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Refugee Entrepreneurship: Learning from Case Evidence

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18.1 Introduction

Although refuge is not a new phenomenon, refugee entrepreneurship is—apart from some door-opening contributions (e.g. Light et al. 1993; Wauters and Lambrecht 2008 and the overview in Heilbrunn and Iannone, 2018 in the introduction of this book), analysis is still in its early stages. Neither quantitative research nor comprehensive cross-case studies have been conducted to date. This book, however, allows us to take our first steps toward learning from case evidence, as all the chapters have followed a corresponding structure and reveal comparable information from the cases examined.

The 16 cases outlined form the ground for a case comparison that starts out by identifying core topics. These topics are condensed both from the structure of the book's chapters and the content provided by the authors. Having intensively reviewed the material, the following questions

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stand at the fore and help to develop the cross-case narrative that structures this concluding chapter:

1. Are there any typical settings (e.g. industries, market structures, migration paths) that refugees as entrepreneurs act upon?
2. Do home countries play any decisive role for refugees after their refuge—in terms of being on their mind or prompting them to maintain a static state of waiting to return?
3. How do refugees develop their perspectives, and what happens throughout their flight?
4. How do refugees perceive their countries of residence and how or why do they journey there?
5. What kind of businesses do refugee entrepreneurs develop, and what motivates these choices (considering entrepreneurial opportunity and entrepreneurial intention)?
6. What are, and have been, the critical resources for founding the companies and running the businesses, and what are the enablers and constraints?
7. What are the psychological factors that made the refugee entrepreneurs pursue their business projects (with a focus on the important construct of hope, cf. Freiling and Vemuri 2017)?
8. What is the (preliminary) outcome of the entrepreneurship endeavor and the business endeavors of refugee entrepreneurs (with some focus on the question of whether trauma occurred and could be overcome)?

The following sections mirror and condense the findings, one by one, following the above set of questions. Lastly, a final section will provide an overview and outlook.

18.2 Typical Settings of Refugee Entrepreneurs and Refugee Entrepreneurship

In the face of considerable heterogeneity, it is useful to structure the situations that refugee entrepreneurs typically occupy. However, the question arises of what kind of factors ought to be considered. In this respect, one

cannot abstract from the root causes of a refugee's flight. Moreover, the personal situation of refugee entrepreneurs often makes a difference in terms of what they do, what they can achieve and how they behave. Furthermore, their socioeconomic background matters, as well. Refugee entrepreneurship seems to depend on what refugees do in relation to their previous activities.

18.2.1 Root Causes of Refuge

The reasons for leaving a home country or home region may be considerably different from one case to another. However, the case evidence suggests that it makes a difference if people flee due to: (1) personal reasons like political persecution (like Hamze, cf. Maalaoui 2018) or sometimes economic pressures, like in the case of Oliver (Tengeh 2018), which is already closely located to the interface of migration entrepreneurship; (2) reasons that relate to social group discrimination (like in case of the human right activist Edouard, cf. Ruparanganda et al. 2018); or (3) an overall social disaster like war—one of the most significant factors of the cases presented in this book (e.g. Futan Ahmed, cf. Palalic et al. 2018 or Hanifa, according to Alkhaled 2018). This corresponds to the constellations of refugees introduced by Kunz (1981): majority-identified refugees, event-related refugees and self-alienated refugees, as portrayed in the introduction of this book (Heilbrunn and Iannone 2018).

18.2.2 Socioeconomic Constellations of Refugee Entrepreneurs

As for their personal situations, several things are significant in profiling refugee entrepreneurs' endeavors. The first relates to a refugee entrepreneur's age—namely, the person's age when the flight takes place and their age when founding a company. The time difference between refuge and company foundation is also a feature to profile entrepreneurial endeavors of refugees in host countries. Sometimes refugees have to leave their home in their childhood or adolescence (e.g. Jamshed, cf. Plak and Lagarde 2018). In these cases, their mind is not so much influenced by

their home country (setting). These particular phases of life are rather sensitive, as non-adults often need a stable background for smooth development. Any break in security, for instance, can cause emotional pain that is often neither an evident nor a conscious factor and, thus, operates very much in the background. Adults, instead, are often fully socialized in their home countries. By virtue of their experiences, they are typically more prepared to cope with the new their circumstances in their host country. However, their openness to a new environment depends, to a large extent, on a home country's imprint—an imprint that may stem from the years they lived in a home country, as well as from cultural or ethnic factors. The case evidence tells the story of younger entrepreneurs, like Abdul (25 years—cf. Hertmann et al. 2018), and adults, like Muhannad (Harima et al. 2018), who are very open-minded and flexible. Muhannad and Ali Dede (Zamantili Nayir 2018) are of the same age, but differ in terms of their home country's imprint remarkably. When a home country's imprint plays an important role, we can expect an impact on recognition of entrepreneurial opportunity and the kind of entrepreneurial intention (Baron 2004; Krueger et al. 2000), as heavily “imprinted” people will narrow down their business corridor based on these factors.

18.2.3 Type of Business and Prior Career Steps

Refugee entrepreneurs are, to a large extent, opportunity seekers and need to be so in order to support themselves and their families. The range of businesses of refugee entrepreneurs varies considerably and depends on local opportunities. However, before running a business on their own, the refugee entrepreneurs portrayed in this book predominantly first looked out for other jobs. As it turned out, employment options did not really exist, and thus, the respective number of entrepreneurs considered self-employment as a fallback option—and took that chance. This also reveals that refugee entrepreneurship is often necessity-driven. Refugees find themselves in precarious positions in new countries of residence and strive to overcome this state by doing something rather than complaining or bemoaning their situations—like in Muhannad's case (Harima et al. 2018). Necessity entrepreneurship often implies that entrepreneurs stand

with their “backs against the wall”. This picture holds true for refugees in particular. Nevertheless, self-employment gives them at least the hope to bolster their development and to get back on a more prosperous path. As hope may play such a prominent role in refugee entrepreneurship, we come back to this issue later on in a separate section.

We can find evidence for many solo-entrepreneurship endeavors. Only in a few cases did the refugees found a business in teams or quasi-team structures (like Abdul or Futan Ahmed, cf. Hartmann et al. 2018; Palalic et al. 2018). Almost all the ventures presented herein belong to the micro-, small- and mid-sized businesses. Oliver’s business perhaps (Tengeh 2018) has some growth potential, but does not currently look like a truly growth-oriented startup. Whether refugees have skills accumulated in their prior careers they can build on as refugee entrepreneurs is sometimes a matter of interpretation. Generally, transversal skills, developed earlier in life, are useful, at least indirectly. However, in some cases, the entrepreneurs directly capitalized on their skills (like Futan Ahmed, Hussam, Kaficho and Oliver, cf. Freudenberg 2018; Moog and Yekoye Abebe 2018; Palalic et al. 2018; Tengeh 2018). Thus, they managed to mitigate their entrepreneurial challenges slightly. At a glance, their flight caused breaks not only in the lives of refugee entrepreneurs, but also in their careers. In most cases, these breaks are literally “disruptive” and in some cases they are minor in nature, but still evident. This brings us closer to the refuge itself, commencing with the home country situation.

18.3 Mental Home Country Imprint and Home-Sickness

Prior to a deeper analysis of both home country and host country settings, Table 18.1 provides a brief overview of the migration routes of the refugee entrepreneurs portrayed in this book.

Notably, points of departure from home countries imply that in most cases, refugees’ minds are still deeply influenced by their home countries. Aside from Ahmed (de la Chaux 2018), who left his home at the age of

Table 18.1 Refugee paths

Chapter number	Case	Home country	Host country	Whistle step(s)
2	Muhannad	Syria	Germany	Turkey, then Greece
3	Abdul	Syria	Germany	Egypt
4	Ellie	Malawi	Ireland	Kenya
5	Jamshed	Afghanistan	France	Iran
6	Hussam	Syria	Germany	Turkey
7	Jonny	Eritrea	Israel	Sudan
8	Kaficho	Ethiopia	Germany	Turned back to Ethiopia, but returned to Germany
9	Edouard	Congo	Australia	Angola, Zambia, South Africa, then Zimbabwe
10	Arash	Iran	Luxembourg	Belgium
11	Hamze	Iran	France	None
12	Abdullah	Pakistan	Pakistan (elsewhere)	None
13	Ali Dede	Syria	Turkey	None
14	Ahmed	Somalia	Kenya	None
15	Futan Ahmed	Iraq	Sultanate of Oman	Syria
16	Oliver	Cameroon	South Africa	None
17	Hanifa	Syria	Jordan	None

three, there is usually a considerable “home country imprint”. At a minimum level, countries of origin imprint refugee entrepreneurs with country-specific values, customs, attitudes, worldviews and typical ways of conducting business or interacting with people. This influence becomes apparent when refugee entrepreneurs set up their business. A much deeper impact is revealed when refugees purposefully transfer their country-specific lifestyles or similar aspects of their previous lives and develop a new business that explicitly builds on these ethnic features. This is already an indicator of strong home country sentiments. A more advanced state is when refugee entrepreneurs found a business for the sake of livelihood, but with the background intention of returning to their home countries, in the future. At the very least, this is proof of a state of home-sickness. If we consider these three intensity modes through real case evidence, we can observe that the first two modes seem to

dominate. None of the entrepreneurs portrayed are totally independent of any home country imprint, but the intensity of that imprint does not seem to far exceed intermediate levels. One explanation for this resides in the fact that many refugees tried almost every possible means available to try to stay in their home countries before making the decision to flee. However, once the decision was made, the people believe there is no easy way back, and with every passing year in the host country, possibilities of returning seem more and more unlikely. Kaficho is one refugee who tried to go back to his home country, but learned that this was not doable (Moog and Yekoye Abebe 2018). However, his experience obviously crystallized his belief that he had to find a way to build a life in his host country. All in all, sentiments play a crucial role and cast a shadow on what refugee entrepreneurs do. However, they are not so strong that they make engender a major struggle. One reason for this may be that entrepreneurs are often fully occupied and need to concentrate on their businesses. In other words, they have only limited time to think about their home countries. Sentiments are at present, but more so in the background. They play an important role, but entrepreneurs often learn to cope with that.

18.4 On the Run—The Sequence of Events and Its Consequences

Journeys to refuge vary widely, and Paludan (1974) provided us with an important range of refugees settings: acute constellations tell us that people are forced to leave their home countries all of a sudden (see also Heilbrunn and Iannone 2018). Contrasting this, a flight situation is anticipatory if refugees foresee an upcoming disaster and leave their homes prior to things getting completely out of control. Case evidence reveals huge ranges between the two categorizations of refuge, but in most, the realities of circumstances reside somewhat in between the two extremes (e.g. Freudenberg 2018), with a tendency towards more acute settings (like the case of Hanifa, cf. Alkhaled 2018). The different stories portrayed in this book also show the dramatic peaks in the development of refugees.

A crucial follow up question is whether refugees gain control over their flight. Sometimes the situation is so dramatic that refugees can only escape through the help of others who temporarily gain complete control over the lives. This means that the final destination, as well as the escape path, are not clear from the refugees' viewpoints. In this respect, it is by no means an exception that a getaway involves stays in different countries, sometimes for longer periods of time, as Table 18.1 illuminates. What refugees obviously need in such odyssey-like situations is patience—accompanied by high levels of courage to withstand the precarious situations they find themselves in. From the set of cases presented in this book, Abdul, Ali Dede, Arash, Edouard, Ellie, Futan Ahmed, Hussam, Jamshed and Muhannad (Freudenberg 2018; Harima et al. 2018; Hartmann et al. 2018; Iannone 2018; Kolb 2018; Moog and Yekoye Abebe 2018; Palalic et al. 2018; Plak and Lagarde 2018; Zamantili Nayir 2018) had to make various shorter stops before reaching their “final” host country.

There are cases where refugees had a clear target destination (e.g. Ali Dede, cf. Zamantili Nayir 2018), with a clear ambition and/or an opportunity for certain pre-flight preparations (like Abdullah and Hussam, cf. Manzoor et al. 2018; Freudenberg 2018). Contrary to these examples, refugees like Arash or Muhannad (Harima et al. 2018; Iannone 2018) started their flight without an ultimate target destination, but with an approximate orientation of where to go and what to avoid. As for later integration and establishment, there are no striking differences when comparing the cases.

An important question remains: what happens during the flight? The situation in the home country is already one psychological factor that causes pain and desperation. The refuge as such is another source of potential trauma. In a small number of cases, significantly traumatic things happened to the refugees we studied. Jamshed is one of the few (Plak and Lagarde 2018). He got in touch with smugglers and thus found himself in a tricky situation because of his resulting dependence on others. Similarly, Muhannad (Harima et al. 2018) temporarily found himself in life-threatening situations. However, the shocks caused by the refuge obviously do not compete with the desperate states of home countries, which people have been facing for prolonged periods of time. Nevertheless,

it is possible that these refugee-related events also play a role in the subconscious awareness of refugees, which crops up at later points in time.

18.5 The Country of Residence: New Home or Waiting Room?

When people escape their homes, they are mostly not well-prepared for this unforeseeable step—and break—in their lives. However, their gut feeling often informs them about what a preferred country to stay in, at least for a while, would be. In fact, in many of the cases, the refugee entrepreneurs had no real flight plan, despite having a preferred country in mind. Additionally, most of the refugees portrayed in this book have been fully aware of the fact that they ought to have different destination countries in mind, as it is highly uncertain to get a residence permit in any desired country. They have something like an “ideal set” of countries under consideration.

Case evidence suggests that in many cases, feasibility issues outweigh top preferences in terms of host countries. Indeed, refugee entrepreneurs sometimes do not have a chance to stay in their preferred country, such as was the case for Abdul, whose first stay before Germany was Egypt (Hartmann et al. 2018). Sometimes, however, they get formal permission to stay in a particular country, but under dangerous or unacceptable conditions—like the permission granted by the USA in Hamze’s case (Maalaoui et al. 2018), who instead opted to immigrate into France. Furthermore, sometimes additional information changes preferences, like in the case of Muhannad (Harima et al. 2018), whose preference switched from Sweden to Germany.

Legal, administrative and socioeconomic factors play a role when it comes to finding a first country of residence. Despite some recent change initiatives, the Irish case of Ellie (Kolb 2018) reveals that receiving countries also install governance solutions that make longer stays in the country more or less unfavorable and tend to allow only voluntary initiatives in the realm of social entrepreneurship. This same case is a good example of how (refugee) entrepreneurship responds to these opportunities by taking chances

and filling socioeconomic gaps. Depending on the situation in the host country, the setting is often quite different from one place to another. In many countries, refugee camps receive larger numbers of incoming refugees and asylum seekers. Some of the cases that reveal these distinctions are, for example, that of Ahmed (de la Chaux 2018), who stayed in a camp (due to Kenya's 2006 Refugee Act), and that of Oliver (Tengeh 2018), who talked about camps in South Africa where refugees may go without any obligation in terms of binding requirements or expectations of the host country.

However, is that stay temporary or more or less permanent? Aside from some settings where legal systems foresee refugees' return to their home countries (e.g. in the Kenyan case, cf. de la Chaux, 2018 with the strange situation that Ahmed has virtually no memories of his home country, having fled at the age of three), this question is still unanswered after reviewing the cases presented in this book. There are some indications that refugees wait for the right time to go back to their home country—such as Ali Dede (Zamantili Nayir 2018). Others, instead, do not really take so much notice of their home countries anymore, as they have found a new place—just like in case of Abdul (Hartmann et al. 2018) or with regard to Oliver's development in South Africa (Tengeh 2018). Other cases are much more ambiguous. Whether circumstances will lead to a prolonged residency or a return depends on a larger set of factors, with family ties and integration or assimilation factoring in to their decisions. If positive ties, that allow for the building of capital, strengthen, as is the case for Abdul, who became the member of a bigger venture team (Hartmann et al. 2018), then staying in a host country for a longer period of time or permanently becomes more likely. The same holds true if countries are generally open to refugees. We can learn from the case of Hamze (Maalaoui 2018) that such an attitude is common for the USA, while in France, the situation is different: "In the USA, I feel that I'm no more refugee, (...) people ask you: how do you do? In France they ask: where are you from?" (Maalaoui 2018). The (perceived) difference cannot simply be explained by migration experiences, as both countries have strong immigration records. Culture and national self-concept seem to matter, as well.

What is often a decisive question is the level of command of the local language in the new location. Low levels of command impede communication and, thus, hamper integration. However, even high levels of

language skills do not always lead to employment opportunities. In the case of Ali Dede (Zamantili Nayir 2018), it was the dialect that prohibited his unconditional acceptance by people from the same country. However, heading from Syria to Turkey, the language was not an obstacle. Abdullah, instead, fled within Pakistan (Manzoor et al. 2018), but faced problems based on differences in dialects that hampered his acceptance and integration. Kaficho (Moog and Yekoye Abebe 2018) accumulated considerable language skills. This, however, was not the decisive door-opener for him. The case of Hanifa is different, as well (Alkhaled 2018). She spoke the language in the host country, and, in addition to other factors, this helped her socialize in her new setting.

18.6 Business as (Un-)Usual—What Did Refugee Entrepreneurs Do?

There are numerous approaches to drawing out important features of the refugee businesses presented in this book. Comparing all the cases, the question of commercial versus social entrepreneurship (Baron 2007) appears to be a meaningful avenue of research. In reality, it is hard to distinguish between commercial and social entrepreneurship, as some ventures are somewhat in between the two categories. They directly or indirectly address social issues and do so with limited or no support from municipalities or NGOs. Nevertheless, when identifying social entrepreneurship, the social mission stands at the fore, distinguishing it from profit-driven ventures. Examples of commercial entrepreneurship are to be found in the cases of Oliver, Futan Ahmed, Jamshed and Muhannad (Harima et al. 2018; Palalic et al. 2018; Plak and Lagarde 2018, Tengeh 2018). The most impressive example of commercial entrepreneurship, however, is the case of Oliver (Tengeh 2018), who developed a mid-sized business with remarkable growth, although his refugee status prevented him from achieving higher growth rates. Moreover, Oliver is one of the few refugees who fled due to economic reasons. He managed to develop a qualification profile that predisposed him for such a career. The following ventures of Ellie and Hussam (Kolb 2018; Freudenberg 2018) explicitly address social issues and, thus, belong to the social entrepreneurship

category. The cases of Edouard (Ruparanganda et al. 2018) and Jonny (Heilbrunn and Rosenfeld 2018) are intermediate forms.

To respond to the huge variety of refugee entrepreneurs is not an easy endeavor. What plays a significant role is the official registration of the business. As refugees or asylum seekers are not always in a position to plan their future, they are sometimes not supposed to officially register their business, as is the case for Ahmed in Kenya, who has been living “temporarily” in a refugee camp for over 20 years and does not have official permission to run a business (de la Chaux 2018). As a consequence, he has worked in the “gray” business areas, providing repair service onsite in the refugee camp. This vacuum of the gray market that is related to the debate on institutional voids (Mair and Martí 2009) does not allow businesses to benefit from any legal protection (like granting property rights) and causes a state of permanent vulnerability. Consequently, informal coordination, such as in the payment of bribes to (semi-)officials, generates some sort of quasi-protection. Another observed mode of establishing a business in a refugee setting is partnering with locals to circumvent legal restrictions. Futan Ahmed used this recourse (Palalic et al. 2018) and worked in a much better and more secure setting than Ahmed in the Kenyan refugee camp.

Finally, it is evident that many ventures presented in this book belong to the tertiary sector as they provide services (of a wide variety) to clients or they center around trading. This focus is rather sensible, as both the first and the second sectors often require huge investments in terms of financial capital that typically cannot be provided by refugee entrepreneurs. In the case of trade and services, however, entrepreneurs may circumvent such challenges by providing labor and/or knowledge as focused input to the value-added process.

18.7 Resources—On Enablers and Constraints

Referring back to the individual chapter subsections on enablers and constraints, the debate about resources—whether they are available or lacking—helps to condense these findings. In this vein, whenever the debate in management and entrepreneurship studies considers the resources required for a business to be successful, literature points to rather evident

asset categories such as financial resources, business skills, famous brands and so on, common in terms of approaches such as the resource-based or competence-based view (Grant 1991; Freiling 2004) or the dynamic capabilities perspective (Teece 2007). In fact, case evidence from refugee entrepreneurship suggests that the basic categories of critical resources and capabilities are salient in this setting as well. However, the relevance of these categories is actually different from what is commonly accepted. Moreover, resource (non-)availability is a pivotal issue in cases of refugee entrepreneurship. When trying to structure the resources critical to the success of refugee entrepreneurship initiatives, the concept of capital—as introduced by Austrian Capital Theory—is a crucial factor (Lachmann 1978; Taghizadegan 2009; Freiling and Baron 2017). It allows for identifying the following “core capitals”: (1) human capital; (2) social capital; (3) financial capital; and (4) support capital provided by the infrastructure in the host country.

18.7.1 Human Capital

Among the profiling elements of refugee entrepreneurs, the cases reveal that the risk taking propensity of refugee entrepreneurs considerably exceeds typical levels. Hamze, the Iranian entrepreneur who started a consulting business in France, simply stated that he had nothing to lose in his particular situation and explicitly mentioned his willingness to take extreme business risks (Maalaoui 2018). This is a prototypical situation for other refugee entrepreneurs as well, as failure in their business would not really worsen a situation that is already dire. This state of mind is atypical for other entrepreneurs. Not every refugee has a previous entrepreneurship agenda. However, where refugees have already been entrepreneurs (like Edouard, cf. Ruparanganda et al. 2018), the venture runs often more smoothly. Among the factors constituting human capital, resilience stands at the fore as well. In many cases, the host country is not very open to a larger number of refugees, and sometimes xenophobia and social exclusion directly challenge refugees. The cases of Oliver (Tengeh 2018), Hamze (Maalaoui 2018) and Ellie (Kolb 2018) provide evidence for this argument. Considering their flight and the complicated state of

mind refugees find themselves in, this is another crucial burden, and it takes a lot of mental strength not to give up. A superordinate motivation to sustain oneself or to improve one's personal situation reveals the passion many refugees, as entrepreneurs, demonstrate. In this regard, Arash (Iannone 2018) is only one example among many.

18.7.2 Social Capital

Reviewing the entire scope of cases in this book, networks, relationships and building social capital appear to be critical aspects of success. Although these factors are relevant to any kind of entrepreneurship, they are of pivotal relevance to the success of almost any refugee entrepreneurship endeavor—at least with respect to the cases in this book. However, there are some important differences depending on the kind of relationships that are used. Granovetter (1973), in his seminal publication, pointed to the “strengths of weak ties”. There is tremendous case evidence that weaker ties are very useful to connect one's own venture with relevant parts of society (e.g. in Muhannad's case, cf. Harima et al. 2018). Putnam (2000), in a similar fashion, referred to the usefulness of bridging capital, which metaphorically highlights connectedness. At the same time, he pointed to bonding capital. In doing so, he emphasized the potential usefulness of stronger ties, as well. In fact, many of the refugee entrepreneurs portrayed in this book built these kind of ties and critically depended on them to provide basic strength to their ventures (e.g. in the case of Hanifa, cf. Alkhaled 2018; Kaficho, cf. Moog and Yekoye Abebe 2018; and Futan Ahmed, cf. Palalic et al. 2018). However, as is evident from the wide range of cases, it makes a difference whether bonded partners are locals (e.g. Abdul, cf. Hartmann et al. 2018; Ellie cf. Kolb 2018; and Kaficho, cf. Moog and Yekoye Abebe 2018) or people of the same ethnicity.

18.7.3 Financial Capital

Refugee entrepreneurs often fall short of financial resources. It may be true that all kinds of entrepreneur face problems of access to venture capital in early stages of venture development. However, in case of refugee

entrepreneurs, the situation is even worse (as the cases of Kaficho and Hussam and to some extent Oliver reveal—cf. Freudenberg 2018; Moog and Yekoye Abebe 2018; Tengeh 2018). It is hard to specify the reasons for this phenomenon on a general level. There may be problems that refugee entrepreneurs experience in relation to socializing in the host country. In these cases, many are simply not aware of the peculiarities of how to approach local venture capitalists. On the other hand, venture capitalists are aware of coping with considerable risks when financing new ventures. However, with respect to refugee entrepreneurs, venture capitalists are not necessarily enough aware of the people and their particular circumstances. Refugees also choose other options for financial support. In the case of Jonny (Heilbrunn and Rosenfeld 2018), for example, his ethnic community provided some financial support (loans), and the host country's NGOs helped him through donations.

18.7.4 Support Capital

As refugees often find themselves in precarious situations in many regards (lack of economic resources, social isolations, trauma, etc.), there are some reasons why they need support—public and/or private—when they found a business, most fundamentally, the simple need that refugees have for a place to stay. Refugee camps (like in Ahmed's case, cf. de la Chaux 2018— or in a rather different settings, such as for Arash, cf. Iannone 2018) represent one type of response, offering baseline support to larger numbers of refugees. Aside from this, refugees need advice on practicalities as to living in a new country and founding a business therein— support which is sometimes provided, particularly in highly developed countries (such as for Hussam in Germany, cf. Freudenberg 2018). It is not a given that such support is (easily) available in every country, as revealed by Jonny's case (Heilbrunn and Rosenfeld 2018). However, in the case of existing support infrastructure, the modes of granting support are diverse and range from venturing infrastructure, like incubators over public subsidies, to giving advice. It is reasonable to expect that this kind of support would be accepted by most refugee entrepreneurs. For some, this definitely holds true (e.g. Ellie, cf. Kolb 2018). However, the cases also reveal a different impression. Sometimes refugee entrepreneurs are simply not aware that

support infrastructures exist. In other instances, refugee entrepreneurs do not ask for such support, as they want to “make it on their own” or do not want to burden the host country more than required (like Futan Ahmed, cf. Palalic et al. 2018; or Jonny, cf. Heilbrunn and Rosenfeld 2018).

18.8 Mental Energizers—What About Hope?

Facing the enormous mental pressure on refugees before, during and after flight, the question arises of what may stimulate them and what may provide them with hope. The role of hope is still under-researched and less understood in business and entrepreneurship literature. However, in refugee entrepreneurship, hope is of pivotal relevance and is decisive for people who have lost many important things in their lives and who then consider the risky venture of founding a company. Firstly, it is necessary to define hope. Following Stotland (1969), hope is not necessarily the conviction that something will come to a good end, but the perception that goals can be met and the subjective certainty that things make sense (Snyder and Feldman 2000). When it comes to refugee entrepreneurship, it is possible to conceptualize hope, according to Freiling and Vemuri (2017), as the availability of both way power (pathways) and will power (motivation). Way power refers to how individuals formulate strategies for reaching a goal, for example, by developing business concepts, strategies and gaining support. Will power is about individual capacities of coping with adversity, as well as initiating, sustaining and renewing motivation (Snyder and Feldman 2000). At any point in time, these dimensions interact with one another for the sake of goal achievement (e.g. livelihood, cf. Freiling and Vemuri 2017).

The cases featured in this book are quite unanimous in revealing that hope, both in terms of way power and will power, is strong leverage for starting a venture and establishing a business. Both components of hope play a crucial role in every venture examined. Table 18.2 provides an overview of the cornerstones that demonstrate hope in the respective cases of refugee entrepreneurship, detailed by case.

Whereas way power and will power are never lacking, the sources of hope are to some extent different. Nevertheless, Table 18.2 portrays

Table 18.2 Hope in refugee entrepreneurship

Chapter number	Case	Way power	Will power
2	Muhannad	Fast access to infrastructure in countries of residence (COR), support from private institutions	Family, connections, belief in his own skills
3	Abdul	Experience, team and team skills, networks, entrepreneurial spirit and intention	Trust (in fairness of other people), striving for independence, growth in ambitions ('wanna be a millionaire')
4	Ellie	A special legal environment to make Ellie a de-facto entrepreneur, support by crowdfunding, strong network, skill development	Sense of justice, personal ambition, public interest
5	Jamshed	Prior experience, ideas as to real options	"Left Iran with a bag full of dreams", strong entrepreneurial intention, ambition
6	Hussam	Supporters and proven business relations, thought leadership	Low ambition, vision
7	Jonny	Alternatives to run a business or to gain employment, social relationships, risk taking propensity	Motivation, striving for independence
8	Kaficho	Entrepreneurial skills gathered in home country, sound business contacts	Family support
9	Edouard	Clear vision, networks	Entrepreneurial spirit, spirit of success, dreams, resilience
10	Arash	Partners, promotion support, skills development	Passion for music, self-expression and business
11	Hamze	Selected relations, relevant experience	Previous success and belief in strengths
12	Abdullah	Previous experience, support from others	Faith (religious)

(continued)

Table 18.2 (continued)

Chapter number	Case	Way power	Will power
13	Ali Dede	Acceptance and integration, relations	Chance to work (some say they "...get tired of sitting at home the whole day"), COR similar to home
14	Ahmed	Bricoleur-like attitude and actions, weak ties, informal alignments onsite and in the camp	Family support, plans for the future, dreams
15	Futan Ahmed	Reliable partners, skills, Leadership, plans	Motivation to care for family
16	Oliver	Leadership, education, skills, entrepreneurial orientation	Drive to improve living conditions, mentality of being "eager to learn", resilience
17	Hanifa	Resilience, inner strength	Responsibility to care for the family

commonalities that emerge from the case studies. In terms of the way power profile, personal experience, as well as business relationships, help in forming pathways. With regard to will power, the sources diverge a bit more, but reveal that resilience is a constitutive element.

Over and above this, the cases give rise to the impression that a certain balance of way power and will power are fundamental to providing enough hope to start and run a venture. A delicate facet to consider is how an unbalanced situation of the two elements could question livelihood potentials, by hope-related problems. Insofar, will power is not enough if business opportunities are much too vague or uncertain. The other way around, sound business opportunities may provide way power but take also strong motivation to achieve livelihood in the host country. However, the available case evidence does not reveal insights into this aspect.

18.9 The Outcome—Psychological, Social and Business Angles

The debate on hope already provides insights into the psychological sphere and addresses a construct of positive psychology. As for the downside, the question as to how far trauma hampers the ventures of

refugee entrepreneurs remains unanswered. The picture is to some extent ambiguous. There are cases where trauma and severe problems of sadness definitely featured heavily. Edouard, Muhannad, Jamshed, Ali Dede and Kaficho belong to this category (Harima et al. 2018; Moog and Yekoye Abebe 2018; Plak and Lagarde 2018; Ruparanganda et al. 2018; Zamantili Nayir 2018). On the contrary, trauma and similar kinds of pain obviously do not play an evident role in the cases of Abdul, Futan Ahmed and Oliver (Hartmann et al. 2018; Palalic et al. 2018; Tengeh 2018).

As for social effects, the question of integration (and to some extent also assimilation), stands at the fore of our discussion. When we turn our analysis to integration, some cases reveal considerable difficulties experienced by refugee entrepreneurs trying to find a niche in their new societies. The case of Abdullah (Manzoor et al. 2018) exemplifies this. However, cases also suggest that integration problems may be mitigated by launching and establishing a business (Maalaoui et al. 2018). This may be related to business relationships that often impact the social sphere, as well.

New ventures are commonly understood as the source of economic (and sometimes even social) renewal and the generation of new jobs. It is evident that solo-entrepreneurship is quite different from high tech startups. Case evidence from this book reveals that real startup activity has not so far played any significant role in refugee entrepreneurship—but can be a playground later on for more experienced refugee entrepreneurs who get settled in a new business context. The reality of refugee entrepreneurship looks different. We see many micro businesses, a few small businesses and, at best, one mid-sized business (Oliver, cf. Tengeh 2018) from our refugees. At first glance, this does not seem to bear a huge economic potential. Digging deeper, however, reveals a certain “hockey-stick logic” of refugee entrepreneurship. When refugees enter a host country, the most pressing need is to gain their footing and, thus, stabilize their often precarious situation (this is the small downturn as the first part of the hockey-stick effect). However, having achieved this and having managed to get settled in and established to some extent, there is some potential to move up (the upturn of the hockey-stick effect) socially and economically. This is something policy makers also may keep in mind when thinking about the long term prospects of refugee entrepreneurs.

18.10 Overview and Outlook

This part of the book is in itself more of an overview than an in-depth treatment of focused topics of refugee entrepreneurship. However, while the latter is far from attempted, the former requires accentuation of the core messages. Although all cases of refugee entrepreneurship are unique in nature, there are, in fact, some core insights we can condense in order to compare refugee entrepreneurship to other modes of entrepreneurship, such as transnational entrepreneurship (Drori et al. 2009). Evidence of the cases that make up this book suggests that refugee entrepreneurs are different from other entrepreneurs and, to some extent, distinct in terms of the following characteristics:

- high levels of *resilience*—not only in business terms, as is common for entrepreneurs, but also in terms of social and cultural issues;
- a superordinate level of the *risk taking propensity*—although this capacity is typical for almost all kinds of entrepreneurs, the propensity of refugee entrepreneurs is often much more extreme as they feel they have “nothing to lose”;
- a strong focus in ventures that are *necessity* rather than opportunity driven;
- an *ambition* driven tension with the conviction that “doing something is much better than doing nothing”;
- a mentality to start business with humble means, regarding almost everything as a potential resource and an attitude of “making do”—just like bricoleurs do (Levy-Strauss 1966; Baker and Nelson 2005; Heilbrunn and Rosenfeld 2018); and
- a sometimes extreme *dependence on social capital*, with often both strong and weak ties, as also reported by Bizri (2017).

Aside from the evident peculiarities of refugee entrepreneurship, there are still some aspects that seem closely related to typical entrepreneurship settings. One of these is the low percentage of women founding companies. Among the refugee cases presented in this book, Ellie and Hanifa (Alkhaled 2018; Kolb 2018) represent women refugee entrepreneurs.

Among 15 cases, the female entrepreneurship percentage is, beyond any claim of representativeness, about 13%—which is typical to the entire entrepreneurship context. It would be interesting to ascertain whether these statistics are comparable—although refugee entrepreneurship is unique, because women are sometimes heavily involved in the refuge. Is it simply that male members are the first to move when families are escaping from their homes, meaning that they also take a lead in founding companies? Is it a question of risk taking attitudes and preferences? Are there any other factors that prevent female refugees from starting a business or becoming part of a venture team? Alkhaled (2018) stated that women refugees are hit the hardest. If so, there is a lot of opportunity to search for the root causes and consequences of this phenomenon in order to better understand the circumstances and the sequences of events.

Another area ripe for examination is to examine the real needs of refugee entrepreneurs, as well as the possible and adequate responses of host country societies to those needs. What is of indispensable value in support programs when refugee entrepreneurs are targeted? How must we connect refugee entrepreneurs to other actors in urban startup ecosystems in order to tap into the potential of renewal by diversity? How can the maturation process of refugee entrepreneurs be accelerated, for example, by designing business incubators?

Notes

1. This book's chapters are excluded from this list of references.

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