

Acknowledgements

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This volume is the outcome of a research project financed by a four-year grant (2019–23) from the Research Council of Norway (RCN 288530). More than a decade since the Syrian uprising turned into a civil war, the world is a different place. The Syrian mass displacement that once dominated everyday popular media, news, and public attention, has been replaced by the war in Ukraine. The world experienced a global pandemic, testing the limits of refugee hospitality, resilience, and compassion. Refugees became both subject and object of shifting geopolitical landscapes and right-wing populist politics that spurred refugee-generating conflict, increased displacement and altered asylum policies. Adding to this, the new deterrence policies invoke bilateral and multilateral agreements that constrain mobility, promote involuntary resettlement, and confine refugees to underserved urban environments where humanitarian aid is ill-funded, poorly designed and protection difficult to attain.

This volume brings together a wide tapestry of experiences, knowledge and expertise, and cutting-edge research on some of the most vexing quandaries that Syrian refugees in the Middle East find themselves today and over the previous years. We would like to thank the project participants for contributing this depth to the volume, as well as the seminars, workshops, and conferences we have had along the way. We also want to thank the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI), and Bergen Global for providing excellent facilities for research and outreach and Berghahn for the support during the publication process. A special thanks to Sari Hanafi for commenting on the draft papers, Leonardo Schiocchet for reviewing the full manuscript and Mark Wells for preparing the index. Most of all, we would like to thank the many Syrian refugees encountered across the Middle East ‘host countries’ who profoundly shaped the understanding of urban displacement underlying this volume. Their protracted displacement has transformed the Middle East and altered urban landscapes, migration trajectories, and resettlement futures – for themselves and for the generations of Syrians to come.

