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# When Health Issues are Long Term and Chronic: Health Care in Humanitarian Emergencies in the Middle East

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RESCAP-MED and FHS-AUB

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# Overview

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- Who I am and my background
- Some definitions
- How I will do this : three case studies
- Normative and Ethical Challenges
- What this talk will aim to achieve: that the most important challenge in the Mediterranean region is recognizing the ***pervasiveness of NCDs among nomads and refugees***

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# Who am I and where have I worked?

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- Social Anthropologist
- Bedouin /pastoralists in Syria-Lebanon-Jordan: camel pastoralists in Sultanate of Oman
- Refugees from Palestine, Western Sahara, Afghanistan, Iraq and now, Syria.

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# Definitions: Who is a forced migrant

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## UNHCR Definitions

- Refugees
- Asylum seekers
- IDPs
- People of concern
- Stateless persons



## Other definitions and categories

- UNRWA for Palestinians
- Disaster displacement
- “Environmental refugees”
- Development induced displacement

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# Case 1: Pastoralists in Lebanon

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- Bedouin wedding in 1973 Terbol, Lebanon.
- Return visit in 2005-10 for EU funded Bedouin Health Project
- The seven Bedouin men in the photograph had all died; their hearts had stopped’.
- The four women in the photographs – some of them grandmothers today – were all alive, though not necessarily well.



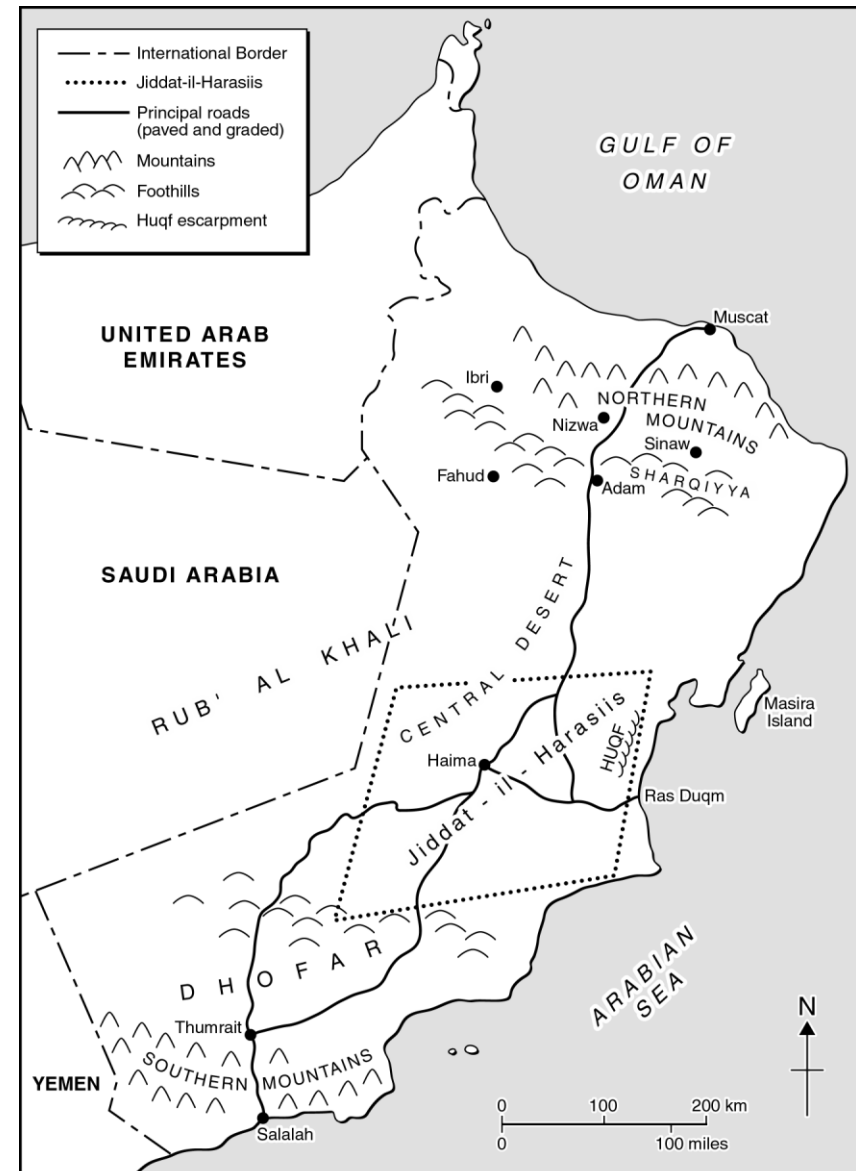
# Case 2: Pastoralists in Sultanate of Oman (1)

- Haima Hospital, Wusta, Oman
- Most rural hospital in the country on edge of Rub'a al Khali;
- Hospital beds nearly empty; except when traffic accident survivor arrives; outpatient heaving
- Health education and chronic disease clinics as well as minor injuries [oil company workers]



# Case 2: Pastoralists of Oman (2)

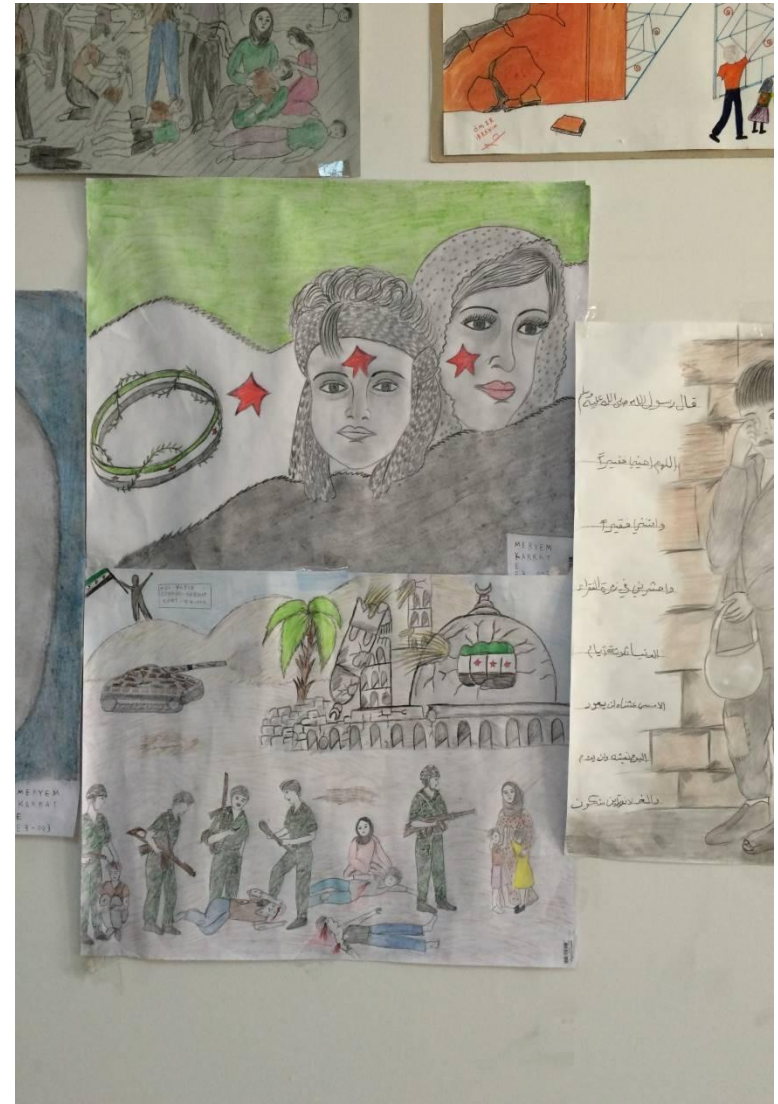
- 40,000 square kilometres
- Four times the size of Lebanon
- Population of 40,000
- One hospital operating largely as an outpatient polyclinic
- Adults between 30-70 largely invisible



Sultanate of Oman

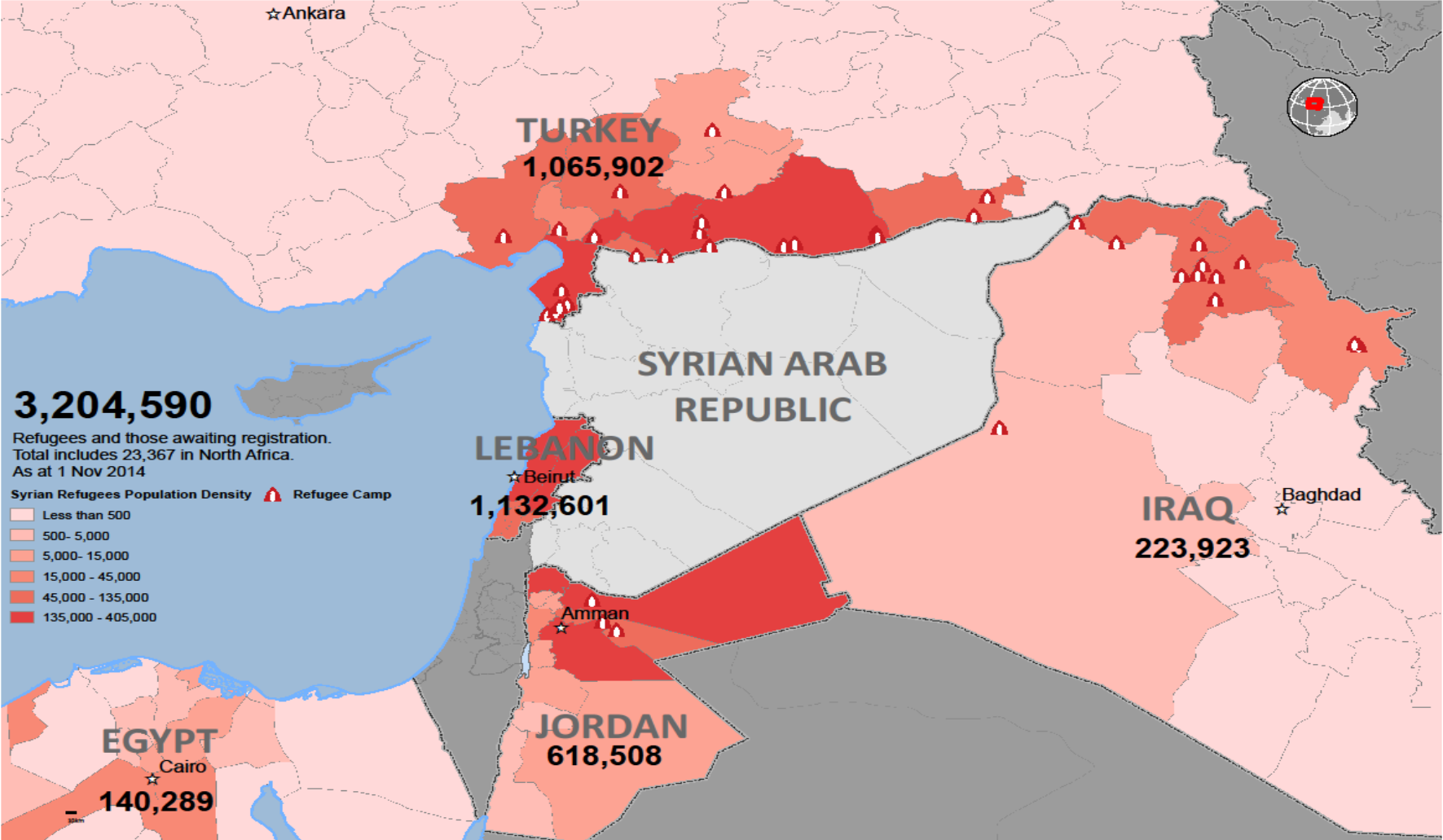
# Case 3: Refugees in Gazianteb, Turkey (1)

- 2.7 m. refugees from Syria in neighbouring countries:400,000  
12-18 year olds
- 150,000 From Syria in Gazianteb
- Psychological distress/trauma hardly recognized
- ‘No Lost Generation’?





# Case 3: Refugees in Gazianteb, Turkey (2)



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

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# Case 3: Refugees in Gazianteb, Turkey (2)

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- UNHCR estimates that Middle East and North Africa host nearly **22.5% of all world's refugees**
  - Total for Africa: 2,932,700
  - Total for MENA: 2,630,700\*
  - World total: 11,702,900 (+5 million)
- \*When the nearly 5,000,000 Palestinian refugees (**UNRWA**) in the region are added, the total percentage in the Middle East is: **45% of the world's refugees.***

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# Normative and Ethical Challenges

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- What's in a name: refugee or IDP ?
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- Prioritizing children over adults?
- Whatever happened to Gender?
- Recognizing distress and trauma but not necessarily PTSD?

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# Conclusions

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- ...ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances...
- ...out of place, unsafe and unwanted ...
- ... long term and chronic health care lacking...

