of urban poverty (Geoffrey and Nwaka 2005)

Poverty and unemployment provoke many illegal practices within the city, especially when the huge projects invade it, while the income doesn't follow the pace. Urban poor become forced to build temporary and permanent constructions on land that doesn't belong to them in order to survive in a world where Urbanization became the most common phenomena, and the construction materials and land prices became out of reach for the ordinary man. Irregular settlements also have become so pervasive that they seem to outnumber legally planned development, and their social legitimacy appears to be no longer in question. Unfortunately, the appalling environmental conditions associated with informal sector activities and settlements constitute a major threat to the health and well-being of urban life (Geoffrey and Nwaka 2005).

Those informal areas are usually small in size at the household level but at the city level it could form a huge part, the unit is usually made of permanent materials with permanent or temporary roofs, and the place is stable too but with an evident design and construction mistakes

Construction affordability

Construction affordability is defined in agenda 21 for developing countries as one of the main issues associated with sustainable construction and sustainable development, (Laue 2008) it is interrelated with two different factors; the first is the cost rates for construction activities and resources which have been continuously increasing. Deficits in construction activities in developing countries increase in cost for basic input materials like steel, cement, brick, timber and other materials as well as the cost of construction labour, building cost increase at around 20% to 30% annually (Laue 2008)

The second is people's economical situation, According to the World Bank, in the early 1990s, during the transition of market economics in post-socialist, adjusting Latin American and Middle Eastern countries, formal employment fell by 5% - 15% (World Bank 1995). In Africa, the number of unemployed grew by 10% every year through the 1980s. (Bayat 2004) In those cities of Asia, Africa and Latin America, the urban poor often have to step outside the law in order to gain access to land and housing. (Duran-Lasserre and Clerc 1996) Those people will find it difficult to function, live and work within the modernizing economic and cultural systems characterized by market discipline, contract, exchange value, speed, and bureaucracy (Bayat 2004)

because they have very limited resources and financial power and they cannot afford living in the formal neighbourhoods or building households that respects the urban regulations and restricts, so they search for cheaper possibilities like the informal areas that follows the resources of the inhabitants and flexible adapt to their needs

Urbanization as a reason of informality

A greater number of cities in the third world as well as countries in transition are facing the phenomenon of rapid urbanization. Simon Bakker wrote: "Today, for the first time since the dawn of humankind, most people are living in a city" (Bekker 2006)

Saad Eddin Ibrahim (Herding 2009) provides a summarized definition of urbanization, referring to it as "a process of re-distributional shifts of population from the countryside to towns and cities." migrants usually acquire both skills and attitudes that mainly correspond to urban life so that they move to cities on their return; even though there might be no job opportunity and they end up in the informal sector

Diverse causes lead to the continuous growth of urban agglomeration such as, natural growth, concentration of economy mainly in bigger cities that create, among others, an increased Rural-Urban migration.(Laue 2008) Within the field of critical urban research, the urban phenomenon has been considered as the dynamic result of a complex, and highly contradictory process of articulation of economic, political and cultural forces, through which both cities and rural areas are currently being redefined in the process of economic globalization. (Fernandes and Varley 1998) The global proportion of urban population increased from 13% in 1900 to 29% in 1950 and reached 49% in 2005 (Boller 2008). In the late thirties, some sociologists like Louis Wirth were concerned the urban mode of life that was no longer confined to cities that involved more general acceptance of social factors like density and the emergence of individualistic survival mechanism among urban residents who were assumed to have come from the countryside (AlSayyad and Roy 2004). Wirth wrote that the urbanization of the world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's was one of the "Most impressive facts of modern times," Bringing profound changes to the social and economic life of nations (Wirth 1938)

In the overall, cities are attractive because they provide reduced costs of services they improve access to the global market, drive national economics, create markets for rural and urban goods, and create social networks (Laue 2008). But those advantages are associated with many problems, like urban crime, inner-city conditions, unemployment, migration, and cultural duality (Bayat 2004). Abu-Lughod discussed the concept of the "traditional urbanite", the non-integrated city dweller who still keeps up his rural life style. Or to put it in Georg Simmel's words, the "marginal personality is a manifestation of cultural hybridism – of living on the margin of two cultures without being a full member of either. (Herding 2009)

Social research has progressed enormously in its efforts to understand the factors, agents and processes shaping urban reality in both developed and developing countries. (Fernandes and Varley 1998) In the late 1960s, the concept of "Informal sector" has emerged, but the discussion was ultimately rooted in descriptions of the movement of labour to cities in the 1950s and 1960s. Among then earliest to identify this trend, there is two sector model for understanding, the new migration of people and the manner of their employment according to Arthur Lewis' proposal (AlSayyad 2004), as urbanization has this tendency to informalize through rendering many people unemployed and pushing them to seek refuge in the informal production

Struggle in the informal sphere meant to find a way to survive rather than political protest and follows two goals, the "redistribution of social goods and opportunities, and attainment of cultural and political autonomy". Relating this attitude back to the question of a connection between informal housing and work, one can conclude that the "culture of informality" evoked by the housing situation, is reflected by the same characteristics of labour. Being marginalized on the housing market as well as in the official economy the mostly poor population responds by creating their own flats and jobs. Although these lack sustainable development they are on the other hand very durable when it comes to planning an in-depth-improvement of the economic situation of the marginalized urban population

Since the world is projected to continue to urbanize, 60% of the global population is expected to live in the cities by 2030. According to the latest United Nations population projections, 4.9 billion people are expected to be urban dwellers in 2030 (Boller 2008) this will lead to a greater group of immigrants that will suffer from social exclusion and informalization. Those new groups of urban poor will attempt to exit from the new social and economic arrangements in the urban areas, seeking alternative and more familiar, or informal, institutions and relations (Bayat 2004)

The economical reasons in the Jordanian agenda

Jordan's small economic has been subject to many external shocks (phosphate and oil prices), the return of Jordanians and disrupted trade pattern due to the gulf war, in addition to the surrounding conflicts in the adjacent countries and the emigration of hundreds of thousands of refugees to Jordan while the markets were closed in

front of the Jordanian goods because of those political conflicts. Economic policy choices may have led to low rate of investment, a small private sector and reliance on government to create employment. The reform program has been slow, at best, to change these factors. These disruptions have produced large changes in population, production and consumption. Between 1987 and 1991, population including returnees) grew 34%, unemployment and poverty have become the most pressing social issues all over the country. At the end of 1996 the Government of Jordan had adopted a national strategy to alleviate poverty among the Jordan society through Implementation of targeted and comprehensive national program called Social Productivity Program (Al Daly 1997). But the immigration of hundreds of thousands of refugees to Jordan, especially during the last two years, made it almost impossible to follow any planned program against poverty

The improvement of living conditions is one of the most pressing challenges facing Jordan today. Jordan is classified by the World Bank as a "lower middle income country." The per capita GDP is \$4,700. Accordingly, poverty line for Jordan is estimated to be JD 468 per capita per year or JD 39 per capita per month, and the majority of those poor live in Amman (Figure 14)

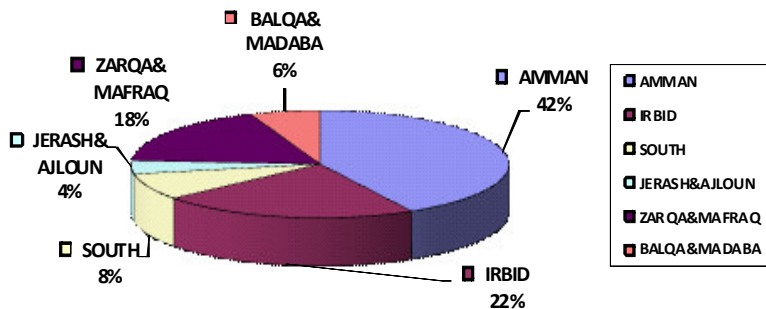


Figure 14. poverty incidence in Jordan- Geographic breakdown (Measurement and Analysis of Poverty in Jordan, 1998)

Recent studies on poverty in Jordan show that the level of poverty did not go down during the last decade but became more acute. Poverty incidence is divided into two groups, i.e., household and population poverties (Figure 15)

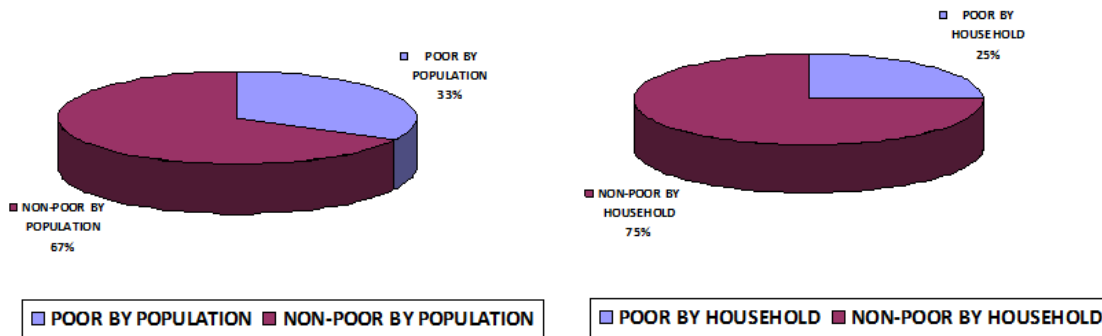


Figure 15. poverty incidence in Jordan (Measurement and Analysis of Poverty in Jordan, 1998)

The number of families below the poverty line increased to reach 20% of the total families in Jordan. According to The World Bank statistics in 1997, Jordan population living below one US\$/day is <2.0%. Whereas, population living below two US\$/day is 7.4% and population living below the national poverty line is 11.7%. The overall share of poorest is 20% in national income level.

The poverty indicators in Jordan (Measurement and Analysis of Poverty in Jordan 1998) show population poverty incidence is 27% and 33% in 1992 and 1997 respectively. Whereas the household poverty incidence is 21% and 25% in 1992 and 1997 respectively. The poverty severity in 1992 with 2.5% has shown an increment in 1997 to touch 3%

Yet, even in this context, with the externally dependent country as a dominant model, Jordan is trying its best to improve the economical situation by converting Amman and other cities into an attraction point for investments, as a probable solution for poverty, and as a new method to create a more stabile internally dependent economical model. The best example to give is Amman Master Plan, which was initiated in June 2006

in response to His Majesty King Abdullah's letter to the Mayor of Amman, in which he gave the directive for initiating "A serious and comprehensive project of city planning for Amman" (Greater Amman Municipality 2007)

Those projects is -from the governmental point of view- a new solution for the informality by reducing the amount of informal work and creating new opportunities in formal enterprises, they hope that the new projects will provide jobs for those who seek, as according to Jordan's Department of Statistics, 13% of the economically active Jordanian population residing in Jordan was unemployed in 2007 (General Statistics Department site 2006)

On the other hand, some informal poor consider that their areas didn't even appear in the text when designing those projects, although they are affected by the new huge urban changes. This case is well described by Hardoy and Satterthwaite (1989) when they said that Third World cities are divided into legal and illegal parts with a gap separating the two. As a result, most poor people have little faith in laws (Hardoy and Satterthwaite 1989), because they feel neglected when any decision is made

The poor may know little about the letters of the law, but they are often conscious of its function, recognizing that squatters are not conscious of the law (Razzaz 1998). So the residents of the areas affected by the master plan are aware that their houses may be demolished when high rise buildings are created on certain routes; for example parts of Wadi Abdoun in Amman, which is occupied by urban poor, may be destroyed or replaced. At the same time, the inadequate provision of land, the speculative investments patterns in Jordan which became a general political and economical trend, the new projects in Amman and the huge investments that invaded the city in the last few years, increased the prices of land, which will lead to a lake of the governmental capability of compensating the evacuated part of the informal sector, as the budget will not allow buying those lands from the owners and re-allocating it to the residents by long term loans like they did in the project of East Wehdad camp, where dead Extra-Legal property were made legal, which according to De Soto, the real property involved would become Liquid capital, and this new capital could power a broad-ranging economic development process that might enable the poor to achieve prosperity (Bromley 2004). All the previous amplified people's tendency towards over-regulation that came with the lake of control and a regulatory framework of standards, regulations and administrative procedures that is hostile to the needs of the urban poor

Political reasons

In some regions informality came from the waves of displaced groups from the nearby countries or even from different areas, those types of compulsory immigrations were the results of political, economical, or social conflicts in some countries, which affected directly the places that had a better situation, in Jordan, this is the main reason of informality, because Jordan has always been a heaven for displaced people and after each crisis, the country had to deal with hundreds of thousands of immigrants, from Iraq, Palestine, and Syria

Political reasons in Jordan

The majority of Palestinian refugees who left Palestine in 1948 as a consequence of the war found themselves in neighbouring host countries, especially in the East Bank as the relationship between the Palestinian and Jordanian Government was strong, while the distance was close which made it a perfect place for temporary displacement as Palestinian thought. Refugees of West Bank were further displaced during the 1967 war and moved to the East Bank of the Jordan River for the same previous reasons in addition to having relatives of the 1948 refugees in Jordan. Today and after living for about 65 years as refugees, they are still waiting for a political solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict that would enable them to see their life-situation restored to normality (Hanssen-Bauer and Jacobser 2003)

"Since its independence in 1946, Jordan's population has increased eleven times. This is due to both high rates of natural increase (more than 4%), and the country's absorption of major waves of refugees and migrants (Ababsa 2008). Two waves of Palestinian refugees, the first was in 1948 when Jordan Hosted the largest amount of Palestinian Refugees, approximately 750 000 Palestinians were forced to leave their land and to take refuge in the West Bank and the adjacent Arab countries, The second wave occurred in June 1967 during the war and after Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza strip and the Golan Heights. At that time 350 000 Palestinians left the West Bank to the East Bank of Jordan. Some of these were forcefully migrating for the second time and they were classified as refugees-displaced. The others who migrated for the first time were classified as Displaced. In 1991, 350000 Palestinian and Jordanian migrants expelled from Gulf, and 2003-2005 (between 300000 and 500000 Iraqis). These waves created high demand on residential land and urban services, as 79% of Jordan's 6 million inhabitants are Urban, half of them living in Amman, Rusaifa, and Zarqa conurbation." (Ababsa 2008), recently and because of the Syrian conflict, around 1000000 Syrian refugee crossed the Jordanian border and a new huge camp was added to Jordan in Alza'atari area- Almafraaq city in addition to those who came to Amman having relatives and family members established there. This also resulted in the Growth of Amman from a small Market town into a teeming metropolis over the course of a few decades,

and the population of Amman for example grew from 33110 in 1947 to 108000 in 1952 (Doan, 1992)

Refugees case

The government is not a party to the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 protocol and does not have any national legislation pertaining to the status and treatment of refugees. It generally cooperated with the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in assisting refugees and asylum seekers. The government respected the UNHCR's eligibility determinations regarding asylum seekers, including those who entered the country clandestinely. A 1998 memorandum of understanding between the government and the UNHCR contains the definition of a refugee, confirms the principle of non-refoulement, and allows recognized refugees a maximum stay of six months during which period a durable solution must be found. In practice the government provided protection against refoulement, the return of persons to a country where there is reason to believe they feared persecution. (Country Report of Human Rights Practices 2007)

The total number of Palestinian refugees registered in Jordan is 1708507 according to UNRWA (March 2003) of whom 790718 are refugees-displaced this is an equivalent of 42.1% of the grand total of Palestinian refugees registered in the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) records live in Jordan. Where the migration into and out of camps is relatively high; these camp refugees have lower incomes and poorer health and education levels than those outside the camps. However, camp refugees have better access to basic health and education services due to UNRWA's presence. The latter point directly leads to the conclusion that the camp populations do not face homogeneously poor living conditions, nor do they constitute the main poverty problem in the host countries like Jordan (Hanssen-Bauer and Jacobser 2003)

Only 18.3% of the refugees and refugee-displaced in Jordan live in camps, the rest 81.7% live in the various cities and towns of the kingdom. According to UNRWA's records released in 2003, the number of Palestinian refugees residing in the ten camps, which the agency recognizes, totals 298562 refugees and refugee-displaced persons. The Department of Palestinian Affairs (DPA) accredits and relies on the statistics of UNRWA since it includes the daily reporting of refugee increase. But the actual numbers of Palestinian refugees exceed the figures on UNRWA records. This is attributed to the fact that when UNRWA had commenced its work in the region in 1950 it adopted a working definition of "refugees" who were entitled to be registered in its record; According to UNRWA, Refugees are persons whose normal residence was Palestine between 1 June 1946 and 15 May 1948 and who lost both their homes and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict and took refuge in one of the countries or areas where UNRWA provides relief, and their direct descendants through the male line. This definition resulted in excluding many Palestinian refugees

Usually five years valid passports are issued to citizens in Jordan. Some persons of Palestinian origin living in Jordan awarded nationality as they considered Jordanian citizens. The UNRWA and the government continued to provide assistance to Palestinian refugees during the year. At year's end approximately 1.9 million Palestinian refugees were registered with the UNRWA. The government granted nationality to approximately 700,000 persons displaced from former Jordanian territories during the 1967 war. An additional 120,000 persons displaced during the 1967 war held temporary residency permits. An additional 200,000 Palestinian refugees were also estimated to be living in the country without any direct assistance. However, the government reported that there were approximately 130,000 Palestinian refugees, mostly of Gazian (Gaza Strip) origin, who did not qualify for citizenship. Approximately half received two-year passports valid for travel but which do not connote citizenship. West Bank residents without other travel documentation are eligible to receive five-year passports which do not connote citizenship

The Department of Statistics in Jordan (DOS REF) has the best coverage for the refugees living in camps, refugees living outside camps, as well as the host population, it completed a survey of national coverage in 1997 that was later supplemented with an in-depth study of the camps in 1999 about refugees (Hanssen-Bauer and Jacobser 2003)

A part from direct implications on security of tenure, housing market and housing regulation arising from the special situation of camp refugees, current practices and regulation within the host country have significant implications in particular for refugees. For example: Lebanese authorities refuse to allow building materials to enter into the camps, in addition, a recent amendment of the Lebanese property law was passed by Parliament giving foreigners the right to own property, whilst specifically excluding Palestinians (Hanssen-Bauer and Jacobser 2003)

In Jordan Refugees do not own the land on which their shelters are built, although a large proportion of camp refugees report that they own their dwelling, although there is no regulatory framework surrounding ownership, buying or selling. In addition to the issue of the lack of secure tenure, housing development has occurred under more or less physically restrictive conditions and has been largely unplanned by any central authority

Refugee camps in Jordan are situated on land made available to UNRWA by the Jordanian governments

to provide housing and services to refugees. (Table 1) (Hanssen-Bauer and Jacobser 2003)

Camp Name	Total area of camp		Total area of land owned by the government	
	Dunum	Square meter	Dunum	Square meter
Martyr Azmi El Mufti	758	199	10	953
Souf	535	696	111	788
Talibieh	133	433	-	-
Sukhneh	68	745	-	-
Al Hussein	445	241	-	-
Irbid	234	322	-	-
Madaba	111	586	-	-
Wihdat	479	164	-	-
Baqa'	1435	686	1059	332
Hitteen	894	632	711	274
Jerash	531	402	-	-
Prince Hassan	96	126	-	-
Zarqa	182	589	135	123

Table 1. Land property in the camps of Jordan
 (Department of Palestinian affairs, Amman, Jordan, 2008)

The camp's physical infrastructure such as water, electricity, and communications are fully government provided. Pathways, paved and asphalted roads are constructed and maintained by the Government of Jordan, represented by the Department of Palestinian Affairs (DPA) and UNRWA, in turn continues to be in charge of the environmental health care Compulsory, Education and Social relief.

Refugees who could not afford living in other places chosen UNRWA camps that granted them a house without paying any rent UNRWA does not own the original camp housing but refugees are free to use the housing so long as UNRWA is given use of the land upon which the houses are built. UNRWA's main role in shelter maintenance is the reconstruction of shelters damaged during natural or man-made disasters, and the rehabilitation and maintenance of the shelters of families that are registered as special hardship cases. Shelter modification is usually regulated by the Jordanian governments. In some cases, outside the camps, UNRWA has provided monetary assistance for dwelling repair to families registered as special hardship cases. Since the initial setting up of shelters, the stock of refugee housing in the camps has changed considerably – a necessity given that the population has increased but the camp borders have not. Where they have had the means and permission, refugees have replaced, modified or built additional shelters (Hanssen-Bauer and Jacobser 2003)

Most of those camps appeared in the 1950's and they were mainly built from non-permanent materials as refugees thought they will return within no time, while in the Jordanian case, due to high number of refugees who crossed to Jordan during the first and the second wars in 1948 and 1967, refugee camps were set up at the outskirts of the main cities of the kingdom, they were made of permanent materials provided with infrastructure and services. To grant shelters for the refugees of the first wave, five camps were established: Zarqa (1949), Irbid (1951), Al-Hussein (1952), Wihdat (New Amman Camp) (1955), and Madaba (1956). Eight other camps were established to provide shelters for those displaced as a result of the second wave of migration. Those Camps were: Talbieh, Hitteen (Marka), Al-Balqa', Jerash (Gaza), Souf, Martyr Azmi Al-Mufti (Alhusun), and Prince Hassan (Naser). They were established in 1967, 1968, 1969. Some refugee camps hold several names; unofficial names are shown in brackets. The type of housing initially set up for refugee households in the camps to replace tents was 'shelters' or small single detached dwellings. Those who moved into the camps subsequent to this have mostly built their own shelters or purchased them (Hanssen-Bauer and Jacobser 2003)

Conclusion and remarks

Different factors, like culture, politics and economy produce informality within the city, and usually those factors are combined to form a lifestyle and a social pattern that produces new forms inside the urban tissue, and whenever analyzing slums, those different reasons of informality assemble a complex understanding that will introduce new issues to be considered when choosing case studies for the research, and produce sensitivity to economical, social and behavioural patterns that could become a new base point to start the study

Acknowledgement

I am using this opportunity to express my gratitude to Applied Science University (ASU) for supporting this research (Cultural, Economic and Political reasons controlling the informalities spreading: Jordan as a model). I am thankful for their invaluable constructive encouragement and rapid response for funding.

Diana Dumour

References

- Al Daly, J. 1997. Informal settlements in Jordan, Upgrading Approaches adopted and lessons learned, Housing and Urban Development Corporation, Amman, Jordan.
- AlSayyad, N.; Roy, A. 2004. Urban Informality : Prologue/ Dialogue- Urban informality :Crossing Borders, Lexington books, Lanham, Maryland, USA.
- Bayat, A. 2004. Urban Informality : Globalization and the politics of the informals in the global south, Lexington books, Lanham, Maryland, USA.
- Bekker, S. 2006. Reflections on identity in four African cities. Cape Town, African Minds.
- Bromley, R. 2004. Urban Informality, Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia, Lanham USA: Lexington Books.
- Duran-Lasserve, A.; Clerc, V. 1996. Regularization and integration of irregular Settlements : Lessons from Experience, UMP, Working paper no.6, World Bank, Washington DC. USA.
- Fernandes, E.; Varley, A. 1998. Illegal cities- Law and urban change in developing countries, Zed books Ltd, London, UK.
- Hardoy, J. E.; D.Satterthwaite. 1989. Squatters Citizen : Life in the Urban Third World, Earthscan, London.
- Razzaz, O. 1993. Contested Space, Urban settlement around Amman, Amman, Jordan.
- Razzaz, O. 1998. Illegal cities Law and Urban Change in Developing Countries, chapter 4, Land Disputes in the Absence of Ownership Rights: Insights From Jordan. (1st ed), London, UK: Zed Book Ltd. London and New York.
- Doan, M. R. 1992. Class differentiation and the informal sector in Amman, Jordan, International Journal of Middle East studies, 24 (1): 27-38.
- Geoffrey I. Nwaka, May 2005. Treating people and communities as assets, the urban informal sector in Nigeria: Towards economic development, environmental health, and social harmony, Global Urban development magazine (GUD), 1 (1).
- Wirth, L.1938. Urbanism as a way of life, American Journal of sociology, 44 (1).
- Ababsa, M. 2008. Public Policies toward informal Settlements in Jordan (1965-2007), Ninth Mediterranean Research Meeting, Workshop no 4 Public Policies and Legal Practice toward Informal Settlements in the Middle East and Egypt, Florence-Montecatini Terme, 12-15 March 2008.
- Boller, M. 2008. Informal Developments- Urban villages?, Ninth Mediterranean Research Meeting, Workshop no 4 Public Policies and Legal Practice toward Informal Settlements in the Middle East and Egypt, Florence-Montecatini Terme, 12-15 March 2008.
- Dumour, D.; Ababsa, M. 2008. Wadi Abdoun : From slums to towers The upgrading policy of an informal settlement in Amman, Jordan, Ninth Mediterranean Research Meeting, Workshop no 4 Public Policies and Legal Practice toward Informal Settlements in the Middle East and Egypt, Florence-Montecatini Terme, 12-15 March 2008.
- Laue, F. 2008. Vertical versus Horizontal construction of modern living conditions in informal settlements and the reality of construction, Ninth Mediterranean Research Meeting, Workshop no 4 Public Policies and Legal Practice toward Informal Settlements in the Middle East and Egypt, Florence-Montecatini Terme, 12-15 March 2008.
- Department of Palestinian affairs 2008. 55 Years in serving refugee camps, Amman, Jordan.
- Hanssen-Bauer, J.; Jacobser, L. 2003. Living in provisional normality: the living conditions of Palestinian refugees in the host countries of the Middle East, Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies, Oslo, Norway.
- Measurement and Analysis of Poverty in Jordan 1998. Joint Study by: Ministry of Social Development, Department of Statistics, Department for Int'l Development (DFID), and United Nations Development Program. World Bank, World Development report 1995. Oxford University press, Oxford, UK.
- Country Report of Human Rights Practices 2007. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Jordan.
- Greater Amman Municipality. 2007. www.ammancity.gov.jo, Airport Corridor and Interim Rural Residential Policy, Press Release, Amman, Jordan.
- General Statistics Department Site. 2006. The living conditions in Jordan.
- Herding, M. 2009. Urbanization and Informality- Responses to Rapid Growth of Middle Eastern Cities. Urbanization in the Middle East – American University in Cairo.
- Measurement and Analysis of Poverty in Jordan 1998. Joint Study by Ministry of Social Development, Department of Statistics, Department for Int'l Development (DFID), and United Nations Development Program.

The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open-Access hosting service and academic event management. The aim of the firm is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the firm can be found on the homepage:

<http://www.iiste.org>

CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

There are more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals hosted under the hosting platform.

Prospective authors of journals can find the submission instruction on the following page: <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Paper version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Academic conference: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/upcoming-conferences-call-for-paper/>

IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

