Challenging humanitarianism: Coloniality and international humanitarian assistance in Jordan

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شكر وتقدير:

على الرغم من أن هذا البحث يحمل اسمي ، إلا أنني أعتبره نتيجة للقوة المشتركة والمعرفة والدعم و حب الأشخاص الذين مكنوني من الوصول إلى هذا الحد.

أولاً ، أنا مدينة بالشكر لأساتذتي الذين وجهوا هذا البحث وللمؤسسات الأكاديمية التي قدمت لي المنحة دراسية كدعم مالي لهذا البحث.

قبل كل شيء ، أنا مدينة بجزيل الشكر لعائلتي التي كانت لي بمثابة العمود الفقري طوال هذا الوقت ودعمتني دون قيود أو شروط في جميع تطلعاتي. لقد زرعتم بذرة فضولي وفتحتم عيوني لأدرك أهمية التدقيق في ما يُعتبر عادة حقائق.

لست أقل شكرًا إلى أصدقائي الأعزاء. لقد قدمتم لي دعمًا عقليًا غير محدود، وكرستم وقتكم بسخاء ، وشجعتم أفكاري النقدية ، مازلتم تعلموني يوم بعد يوم ما يعنيه الحب. من خلال مشاركتكم المعرفة ووجهات النظر المتنوعة معي ، لقد أثريتم هذا البحث بكل تأكيد وقبل كل شيء جعلتموني أنمو و أتطور كشخص.

أخيرًا ، أود أن أشكر عائلتي المضيفة في الأردن ـ التي أصبحت بمثابة عائلتي الثانية بعيدا عن الوطن. في الاوقات الصعبة التي نمر بها بسبب الوباء العالمي الذي اربك حياتنا COVID-19

دمجتموني في عائلتكم، وشاركتوني منزلكم وطعامكم، ومنحتموني إحساسًا بالأمان. علمتني تجاربنا معاً أن البحث قد يكون مختلفًا ، تمامًا عما هو مخطط له. بسببكم ،تخطت هذة المرحلة التعليمية حدود الأوساط الأكاديمية بشكل كبير. لقد علمتوني لغة جديدة ، وأظهرتم جمال التنوع الثقافي ، وعلمتموني ما يمكن أن تعنيه الإنسانية.

Abstract

Although crucially responding to humanitarian needs in complex crises, the international humanitarian system (IHS) faces severe criticism that it perpetuates the same inequalities it is trying to alleviate. Informed by decolonial theories and practices, this research aims to investigate the impacts that coloniality as the endurance of a colonial system of power, knowledge and being has on the IHS and its problematic outcomes. This research utilized a case study design of humanitarian assistance in Jordan and employed semi-structured expert interviews. Results show that local employees, volunteers, and local NGOs face disproportionate difficulties in the competitive environment of the IHS which hinders the outcomes of humanitarian assistance. At the base of these inequalities lies a division of humanitarians into locals, volunteers, and internationals that hierarchizes these actors and their knowledges along the line of coloniality. This divide privileges mostly White/Western internationals as well as local elites in terms of access to decision-making, employment and tangible assets. Although localization is currently treated as a means to enhance the IHS and its outcomes, the case study illustrates that an uncritical view on localization that ignores the diverse understandings of and intentions behind localization, entails the danger to perpetuate these inequalities. However, it also suggests that localization as aspirations towards decoloniality has potentials to improve humanitarian assistance and to reduce inequalities and power asymmetries within the IHS. This, however, requires to fundamentally challenge the hegemonic nature of the IHS and its understanding of humanitarianism and instead move towards a pluriverse of humanitarian actors and knowledges.

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Abbreviations

ALNAP	-	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
CMoP	-	Colonial matrix of power
EU	-	European Union
HLA	-	Humanitarian Leadership Academy
IASC	-	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	-	International Committee of the Red Cross
IHS	-	International humanitarian system
INGO	-	International non-governmental organization
IO	-	International organization
I.e.	-	Id est (Latin)
Jordan	-	Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
MCD	-	Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality School of thought
NGO	-	Non-governmental organizations
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
UN	-	United Nations
UNHCR	-	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
US	-	United States of America
WHS	-	World Humanitarian Summit

1. Introduction

The international humanitarian system (IHS) has a challenging nature in responding to augmenting humanitarian needs. This proves difficult in the context of rising conflicts and natural hazard-related disasters, as well as the increasing complexity of crises, to which the emergence of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic adds yet another layer of challenges (DI 2020). Although the IHS gained importance, critique arose on its operational underperformance in delivering effective and efficient humanitarian assistance. In addition, more profound criticism arose that scrutinizes the structure of the IHS as guided by colonial legacies that lead to a perpetuation of the same inequalities that it tries to reduce. This led to what BENNET (2016:68) describes as "*a crisis of legitimacy*" of the IHS—thus challenging international humanitarian assistance in its very nature.

As a way to address existing shortcomings and paradoxes of the IHS, 'localization' became a buzzword on the international humanitarian agenda (ROEPSTORFF 2019). Localization in its broadest sense aims to make humanitarian responses "*as local as possible, and as international as necessary"* (UNGA 2016) to ameliorate humanitarian assistance. However, the fuzziness of the term localization combines manifold aspirations of diverse actors—reaching from sole operational ameliorations to rather political topics of decolonization (ADESO 2015). Being that broad, localization may not only miss its objective of directing the IHS out of the crisis of legitimacy but additionally may be counterproductive by reducing it to the lowest common denominator and ignoring structural, more profound criticism on existing inequalities and colonial legacies (ROEPSTORFF 2019).

A current discourse that scrutinizes questions on the contingency of colonial legacies and ways of actively breaking them, is 'coloniality'/'decoloniality' (SHIZHA 2012). At the baseline is the tenant that 'coloniality'—as the entanglement of asymmetrical power structures that were put in place during colonization—remains hegemonic on a global level and sustains structural inequalities and exploitation (GROSFOGUEL 2006). 'Decoloniality' embodies diverse theoretical and practical projects that aim to dismantle the often hidden ways through which coloniality is working in the domains of power, knowledge, and being. It seeks to get rid of existing dominant and exploitative power structures (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016; MIGNOLO 2011).

Despite an ostensible link between structural criticism on the IHS and coloniality, as well as decoloniality and localization efforts as ways to get rid of the existing inequalities, the broader discourses have rarely been linked to each other (RUTAZIBWA 2019; SABARATNAM 2017). To build

on this gap, this research seeks to analyze in how far coloniality has problematic impacts on the IHS and its outcomes. Moreover, it aims to investigate the role that localization may take to initialize processes that lead towards decoloniality and ultimately towards the improvement of the IHS to direct it out of its crisis of legitimacy.

For this research, the following methodological approach was chosen: chapter two gives a brief overview of key components and mechanism of the IHS and introduces the localization agenda as response to current challenges and criticism of the IHS. Based on a literature review, chapter three explores the link of coloniality and humanitarianism. More specifically, sub-chapter 3.1 sets basic assumptions and theoretical clarifications on coloniality and decoloniality by describing the genealogy of decolonial thoughts and movements, outlining conceptual foundations, as well as describing decoloniality as theoretical and practical project. Subsequently, sub-chapter 3.2 explores the link of coloniality and humanitarianism through a short overview on decolonial literature on humanitarianism and the exposition of several paradoxes within the hegemonic Western humanitarianism and their entanglement within coloniality. As a result, this chapter gives a first glimpse of the ways in which the IHS is governed by a Western humanitarianism that contains coloniality as its basic constituent. Based on these findings, a main research question and two sub-research questions are defined.

As means to investigate the impact of coloniality within the IHS, the research concentrates on the specific case study of the IHS in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (Jordan). The country is geopolitically relevant for humanitarian responses to crises in the Middle Eastern region and became a hub for diverse international, national and local actors (SHTEIWI et al. 2014). The IHS in Jordan turned into a broad and dynamic landscape that represents a highly competitive environment, in terms of securing funding and job employment. Local actors which are at the core of localization seem to face diverse challenges and difficulties within the competitive IHS—which turns Jordan into relevant case study.

Chapter four delineates the research methodology by introducing the broader research paradigm and design, as well as describing data collection methods with a specific focus on expert interviews and the data analysis. Subsequently, chapter five introduces the topic of humanitarian assistance in Jordan. It outlines the relevance and political strategy of humanitarian responses to refugee crises in and around Jordan, as well as the current structure and coordination of the IHS. Building on the theoretical discussion in chapter three, chapter six outlines specific difficulties and particular challenges that all those actors who are categorized as 'local' face within the competitive

environment, thereby illustrating the impact of coloniality within the IHS in Jordan. Following the same approach, chapter seven outlines perceived localization processes in Jordan and their impact on improving the IHS and its outcomes through decoloniality. Finally, the concluding chapter seven draws the results together, discusses the limitations of this research and provides an outlook for future topics of discussion.

2. The international humanitarian system and the current localization reform agenda

The thesis sets out to investigate the impacts of coloniality and relevance of decoloniality within the IHS and its outcomes by looking at the case study of Jordan. To understand the challenging nature of humanitarian assistance on an international scale, this chapter describes key components and mechanisms of the IHS and introduces the localization agenda as a response to current criticism and challenges that the IHS faces.

2.1 Key components and mechanisms of the international humanitarian system

Within the last decades, an increased number of natural hazard-related disasters and conflicts, as well as an augmentation of the complexity of crises drove humanitarian needs to an exceptional level (DI 2020). At the same time, international humanitarian assistance in addition to the response of national governments as main provider of humanitarian assistance and protection gained importance. International humanitarian assistance is defined as the "*provision of assistance and protection in order to save lives, prevent and reduce suffering and preserve peoples' dignity in crises arising from armed conflict, natural hazard-related disasters and other causes*" (ALNAP 2020) and is "*provided by an agency in one country to respond to a crisis in another*" (ALNAP 2020). What once started as a group of loosely organized actors responding to humanitarian needs, over the last decades, developed into a formal international system (ALEXANDER 2020). While various definitions exist, the IHS as we know it today can be defined as:

> "*the network of interconnected institutional and operational entities through which humanitarian action is undertaken when local and national resources are, on their own, insufficient to meet the needs of a population in crisis. These entities are operationally or financially related to each other and share common overarching goals, norms and principles in humanitarian action*" (ALNAP 2020)

The definition of the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP) is useful, given that it incorporates basic components that are widely used to describe the IHS, namely (i) its constitution as an entangled and dynamic network of diverse actors, (ii) a central coordination structure, (iii) as well as the centrality of shared goals and principles, and (iv) the connectedness through operational and financial relations and flows.

As first basic component, the IHS includes a dynamic network of various actors that work on different scales from local to international. While acts of compassion and charity reach far back in human history, the birth of the IHS and its institutional, conceptual and legal roots are often dated back to mid-nineteenth century and more specifically the foundation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (BENNET 2016). Fueled by concerns about rising human impacts of increasingly mechanized conflicts and augmented media attention through new technologies, the ICRC provided humanitarian assistance to combatants in diverse conflicts (BENNET 2016). While initially rather constituting a small assemblage of loosely organized entities, the number and diversity of actors engaged in international humanitarian assistance grew (ALEXANDER 2020). As a key stone, the creation of the League of Nations in 1920 that was born out of the desire for a peaceful Europe after the end of the first world war entered the stage as the first truly international organization (IO) (DAVEY et al. 2013). Accompanied by the establishment of Save the Children as a prototype for many transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that would follow around the same time, humanitarian actors got more diverse, grew in their number and size and significantly expanded the humanitarian network (BENNET 2016). Accordingly, ALNAP (2010; 2018) estimated the number of field personal in the humanitarian field to have significantly grown over the last decades reaching over 570,000 in 2017—a number that is likely to be even higher since not all types of humanitarian staff and organizations were included. Most staff are employed within NGOs and, by constituting 90% of the overall number, national field personal largely outnumbers international ones (ALNAP 2018). Moreover, the geographical scope of the humanitarian network expanded when the targets of humanitarian assistance shifted from Europeans in World War II to citizens of the juridical-political decolonizing Global South during the second half of the 20th century (BENNET 2016).

Accompanied by the increase and diversification of a humanitarian network, steps to formalize and coordinate the system became prominent (DAVEY ET AL. 2013). An important institutional development towards the formal architecture of the IHS seen today, is found in the establishment of the United Nations (UN) in 1945 and with it its humanitarian constituents (BENNET 2016). As such, the establishment of distinct UN bodies such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (1950) or the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (1991), as well as the establishment of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) (1992) as forum for the coordination of UN and non-UN humanitarian actors, contributed to a formalized coordination (BENNET 2016; UNCEBS 2016; UNHCR 2020a; UNOCHA 2020a). However, the post-cold war period—and in particular the humanitarian response to the 1994 Rwandan

genocide—shed light to considerable shortcomings of the IHS in terms of poor coordination, skills and monitoring procedures of humanitarian agencies (BENNET 2016; ERIKSSON et al. 1996). This led to an existential crisis of the IHS based on which a deep restructuring took place. Various initiatives strived for more coordination and accountability within the IHS and thereupon many actors adopted standardized guidelines such as the Sphere project's Handbook of Minimum Standards (BENNET 2016). Almost 15 years later, this foundation led to the major Humanitarian Reform in 2005 which was meant to further increase predictability, partnership, complementarity and accountability. It included the introduction of the cluster approach that organizes humanitarian actors into different groups related to main sectors of assistance and that structures the coordination of the IHS until today (UNOCHA 2020b).

As another basic component, the IHS is governed by some shared principles and normative frameworks of humanitarian actors. First of all, official UN declarations that embrace key normative changes that occurred over time, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 or the 1949 and 1951 Conventions relating to the Status of Refugees impacted the nature of humanitarian assistance (BENNET 2016). In addition, the 'humanitarian principles' that have their roots in the field work of the ICRC/the national Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies and were officially adopted by the UN General Assembly, are widely acknowledged as crucially governing the execution of humanitarian assistance for diverse actors engaged (BAGSHAW 2012). The humanitarian principles that embrace neutrality, impartiality, humanity, and independence define assistance and traditionally delineate it from development cooperation (BENNET 2016). However, the clear cut between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation is increasingly contested (STAMNES 2016), a discussion which exemplifies the fluidity of norms and practices that govern the IHS.

The network of diverse actors within the IHS is not only normatively connected to each other but to an important part also operationally and financially (ALNAP 2020). While operational relations such as through IASC and the cluster approach are crucial to respond to crisis, financial flows are likewise important. The expansion of the IHS and the increase of the number of people in need, went hand in hand with rising funding requirements and humanitarian donations over the last decades (ALEXANDER 2020; DI 2020). Reaching a temporary high of US$ 31,2 billion in 2018, the sector received about 12 times as much funding as 20 years ago (DI 2020). While less than a quarter of donations in 2018 came from private entities, more than three-quarter were paid by institutions or governments of the European Union (EU) with Western governments such as the United States of America (US), Germany and the United Kingdom constantly being among the top donors over

the last decades (BENNET 2016; DI 2020; PARKER 2019). In contrast, the main recipient countries were from the Global South, with various countries from the Middle East such as Syria, Yemen or Palestine among the top recipients (DI 2019). Thus, financial flows are relevant in the IHS and link donors, humanitarian organizations and aid recipients.

2.2 The localization reform agenda as a means to address current challenges and criticisms

Despite continuous efforts over the last decades to enhance structures and processes, the IHS faces severe criticism that reform efforts "*failed to match the scale of the humanitarian challenge*" (BENNET 2016:26). Due to the growing volume and complexity of humanitarian needs, the humanitarian community often lacks funds and capacity to respond (BENNET 2016; DI 2020). The current COVID-19 pandemic can be seen as yet another layer that adds to existing crises while simultaneously creating new ones. Thus, increasing the humanitarian challenge in both complexity and scale (DI 2020). In addition, the dynamic nature of the IHS made place for the emergence of various topics and trends that are controversial and split the humanitarian community. Among those are moves towards bridging the gap between development and humanitarian work (FOX 2001), as well as the growing importance that emerging actors such as new private entities or NGOs have as donors or implementors within the humanitarian network (Roepstorff 2019)–trends that challenge core humanitarian principles and create controversies. Also, the IHS is becoming a riskier work environment given that aid workers are increasingly in the line of fire, with the number of attacks on aid worker nearly doubling yearly over the last decade (ALEXANDER 2020). Moreover, numerous scandals related to corruption, discrimination or sexual misconduct within the IHS have profoundly shattered confidence (JAYAWICKRAMA 2018). As consequence of struggling to keep pace with the humanitarian challenge despite various reform efforts, the IHS is described to find itself in a crisis of legitimacy (BENNET 2016).

As a way to adapt to challenges and critique and regain legitimacy, 'localization' became a buzzword within current reform agendas of the IHS (ROEPSTORFF 2019). The localization agenda arguably gained momentum in the wage of the first World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016, which was a pivot moment in which the world's largest donors and humanitarian organizations came together to discuss necessary changes towards a more efficient, effective and people-centered IHS (BRUSCHINI-CHAUMET et al. 2019; ROEPSTORFF 2019). The relevance of localizing humanitarian assistance is based on diverse criticism that local actors—even though crucial for aid provision—do not own enough agency within the IHS and are side-lined by larger international actors. Disaster-affected people are not only the first responders in every crisis but local actors additionally

possess important knowledge of the specific disaster context that is crucial for humanitarian responses:

> "*When disaster strikes, it is more often than not local actors that are first on the scene, first to respond, and best placed to understand the needs of affected communities. But with limited access to funds and isolated from decision-making fora, local actors and SNGOs [Southern NGOs] in particular, are over-burdened, under-funded, and often inadequately prepared to respond as effectively as possible*" (ADESO 2015)

One central point to this criticism is the fact that local and national actors only receive an extremely small share of direct humanitarian funding and are dependent on larger multilateral UN organizations or international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) that receive the large bulk. In 2019, only 2.1% of all humanitarian funding went directly to national and local actors (DI 2020). Among the national and local funding, a large part typically goes to governments. Direct funding to national and local NGOs just amounted to 0.4% in 2018 (PARKER 2019). Moreover, it is criticized that the IHS falls short in capacity-building for local actors which impedes their share in development and implementation of humanitarian projects (ROEPSTORFF 2019). In addition, an important point of critique is a growing disconnect between the people that are affected by disaster and large IOs/INGOs that influence humanitarian agendas—through which the IHS fails to place the needs of the targets of assistance at its center (ADESO 2015).

In response to this criticism, the localization agenda incorporates a general consensus on the need to make humanitarian assistance more effective, efficient, adequate and accountable (ADESO 2015; ROEPSTORFF 2019). The slogan "*as local as possible, as international as necessary*" (UNGA 2016) that highlights the comparative advantages of local actors in complementarity to other international actors, became an important leitmotiv for the humanitarian community (ROEPSTORFF 2019). Localization was included into many formal agendas and commitments such as the Charter4Change and the Grand Bargain. Both were agreed upon at the WHS and are of importance given that they are signed by the core donors and organizations that are in charge of the large part of overall humanitarian funding (ELS 2018; PARKER 2018). As a main marker, the Grand Bargain entails the commitment to notably increase the share of direct humanitarian funding to local and national actors up to 25% by 2020 (DI 2020).

Nevertheless, despite the incorporation of localization into major commitments within the IHS, it remains contested what localization specifically entails and who local actors are (HLA 2019; ROEPSTORFF 2019). In reference to similar debates on the notion of the 'local' in development and peacebuilding sectors[1], ROEPSTORFF (2019) critically analyzes current discussions on the term

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[1] For more information on this debate, see ROEPSTORFF (2019)

'local' humanitarian actor and illustrates that there is no clear answer on how this vague notion is defined. Debates include disagreements on whether national governments, national societies of IOs, private sector agencies or diaspora organizations—among many more—count as local. Moreover, the lines are further blurred given that many humanitarian organizations act as hybrids within local to global networks of agency and are difficult to categorize. Also, humanitarian employees often move between employment within local and international organizations that work in the same context (ROEPSTORFF 2019). The lack of clarity is criticized since it leaves open who is targeted in current localization agendas. In addition, diverse definitions of the term 'localization' exist and it remains contested which processes and aims localization embraces. In an effort to incorporate the perspectives of different actors, the Humanitarian Leadership Academy (HLA 2019:3) broadly defines localization as: "'*the process […] to ensure local and national actors are better engaged in the planning, delivery and accountability of humanitarian action, while still ensuring humanitarian needs can be met swiftly, effectively and in a principled manner*". However, this definition leaves much room to use the language of localization for many different purposes. As the HLA (2019:3) describes: "'*Lack of clarity or a shared understanding of localization and the persistence of some core challenges have meant that humanitarian actors continue to contest how localization unfolds, even while agreeing almost universally on its importance*".

In the main commitments such as the Grand Bargain, a rather operational and pragmatic focus prevails that places financing, partnership, capacity strengthening, coordination, recruitment and communication at the bottom line of localization—an understanding of localization which is not shared by everyone (HLA 2019; ROEPSTORFF 2019). Based on a collection of various understandings from different actors, the HLA (2019) suggests four interrelated domains of localization processes that, next to operations and effectiveness, finances and efficiency, and quality and accountability, also encompasses political and identity processes. Diverse actors criticize that a narrow operational emphasis will not be enough to yield desired results of localization and to keep pace with the humanitarian challenge (BRUSCHINI-CHAUMET et al. 2019). Instead, they stress that questions of shifting decision-making power and ownership need to be addressed if localization was meant to make a difference (Adeso 2015; BRUSCHINI-CHAUMET et al. 2019; HLA 2019).

The latter perspectives on localization is in line with more structural criticism that fundamentally scrutinizes the IHS by asserting that through embedded power imbalances and structural inequalities the IHS perpetuates the same inequalities and suffering it is trying to alleviate (ROTH 2015; RUTAZIBWA 2019):

"We have to be honest about who the humanitarian system is—and it is dominated by the U.N. and iNGOs who are predominantly Westerners and mostly white people. The majority of the decision-making in these institutions lies in the hands of white people. Southern representation—whether it is from national governments or whether it is from southern society—is limited" (D. ALI, In: HLA 2019:10)

The criticism directs towards the consistency of colonial power structures within the IHS and links localization towards a drive for decolonization (HLA 2019). It builds on perspectives of localization as a more profound and structural transformation of the IHS. However, the debate leaves open whether, and if so, how the current momentum of localization is able to reconstitute the legitimacy of the IHS in face of its crisis.

3. The link of coloniality and humanitarianism

Considering the challenges and crisis of legitimacy that the IHS is facing, it is relevant to further elaborate on colonial contingencies that are criticized to sustain the perpetuation of structural inequalities and power asymmetries within IHS. To do so, the theoretical and practical project of decoloniality stands out to generate fruitful perspectives by illuminating and scrutinizing often hidden colonial continuations in form of coloniality. This chapter explores ways in which coloniality works within the IHS and the herein embedded visions of humanitarianism. It expounds basic assumptions and theoretical clarifications of coloniality and decoloniality and explores the link of coloniality and humanitarianism through identifying several problematic paradoxes. Finally, it outlines the resulting research questions.

3.1 Theoretical background—Coloniality and decoloniality

This chapter introduces key assumptions and concepts that are used as theoretical background of this research. It gives an overview on the genealogy of decolonial thoughts and movements, outlines conceptual foundations, and describes decoloniality as theoretical and practical project.

3.1.1 The decolonial turn—Genealogy of decolonial thoughts and movements

Within recent years, there has been an insurgence and resurgence of diverse activist movements and intellectual work that use the language of 'coloniality' and 'decoloniality' to challenge predominant racist, sexist, homo-and transphobic, (neo)liberal and Eurocentric politics and mindsets (CLOETE & AURIACOMBE 2019; MALDONADO-TORRES 2016; NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019). Decolonial projects are diverse in their nature and scale (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016; NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019; STANEK 2019). Examples of current decolonial insurgences include calls to decolonize universities, such as the student-led Rhodes Must Fall campaign that started in

South Africa (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016) or to decolonize museums, such as the debate on the repatriation of European museum artefacts to the global South (SARR & SAVOY 2018).

Decoloniality as transnational effort to understand, dismantle and turn away from the hegemonic Western civilization project is predicated on a 'decolonial turn' (DUTA 2018; MALDONADO-TORRES 2007, 2016). The 'decolonial turn' can be traced back to the very beginning of colonialism as Indigenous, First Nations, or Black people movements persistently fought against colonialism (NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019; STANEK 2019). As such, the Haitian revolution in 1791-1804, as well as the Tupac Amaru uprising in Peru (1780-1782) are described as early key stones for the decolonial turn as they embody major independence movements that took place outside of Western cosmological variations such as socialism or Marxism (MIGNOLO 2007b; NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019). While decolonial thinking has long existed, the twentieth century is often mentioned as the moment when increasing self-conscious and coalitional efforts in decolonial skepticism, theories and creative thoughts led to a more profound shift away from coloniality and towards decoloniality (MALDONADO-TORRES 2011). Importantly, decolonial thoughts stem from writers and theorists of non-Western anti-colonial struggles—such as W.E.B. Du Bois, A. Césaire, N. wa Thiong'o, or F. Fanon—that created their knowledge apart from the dominant Western academic canon which often overshadowed decolonial epistemological movements (CASTRO-KLARÉN 2019; LÓPEZ-CALVO 2016b; MALDONADO-TORRES 2011; MIGNOLO 2007b). Thus, decoloniality, in its genealogy, stands in difference to other critical school of thoughts such as post-colonialism (NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019)[2].

Given that decolonial thoughts and movements stem from many different spaces and actors, decoloniality is regarded as a broad family of different initiatives that are all located in their own local histories and realities (NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019). Instead of searching for universal meanings, methods or answers, decolonial approaches value their local and diverse manifestations (CASTRO-KLARÉN 2019; NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019; TUCK & YOUNG 2012). Rather than constituting one distinct school of thought, decolonial scholars from all over the world contributed to the development of different decolonial schools of thoughts (NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019):

> *"The decolonial turn does not refer to a single theoretical school, but rather points to a family of diverse positions that share a view of coloniality as a fundamental problem in the modern (as well as postmodern and information) age, and of decolonization or decoloniality as a necessary task that remains unfinished"* (MALDONADO-TORRES, 2011:2)

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[2] For an overview on differences of decoloniality to other critical schools of thoughts, see NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019 and NAYLOR ET AL. 2018.

As one of these, the Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality (MCD) school of thought is used as theoretical grounding by many recent scholars that focus on (de)coloniality (STANEK 2019). While the MCD stems from a Latin American context, it contains rich theoretical and conceptual ideas that are used in different contexts and which are fruitful to be used to work on the defined research questions.

3.1.2 Conceptual foundation—The triangle of coloniality of power, knowledge, and being

The MCD school of thought heavily draws on the concept of 'coloniality of power' which was introduced by the Peruvian sociologist A. Quijano and further complemented by other decolonial scholars—to form a triangle of 'coloniality of power, knowledge, and being' (CASTRO-KLARÉN 2019). By coloniality of power, GROSFOGUEL (2006:172, based on QUIJANO 1991;1993;1998;2000) refers to *"an entanglement of multiple and heterogenous hierarchies ('heterarchies') of sexual, political, epistemic, economic, spiritual, linguistic, and racial forms of domination and exploitation"* which were established during colonialism but endure until today. The following sub-chapter outlines basic premises that underlie the concept of coloniality of power and its complement with coloniality of knowledge and being.

(i) On the differences between colonialism and coloniality

First, it is crucial to highlight the differentiation that MCD scholars make between 'colonialism' and 'coloniality' (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016; MIGNOLO 2017; QUIJANO 2007). While different conceptualizations of 'colonialism' exist, MALDONADO-TORRES (2007:243) in line with other MCD scholars defines it as *"a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such nation an empire"*. In this sense, colonialism is taken as an ontic concept that is bound to the question of state-political sovereignty and which refers to a specific empirical episode in time and space (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016; NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019). Accordingly, MCD scholars refer to Euro-centered colonialism as the period of European expansion through the establishment of a formal system of direct, political, social and cultural domination over the conquered that started in the 15th century in the Americas, followingly extended to Asia and Africa, and ended with the legal decolonization of most former colonies in the 20th century (MIGNOLO 2017). In contrast, 'coloniality', as defined by MALDONADO-TORRES (2007:243), refers to "*long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjectivity, relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations*". Through the concept of coloniality, it is emphasized that power structures and value mindsets that emerged through the subjugation, destruction, and/or replacement of indigenous political and legal systems and social, economic and cultural practices by Eurocentric

policies, values and practices remained hegemonic even after colonialism ended (CLOETE & AURIACOMBE 2019; MALDONADO-TORRES 2011). While colonialism and state-political decolonization seem to be matter of the past, coloniality rather refers to the enduring "*logic, metaphysics, ontology, and matrix of power*" (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016:243) that were created through processes of colonization and that remained alive until today:

> "*Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience. In a way, as modern subjects we breathe coloniality all the time and every day*" (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016:243)

The differentiation between colonialism and coloniality is crucial, given that colonialism when conceptualized as past reality or specific empirical episode is seen as replaced by new socio-political and economic regimes that make it difficult to criticize the continuation of hegemonic power structures:

> "*[C]olonialism and decolonization are locked in the past, located elsewhere, or confined to specific empirical dimensions. They become objects for a subject that is considered to be already beyond the influence of colonialism and the imperative of decolonization. In like manner, from this perspective, those who make the questions about the meaning and significance of colonialism and decolonization inevitably appear as anachronic—as if they exist in a different time and therefore can never be entirely reasonable*" (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016:10)

Accordingly, the concept of coloniality becomes a mean to help articulate, understand and analyze current situations of ongoing structural inequalities and subordination (GROSFOGUEL 2007; NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019).

(ii)   Coloniality as the 'darker side' of Western Modernity

Another basic premise within MCD is that there is no 'modernity' without 'coloniality' (MIGNOLO 2007b). This is an important conceptual clarification given that "*up until that moment everybody thought of modernity as a totality and colonialism as an unhappy situation that advancing modernity vision and ideals would end*" (MIGNOLO 2017:2). However, it is suggested that coloniality rather is "*the darker side*" (MIGNOLO 2017:2) of modernity in a sense that it constitutes a "*logic that enforces control, domination, and exploitation disguised in the language of salvation, progress, modernization, and being good for everyone*" (MIGNOLO 2005:6). 'Modernity', here, refers to the European or Western civilization rhetoric that started during colonialism and changed from Christianity, to progress and civilization, development and global market democracy (MIGNOLO 2017). While modernity was only one—a European— form of many different forms and modes of social life, it became hegemonic on a global scale and was treated as totality which is desirable for everyone (MIGNOLO 2007b). As a result, Europe or the West as a particular place, the people that live in it and knowledge and values that they produced

became treated as qualitatively and naturally distinguished and superior to everyone or everything else (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016). Concomitantly, far from being beneficial for everyone, modernity is based on a so-called logic of 'colonial difference' that hierarchizes humans into modern/non-modern and superior/inferior subjects (GROSFOGUEL 2011). This logic is used to justify processes of domination and exploitation of all those subjects that are placed outside of modernity: "*while modernity is presented as rhetoric of salvation, it hides coloniality, which is the logic of oppression and exploitation*" (MIGNOLO 2007a:162)

(iii) Capitalism as one structural element of coloniality

As another basic tenant, MCD departs from the assumption that colonialism and the related creation of colonial differences was the foundation of the ascent of the current hegemonic capitalist world-economy and Euro-America-centric world order (NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019; STANEK 2019). Accordingly, the hegemonic colonial differences developed through colonialism were used by the colonizers to expropriate land, exploit labor and turn colonized people into commodities to gain profits and boost the production for their own benefits (CLOETE & AURIACOMBE 2019). As such, colonialism gave rise to the development of capitalism as an economic system which became hegemonic on a global scale and remained so within the coloniality of power (LÓPEZ-CALVO 2016B). Hence, QUIJANO & WALLERSTEIN (1992:549) sympathize: "*The Americas were not incorporated into an already existing capitalist world-economy. There could not have been a capitalist world-economy without the Americas*". Furthermore, following the world-system analysis as developed by E. Wallerstein (HALSALL 1997), MCD scholars highlight that colonialism and the emergence of capitalism caused a global world-economy which is based on an international division of labor. Concomitantly, high-skill and capital intensive labor took place in Europe and later North America as core zones, while low-skill and cheap labor was outsourced to colonies as peripheric zones—a model which in turn reinforced the dominance of the core zones (GROSFOGUEL 2006). While direct dominance of core zones over the periphery ended with decolonization, the hegemony of this economic system prevailed as a fundamental element of coloniality: "*Today the core zones of the capitalist world-economy overlap with predominantly White/European/Euro-American societies such as western Europe, Canada, Australia, and the United States, while peripheral zones overlap with previously colonized non-European people*" (GROSFOGUEL 2011:14).

Despite the relevance of capitalism as hegemonic economic form in the coloniality of power, the conceptualization of the world-system in the frame of MCD, significantly differs from traditional Western conceptualizations. Most importantly, MCD scholars emphasize that capitalism is not enough to explain global coloniality of power as the latter consists of diverse entangled power

hierarchies—including but not limited to race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, politico-military, labor, spirituality, epistemology, ecology, media/information and languages—that are organized by a specific power matrix, the 'colonial matrix of power' (CMoP) (GROSFOGUEL 2006;2011).

(iv)   Race as key structural element of coloniality

What is new and crucial in the concept of coloniality of power, is that race becomes the key element in this matrix, through which all other hierarchies of the world-system are structured: "*The idea of race organizes the world's population into hierarchical order of superior and inferior people that becomes an organizing principle of the international division of labor and of the global patriarchial system*" (GROSFOGUEL, 2006:172). Building on early work of Du Bois, who called the supposed biological, objective, and scientific nature of race into question, 'race' in line with MCD rather constitutes the *"products of social thought and relations. Not objective, inherent, or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather, races are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient*" (DELGADO & STEFANCIC 2001:7f). Accordingly, the social construct of race incorporates a power imbalance between dominant subjects who define race categories and the dominated ones who are defined by it. During colonialism 'White' identity was established as the marker of superiority and legitimized expropriation, exploitation and domination of colonized places and subjects (DUTA 2018). The establishment of race categories further paved the way for the creation of other hierarchized social identities that are closely interlinked—or sometimes used interchangeably—to race, such as nationalities, geo-cultural identities like Europeans or Middle Easterners, or ethnicities like Latinx or Arabs (QUIJANO 2007). However, while these social categories were codified differently based on the agents, populations and times involved, the underlying power structures embedded in the hierarchical division remained and continues to structure our current world-system:

> "*In fact, if we observe the main lines of exploitation and social domination on a global scale, the main lines of world power today, and the distribution of resources and work among the world population, it is very clear that the large majority of the exploited, the dominated, the discriminated against, are precisely the members of the 'races', 'ethnies', or 'nations' into which the colonized populations, were categorized in the formative process of that world power, from the conquest of America and onward* " (QUIJANO 2007:168f)

As basic structural category, race influences all other hierarchies in what Black feminist CRENSHAW (1989) called 'intersectionality'. The entanglement of race with additional hierarchical categories such as gender or nationality results in an intersectional identity that defines a subject's position of privilege and dominance in the CMoP (GROSFOGUEL 2006).

(v)   The triangle of coloniality of power, knowledge, and being

Explicitly linked to coloniality of power as described above, is the concept of 'coloniality of knowledge' which is the epistemological critique of Eurocentric knowledge production (NDLOVU-

GATSHENI 2019). The concept departs from the assumption that colonialism was not only built on political and economic control but further on systematic repression of knowledge, beliefs, values, and culture (MIGNOLO 2007a). During colonization, indigenous knowledge that was useful for colonizers—such as agricultural or mining practices—was appropriated while knowledge that was perceived as unbeneficial was suppressed. The deprivation of parts of indigenous knowledge and cultural practices left a void which was filled by colonizers with their own belief systems as means of social and cultural domination (CLOETE & AURIACOMBE 2019). To legitimize the claim of superiority, colonizers mystified their own patterns of thinking and placed it outside of the reachable as *"god- eye view"* (GROSFOGUEL 2011:6). Eurocentric knowledge became hegemonic found on the assumption of a neutral, objective and universal point of view—reflected, for example, in mainstream Western academia (GROSFOGUEL 2006). This so called 'zero-point of view' is created by decoupling the social and geopolitical location of subjects from the knowledge they create. The subjects that produce knowledge are 'disembodied' by ignoring their social identity—such as culture, race, or gender—and 'unlocated' by neglecting their geopolitical location of knowledge production—such as the institutions where knowledge is acquired (GROSFOGUEL 2006,2011; MIGNOLO 2007a).

In line with critical scholars from other disciplines—including Black feminist H. COLLINS (1990)—MCD scholars deconstruct the notion of a zero-point of view by emphasizing that knowledge always has to be conceptualized as emerging from a specific location in the global power structure and is never universal, neutral, or objective (GROSFOGUEL 2006;2011). This is relevant, since it deconstructs the legitimacy of Eurocentric knowledge which is based on creating a hierarchy of superior/inferior knowledge and with it of superior/inferior humans which became a basic pillar of de-humanization and the rejection of a common humanity (GROSFOGUEL 2006; MIGNOLO 2007a). It created the assumption of an inner-circle, i.e. subjects that know and create, as opposed to an outer-circle of objectified humans that are only capable of passively receiving cultural knowledge from those subjects in power (NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019). The outer-circle is what FANON (1961) described as 'the damnés':

> *"The damnés are the subjects that are located out of human space and time, which means, for instance, that they are discovered along with their land rather than having the potential to discover anything or even to represent an impediment to take over their territory. The damnés cannot assume the position of producers of knowledge and are said to lack any objectivity"* (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016:21)

Following Fanon's argument, the effects of this hegemonic belief system had a global impact on both, dominant and dominated cultures:

> *"So far, the history of the 'modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system' has privileged the culture, knowledge, and epistemology produced by the West [...]. No culture in the world remained untouched by European modernity.*

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There is no absolute outside to the system. The monologism and monotopic global design of the West relates to other cultures and peoples from a position of superiority and is deaf to the cosmologies and epistemologies of the non-Western world" (GROSFOGUEL 2006:177)

Over time, this led to the extinction or subordination of all those cultures that were defined different to Western culture (QUIJANO 2007). Thus, no culture remained untouched by modernity—a conceptual clarification that rejects a binary essentialism between a pure anti-modern outer-circle of the non-West in contrast to the West. Rather, subordinate subjects too are influenced by modernity and might alike reproduce the latter (GROSFOGUEL 2006). As the believed superiority of modern Eurocentric knowledge and culture is not only lived by the dominant side but also internalized by the subjugated one, the hegemony is actively maintained from all positions within the CMoP (GROSFOGUEL 2006; NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019). This internalization with impact on the colonized minds is what THIONG'O called 'the cultural bomb':

"*The biggest weapon wielded and actually daily unleashed by imperialism against that collective defiance is the cultural bomb. The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves*" (THIONG'O 1986:3)

This is relevant, given that MCD scholars emphasize that the hegemony of Western knowledge, culture and epistemologies persists until today, framed as universal aspirations in concepts such as 'development': "*We went from the sixteenth-century characterization of 'people without writing' to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century characterization of 'people without history' and to the twentieth-century characterization of 'people without development'*" (GROSFOGUEL 2006:169).

The concepts of coloniality of power and knowledge are further complemented with the concept of 'coloniality of being'. Coloniality of being is used to raise questions on human ontology and to investigate and criticize processes of de-humanization, objectification, thingification and commodification of human subjects (NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019). It further helps to highlight and unravel complex processes through which humans are impacted by coloniality in time and space within the most personal domains of being such as gender, sexuality or subjectivity (MALDONADO-TORRES 2011).

3.1.3 Decoloniality as theory and practice

The triangle of coloniality of power, knowledge, and being is complemented with decoloniality. As demonstrated in Figure 1, decoloniality becomes relevant to challenge and dismantle the often hidden ways coloniality is working in the way we think, act and be (NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019).

Accordingly, decoloniality is "*the dismantling of relations of power and conceptions of knowledge that foment the reproduction of racial, gender, and geo-political hierarchies that came into being or found new and more powerful forms of expression in the modern/colonial world*" (MALDONADO-TORRES 2007:243).
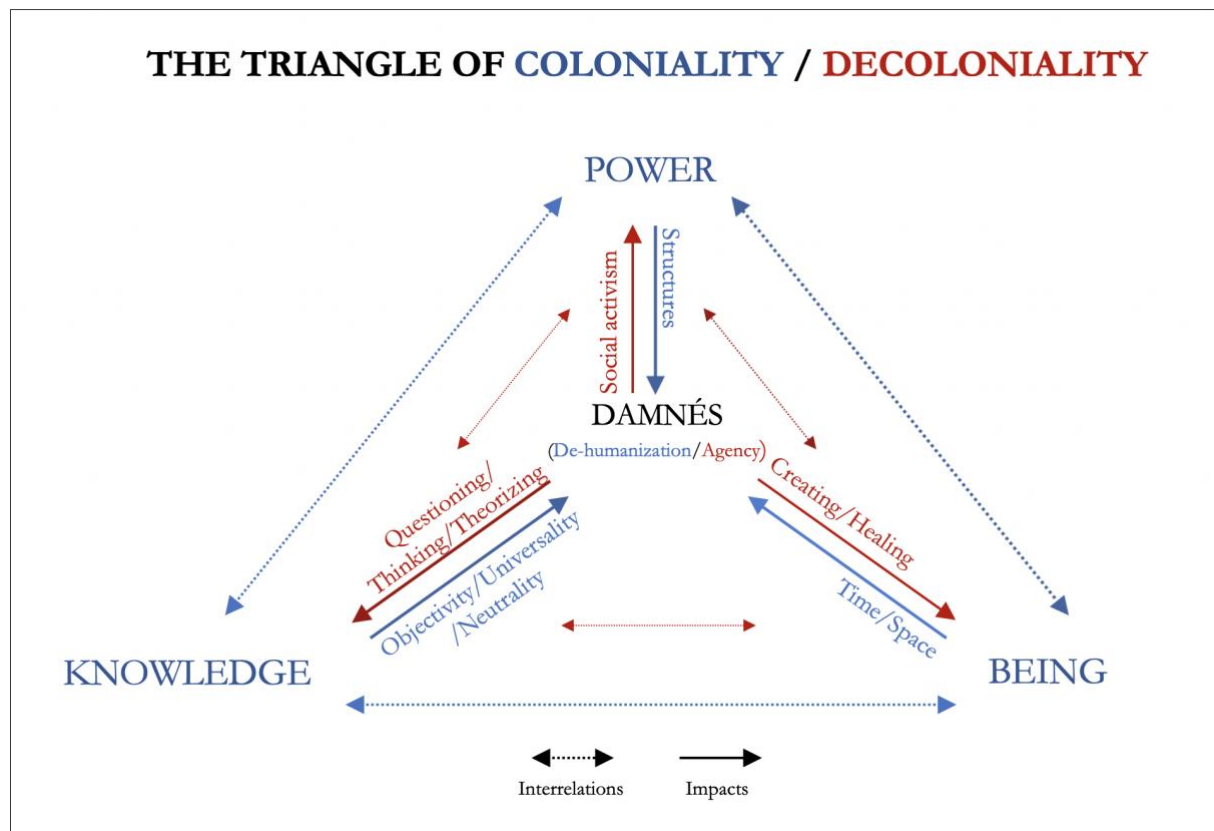
Figure 1 The triangle of coloniality/decoloniality, own graphic based on Maldonado-Torres 2011 and Mignolo 2007

Following MALDONADO-TORRES (2016:30), decoloniality necessitates people to come together "*to create, think, and act in the effort to decolonize being, knowledge, and power*". Although MCD scholars stress that decoloniality is a collective process of all humans, it embraces the agencies of damnés as actors, thinkers, and creators at its core—hence becoming a fundamentally re-humanizing project (MALDONADO-TORRES 2007b;2016): "*de-coloniality, as ethically oriented, epistemically geared, politically motivated and economically necessary processes, has the damnés as its central philosophical and political figure*" (MIGNOLO 2007b:458).

Decoloniality as illustrated in Figure 1, works against coloniality in its three interrelated domains. Decoloniality of power strives for a fundamental transformation of existing power hierarchies through joint efforts of social activism. Decoloniality of knowledge aims towards the production of counter discourses to hegemonic knowledge production (DUTA 2018, MALDONADO-TORRES 2007). As central part, MIGNOLO (2007b) describes the importance of 'de-linking' from modernity/coloniality, which includes the move away from the assumed universality, neutrality and rationality of Eurocentric knowledge as well as the emergence of the damnés as central writer,

communicator, theorists, thinker, and questioner (NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019). Also termed as 'critical border thinking', the epistemic response of the damnés to Eurocentric knowledge production is seen as an important part of decoloniality which does not entirely reject modernity in itself but rather highlight is incompleteness: "*Instead of rejecting modernity to retreat into a fundamentalist absolutism, border epistemologies subsume/redefine the emancipatory rhetoric of modernity from the cosmologies and epistemologies of the subaltern, located in the oppressed and exploited side of the colonial difference*" (GROSFOGUEL 2006:178). Decoloniality of knowledge intents to fundamentally transform the terms of knowledge production towards valuing the existence of diverse equitable knowledges and societal structures, also termed as 'pluriverse' (NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019). It breaks with the hegemonic hierarchizations of superior/inferior knowledges and human beings. Decoloniality of being embraces efforts of healing and creation through domains such as pedagogy or art, that become crucial to countering the various ways coloniality impacts the most personal spheres of being (DUTA 2018; MALDONADO-TORRES 2011; NDLOVU-GATSHENI 2019).

Decoloniality is described as diverse processes that aim at overcoming the CMoP towards a utopian future of a decolonial world while acknowledging that until now it is an unfinished project:

> "*Decoloniality is never pure nor perfect, and it does not count with a full picture of what a decolonized institution, society, or world can be. […] Neither perfect nor pure, decoloniality is rather an attitude that keeps subjects and collectives open to growth and corrections as well as an unfinished project*" (Maldonado-Torres 2016:31)

Given the incompleteness of decoloniality and the continued hegemony of coloniality, it becomes relevant to understand the diverse ways through which coloniality is working in our everyday lives: "*In a context where coloniality perpetuates itself through multiple forms of deception and confusion, clarity can become a powerful weapon for decolonization*" (MALDONADO-TORRES 2016:2).

3.2 Exploring coloniality as constituent within Western humanitarianism

Based on conceptual clarifications as introduced in the previous chapter, this chapter discusses the link of coloniality and the IHS. It illustrates that the IHS is governed by a hegemonic Western humanitarianism that continuously builds on coloniality and thereby sustains problematic paradoxes of humanitarian assistance. To elaborate on these findings, a short overview on decolonial literature on humanitarianism is given before several paradoxes of Western humanitarianism and their entanglement within coloniality are outlined and the resulting research focus is set out.

3.2.1 Decolonial literature on humanitarianism

Although decolonial lenses towards the paradoxes within the IHS seem fruitful, the conducted literature review revealed little resources that specifically scrutinize humanitarianism from decolonial perspectives. However, taking into consideration the basic tenant of decoloniality that identified the hegemony of Western knowledge reproduction, the lack of literature of this nature within mainstream academia comes as no surprise. Following this line of argument, rather than constituting a real lack of the existence of decolonial perspectives towards the IHS and humanitarianism, it is more likely that a lack of access to those perspectives based on silencing and/or marginalizing knowledges that emerge outside of the Western academic canon is prevalent (SABARATNAM 2017; STANEK 2019). According to RUTAZIBWA (2019), the supposed gap is further constituted through limited efforts within mainstream academia to understand how good intentions of humanitarianism coexist with harmful outcomes of the latter: "*The silence of too many researchers simultaneously masks and normalizes the harmful consequences of the aid system*" (RUTAZIBWA 2019:66)

However, some literature that includes decolonial perspectives on humanitarian assistance exists. Next to RUTAZIBWA (2019) who challenges the mourning of a presumed 'end of neoliberal humanitarianism' from a decolonial perspective, SABARATNAM's (2017) 'Decolonizing interventions' is mentioned as important decolonial work within this field (HOFFMAN 2017; RUTAZIBWA 2019). While not specifically focusing on humanitarian assistance, the work of SABARATNAM (2017) gives a coercive feminist decolonial analysis of the way coloniality is constitutive to international interventions in the Global South. In addition, an increasing emergence of Western academic literature that uses decolonial theories and concepts can be witnessed in diverse disciplines (NAYLOR ET AL. 2018; STANEK 2019). However, work of this kind that specifically focuses on humanitarianism remains scarce.

Despite this shortage, there is a lot of critical work on humanitarianism from various other disciples within mainstream academics that are helpful to further explore the link of coloniality and humanitarianism. While a more detailed analysis of this critical literature is out of the scope of this research, overviews on literature of this kind—such as the ones from PASCUCCI (2019), CHRISTIE (2015) and SABARATNAM (2017)—highlight that groundbreaking work emerged from disciplines such as postcolonial studies, geography, or social sciences, such as ethnography. Albeit acknowledging valuable contributions, SABARATNAM (2017:35) points out that much of existing critical literature on interventions "*thus far is characterised in various dimensions by forms of Eurocentric theory, method and conclusion and as such gives us only limited scope for understanding it, or reimagining the nature*

of intervention and its alternatives". A point which highlights once more the relevance of deploying decolonial concepts and thoughts to explore the link of coloniality and humanitarianism:

> "*While much has been uncovered about how political and humanitarian agendas tend to reinforce each other, it is necessary to dig deeper into the nature of humanitarianism by looking at how [...] it is deeply embedded in a system of knowledge that professes to be universal but is in reality an extension of European and Western hubris*" (GORDON & DONINI 2015:102).

3.2.2 The paradoxes of humanitarianism and their entanglement with coloniality

By exploring the link between humanitarianism and coloniality, this chapter identifies that a hegemonic Western humanitarianism governs the IHS and contains several problematic paradoxes which intrinsically build on and perpetuate coloniality. This chapter illustrates the identified paradoxes within their historical embeddedness and outlines the continuity of coloniality within dominant forms of Western humanitarianism.

(i) De-humanizing humanitarianism—Genealogy of Western humanitarianism during colonialism

Literature reveals that Western humanitarianism, paradoxically, was deeply embedded within and perpetuated de-humanizing practices during colonialism. During the nineteenth century, which is often referred to as the birth of Western humanitarianism, the language of humanitarianism was used as an important means to legitimize European colonial control in the Global South (BENNET 2016). The hierarchical colonial divide of humans into the civilized Christian West and uncivilized savage Non-West—that decolonial scholars define at the base of coloniality—legitimized civilizing missions under the premises of 'the White man's burden' (BENNET 2016; LESTER & DUSSART 2014). Accordingly, many humanitarian practices such as famine relief were invented during colonial times and legitimized colonial control through its alleged benefits (BENNET 2016).

Moreover, Western humanitarianism was not only used for legitimizing colonial control but it was itself built on the same ideologies and power hierarchies embedded within the CMoP that became hegemonic during colonialism. This becomes clear when looking at the early beginnings of the ICRC, as one institution that is described as a main driver for the development of the current IHS as we know it today (BENNET 2016). By reviewing former ICRC Bulletin publications, FORSYTHE (2018) identified that early ICRC ideologies fundamentally rest on the hierarchized dichotomy of civilized White and uncivilized non-White humans and are intrinsically linked to the racialized bifurcation of humans into superior/inferior. The latter becomes apparent when considering that ICRC Bulletins not only related humanitarian progress exclusively to "*the Aryan race*" (FORSYTHE

2018) but also displayed Black humans as 'too savage' and 'incapable' of adopting humanitarian values:

> *"No Negro state [...] has acceded to the Geneva Convention so far; it is not even to be hoped that they would, for the black peoples of Africa are largely still too savage to connect to and put into practice the humanitarian thought that inspired this treaty"* (ICRC 1880:5)[3]

In addition, it becomes apparent that Western humanitarian ideologies included considerations and active confrontations towards the suffering of some humans while turning a blind spot to others (FORSYTHE 2018). Accordingly, the ICRC was determined to limit human suffering during war in Europe, while keeping silent and inactive towards large-scale murder, mutilations and torture that were conducted in the colonies. ICRC president Moynier was known to keep close relations to King Leopold II of Belgium, whose brutal rule of the colony of Congo free State from 1885 to 1908 (FORSYTHE 2018) is associated to the death of several million people (Marysse 2005). The examples illustrate that Western humanitarianism was built on a systematic differentiation of "*those lives who are worthy of Western concern, from those lives that are silenced and rendered invisible*" (IVANOVIC 2019:100)—the latter which Fanon titled 'the damnés'. Western humanitarianism was paradoxically used for and actively perpetuated de-humanizing processes during colonialism.

(ii)   On the 'other' side of compassion

One may argue that de-humanizing ideologies were not surprisingly found within Western humanitarianism during colonialism as they were embedded in the hegemonic ideologies of that time. However, a closer look at Western humanitarianism in the second half of the 20th century shows that a racialized bifurcation of humans—and therewith associated de-humanizing processes—continued to play a crucial role for Western humanitarianism, paradoxically, through politics of humanitarian compassion.

According to DAVEY et al. (2013, in BENNET 2016), the intersection of Cold War geopolitics and state-political decolonization had a high significance for the emergence of a considerable number of Western NGOs:

> *"The skills, material and money wielded by Northern organisations were called upon to supplement those of the newly established Southern governments, many of whom were struggling with inadequate resources and infrastructure after the rapid withdrawal of the colonial powers'. The opening up of such a broad new theatre of action in the post-colonial world stimulated a significant increase in non-governmental humanitarian action*" (DAVEY et al. 2013, in BENNET 2016:14)

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[3] Own translation from original version in French language

Thus, the second half of the 20ᵗʰ centuries witnessed an increase in the number and size of Western humanitarian NGOs that used media as a tool for fundraising and advocacy. Building on moral sentiments of solidarity and compassion, newspaper and television transmitted images portraying human suffering through motives such as starving Black children to call on Western spectators to financially support the humanitarian cause (COSTNER & KOHLI 2018). While humanitarian fundraising was meant to secure resources for well-intended aid, criticism reveals that the language of compassion and solidarity was built on racialized colonial differences and power asymmetries.

As IVANOVIC (2019) expounds, on one hand the pictures of the targets of humanitarian assistance convey images of helpless victims and are often completely taken out of the historical context in which human suffering occurs. This does not only lead to a de-historization of human suffering but also contributes to an excessive 'othering' that perpetuates racialized colonial differences:

> "*The formation and articulation of knowledge about the suffering of others take place in public sites wherein images, news broadcasts, diverse "artistic" renderings of human deprivation on social media, etc. are entangled with relations of power that deploy epistemic and ontological mechanisms of othering according to the hegemonic logic of Eurocentrism*" (IVANOVIC 2019:100)

Accordingly, humanitarian assistance, as described by KHALILI & HAJAR (2013, in LOPEZ et al. 2015:2235) embodies an "*ethical commitment toward others who are not quite regarded as equals*".

On the other hand of this "*otherizing world of humanitarianism*" (Ivanovic 2019:98), the Western spectator is constituted as active and self-assertive subject that is left with the personal choice of solidarity and compassion which often appears to be taken independently of the Western spectator's position within existing power configurations:

> "*Despite innate optimism of current Western liberal culture, compassion itself is manifested as the personal choice of a Western consumer; it remains a form of public action insofar as it silences vulnerable others by negotiating their humanity as a consumerist practice devoid of genuine solidarity*" (IVANOVIC 2019:85)"

The immanent power asymmetries between passive targets of aid that wait for an active acknowledgment of human suffering and material support by the Western spectator, concomitantly, represent an epistemic and material domination (IVANOVIC 2019; SABARATNAM 2017). Paradoxically, in this way Western humanitarianism deploys a language of moral sentiments and compassion while applying unjust colonial market forces and practices of domination.

(iii) The hegemony of Western humanitarianism: On the pluriverse of universal compassion and humanity

Another paradox of Western humanitarianism comes to light when following IVANOVIC'S (2019) conceptualization of compassion. Accordingly, compassion is made of fluid politics that are

actively created and negotiated by different actors that are embedded within the existing power matrix. Although Western humanitarianism builds on a universal applicability of humanity and compassion, compassion in this understanding is not only fluid but also diverse (GORDON & DONINI 2015; IVANOVIC 2019). The pretention of just one universal form of compassion and humanitarianism—the currently hegemonic Western one—paradoxically silences pluriverse forms of responding to the suffering of others that have a long history and continue to exist globally (BENNET 2016).

To exemplify, BENNET (2016) outlines various forms of responses to the suffering of others that did not only emerge outside of the Western canon but were even used to oppose colonial practices on which Western humanitarianism builds. As one of the most well-known examples, concepts of charity such as 'wakf' and 'zakat' that are hold as sacred in the Islamic precept, as well as 'insaniyeh' as the Arabic term to refer to humanitarianism, contain understandings of compassion and responses to human suffering that diverge from the hegemonic Western humanitarianism (BENNET 2016). Moreover, the latter humanitarian endeavors were directly used to challenge early Western humanitarian imperatives of White saviors acting on uncivilized savages. For example, the life of Abd al-Quadir *(1808-1883)*, who was a leading opponent of the French conquest of Algeria, "*serves as a useful reminder that the humanitarian impulse both predates and can be fully independent of the organisations and frameworks that structure it today* (BENNET 2014:21). Accordingly, Abd al-Quadir, in face of the brutal conquest, strived for more human practices of war including the distinction between combatants and non-combatants, human treatment of prisoners, and legal limitations to warfare practices that he based on Islamic legal traditions (BENNET 2016).

Building on the diversity of compassion and ideas of humanity, humanitarianism "*articulates and offers a site wherein different dimensions of moral, economic and political intersect with, and determine one another, in ways that variously come to define what humanism and solidarity are*" (IVANOVIC 2019:84). This conceptualization goes in line with what HILHORST & JANSEN (2010) call the 'humanitarian arena'[4]. This conceptualization entails an actor-oriented approach in which the relevance of actors that are placed within existing power structures are of crucial importance since they shape humanitarian assistance:

> "*We view humanitarian action as an arena where actors negotiate the outcomes of aid. […] The realities and outcomes of aid depend on how actors along and around the aid chain — donor representatives, headquarters, field staff, aid recipients and surrounding actors — interpret the context, the needs, their own role and each other. […]*

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[4] The 'arena' concept is grounded on ethnographic research in the fields of development and humanitarian practices and influenced by scholars such as BAKEWELL (2000), BIERSCHENK (1988), and LONG (1992; 2001). For an overview on the debate in the humanitarian context, see HILHORST & JANSEN (2010).

> *'Aid, in this perspective, is the outcome of the messy interaction of social actors struggling, negotiating and at times guessing to further their interests' (Bakewell 2000:108-9)"* (HILHORST & JANSEN 2010:1120)

Following this line of arguments, the embeddedness of humanitarian norms within social structures turn them into what GORDON & DONINI (2015:81) call "*currency […] of power*" that empower certain actors and institutions to promote specific interests:

> "As *such, humanitarianism is a dominant discourse that maintains the dominance of particular institutions and modalities as well as defining the content of purportedly universal values of charity and compassion in specific types of situations of crisis that are labelled "humanitarian crises*" (GORDON & DONINI 2015:81)

Hence, from a decolonial perspective Western humanitarianism can be conceptualized as the hegemonic form of this discourse which maintains the power of dominant Western humanitarian institutions and actors in the IHS based on the CMoP. It is fueled with a Eurocentric value system that promotes the alleged universality of Western humanitarian norms while silencing other forms of humanitarianism.

(iv) Western humanitarian principles—On the biased nature of neutrality and impartiality

The following argument heavily builds on the aforementioned deconstruction of the supposed universality of Western humanitarian norms and values. It is argued that the universalization of hegemonic humanitarian principles incorporates a de-politicization of humanitarian action which, paradoxically, is enabled by the political nature of humanitarianism and its embeddedness within the CMoP.

Western humanitarianism has conventionally been constructed around a certain set of core humanitarian principles. The latter include humanity (human suffering must be addressed), neutrality (not take sides in conflicts), impartiality (aid must be delivered on the basis of need alone with no regard to ethnicity, religion, race or any other consideration), and independence (aid must be autonomous from political, economic, military or other objectives) (BAGSHAW 2012). As GORDON and DONINI (2015:78) state: "*These principles, whilst never unchallenged, have dominated the contemporary discourse of humanitarianism and have been synonymous with or at least reflections of a presumed essential, enduring and universal set of humanitarian values*". Moreover, the humanitarian principles build on the assumption of the existence of a 'humanitarian space' wherein it is possible to deliver humanitarian assistance separately from its politicized environment—an understanding which is pervasive in many policy documents and academic work (HILHORST & JANSEN 2010). As HILHORST and JANSEN (2010) expound, this understanding embodies the aspirational nature of Western humanitarianism as it can be traced back to the work of H. Dunant who founded the Red

Cross in 1982 and believed that his organization needed to remain neutral and impartial to gain access to battle fields.

However, it is argued that the uncritical use of these principles contributes to a de-politicization of humanitarian assistance since it neglects the existing power asymmetries that are intrinsic to it (HILHORST & JANSEN 2010). When conceptualized as 'arena', humanitarian assistance never appears in a vacuum but is always a product of social actions and relations within the existing power matrix. Hence, humanitarian principles of impartiality and neutrality are consubstantial with political, epistemic and cultural power (GORDON & DONINI 2015) and, paradoxically, biased in their very nature. It is criticized that ignoring existing power structures allows for the use of humanitarianism to legitimize specific interests of dominant actors: "*The language and principles of humanitarian space are strategically or tacitly used by different actors to advance or legitimize their respective interests, projects or beliefs*" (HILHORST & JANSEN 2010:1118).

Based on the recognition that humanitarian principles "*often sit uneasily with the reality of crisis situations*" (BENNET 2016:5)—as demonstrated by abundant empirical evidences (BENNET 2016)—scholars and practitioners alike started to challenge the neutral and apolitical nature of traditional Western humanitarianism as morally questionable and naïve (FOX 2001). Accusations that humanitarian assistance in some cases led to aggravated conflicts fueled a rethinking towards basing humanitarian "*actions (or inaction) on the assumed good or bad consequences of a given intervention in relation to wider developmental aims*" (SLIM 1997, in FOX 2001:280). Described as a paradigm shift, a so-called 'new humanitarianism' emerged within Western humanitarianism (GORDON & DONINI 2015). It consciously attempts to move beyond traditional humanitarian assistance that was clearly separated from development approaches towards a more politically driven and conflict resolution framework in which it is used to achieve more political goals (FOX 2001; LOPEZ et al. 2015).

However, the emergence of the new humanitarianism is everything but undisputed. Among the critique is skepticism of "*an over politcisation of aid*" (FOX 2001:275) through which humanitarians risk to lose access to conflicts due to the abandonment of basic principles. Moreover, it is criticized that humanitarian assistance increasingly reflects the interests of dominant Western actors while using Western morals to decide who deserves aid and who does not—which reinforces given power asymmetries: (FOX 2001; LOPEZ et al. 2015).

> "*While the old colonialists invoked a civilising mission, the new humanitarians speak about human rights and ethics. Those groups that comply with the Western version of human rights and conflict resolution will receive aid. Those that*

reject Western values will be left to their fate. In this way conditional humanitarian assistance is becoming yet another tool available to Western governments to control developing countries" (FOX 2001:284)

This criticism is important to highlight the hegemony of Western value systems within humanitarianism. However, from a decolonial perspective it reinforces Eurocentric perspectives given that the hegemonic discourse of Western humanitarianism is uncovered as political in its very nature and never existed separate from politics (LESTER & DUSSART 2014). To assume that the politicization of humanitarianism in favor of dominant actors is new requires the assumption that humanitarianism once existed, or at least is possible to be separated from the given matrix of power. RUTAZIBWA (2019) brings the danger of a simplistic criticism of new humanitarianism on point when she put forward:

> "*Thinking about the role of humanitarianism today requires that we don't reproduce or unwittingly celebrate Western-led order by mourning the end of a history that never actually existed. Given past and present non-Western experiences of liberal order, we might ask: what's there to mourn?*" (RUTAZIBWA, 2019:65)

(v)　　Localization—In between coloniality and decoloniality

Localization emerged as a new buzzword within the humanitarian arena. While it is praised by some actors to increase the efficiency of humanitarian assistance, others emphasize its broader potential towards a decolonization of humanitarianism—away from the hegemony of the Western humanitarianism and actors within the IHS—towards local, mostly Southern, actors. However, a decolonial approach highlights that localization, paradoxically, also includes the risk to perpetuate coloniality.

The buzzword of localization gained momentum in the early 21st century and is used by many different actors within the Western humanitarian discourse as well as in Southern approaches towards humanitarianism (BENNET 2016; ROEPSTORFF 2019). While Southern humanitarian approaches, for a long time, only played a marginal role in the humanitarian arena of the IHS due to the hegemony of Western humanitarianism, a recently growing role of Southern humanitarian actors is challenging this dynamic (GORDON & DONINI 2015). Accordingly, it can be witnessed that Southern actors are visibly accelerating their engagement within humanitarian responses within their own countries—partly under the name of localization (ROEPSTORFF 2019). The example of China's growing role in international humanitarian assistance, moreover, demonstrates that non-Western actors are also increasingly engaging outside their own borders (RENWICK 2020). With the growing engagement of Southern actors, ideas of humanitarianism that are bound to other cultural and political settings gained of importance. They increasingly challenge the universality of Western humanitarianism's values: "*Many of the new or emerging powers have no obligation, nor perhaps the inclination,*

to conform to the boundaries of the traditional humanitarian sector" (GORDON & DONINI 2015:103). In addition, many local actors originate from former colonized places. Thus, a certain suspicion or rejection towards Western humanitarian values and a drive towards localization can be based in a "[*r*]*esistance against what is being perceived as a continuation of a colonial agenda and civilisation mission*" (ROEPSTORFF 2019:4). Consequently, localization aspirations can be placed in a broader rejection of how Western humanitarianism is reproducing power asymmetries between countries, people and cultural values within the CMoP (ROEPSTORFF 2019)—which arguably is a move towards decoloniality.

Nevertheless, criticism reveals that localization, paradoxically, runs the danger to simultaneously further perpetuate coloniality. At the heart of this criticism lies the notion of the 'local'. ROEPSTORFF (2019:1) describes that the debate on localization "*lacks a critical discussion of underlying assumptions—most strikingly, the very conceptualisation of the local itself*". The term 'local' often embraces a very broad group of actors such as local staff of INGOs, national government representatives or local/national NGOs that seem in contrast to 'internationals' such as foreign governments and donors, INGOs, or foreign academic institutions. As ROEPSTORFF (2019) outlines, not least because of the hybrid nature of the humanitarian network with many organizations that act through local, national, regional and international networks of agencies, the binary division between 'local' and 'international' actors constitutes an oversimplification of the complex interactions within the humanitarian arena. This runs the danger to either 'romanticize' or 'vilify' local actors—both of which ultimately perpetuate coloniality. Through the vilification "*a less sympathetic view of the local persists that construes it as something static, rural, traditional, incapable and waiting to be 'civilised, developed, monetized and "properly" governed'*" (ROEPSTORFF 2019:8), which directly picks up on the colonial epistemic and ontological processes of othering, victimization and de-humanization. On the other hand, the romanticizing of locals comes with the assumption that local actors, no matter who they are, are inherently authentic, legitimate and knowledgeable within their local context. This, however, sidesteps the necessity to critically scrutinize local actors and their embeddedness within given power configurations (ROEPSTORFF 2019). As a consequence, it runs the danger to turn a blind spot on exclusionary processes such as the dominant position of local elites, patronage or so-called 'Third World nationalism or fundamentalism' (GROSFOGUEL 2006; ROEPSTORFF 2019)—which constitute a shift of power but, as GROSFOGUEL (2006:178) argues, are "*as Eurocentric, hierarchical, authoritarian, and anti-democratic as Eurocentric modernity itself*". Romanticizing and vilifying locals, hence, is part of a Eurocentric essentialism which perpetuates coloniality rather than enforcing decoloniality.

3.3 The current study

As chapter three revealed, the IHS is broadly governed by a hegemonic Western humanitarianism. The latter is dominated by Western norms, values, and actors based on their dominant position within the CMoP. Thus, the intrinsic logic of coloniality is constituent within Western humanitarianism and leads to certain paradoxes. Chapter three mainly focused on the problematic ontological and epistemological processes that create these paradoxes. However, it is argued that these paradoxes lead to tangible outcomes that ultimately perpetuate the same injustices and inequalities that the IHS is trying to alleviate—and thus, lead to a crisis of legitimacy of the IHS. In light of ever failing reform agendas of the IHS and a scarcity of accessible literature about the link of coloniality and humanitarianism, it is imperative to further scrutinize the specific impact that coloniality has on the IHS and its outcomes. As the impacts of coloniality, however, are highly context dependent, it appears relevant to take a closer look at a specific case study. To do so, this research focuses on the IHS in Jordan. The myriad of local to international humanitarian actors that interact within the broad and competitive international humanitarian landscape in Jordan give evoke the need to explore the following main research question and the two sub-research questions:

Main research question:

> **In what way does coloniality impact the international humanitarian system in Jordan and its problematic outcomes?**

Sub-research question 1:

Considering that humanitarian actors are at the core of the IHS and ultimately shape its outcomes, it seems fruitful to start the inquiry with a closer look at the way that coloniality impacts humanitarians within the IHS in Jordan. Given that current localization aspirations heavily draw on a differentiation between international and local actors even though these categories are contested, it appears useful to further investigate on the differentiation of humanitarian actors: asking how and by whom the 'local' at the 'international' are constructed, who belongs to these categories and who is excluded? Moreover, it seems necessary to further elaborate in how far coloniality is reflected within these differentiation processes. In addition, to better understand the impact of coloniality within the IHS the research sets out to identify challenges and difficulties that humanitarian actors face within the competitive humanitarian landscape in Jordan. However, the theoretical analysis in chapter 3.2 suggests that coloniality impacts humans very differently based on a subjects' position within the CMoP. Consequently, this research specifically focuses on difficulties and challenges that local actors—including local humanitarian NGOs and local

employees within NGOs and IOs—face within the IHS in Jordan. This seems relevant given that local actors are at the core of current localization aspirations, yet only very limited research has focused on them (PASCUCCI 2019). Consequently, the first sub-research question is the following: **In what way is coloniality reflected in a differentiation between local and international actors and in the difficulties and challenges that local actors face within the IHS in Jordan?**

Sub-research question 2:
Localization is currently treated as a panacea to address shortcomings of the IHS, yet it remains vaguely defined and includes diverse processes and aspirations. Hence, it imperative to investigate weather and if so what kind of localization processes humanitarian actors perceive to be present in Jordan. Moreover, a closer look at perceived benefits, potentials and/or shortcomings of localization processes in Jordan is requisite. In doing so, it is especially relevant for this research to investigate in how far localization incorporates processes that lead towards decoloniality as a means to dismantle the impact of coloniality and improve the IHS and its outcomes. Thus, the second research question is as follows: **In what way are localization processes, as an aspiration towards decoloniality, perceived as present and beneficial for the IHS and its outcomes?**

4. Methodology

This chapter outlines the research processes and methodologies. It chapter briefly describes the research paradigm, the research design, data collection methods and ethical considerations, as well as data analysis and data security processes.

4.1 Research approach

Decolonial scholars and practitioners continuously stress that decoloniality is more than just a research framework or theory but a combination with practice. Using a decolonial approach for this research has important implications for the methodology. Most importantly, following decolonial scholars, research methodologies are never accepted as neutral but unmasked as a tool of subjectivation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2019). Hence, it becomes crucial to scrutinize my own positionality, epistemic privilege, objectivity and representation as a researcher. As a White, female, German student/researcher that for the most part of my education process visited European education institutions, my own position within the global matrix of epistemic power relations is of a relatively privileged one. As such, I do not consider myself as a decolonial researcher but rather as one who is committed to more reflexive, responsible and ethical research.

Moreover, bearing in mind that decolonial perspectives stress that there is no outside from the global matrix of power (Mignolo 2017), I reject the notion of an objective research. Instead, I want to highlight that my own positionality influenced my research process, methodologies and outcomes to a large extent. To exemplify, my nationality gave me access to specific research funding mechanisms that allowed me to conduct my research abroad and without which I would have not been able to succeed in the same manner. Moreover, my personal experiences within the humanitarian field that I collected during two internships—one at the headquarter of a United Nations organization in Geneva and one in a field office of an INGO in Jordan—gave me insights into some work realities and drew my research interest. More specifically, I stumbled upon a perceived gap between the good intentions of many ambitious humanitarians that strove for alleviating human suffering, while at the same time witnessing problematic or at least insufficient impacts that the humanitarian work showed on the ground. Also, I continuously perceived a disparity between the opportunities of Western humanitarians in contrast to those who originated from the Global South: be it as an UN intern among almost exclusively other Western interns that could afford an unpaid internship in Geneva, or as an intern in the field office in Amman who almost earned as much as a Jordanian field officer without me having at least a fraction of the needed skills that they had. As much as my previous experiences shaped my research interests, they further facilitated the conduction of my research. Personal connections that I established in Jordan's capital Amman during my internship helped me to find interview partners. Also, they allowed me to spend the duration of my research stay with a Jordanian family who substantially supported me and taught me to speak Arabic—which facilitated the way that I was able to communicate throughout my research.

4.2 Selection of the research location

The research took place in Jordan's capital Amman for several reasons. In addition to my personal familiarity with the country and the culture which was useful, Jordan itself is geopolitically highly relevant for humanitarian responses to crises in the Middle Eastern region. While Jordan became a key actor for providing large-scale humanitarian aid within their own borders to people fleeing from crises in neighboring countries, Jordan itself remained in a relatively stable political position that attracted many international humanitarian organizations (SHTEIWI et al. 2014). The capital Amman became an international hub for diverse humanitarian actors that engaged within humanitarian responses for refugees in Jordan and within the larger region in all those places that security-wise were inaccessible for international humanitarian organizations (PASCUCCI 2019). Aware of the diversity and scale of the international humanitarian network and having made first contacts to some employees and organizations, Amman offered itself as a fruitful location to

conduct my research. Moreover, the stable security situation in Jordan did also allow me to gain access into a humanitarian environment without exposing the people with whom I conducted the research or myself to specific risks.

4.3 Research structure

The research follows the structure illustrated in Figure 2:
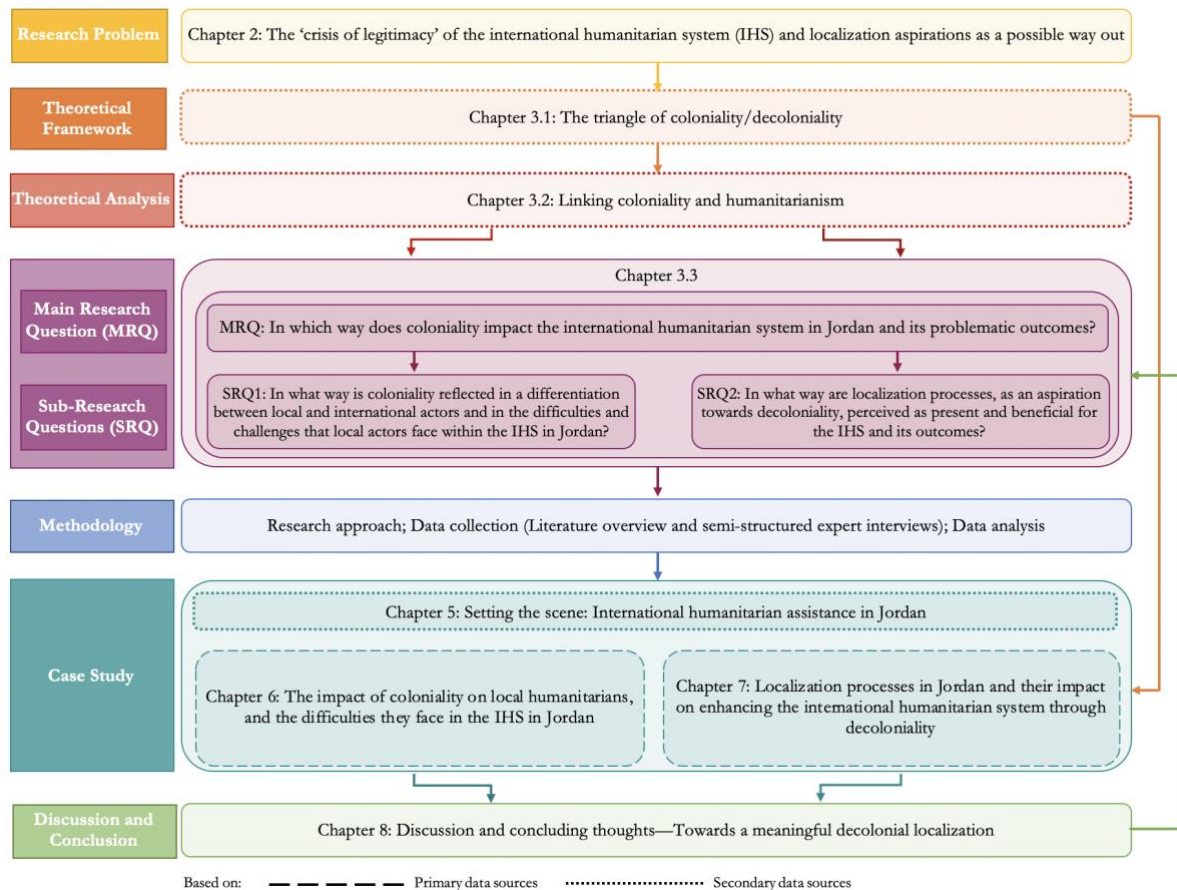
Figure 2 Research structure, own graphic

As Figure 2 shows, the first step examined current challenges and criticism of the IHS that led towards the definition of the overall research problem. By building on the theoretical framework of the triangle of coloniality/decoloniality, this research began with a theoretical analysis of the ways in which coloniality is embedded within Western humanitarianism that governs the IHS. Based on this analysis, the relevance of further elaborating on the impact of coloniality on the delivery of aid within a specific case study became apparent. As a result, a main research question and two sub-research questions were defined. Subsequently, data was collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed through coding processes. Based on the code system, the research questions were answered by elaborating on the findings that emerged within the case study and linking them back to the theoretical analysis.

4.4 Data collection methods and ethical considerations

The research collection process differed between the theoretical analysis and the case study. The theoretical analysis was built on secondary data that was collected through a non-exhaustive literature review in accordance to BUI (2014). Based on the identification of the research problem, electronic databases were used to find scientific literature on the topic. Moreover, data was complemented with official reports from humanitarian organizations to gain insights into information from humanitarian practitioners.

To answer the research questions, primary data was collected through semi-structured expert interviews based on BRYMAN (2012) and BOGNER et al. (2014). Semi-structured expert interviews were used because pre-defined, open-ended questions lead the participants into the relevant research direction while still maintaining enough freedom for the participants and the interviewer to spontaneously set certain foci that turn out to be relevant within the interview (BOGNER et al. 2014; BRYMAN 2012). The questionnaire (see Annex I) was developed based on BOGNER et al. (2014) and included three thematic blocks that helped to structure the interviews.

The sampling for the semi-structured expert interviews builds on the understanding of an 'expert' as a construct that is made from research and society and as such depends on the specific research focus (BOGNER et al. 2014). Given that this research focuses on humanitarians within the IHS in Jordan, interviewees where considered as experts if they at least worked for one year within the IHS, in either humanitarian IOs or NGOs. Based on the identified lack of studies with/on local employees, and in accordance with the focus of localization on local humanitarians, most interviews were conducted with local employees. Considering that the theoretical analysis revealed the absence of a clear definition, the term 'local employees' was used in a vague manner and included all those persons that self-identified themselves as local staff when asked for an interview. Based on time and resource restrictions, seven interviews were conducted with local employees. To add to those experiences from local staff and gain other perspectives, two additional interviews were conducted with participants that self-identified as international staff. The overall sample group of nine interviewees was meant to be as heterogenous as possible, related to gender, age, position within the organization, and working experiences. More detailed accounts on interview participant demographics are outlined in a sample table (see Annex II).

Initial interview partners derived from connections that were made during previous visits in Jordan and throughout the research stay that extended from March to July 2020. From initial interview partners as starting point, further interviewees were found through snowball sampling, as described by NOY (2008). However, to openly illuminate the research methodologies it is important to point

to the fact that snowball sampling entailed the risk that the collected data comes with a certain bias given that initial interviewees impacted the determination of additional interview partners (NOY 2008). Thus, the sample is neither randomized, nor representative. In fact, the data is rather collected to gain insights into different perspectives and experiences without any claim of generating a complete picture.

Given that the nature of the research topic is rather sensitive, personal meetings for the interviews were scheduled to create a safe atmosphere of trust. Most interviews were conducted in different Cafés in Amman, while some were conducted at the home of the interviewees according to their personal preferences. Despite basic Arabic language skills of me as researcher, all interviews were conducted in English to communicate fluently and grasp important matters appropriately. The interviews lasted on average about one hour and were audio recorded after the interviewees were informed about the research process and procedures and following them signing an ethical disclaimer (see Annex III) including their consent to audio recording and the further use of the data.

4.5 Data analysis and data security

The first step of the data analysis included the transcription of all interviews by using the data transcription software AmberScript. However, given that most interview transcripts were based on non-native English speakers and the software does not properly transcribes accents, the interview transcripts had to be revised or completely transcribed manually. Within the transcription process, the audio files were transcribed word by word and subsequently word duplications, fillers or minor grammar mistakes were edited out. This transcription process is called intelligent verbatim transcription and helps to enhance the reading flow while maintaining the participants original meaning (EPPICH et al. 2019). Given the critical nature of the study inquiry, privacy and data security measures related to participant data were of high relevance. Sensitive data that could be used to relate the information back to a specific participant, such as names of people or of the organizations the participants worked at, were anonymized through a coding system and displayed as 'X#'. All transcripts can be found in Annex V.

As a next step, the data was coded with the computer system MAXQDA. CHARMAZ (2001, as cited in SALDANA 2013:3) described the relevance of codes for data analyses as "the *'cricical link' between data collection and their explanation of meaning*". Accordingly, the use of codes as part of the analysis process within this research helped to organize and extract the relevant data from the transcripts through the identification of reoccurring topics that seemed relevant for answering the given

research questions. The codes were defined by reading trough the transcripts several times which allowed to initially get familiar with the data, identify and mark initial categories within the computer program and then refine the initial codes by merging, deleting or creating new codes (SALDANA 2013). The list of codes (see Annex IV) that emerged through this process was subsequently used to answer the given research questions in an organized and in-depth manner.

5. Setting the scene—International humanitarian assistance in Jordan

The following chapter introduces the topic of the IHS and humanitarian assistance in Jordan. It describes the long relevance of and the political strategy towards humanitarian responses to refugee influxes, as well as the current structure and coordination of the IHS.

5.1 Historical background and relevance of international humanitarian assistance in Jordan

Historically, Jordan has long been relevant for humanitarian responses to crises and refugee movements within the Middle Eastern region. Already shortly after the British Mandate of Transjordan became independent in 1946, the newly found Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan started to face a long period as main destination for people seeking for refuge due to reoccurring crises in the Middle East. Nowadays Jordan constitutes the second largest refugee host related to its population worldwide (GHAZAL 2017) and hosts refugees from diverse origins including Iraqi, Palestinian, Yemeni, Sudanese, and Syrian people (AL ABED 2015; PASCUCCI 2019; UNHCR 2020b). Among those crises, the Syrian conflict, arguably also called "*one of the most tragic humanitarian crises of our time*" (MPIC 2019:7), caused humanitarian needs on an unprecedented scale and led to a large influx of refugees into Jordan (MPIC 2019; UNHCR 2018).

The Syria crises and related population movement towards Jordan are associated with miscellaneous social, economic, environmental and political impacts on the country's people and institutions (MPIC 2019; MANSUR et al. 2019). Challenges to respond to the needs of incoming refugees joined the middle-income country's socio-economical already challenging situation. Since its independence, Jordan has faced several economic crises and has consistently been dependent on foreign aid and remittances to sustain its economy (MANSUR et al. 2019). Existing economic difficulties are embedded into a social fabric that is constituted by sharp inequalities, urban informality and segregation, as well as sectarian and family-based social/geographical disparities (PASCUCCI 2019; SUKARIEH 2016). Over the past three decades the country has engaged in several economic reforms that build on the thriving Western model of the Washington Consensus to responded to internal economic crises. However, the reform agendas for the most part were met critically by the public given that the liberalization of the domestic market and privatization policies

were associated with the reduction of social services, the emergence of unprecedented deficits and debts, and the adoption of fiscal policies that placed the heavy burden on poorer groups. It has been argued that the effects of these top-down reform agendas failed to solve deep-rooted socio-economic problems such as those in Jordan's labor market (MANSUR et al. 2019).

According to PASCUCCI (2019) and MANSUR et al. (2019), Jordan's labor market faces high unemployment rates that are coupled with existing problematic labor conditions. As PASCUCCI (2019:747) points out, precarious labor *"has been a structural feature of […] Jordanian societies throughout the modern era"* and is deeply embedded in colonial dependencies, neoliberal economic reforms, lack of welfare programs, as well as political arbitrariness and local relations of patronage such as through 'wasda'. Wasda translates to favoritism or nepotism and most often refers to the use of personal connections to seek economic benefits such as getting a promotion or employment and is regarded as a fixture within the Jordanian society (BARNETT et al. 2013). Adding on already existing challenges, refugee influxes to Jordan are associated to an increased competition for jobs and reportedly lowered wage levels, raised unemployment and exacerbated already poor working conditions especially for low paid jobs, which is disproportionally impacting Jordan's working-class and lower class (MPIC 2019; SHTEIWI et al. 2014; TURNER 2015). While the worsening of working conditions is often prematurely reduced to the impacts of refugee influxes from neighboring countries (PASCUCCI 2019), the example of Jordan's labor market demonstrates that humanitarian refugee crises did not only confront Jordan with considerable humanitarian needs of incoming refugees but moreover with humanitarian needs of socio-economically vulnerable Jordanians which, according to the Jordanian government, seriously endangered Jordan's development goals (MPIC 2019).

5.2 Political position—Jordan as refugee rentier state
Traditionally, the government of Jordan has built on an 'open border policy' in major refugee influxes such as the ones from Palestine or Iraq, using them as financial income opportunity through the international community (BRUSCHINI-CHAUMET et al. 2019). This approach was followed in the beginning of the Syrian crisis. Already early into the crisis, UN humanitarian appeals were launched by the Jordanian government to initiate international humanitarian assistance to receive support in addressing fast growing humanitarian needs (MPIC 2019). However, from mid-2013, as a growing atmosphere of resentment with Syrian refugees could be sensed in Jordan, the Jordanian government changed directions progressively. Heavy restrictions of access, movements and work of Syrians in Jordan were implemented and border closures became more prominent (TSOURAPAS 2019). While this change can be read through different lenses, TSOURAPAS (2019)

describes the shift of Jordan's refugee policies as a move towards the emergence of Jordan as a 'refugee rentier state'—a category that he defines as *"states that employ their position as host states of forcibly displaced populations to extract revenue, or refugee rent, from other state or nonstate actors in order to maintain these populations within their borders"* (TSOURAPAS 2019:465). Accordingly, Jordan receives substantial external economic aid which is dependent on the country's status as host of forcibly displaced populations while Jordan's government as principal recipient of the incoming rent became financially reliant on this substantial external income (TSOURAPAS 2019).

To secure constant rent, Jordan's foreign policy seems to apply a strategy that TSOURAPAS (2019) describes as 'back-scratching strategy'. Accordingly, Jordan's foreign policy builds on framing the humanitarian response as a matter of global responsibility and shared benefit while at the same time stressing the fact that they are currently sharing a disproportionally large share of this burden. Consequently, political statements highlight the need for multilateral cooperation to respond to humanitarian crises while at the same time referring to international laws and norms to strengthen the case (TSOURAPAS 2019). This strategy becomes visible in multiple governmental statements towards the Syrian refugee crisis:

> *"Since its onset in 2011, the Syria crisis has become the defining human rights issue of our time, not only due to the sheer humanitarian costs involved but also due to the fragmented response of the international community. Six years into the crisis, Jordan continues to meet its moral obligations, bearing more than its fair share of the response and exhausting its absorptive capacities to meet the short and long-term needs of those seeking refuge within its borders. [...] Mitigating this challenge can only work under the premise that Jordan is doing is a global public good on behalf of the international community"* (MPIC 2019;V)

In addition, Jordan's King Abdullah II made no secret of the mutual interests that Jordan and Western donor states have in addressing Jordan's refugee situation when he stated:

> *"[Western states] realize that if they don't help Jordan it is going to make it more difficult for them to be able to deal with the refugee crisis. And, to be honest, all the leaders that we talk to know that, by helping Jordan, they are actually helping themselves more. So, it is in their vested interests"* (King Abdullah II, In: DOUCET 2016)

As the Jordanian government changed their policies gradually, they framed the humanitarian refugee response increasingly in terms of detrimental economic and social impacts on development, job growth and debt reduction and stressed the necessity of combining humanitarian response with national development (TSOURAPAS 2019). Concomitantly, the discourse on humanitarian assistance in Jordan shifted and became heavily coupled with the one on national development. This is reflected in the Jordan compact, an agreement between Jordan and the international community that was signed 2016 and according to the government "*sought to transform the refugee crisis into a development opportunity that attracts new investments and opens up the EU market with*

simplified rules of origin" (MPIC 2019;VI). Framed as a 'paradigm shift' by the government, the compact aimed to bridge the divide between short-term humanitarian and long-term development response and inherently tight international humanitarian finances to national development investments (MPIC 2019).

5.3 The international humanitarian system and its impacts in and on Jordan

In response to the enormous humanitarian needs of refugees arriving in Jordan, as well as those of local Jordanian host communities, a large-scale international humanitarian aid infrastructure grew in the country (MATSUDA 2019). Furthermore, the complex and volatile security situation in many neighboring countries prevented many international humanitarian agencies from being able to directly implement aid in those crises. Instead, many international humanitarian agencies shifted to a regional response and coordinate humanitarian assistance for people in Syria or Yemen from Jordan (SHTEIWI et al. 2014). Jordan's geopolitically relative stable security situation and geographic proximity to surrounding conflicts, turned the country into an important international humanitarian hub for the whole region (PASCUCCI 2019). Concomitantly, a rapidly growing humanitarian landscape in Jordan became densely populated: already existing humanitarian agencies were scaled-up, new local humanitarian organizations got created and new national and regional offices of international organizations were established (KRAFT & SMITH; 2019 MATSUDA 2019). The humanitarian network comprises of a myriad of different actors including Jordanian and foreign governmental agencies, IOs such as UN organization or the World Bank, local and international NGOs, royal-affiliated organizations, local civil societies, faith-based organizations such as Islamic Relief or World Vision, as well as Jordanian and foreign private entities (KRAFT & SMITH 2019; SHTEIWI et al. 2014).

As a considerable network like this requires coordination, the Jordanian government built on official coordination mechanisms that were initially established in the humanitarian response to the Iraq refugee crisis. These mechanisms for Jordanian-international humanitarian cooperation placed the overall sovereignty and full decision-making power in the hands of the Jordanian government (MPIC 2019; SHTEIWI et al. 2014). Throughout the Syrian refugee crisis, this approach to humanitarian coordination changed from a rather divided response between long-term development challenges and short-term assistance towards a more integrated response. However, the overall responsibilities in the coordination and implementation of aid remained rather divided into two parallel systems. The responsibility for the coordination and day-to-day implementation of short-term relief efforts to Syrian refugees in Jordan is largely under UNHCR leadership (SHTEIWI et al. 2014). Meanwhile, the Jordanian government, with a focus on national development

tasks, coordinates and implements the assistance to Jordanian host communities that are impacted by the refugee influx. These measures aim to minimize negative effects and inherently tie any help to refugees within these measures to the broader long-term goal to enhance national resilience and preserve Jordan's economic and human development (SHTEIWI et al. 2014).

The large-scale response to the Syrian refugee crisis went hand in hand with considerable funding requirements that, according to the Jordanian government, exceeded USD 7.6 billion for the period of 2017 to 2019 alone (MPIC 2019). Humanitarian assistance in Jordan turned into a billion-dollar industry mostly dependent on donations of Western states. Accordingly, the US, Germany and the EU are mentioned to be the most important donors, next to Canada, Switzerland and Italy (SHTEIWI et al. 2014). However, given that the amount of actually granted funds for the Syrian crisis persistently fell short of meeting overall financial requirements, the humanitarian landscape in Jordan witnessed considerable competition for scarce financial resources between involved actors (PASCUCCI 2019; SHTEIWI et al. 2014). Overall, the majority of official funding is either bilateral aid to the Jordanian government or funding given to international humanitarian agencies including UN agencies or large INGOs. Only a small part is given to local or independent national NGOs (Kraft & Smith. 2019).

In many ways, not only the influx of refugees but also the international response in form of the presence of many humanitarian agencies and their financial resources had considerable impacts on Jordan. Accordingly, the work of PASCUCCI (2019) has shown that humanitarian assistance plays an important economic role, not only because jobs in this field attract international staff that come to work in a relatively safe geopolitical environment but especially because they provide employment for local populations. While specific numbers on the amount of local staff working in Jordan are not available, with large-scale funding and humanitarian projects implemented in and through Jordan also the local humanitarian job market grew (PASCUCCI 2019). This seems especially relevant given that Jordan struggles with high unemployment rates and belongs to the Middle East as the geo-economic region with the highest youth unemployment in the world (DIBEH et al. 2016). According to the latest unemployment rates, about 36% of Jordan's youth between the age of 20-24 is unemployed (MANSUR et al. 2019). Hence, the growing humanitarian job market provided crucial working opportunities especially for Jordanians with access to higher education (ALHABAHBA 2016; MATSUDA 2019; PASCUCCI 2019). This shows that the effects of the presence of the IHS in Jordan are complex and interrelated. However, scientific work on local actors within the competitive IHS, including local NGOs and local employees, and on the difficulties that they face, remains scarce (PASCUCCI 2019).

6. The impact of coloniality on local humanitarians, and the difficulties they face in Jordan

The IHS in Jordan constitutes a competitive environment in which diverse actors compete for resources, influence and benefits. The first sub-research question seeks to reveal and explore the ways in which coloniality is reflected in a differentiation between local and international actors and in the difficulties that local actors face within this competitive environment. This chapter outlines four key findings that were identified within the collected data.

6.1 Structural dependencies of local NGOs on dominant actors

The first finding relates to specific challenges for local humanitarian NGOs as important actors within the IHS in Jordan. It reveals that uncertain and limited availability of funding creates strong competition in which IOs/INGOs have structural benefits in securing funds from mostly Western donors. Predominant funding mechanisms create a dependency of local NGOs on IOs/INGOs and Western donors in terms of accessing finances, decision-making and distribution of responsibilities. This hinders local NGOs in their implementation of humanitarian assistance.

Throughout the interviews, interviewees identified uncertainties in regard to the availability of humanitarian funding as a considerable challenge for local NGOs in Jordan. As IP1 stated, local NGOs are predominantly funded by short term project-based funds. Thus, they face a high unpredictability regarding reliability and availability of funds. Moreover, humanitarian funding can be impacted by sudden changes in foreign political tendencies since a considerable part of the funding comes from governmental, mostly Western, actors. Accordingly, IP2 reported that humanitarian project funding in Jordan experienced a drastic downturn when U.S. President D. Trump was elected and cut a considerable portion of funding. The U.S. was hitherto the main donor country for the humanitarian response to the Syrian crisis.

In general, a lack of available funds to the Syrian refugee response in Jordan was identified as a challenge that all humanitarian actors faced from the very beginning of the Syrian crisis (IP6). IP6 relates this to a 'donor fatigue' that came with the repeated occurrence of conflicts in the Middle East:

> *"I think they call it in the UN language 'donor fatigue'. It was donor fatigue. Funding was not as much as the funding available for the Iraqi trust fund. I think the Jordan Response Plan for Syria was largely underfunded. It remains underfunded until now. There was lots of pressure on the neighbor countries to support the refugees, but they didn't receive the same funding they did at the Iraqi time"* (IP6, Pos.32)

According to IP8, this donor fatigue seems to have increased within the last years. Almost ten years into the Syrian crisis, the conflict has developed into a long-term civil war which gains less and less international attention and funding while the number of people in acute humanitarian need remains high:

> *"I think the humanitarian sector in Jordan is trembling a bit now because you have donors not giving as much funding to programming for the Syrian crisis, for example. So, a lot of programs have closed in the last couple of years. Of course, I think it still plays an important role for the refugee population. […] But the NGO presence in Jordan in general has decreased in the last couple of years because donor interest has also decreased. The conflict has lasted so long, like almost 10 years that the interest just decreased"* (IP8:30)

Accordingly, recent cuts enhanced the lack of funds that were mentioned as a major challenge for all humanitarian organizations (IP2; IP4; IP8).

Although accessing funds poses challenges for all humanitarian organizations, the interviews illustrate that local NGOs face specific difficulties due to governmental regulations and dominant funding mechanisms (IP6). These difficulties start already in the establishment phase of local NGOs for which the Jordanian government sets strict rules and regulations. As IP6 outlines, local NGOs in the Jordanian context include voluntary or charitable societies which belong as a mandate to the Ministry of Development and non-profit companies as registered under the Ministry of Trade and Commerce. Although IP6 describes the latter type as the most likely way to successfully register a local NGO, it comes with specific regulations that require a start capital. However, given the project-based nature of many humanitarian funds that are only paid once an application to the specific project is submitted and approved, start capital is difficult to access:

> "*And then the fact that you need to put in capital to establish a company. The fact that you need to meet so many rules. You still have not obtained a grant or a contract. One of them is rent. You have to rent a premise and you have to provide an address to the ministry. […] That's out of the pockets of the founders. […] The initiation phase or the preparation phase you're not going to be able to pay anybody to help you. So, unless you have acquaintances, colleagues, people willing to donate their time and effort it is not going to work for you. So, this… there's this gap here between the registration and the getting off the grant. This is a difficult situation"* (IP6, Pos.78)

These difficulties are specifically challenging for local NGOs. As IP6 explained, local NGOs face difficulties in competing with INGOs for funds. The majority of larger INGOs have more institutional support through access to core funding from international headquarters or to overhead funding that they receive from their respective governments and that is not contingent on projects. Thus, many INGOs do not solely depend on project funds, making them less reliant and more flexible when applying for funds.

Moreover, IP6 (Pos.42) reported that local NGOs face additional challenges in accessing direct funds from donors due to a higher trust in INGOs/IOs: "*Ok, the international organizations have the reputation and the accountability.... uhm structure. So they have the confidence of donors. The locals do not have this*". While different ways of funding procedures exist, in most cases, donors give their money to larger INGOs/IOs who then either implement the projects or contract local NGOs through project-based funding for the implementation (IP6). Local NGOs, due to a small amount of direct funding from donors, become dependent on INGOs/IOs—a dependency which was stressed by many interviewees (IP6; IP8; IP9):

> "*[…] the local NGOs, they always need the international NGOs to give them money. They cannot do anything. I know some local NGOs, they always have funds from US Aid or from other international NGOs. […] And every time they have to search for a new fund*" (IP7, Pos.83)

According to the interviews, this dependency further translates into unequal decision-making power. As IP6 explained, INGOs/IOs decide on the ways to achieve aspired results in accordance to donor requirements by defining project activities, manner of implementation and the specific local NGOs that they contract. As such, local NGOs are contracted with certain pre-conditions that often encompass a predetermined set of project activities to which they have to adapt:

> "*[…] because these local organizations often receive grants from international organizations, sometimes they serve as like an arm. So let's say […] like NRC [Norwegian Refugee Council] or DRC [Danish Refugee Council], these big ones sometimes they contract a local organization to do programming for them on the ground in some community. So the agenda of NRC becomes the agenda of the smaller organizations*" (IP8, Pos.40)

Moreover, the interviews suggest that the dependency within this relationship has an impact on liabilities. While INGOs/IOs oversee the implementation and are responsible to report back to donors, they often transfer the liabilities on the ground to local NGOs:

> "*The international organization also do not want the liability of being on the ground and taking the responsibility if something happens. […] The INGOs say we bring you the funds and we will manage the projects or we will monitor you and control what you are doing but you take all the responsibility of implementing. We don't want to get involved in the details. […] So, the INGO receives the grants and is considered in the grant but then they contract a local NGO to do the work for them*" (IP6, Pos.42)

Although taking considerable liabilities on the ground, local NGOs have little say in project planning and agenda setting and even less flexibility in adjusting their activities to changing needs: "*It's a very clear hierarchy system. It's related to the funding, and it's related to decision-making, and it's related to the responsibilities. […] No, there's not much flexibility, it's all challenges for the local NGOs*" (IP6, Pos.95).

Local NGOs face many challenges in the IHS that are based on structural inequalities related to the competition over the access to uncertain and limited funds. The privileged position of many Western INGOs/IOs in securing funds from mostly Western donors creates a hierarchy in which local NGOs take a subordinate position. Thus, the IHS seems to be structured by the very hierarchies that are constituents of coloniality of power and that asymmetrically privilege Western INGOs/IOs over local NGOs. Moreover, local NGOs with weak decision-making power have to adapt to humanitarian agendas of Western actors. Thus, the hegemony of Western values and norms that are intrinsic to coloniality is further perpetuated within the IHS in Jordan. As reported, the dependency on Western decision-makers limits the flexibility and efficiency of the work of local NGOs. Hence, the data suggest that the endurance of coloniality within the IHS has direct problematic impacts on the outcomes of humanitarian assistance.

6.2 Inherent structural inequalities between locals, volunteers, and internationals

The second finding focuses on the difficulties that workers within humanitarian INGOs/IOs in Jordan face. The collected data reveal a division of humanitarians into socially constructed groups of international and local employees and volunteers. Moreover, the belonging to certain groups implies structural inequalities from which locals/volunteers suffer disproportionately. The following section further describes how the divide between humanitarians is socially created, which specific difficulties locals/volunteers face, and to what inequalities it links.

6.2.1 The social construction of local, volunteer, and international humanitarians

The data analysis discloses that humanitarians are categorized based on diverse intersecting socially constructed markers including race, nationality, geo-cultural identity, and ethnicity. These are associated with the type of contract through which subjects are employed as either international or local employees or volunteers.

INGOs/IOs in Jordan are an important source of employment for a diverse set of persons of various origins, professions and with different motivations. Although most INGOs/IOs work under premises and codes of conducts that counteract unequal treatments based on distinguishing features such as race, gender, religion, nationality, ethnicity, language, or socio-economic status (UNHCR 2019), the interviews indicate that the realities for many employees in the humanitarian sector in Jordan contradict this. All interviewees stated that a separation of employees into 'international' or 'local' is omnipresent and relevant as it impacts the type of contracts received. However, although the interviews reveal that the terms 'internationals' and 'locals' were most overtly linked to a specific nationality or place of origin of the employees, the interviews also bring

to light that these groups are divided based on numerous and at times more obscured distinguishing features. This makes the boundaries between such groups porous.

Nationality appears to be the most overt distinguishing factor impacting group categorization. Throughout the interviews, the terms 'expats' and 'locals' were used almost interchangeably with the terms 'international' and 'Jordanian/national' employees, respectively. Nationality plays a major role in determining the types of contract an individual gets within organizations (IP1; IP2). Employee nationality is especially relevant for humanitarian organizations that need to fulfill certain internal institutional regulations. For example, in accordance to standards of some UN agencies, certain UN representatives in Jordan are not allowed to be Jordanian (IP5). Moreover, employee nationality is relevant given that the Jordanian government has clear restrictions and quotas concerning the nationalities of employees within INGOs/IOs (IP1; IP7). Accordingly, Syrian nationals are not allowed to be hired as employees until a certain quota of Jordanian employees is first met. In those cases where the quota is met, Syrians are most often hired as local, rather than international, employees (IP1; IP7). However, often the quota is not met. For this reason, Syrians are most often hired as so-called 'volunteers'. Volunteers are not considered official staff of IOs/INGOs since their contracts are fundamentally different to the ones of local or international employees. Volunteers generally work on a two-week basis and with monetary compensation instead of official salary.

Furthermore, the interviews reveal that being Jordanian or a foreigner in Jordan is not enough to explain group categorizations of locals and expats but that geo-cultural identity, ethnicity, and race additionally played an important role. Accordingly, race emerged as an important factor given that several interviewees used the terms 'White' and 'expat'/'international' almost interchangeably (IP4; IP8; IP9): *"You see mostly White people, I don't want to say all expats are White, but most of them are. I meet them, I work for them every day"* (IP4, Pos.76). Moreover, several interviewees directly related the terms 'expat'/'international' to foreigners from Western countries—hence excluding other foreigners of a non-Westerner geo-cultural identity in Jordan (IP1; IP5; IP9). Thus, the data show that international group membership is filled with a rather exclusive group of foreigners of predominantly White Westerners.

Local employees, in contrast, not only incorporate Jordanians but include people of different nationalities from the Middle-East, such as Syrians (IP1; IP2; IP5). Thus, the decision of being employed as a 'local' seems less related to nationality but rather to being Arab:

"The point is that in Jordan, if they have additional work in the Syrian field and they want to have somebody from this region they are first looking for Syrians. Unless if somebody, who is for example Iraqi, came with like a high recommendation or with very good experience. […] And they are giving them local contracts, that's not specific to the Syrians but it's about the Arabs who are living in Jordan" (IP1, Pos.42)

Moreover, the categorization of different Middle-Eastern nationals as 'Arabs' not only played a role within contractual considerations but also in the ways in which humanitarian employees are perceived by the targets of assistance*:*

"[…] if an international staff from an Arab country is there, it is a different story. So he will be like a national staff. Not because he is national but because of the cultural point of view. He's Arab, he can speak our language and he knows our misery because we share the same history as Arabs. So this is how they think. So they will go to an international staff from an Arab country and it would be the same as they do with national staff" (IP5, Pos.82)

However, the act of placing Arabs of different nationalities within one homogenous group was criticized by interviewees. IP1, a Syrian national, expressed his negative feelings about his employment as 'local' staff in an INGO:

"Yes, this is another thing. When you hire an America and you hire a Jordanian, it is natural to say that Americans come with an international contract and a Jordanian with a national contract but why hire the Syrians with a national contract? He is not living here, it is not his home. […] But the funny thing is that for a Syrian in Jordan, you would find yourself like a foreigner in all your life dimensions, except when it comes to your contract [Sarcastic laughing]. You find that they can distinguish between you and a Jordanian in many dimensions of your life but when it comes to the contract they treat you like a Jordanian" (IP1, Pos. 38)

The employment of Arabs as local staff, however, does not apply in all cases. Accordingly, IP9 mentioned a case in which a Yemeni employee was employed with an international contract:

"[IP9:] Yes, he is Yemeni, but he's actually employed in D.C. as an international. […]
[Interviewer:] So, they're all employed… any Yemeni is employed as international?
[IP9:] No. So, X4, because he has been with the organization for years and being staff, I think that's why he's international" (IP9, Pos.56)

Nevertheless, it was stressed that international contracts for Arabs either required hard work or lot of experience and that those were rather exceptions to the overall rule (IP8; IP9). As such, internationals are not only determined by markers such as nationalities or ethnicities but also by exceptional personal achievement.

In conclusion, coloniality seems to crucially structure employment within the IHS in Jordan, considering that humanitarians are categorized based on the same entanglement of socially constructed markers that are at the core of coloniality. While nationality is the most obvious marker of separation, the data reveal that ethnicity, geo-cultural identity, and race moreover play an important role as entangled makers of differentiation. Accordingly, local employees are a diverse

group that extend over Jordanian nationality and includ a broader range of employees that are socially identified as Arabs. In contrast, international employees constitute a rather exclusive group that include predominantly White Western subjects and usually do not include Arabs unless they show specific outstanding performances. In addition to the local/international binary, the case study of Jordan reveals the additional group of 'volunteers' as those humanitarians that—based on their nationality and the broader socio-political position towards Syrians in Jordan—are excluded from official employment as staff member. The colonial division of humanitarians based on socially constructed markers, subsequently, manifest itself into different contracts that employees would receive. These have considerable implications for humanitarians, as the next chapter illustrates.

6.2.2 Difficulties for humanitarians that disproportionally affect locals/volunteers

The interviews illustrate that the categorization into international, local, and volunteer is associated with specific difficulties and challenges that humanitarians face. Moreover, the collected data indicate that the existing difficulties disproportionally affect volunteers and local employees. The main four reported difficulties and the inequalities in their distribution are outlined in the following.

(i)   Challenging working conditions and uneven distribution of precarities and risks

While some prevalent difficulties in working conditions impacted all employee groups in the humanitarian sector—such as a high workload (IP8; IP9) or a lot of working hours (IP3; IP4; IP8)—the interviews reveal a clear divide between working conditions of internationals, locals, and volunteers and show that locals/volunteers face the greatest risks and precarities of humanitarian work.

The interviewees mentioned salary as a main point of difference. Interestingly, the salary for locals/volunteers in the humanitarian sector was reported to be relatively high when compared to the wage average for Jordanians and Syrians in Jordan (IP2; IP4; IP5; IP8). Consequently, salary was mentioned as a main motive for many locals to start working in the humanitarian sector:

> *"Yeah, I mean, the people who work for NGOs here, they're living in the one percent. Even the national who works for the NGOs [...]. So these NGO jobs are also highly sought after by Jordanians because they are paid well compared to other things that they can find"* (IP8, Pos.71)

However, when comparing the salary of locals and expats, dissatisfaction was prevalent in almost all interviews. Interviewees criticized a high wage gap which was rarely perceived to be justified by differences in knowledge, experience or skills: *"So because you're an expert or you have some foreign passport, sometimes some of them they didn't even finish school or university but they get paid triple your salary"* (IP2, Pos.56). Moreover, IP4 (Pos.100) stated: *"[...] if a foreigner had my job, they would be getting paid triple of*

what I'm getting paid". Interviewees often explained the justification of salary differences to be based on the circumstances that expats are away from home and have to cover extra costs of living abroad or by the hardship that being contracted as an expat requires. However, the data revealed that the same does not apply for all foreigners in Jordan as Syrians with local contracts for example do not receive a higher payment: "*According to their standards itself, they are breaking it. Jani [English: I mean], since they have this kind of separation between the salaries of the nationals and the internationals, so I am international not Jordanian unless you can give me a nationality"* (IP1, Pos. 69).

Health insurance is another dimension of working conditions reported as relatively satisfying in comparison to Jordanian working standards (IP1; IP2). However, when comparing them to the health insurance of international staff, Jordanian interviewees stressed considerable differences (IP3; IP6). IP3 explained that her health insurance was restricted to a certain number of times she is allowed to see a doctor per year while the insurance for an international in her organization is unrestricted. The biggest difference in health insurance emerges for Syrian nationals who are employed as volunteers. As IP7 explained, he has been working for nine different INGOs/IOs as a volunteer and never received health insurance through his employer. This lack of health insurance was mentioned as a major problem that impact volunteers' work and personal well-being:

> "*Well, when I used to work for X7 I never felt that I'm safe. Even one day, the shoulder of one of my colleagues broke when a guy came to our center and broke her shoulder. No one gave her any money. They said: 'You are a volunteer. We can't give you anything. There is no health insurance for you'"* (IP7, Pos.154)

The difference in the benefits and securities that humanitarians receive become even more relevant when looking at the specific nature of work tasks that locals/volunteers conduct and that come along with specific challenges and risks. According to the interviews, international employees most often conduct office work while locals/volunteers conduct most of the field work—including working in refugee camps or host communities across Jordan (IP2; IP4; IP6; IP7). When asking about the main difficulties of field work, many interviewees stated that it goes along with physically tiring activities including long transportation to work sites and exposure to sun and heat (IP4; IP6). Moreover, they stressed the exposure to physical dangers that are inherent to field work: *"Of course you are in some kind of danger when you are in the field by yourself. So yeah, these kinds of things are really challenging for us"* (IP5, Pos.80). Even though Jordan is relatively safe in comparison to other humanitarian settings, many interviewees mentioned exposure to physical dangers such as unsafe roads and traffic during long travels (IP4; IP5; IP7). During the interview, IP7 recounted having a car accident when returning from field work, breaking his leg and not being able to work for half a year.

In addition, the interviews reveal that locals/volunteers are exposed to physical dangers inherent to the direct contact with recipients of aid. Interviewees gave accounts of manifold situations in which they felt unsafe among recipients or directly faced threats to their physical well-being (IP5; IP7). The inherent danger was even recognized by employers as IP7 reported that they were briefed on how to deal with these dangers:

> "*And when I was working as an outreach worker, I never felt safe. They even told us you don't have to take your shoes off when you go to visit families. You always have to wear your shoes and sit next to the door. Don't get in, if anything happens, run away. One guy, once he had a gun and he wanted to kill us and we ran away and called the police. A then we had a big meeting and they told us 'If anything happens to you next time call us'*" (IP7, Pos.154)

Moreover, Syrian volunteers face specific dangers. The lack of a contract with clear terms and conditions puts them in unclear working conditions, possibly then interfering with their residential status in Jordan. IP7 reported that one of his colleagues faced trouble with the police and was expelled back to Syria because he did not have valid documents for conducting field work in Jordan:

> *[IP7:] "One of our colleagues also, the police harassed him on the street and no one did anything for him. He was sent back to Syria. This also happens because we don't have a paper that we are allowed to do the home visits on the street.*
>
> *[Interviewer:] You don't have a paper?*
>
> *[IP7:] No. They tell us 'If the police catch you, don't go with them to the car. You have to walk with him to our center and then we will talk to him.' But how will the police understand that?"* (IP7, Pos.154)

In addition to physical insecurity—and partly related to the latter as a possible consequence—locals/volunteers mentioned difficulties and challenges of a psychological nature that they face during work. An often-mentioned factor of pressure was the lack of job security due to the short-term nature of many humanitarian contracts (IP1; IP7). While this difficulty was mentioned by locals and volunteers alike, the nature of volunteer work which is restricted to two-week periods exposes volunteers to specific precarities. Not only do they face extreme monetary insecurities, but as IP7 explained, it also exposes them to psychological pressure to always perform well and maintain good relationships with employers since any difficulty could mean the abrupt termination of employment:

> "*Also, I don't feel safe that I will have any work tomorrow. Every day I think that because for them it's allowed to fire me any time. So I didn't feel safe and I had to be very careful every day and I had to be good and nice with everyone to make sure that they will not fire me. This was a big challenge for me. For the security and the insurance, I thought it is up to Allah. If god wants me to die, I will die, khalas [English: End of discussion]. I don't think about it, if it happens it happens. But what I was very scared about was that they would fire me or they will not leave me work with them anymore*" (IP7, Pos172)

The psychologically challenging nature of humanitarian work was not exclusively reported by locals/volunteers. For example, an international employee stated that the aim to reduce the suffering of recipients of humanitarian assistance and the realization that at times their work has no or very limited impact is psychologically challenging (IP9). However, humanitarian field work—mostly conducted by locals/volunteers—was reported to entail specific challenges that are not shared by office staff to the same degree. Local/volunteer interviewees reported that direct contact to the recipients, including listening to their stories and directly witnessing suffering, poses severe psychological stress:

> *"You will start realizing the hard work that the humanitarian organizations are doing and the amount of suffering of people that you never ever imagined that it existed. […] Sometimes you will reach a point where you don't feel anything anymore. Because you hear a lot of stories, a lot of stories, a lot of stories until you are in kind of a shock or something. […] Especially when you see that there are people in need of help but you can't do nothing. You can do nothing. You will have to counsel them. You will have to make them understand that this is the current situation. Maybe in the future things will be better and maybe we can help you more. But you'll see in their eyes that they're not satisfied with the answer"* (IP5, Pos. 26)

IP3, a Jordanian employee that worked with Syrian refugees in Jordan and Syrian informants in Syria also gave insights into the psychologically demanding nature of the work. Within IP3's accounts, it became apparent that the psychological challenges in some cases result in serious impacts on local staff that are worsened by the lack of sufficient health security:

> *"So the most difficult thing was when I worked directly with the refugees in Jordan. I met refugees face to face. So I heard a lot of sad stories. I saw a lot of bad things actually. I heard a lot of violence. It was a very hard time for me, actually"* (IP3, Pos. 80)

IP3 later goes on:

> *"I can't forget about it. Many days and nights I can't sleep. I started to take... I had nerve issues after I worked on a project […] Yes, I have nerve issues and I started to take a strong medicine. […] And when the attack started in Dara in the south, I was close to the borders. So I used to hear the bombing and shelling and I knew a lot of people there. It made my heart beat. No I can't.... I can start crying when I am talking about this. They told me there's a therapy and there are a lot of doctors and that I can talk to them online through an application. I've tried to talk about it, my times but it did not work. I told them many times that it didn't work but no one listened to me. I told HR that it doesn't work because I needed it, I couldn't sleep"* (IP3, Pos. 84-85)

While physical dangers and psychological challenges during humanitarian work are not exclusive to the work of locals/volunteers but also impact internationals (IP7), the interviews suggest that locals/volunteers face additional specific risks. Interviewees repeatedly emphasized that the nature of work that locals/volunteers are doing is very different from that of most internationals.

Locals/volunteers more often receive field work tasks which increases their exposure to physical dangers (IP4; IP7; IP6; IP2). The higher exposure to physical and psychological threats, coupled with the higher vulnerably to these dangers given the insufficiency or complete lack of certain work securities, such as health care or work permissions, places locals/volunteers at higher risk. As in the case of IP7, who had the car accident during field work, a lack of health insurance meant he had to cover all of the costs of his injury, creating new and serious difficulties.

Looking at the described difficulties in the working conditions for humanitarian employees, the data suggests that coloniality of power and being plays a crucial role within the IHS. To begin with, the different employment types within the humanitarian sector mirrors the global division of labor which is a basic component of coloniality of power. While predominantly White/Western international employees conduct higher paid office work, Arab locals/volunteers conduct lower paid work that includes labor intensive field work. As such, the division of humanitarians based on racialized social markers translates into different working conditions in which locals/volunteers gain less benefits while working under more precarious and dangerous conditions. The specific place that a humanitarian occupies within the given CMoP based on the intersectional identity, hence, has a direct impact on the risk that is faced at work. Moreover, certain precarious working conditions that local/volunteer staff disproportionably face mirror an exploitation of non-White/non-Western people that lies at the base of coloniality. The high risk that locals/volunteers face, subsequently, affects them in their most personal spheres of being, such as their physical and psychological well-being.

(ii) Unequal opportunities in the competition for employment

According to the interviews, the humanitarian landscape in Jordan is currently a competitive environment when it comes to securing employment. This is due to a lack of funds and downsizing of humanitarian projects creating a saturation of humanitarian employment (IP6; IP8). Interviewees mentioned that losing their jobs became more likely due to this downsizing (IP2; IP6; IP7). Additionally, interviewees described the competitiveness in the humanitarian job market as a major challenge to find new employment, especially in positions with less precarities (IP2; IP3; IP8; IP9). When asked for pre-requisites that were needed to find employment in the humanitarian field, interviewees listed work experiences in the humanitarian field, including previous jobs and internships (IP2; IP3; IP4; IP7, IP8; IP9), education, including languages and university degrees (IP2; IP8), as well as personal connections (IP2; IP7; IP8) as the most relevant factors. While this reportedly applies for all humanitarians, the data evince that the opportunities of successfully competing for employment are unequally distributed between and within the groups of

internationals, locals and volunteers. This results from the intersection of nationality and socio-economic background that determine access to the mentioned pre-requisites.

The data analysis shows that fulfilling the most important pre-requisites to find employment is unequally challenging for individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds. This is especially relevant when looking at the most often mentioned pre-requisite—work experience. Both local and expat interviewees that recently started their work in the humanitarian sector explained that in order to find their first paid job, they had to gain working experiences through unpaid or low paid labor (IP4; IP8; IP9). The necessity of affording unpaid or low paid labor to gain work experiences poses unequally high difficulties for those without financial stability, making access to humanitarian employment a privilege for people from a certain socio-economic background:

> *"It's definitely not easy. I mean, you have to get a foot in the door of the humanitarian sector. You have to intern for a while, which not a lot of people can afford to do so. So it's often, I think, amongst the international people, sort of like high class. People who are able to afford, you know, interning a couple of times before they can actually get a paid position"* (IP8, Pos.26)

Similar tendencies are seen for the pre-requisite of education. As many interviewees stressed, a university degree is beneficial, if not necessary, for certain humanitarian jobs. Here, especially degrees from universities abroad are perceived as valuable assets (IP2; IP4). These, in turn, are more accessible for internationals or Jordanians from a wealthier background, thereby unequally increasing their opportunities for employment. IP2, a Jordanian/Palestinian national that is currently searching for new employment, stressed this fact when she stated:

> *"The idea of you having a degree from... even if you were a local and you were very stupid, but you passed your high school and you went outside and your family paid for your certificate and you come back with a certificate from the United States, Germany or anywhere, they think 'Of course he's smart or she's smart', and that's a problem. Because, yes not all universities are amazing but sometimes some people had to go to this university but they're actually really smart and they don't get chances. For them, even without having an interview with you, they will hire you because you're international and you have a certificate from outside"* (IP2, Pos.124)

Access to education further plays a major role for many Jordanians when it comes to English language skills. A proficiency in English was repeatedly mentioned as an important asset if not fundamental pre-requisite for locals to find employment in the humanitarian sector. Interviewees reported this as a necessity given that English is crucial for interactions within this sector, especially when it comes to report writing and communication with international headquarters or donors (IP1; IP2; IP6; IP8). However, access to building proficient English skills is unequally distributed

among Jordanians. Most often only wealthier Jordanians have access to sufficient training, such as opportunities for staying abroad to learn English (IP4).

Similarly, IP7 mentioned that it is easier to find employment in the humanitarian sector for Jordanians who are well-connected to wealthier socio-economic and/or international people. Moreover, some interviewees mentioned a certain open-mindedness or proximity to international or Western cultural dimensions as beneficial for finding humanitarian employment (IP5; IP7). However, the exposure to international communities and the ability to gain inter-cultural knowledge is another factor that is at least partly restricted to socio-economically wealthier Jordanians, not least because of the necessity of certain English skills. The inequalities in employment are further problematic given that privileged Jordanians were at times described to lack awareness of the realities of many humanitarian recipients. For example, IP7 explained that some Jordanians from richer urban neighborhoods had difficulties relating to recipients, who often came from rural areas and had completely different realities despite being from the same country or region.

Although socio-economic background plays a crucial role for the opportunities to find employment, the interviews further suggest that nationality is an additional barrier. Syrian nationals face specific difficulties in finding employment outside of precarious volunteer positions based on existing governmental regulations (IP1; IP7). Several interviewees also stressed the difficulties for Jordanians to compete with international employees for positions due to their privileges in accessing education (IP4; IP5; IP7):

> *"I think between the educational system in European and in Arab countries, especially Jordan, there's a huge difference. So that's why you will find, for example, that a person from Germany has higher educational degrees than a person from Jordan. Because for a Jordanian it is harder to go to university and finish your master's degree or your PhD than for other countries. Because in other countries sometimes the government itself provides the education for the people. And also, you know how it works, there are some universities that are really well known compared to other universities. So the name of the university will matter on your CV"* (IP4, Pos.72)

Although certainly not all internationals have access to the privileges that IP4 described, the data expound that internationals have certain benefits in accessing education and working experiences due to the support of foreign institutions. Accordingly, IP8, an American national working in Jordan for several years, described being supported by scholarships from his university and government, allowing him to finance unpaid work in the humanitarian sector before getting his first paid position. These benefits, however, apply predominantly to certain foreigners. IP8 stated his impression that some INGOs are acting as platforms to support the early career of foreign/White people:

"But you still have certain organizations, like X9, like X6, where it's a bit of like an industry where they bring in these young foreigners to come in and run these huge projects and then they leave after six months or a year. It's just essentially like a training to afterwards go to the UN. […] It is more just like giving young White people experiences while they are often doing harm to the local beneficiary populations by not running projects well" (IP8, Pos.66)

The competition for employment in the sector contains major difficulties for humanitarians and points to several impacts of coloniality. First, existing difficulties were described to be unequally distributed among humanitarians, as Syrians and Jordanians from a lower socio-economic background face the most challenges in accessing employment. The ability to fulfil certain prerequisites such as experiences or education to access humanitarian work is linked to a subject's position within the CMoP based on hierarchies such as nationality and someone's socio-economic status. Moreover, the role of Western institutions—such as governments or universities—that grant Western/White individuals funding to gain experience further exemplifies the ways through which coloniality of power seems to perpetuate unequal access to funds and education and thus to crucial pre-requisites to find employment in the IHS. In addition, the interviews suggest that coloniality of knowledge impacts opportunities for employment in the IHS as Eurocentric perceptions on a presumed superiority and desirability of Western education and culture privilege those applicants with a higher proximity or access to Western education and culture. The impacts of coloniality, given the unequal access to gain pre-requisites for employment within the IHS, subsequently, translate into unequal employment of those humanitarian workers that occupy privileged positions within the CMoP. This leads to exclusion of certain individuals and relevant knowledges based on their subordinate positions which has crucial impacts on the outcomes of humanitarian assistance.

(iii) Lack of access to decision-making power and leadership for local employees

Another set of challenges and points of criticism were the perceived lack of decision-making power and limited access to leadership positions for local employees in the humanitarian sector. Although interviewees stated that the number of local employees in many INGOs/IOs is significantly higher than the one of internationals, they reported that locals rarely work in higher management positions if internationals are employed in those organizations (IP1; IP9; IP5). Instead, locals fill lower positions while internationals are most often found in management positions (IP4; IP7; IP9; IP8; IP1):

"So, often times the managers are international. They're the ones who are managing the local staff. They're deciding the direction of the project and then they're interfacing with the big bosses or donors or whoever they may be. So the international staff are often times the face of the project or the face of the programming" (IP8, Pos.62)

Several interviewees stated that locals are at a disadvantage in getting employment in or being promoted to managerial positions and reported the existence of a career ceiling for nationals: *"I feel like there's a ceiling for national staff where you can't really go beyond it because that's like territory for international staff when it becomes like management level staff at a lot of NGOs"* (IP8, Pos.81). Further, IP1 (Pos. 35) emphasized: *"Separation, of course there's separation. At least, when we are talking about the positions, the leadership of the teams. You will find that most of the leadership of all the departments are some kind of exclusive for the Western staff".* In addition, IP8 (Pos.65) criticized that these managerial positions were unjustifiably occupied by international employees with insufficient relevant knowledge: *"[W]ith the humanitarian work… yeah X6 and UNX5, the international staff are the ones who are managing it. Even though they didn't have much knowledge or experience. Which means, in my opinion, that they shouldn't have been managing things".*

The data additionally expound that the limited access to management and leadership positions further collides with a lack of decision-making power for local staff. This was perceived as a considerable problem by both local and international interviewees. IP9 (Pos.96), a British national who recently started work in the humanitarian sector reported: *"[…] all these decision-makers are still White, they are still international staff. It is like this".* As the quote further illustrates, some interviewees specifically referred to race or ethnicity when talking about the distribution of decision-making power. IP4 stressed her impression that White foreigners predominantly occupy management positions while Arabs rarely fill these positions:

> *"As a local, as Jordanian—I am not even going to say local—you are not a decision-maker. You always have to report to a superior or a manager who always ends up being an expat. I rarely see a manager who's Jordanian, or a Syrian or any Arab let's say. It is hard. […] Also a lot of Jordanians argue with me saying 'Yeah, but it's their country's money and they get to hire someone who is from that country'. You know or someone who is White"* (IP4, Pos.72)

Looking at the impact of coloniality within these findings, it becomes apparent that difficulties to access leadership positions and decision-making power are impacted by belonging to a certain employee group and structured by social markers of nationality, ethnicity and race. The unequal access to decision-making power and leadership illustrates that humanitarians are not only divided into international, locals and volunteers but that this divide also contains a certain hierarchization in terms of access to power. The hierarchization of humanitarians constitutes reduced access to power positions for locals/volunteers as subordinate individuals within the CMoP. This becomes apparent through the relative lack of local employees in leadership positions and with decision-making power. The prevalence of Western/White internationals in power positions not only perpetuates the colonial divide between powerful Western/White employees and local/Arab

employees in subordinate positions in the IHS, but also translates into further difficulties. These are apparent through the impact of Western behavior and agendas in humanitarian assistance, outlined in the following section.

(iv) Insufficient knowledge of local realities and disproportionate impact of Western agendas

As another set of difficulties, interviewees reported that many Western decision-makers lack knowledge of local contexts. Coupled with their disproportionate influence, this leads to inappropriate agendas and project designs that negatively impact humanitarian assistance.

According to the data, a certain familiarity with the work environment is crucial for the successful implementation of humanitarian work. IP4 explained the relevance of getting familiar with the culture and Arabic language to actually be beneficial to an NGO in Jordan:

> *"To be fair, if you're going to come to a country to at least work for one year, you should learn the language, you need to. If you don't learn the language, especially in the Arab world, you don't know the culture. You don't know anything. And for a big part of work in an NGO, you should, you must have a background on their culture"* (IP4, Pos.91)

Despite the relevance of a certain familiarity with the region or Arabic skills that reportedly became more recognized and sought-after recently (IP8), interviewees gave accounts of many internationals that are employed without sufficient knowledge of local culture or language (IP1; IP2):

> *"[…] to manage a project, it always bothered me that an international staff could work for a couple of years in South Sudan or something and then be brought to Jordan and like because they've been in South Sudan managing a project, we can then assume that he can run a project effectively in Jordan. I don't get that. This whole humanitarian sector is filled with people who are jumping from setting to setting to setting and all these settings are so different from one another. So sure, you can bring certain management skills to the table but if you don't know the context, are you really that effective? Probably not."* (IP8; Pos.54)

The lack of knowledge about local customs and culture, as well as the inability of some international employees to effectively communicate with locals and recipients was repeatedly described as a challenge by local and international interviewees (IP1; IP2; IP8). As outlined above, a lack of knowledge of local realities does not only appear among internationals but also among locals from privileged socio-economic backgrounds (IP1). Nevertheless, interviewees repeatedly emphasized the problematic nature of a lack of knowledge about the local context coupled with disproportionate decision-making power of many Western internationals—which results in inappropriate agenda setting and project planning. Hence, several interviewees complained that many projects are neither informed by research nor by knowledge about local needs and realities

(IP1; IP4; IP6; IP7; IP8). Instead, many projects are designed for completely different contexts and transferred to Jordan without checking the applicability (IP1). Although the nature of humanitarian responses often requires immediate actions to sudden-onset events, interviewees reported that these ready-made projects—which predominantly follow the agendas of Western INGO/donors—often end up failing:

> *"Because one of the problems which was clear at the beginning of the international aid coming to Jordan to support the Syrians or refugees let's say, is that they came with a Western perspective or with an international perspective. They were not aware about the specialty of the communities here in this area. So, they came with ready projects and they started to implement them even though they were not relevant to the realities. Their work is an example of failure"* (IP1, Pos.30)

Although not a specific focus of this study, interviewees repeatedly brought up the topic of gender to exemplify how Western agendas collide with an inaccurate prioritization of humanitarian projects (IP1; IP2; IP4; IP8):

> *"On other levels, we have some projects which came from a Western perspective and needed review to match with the reality. Basically, I can talk about all the projects which are connected with the gender. The gender issue, in the Western culture, it's very much different than in our culture. […] Most of these jobs, they need to think again to prioritize their projects. To think about what is it that people need more today"* (IP1, Pos.93)

As an example, IP2 reported that some INGOs focus on educating socio-economically disadvantaged women on women's rights while the family is struggling to gain enough money to meet basic needs. IP2 explained that these women often have other priorities such as sending their children to school and talking about women's rights is not desired at that time. This lack of knowledge about local realities poses major problems:

> *"The problem is they didn't understand the people of the country. […]. So you can't just assume that problems that you have are similar to Middle Eastern problems. It's totally different. So this is the problem that we face. Jani [English: I mean], I always hope for the organizations or the people that come from outside, that they actually read more or live a little bit with the culture itself and then actually start doing what they wanted to do with locals or with everyone'"* (IP2, Pos. 52)

Furthermore, IP4 pointed to an additional issue when she criticized the supremacy of Western agendas and mentioned her discomfort about the enforcement among Jordanian/Syrian people without their consent:

> *"They try to implement things that even I, someone who saw the world and saw a lot of stuff and I call myself a feminist, I would be like 'No I am against this. I'm with the idea but I'm against you coming here to enforce this out of nowhere to people"* (IP4, Pos.62)

The outlined difficulties of insufficient knowledge of local realities coupled with a disproportionate impact of Western agendas suggests that coloniality detrimentally impacts the IHS and its outcomes. First, the data suggest that coloniality of knowledge plays a role in the way that Western employees' experiences, knowledges, and agendas were considered universally applicable and desirable and to be prioritized over those within a more local context. In addition, while a lack of local knowledge is not limited to international staff, coloniality seems to create a disproportionate impact of Western/White agencies that lack local knowledge based on the assumed universality of their agendas/knowledge, coupled with their above-mentioned privileged access to employment and decision-making. This is problematic, given that it sidelines specific local agencies and relevant contextual knowledges that are crucial factors to successfully implement humanitarian assistance. Consequently, decisions on project activities are often conducted without sufficient knowledge of local realities and are instead based on agendas and experiences of Western decision-makers that do not necessarily fit the local context. This results in the inappropriateness of some agenda items in the Jordanian context while creating ineffective projects as well as discomfort felt by local employees.

6.3 Inter-personal relations, discrimination, personal biases, and prejudice

Although the first two key findings rather focus on difficulties that are based on structural inequalities within the humanitarian system, this finding expounds challenges and problems that humanitarians face on the basis of personal biases and prejudice related to race, ethnicities, gender, nationalities, and religion. As the interviews suggest, personal biases and prejudice lead to discriminatory behavior towards certain humanitarians that influence their benefits and opportunities within the IHS.

When asked about inter-personal relationships at the work place, most interviewees did not report structural inter-personal difficulties within or between the different groups of humanitarians. Instead, interviewees described very positive relationships with colleagues from shared or different backgrounds (IP1; IP4; IP5, IP8). For example, IP1 perceived most colleagues in the humanitarian field as especially open-minded and willing to interact. Moreover, IP1 related the positive interaction specifically to the structure of INGOs that is different compared to the one of many private companies in Jordan:

> "The interaction level, I think so far so good. There's no such kind of separation between people regarding if they are locals or Westerners. You will find in each organization that they are in good relations. This is also something different from our situation here if you look at a national company or a humanitarian organization. […] [I]n the humanitarian NGOs, and this is something that comes from the Western system, in the way of leading you don't feel this separation" (IP1, Pos. 36)

However, not all interviewees shared exclusively positive experiences. Some reported a certain physical segregation between locals, volunteers, and internationals in their work spaces that hinder positive interaction (IP7): "*There was also like literally a physical gap… like where the national staff sat and where the international staff sat… like the intermingling itself. It didn't feel like you were one team*" (IP8, Pos.48). Others reported intercultural difficulties such as language barriers to impede inter-personal relationships (IP2). Nevertheless, many interviewees perceived separation less as a structural issue but rather as a personal one (IP1; IP5; IP8). Accordingly, inter-personal relationships vary between different work settings and depend on personalities and character of individuals:

> "*It's different from person to person. There are some internationals that you feel close to with and some where you feel they didn't like you. […] I can't say it between international and nationals in general because even between national staff you can feel it like that. Some of them are close, others are not. You can't separate it between national and international staff*" (IP3, Pos.107)

Nevertheless, the data contain many accounts of prejudice and personal biases among employees in the humanitarian work environment which lead to discriminatory behavior at the work place. Many local interviewees reported that they experience prejudice from internationals about Arabs. Several interviewees reported hearing prejudices about Arabs not being 'smart' (IP2; IP7), 'trustworthy' (IP2; IP7), or being 'naïve' (IP4):

> "*This is the typical thing to think about Arab people, they don't know anything, they live in the desert with camels. I saw it with many adjanib [English: foreigners], many international people. They come to Jordan and they think like this. When I tell them something, they don't trust me, and this happens always. And even my friends, Jordanian people who work with internationals, they always have this problem with their managers*" (IP7, Pos.121)

In addition, interviewees gave examples of existing prejudices related to work attitudes such as Arabs always 'being late' (IP2) or being 'lazy' (IP8). IP8 reported that one of his former expat colleagues complained about the local staff being lazy and not working a lot, although local staff had to comply to national work standards and were not allowed to work as late as international staff:

> "*She said, like the national staff don't work as hard or something. And she was pointing towards the fact that they left at four. But that's also because it is illegal for them to work passed that time. And I mean, to say that they don't work as hard is a bit of a racist attitude I think. A lot of people had that attitude though. A lot of international staff they view local staff as 'They are not hard workers. They don't have a good work ethics' and stuff like that. Which is all essentially racist attitudes that have existed for a long time about people who are not White*" (IP8, Pos.106)

The example of IP8 further indicates personal biases and prejudice about Western/White people's assumed superiority along different dimensions. Hence, in five of the nine interviews, interviewees stated that Western expats are often considered as being 'smarter' (IP2; IP3; IP4; IP7) and 'more knowledgeable' (IP8). Importantly, these prejudices are not only endorsed by internationals. Several interviewees stressed that the same prejudices exist among Arabs (IP2; IP4):

> *"And that's the typical thing also from Arab people. When they see an adjnabi [Foreigner]. He is the smarter one, he knows everything and we don't know anything. It is a typical thing here in the Arab countries"* (IP7, Pos.135)

As an American national, IP8 gave his impression that sometimes his local senior colleagues who he perceives as more knowledgeable seek advice from him rather due to his nationality or race than on his actual knowledge (IP8). When asked why the assumed superiority of White Westerners was prevalent in the humanitarian sector, IP2 related it to broader socio-political tendencies such as the influence of media that taught these images and perceptions:

> *"I think we have media, it plays a huge role that we've learned since we were kids. Things like 'Americans are very smart' […]. And we all know that because we can see it even now in media"* (IP2, Pos.124)

The data illustrate that these prejudices and biases lead to discriminatory behavior in the humanitarian sector that privileges certain persons over others. IP4 exemplified this concern when she reported that internationals are privileged in getting positions in the sector given that they are seen as more capable at solving issues in Jordan. When asked about the reason, she answered:

> *"I don't want to get into the issue of race but look at the whole White savior complex. I'm not kidding. […] So they [White people] are perceived as someone who can help us and that they can fix issues that we're not able to. Even though we are!"* (IP4, Pos.76)

Along the same line, IP2 criticized that INGOs prefer internationals over locals when it comes to employment based on specific assumptions about internationals:

> *"Yes, and sometimes I think it relates to the passport you have. And we don't get it as national people, we don't get it. Why do you prefer an international while you have a lot of good people that are actually in Jordan? ... I think they have the idea that all internationals are very smart and they have knowledge of everything, and they are democratic and they're very humanitarian. I'm not saying it's wrong, but sometimes it's not always right"* (IP2, Pos. 122)

Moreover, biases and prejudice about nationalities were relevant for Syrians. Both Syrian interviewees reported discriminatory behavior by Jordanians towards Syrians (IP1, Pos.85; IP7, Pos.38,174). IP7 recounted his experience with a former Jordanian superior who used to ridicule his Syrian subordinate staff, while the latter accepted this behavior because of fear of getting fired (IP7, Pos.38). IP7 also spoke of hostile attitudes and threats that he received based on his Syrian nationality and in which case the discriminatory behavior affected his security at work:

"The problem started after they knew that I'm Syrian and these people all of them were Jordanian. So they said they want to hit me and they want to kill me. So they threatened me over Whatsapp and told me they will find me and they want to kill me because I am Syrian. So sometimes I feel that because I am Syrian and I am still young and have a good position, the people don't respect me for that" (IP7, Pos.174)

In addition, biases and prejudice in terms of religion emerged as another category that leads to discrimination. IP7 reported that at one of his work places, women wearing hijab had a harder time getting employment given that they were perceived as 'narrow-minded':

[IP7]: "If they want a girl, they want a girl who is not wearing hijab.

[Researcher]: Why?

[IP7]: The one without hijab, she's cool, she's open-minded, she can be in the team" (IP7, Pos.192)

Accordingly, biases towards religion and consequent discrimination impact the work environment in so far as it negatively influences job opportunities and well-being of the targeted people.

Moreover, several interviewees brought up difficulties with gender stereotypes and sexism at the workplace that impaired personal relationships, security, and job opportunities for women (IP2; IP4; IP7). IP7 witnessed the harassment of a female job applicant from a male employee during a job interview at a large INGO. Although the harassment did not remain unobserved, it led to the rejection of the female applicant:

"My manager at X6, I saw him, he was telling a new girl who came to work: 'Your eyes are very beautiful. Is it ok if I told that I always want to sit next to you to see your eyes?' She needed the job, so she told him yes […]. When I heard the conversation, I was with a big manager and he heard him saying that as well so he said 'This girl will not work here because you will harass her'. So he didn't fire him, he fired the girl. I mean the girl was only at the interview, she didn't get the job yet" (IP7, Pos.198).

However, in multiple other accounts of discrimination, gender is not always readily identifiable as a factor. IP4 reported her experiences during an internship in a large humanitarian IO, where she started at the same time with a male American intern of similar background knowledge. The supervisor, without knowing either of them, stressed that she was more worried about IP4 in her capability to succeed at the work place than she was about the male American. While IP4 perceived this instance as discriminatory, the following quote illustrates her own confusion about the underlying reasons:

"Aehm, is this because of I am a girl or why? If you don't care that I'm a Jordanian and you think, yeah I am a Jordanian and I can get by, then why is it? Is it because I am a girl? Or is it because I'm not American? What is it about?" (IP4, Pos.125)

Consequently, the data emphasize that discrimination is seldom based on a single distinguishing feature. Rather, the intersectionality of individual characteristics (e.g., nationality, race, gender) influences prejudice and biases towards them. IP4 summarizes this when she reported her experience that female gender was just one of many interacting and impairing characteristics. In her example, IP4 referred to a certain hierarchy of privileges to which the intersectionality of gender nationality, ethnicity, and race lead:

> *"I know a woman, she is American but she is not White. She's American. Also, this is a very interesting thing. So, you have White Americans, White American women, White Westerners, Americans who are not White, and then you have Arab women at the bottom of it. So the women, she's not White. She doesn't have that privilege that White women obviously have. But she is still American, she still has it way better than we do here"* (IP4, Pos.163)

She further exemplified the crucial importance that the intersectionality of an Arab woman or a Western woman plays by addressing certain privileges that Western women get while emphasizing specific difficulties that Arab women face based on their gender, nationality, and ethnicity:

> *"[…] one thing is that woman seem to face a lot of challenges everywhere, like if you're from the West or anywhere else in Africa, Asia, Middle East, all of it. But Western women do, even here, have it easier than Arab women. They are viewed as smarter. They are viewed as smarter and I am like 'Why?'. Isn't it enough that I have all the issues here. Aehm, mostly by locals which is even sadder and stupid I guess. […] So a lot of men here are like 'Look at the foreigner women who come and work here […]. Look at them they fight for their rights'. And I am like: 'I fight for my rights but you don't want to give them to me'."* (IP4, Pos.157)

In conclusion, this sub-chapter suggests additional ways in which coloniality impacts the IHS and its outcomes. Although not perceived as structural difficulties among the relation between different humanitarians, accounts of personal biases and prejudice among humanitarians were widely experienced. Accounts include personal biases and prejudice that predominantly concern race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, and gender and hierarchize humanitarians into intelligent/not intelligent, trustworthy/unreliable, hard-working/lazy, or modern/backwards. As such, the prejudice and biases are based on the same entanglement of hierarchies that are at the base of coloniality of power. Also, they mirror the same logic of colonial differences that hierarchizes humans based on a bifurcation into superior/inferior and leads to discrimination and de-humanization. The same can be witnessed within the interviews, given that personal biases and prejudice reportedly lead to discriminatory behavior towards those humanitarians that are defined as subordinate, including Arabs and/or women, while privileging those at the dominant side, including Westerners, White persons and/or men. Moreover, the interviews reveal that one social marker alone barely explains complex experiences of discrimination or privilege within the IHS. Instead, the intersectional identity of humanitarians as created through the entanglement of multiple heterogenous hierarchies determines their specific position within the CMoP and

followingly their privileges or discrimination. In addition, the data analysis expounds that prejudice, personal biases and discriminatory behavior not only emerge from the dominant side of humanitarians but that the believed superiority of certain people and their knowledge is likewise among subordinated humanitarians—as exemplified by the accounts of Arabs that perceive Westerners to be more intelligent. These findings suggest that the internalized logic of colonial differences that lies at the heart of coloniality is pervasive within the IHS in Jordan. This has a considerate impact given that the resulting discriminatory behavior towards underprivileged humanitarians leads to significant difficulties during work life and negatively impacts domains such as job opportunities or personal security at work.

6.4 Corruption, favoritism, and neutrality in the humanitarian sector

Another key finding encompasses the difficulties and challenges that local actors face in terms of corruption and favoritism. While corruption and favoritism were perceived as omnipresent problems in the entire IHS, many interviewees reported that they are especially common among local organizations and employees, whereas international actors were often associated with neutrality and principled biases.

Many interviewees reported the prevalence of corruption/favoritism at their work place within INGOs, IOs, the government and local organizations. Accordingly, several interviewees witnessed favoritism within hiring processes among local and international employees that led to preferential treatment of friends, relatives, or compatriots (IP2; IP3; IP4; IP6; IP9). Moreover, several interviewees mentioned issues related to the stealing or misuse of funds (IP1; IP4; IP7). As a result, IP1 reported a certain mistrust among humanitarian employees and recipients towards the IHS: "*Yeah, because today also one of the ideas is that the humanitarian sector is a big lie. It's more a business than humanitarian. Which, in one way or another, is a fact from my point of view*" (IP1, Pos.96)

Although interviewees experienced corruption/favoritism executed by internationals and locals, the interviews indicate that they were perceived as more prevalent among local actors. IP4, an INGO employee, stated that she is more worried about the misuse of funds within local organizations given that many local NGOs are small and the use of funds is less supervised. While IP4 related her reservations about local NGOs to structural reasons, other interviewees based their concerns on the positionality of local actors. In line with this, IP9 and IP3 reported that local staff and organizations are more entangled within political tendencies and local dynamics. Thus, assistance is more likely to be distributed based on political affiliation or personal relationships rather than on the basis of need. Moreover, some Jordanian and Syrian interviewees spoke about

their culture as a reason for corruption and favoritism as they pointed to the influence that wasda plays in work environments. According to several interviewees, wasda is pervasive within the humanitarian landscape in Jordan and especially common among local staff (IP2; IP3; IP7):

"I'm from here and I know what would happen if all of the staff is national. Even if we bring someone with high qualifications, with perfect skills, national staff will make it about wasda and would make it a personal thing. We can't. They are raised in this way. They can't stop doing that in the work. They have no idea about separating 'This is the work and this is the life'. No, what happens at work will affect you in life, and what happens in life will affect you at work. No, we need international staff to be professional in this" (IP3, Pos.122)

The above-mentioned quote also highlights that internationals are widely considered to come with a certain neutrality and principled bias which impedes corruption/favoritism. The notion that internationals are less likely to engage in corruption/favoritism, and are more neutral, independent and professional emerged in several interviews (IP1; IP2; IP3; IP6; IP9). As the interview with IP1 shows, the characteristics by which international actors are described are closely linked to the humanitarian principles of neutrality and independence. Concomitantly, when asked about the relevance of international actors, IP1 stated:

"They bring our dream. Which is 'the principles', the big principles when we are talking about neutrality, independence in the humanitarian field. These are things which in our region we still suffer from applying. Which I believe, that it's our way of living. In this regard, it's justified because we are living here. […] So these principles came from the Western organizations, came from the Western people because Western people are more able to separate themselves from the local dynamics let's say and the people. They try to look at people as just one, and all people are in need and we have to support them. That's why I said this is our dream" (IP1, Pos.47+48)

The reported challenges and difficulties in relation to corruption/favoritism can be explained by the impact of coloniality on the IHS and its outcomes to a varying degree. First, the interviews illustrate that corruption/favoritism are mostly perceived as an issue among local employees and organizations. As the often-raised concern about the occurrence of wasda exemplifies, local power structures that mirror the CMoP favor well-connected and wealthy Jordanians. The data suggest that colonial power structures pave the way for corruption/favoritism and present considerable challenges for the implementation of humanitarian assistance. Secondly, the interviews reveal that international employees are less often associated with corruption/favoritism. Instead, they are predominantly associated with neutrality and independence. The data illustrate that these associations relate to structural reasons given that internationals are often less engaged in the social fabric of a local context and less affected by local power dynamics. Although not explicitly reflected in the data, the perceived objectivity and neutrality ascribed to internationals may alternatively be explained by coloniality of knowledge. In particular, coloniality of knowledge inherently links

Western humanitarianism with neutrality and objectivity without interrogating these assumptions and consequent actual behavior (i.e., favoritism among international actors). This inherent trust might undermine investigations into corruption/favoritism, leading to less knowledge of these behaviors among international actors—further disrupting successful implementation of humanitarian responses.

7. Enhancing the international humanitarian assistance through localization processes

The previous chapter illustrated various problematic tendencies within the IHS and its outcomes that can be explained by the impact of coloniality. Following the research design, the second sub-research question aims to understand the extent to which localization trends are perceived as existent and as beneficial to reduce problematic outcomes of the IHS by leading towards decoloniality. Throughout the interviews, diverging perceptions on the extent and benefit of localization processes in Jordan's humanitarian sector can be. In the following, five main topics on this regard that became apparent in the interviews are outlined in more detail.

7.1 Increase in the share of locals and the global division of labor

Most interviewees perceived a relative increase of local employment within the humanitarian sector over the last years (IP1; IP4; IP6; IP8; IP9). Both international interviewees reported that they felt the shift towards more local employment through an increased competition for jobs between internationals and locals, which made it harder for internationals to find employment (IP8; IP9):

> *"Definitely, and I think that's one of the reasons I found it so difficult to get a job. […] What is the competition with someone who just came from a good university, but can't speak the language and don't know the context, like, just being parachuted into the Middle East and trying to get a job? So, I feel places like […] Jordan, because there is a very educated youth as well, it's become increasingly difficult because people are realizing what is their value add when you're in competition with other people who know the context better"* (IP9, Pos.92)

Based on IP9's experiences, the move towards the employment of local staff went with a higher appreciation of local knowledges and education levels among Jordanian youth. Given that chapter seven emphasized that local knowledge is a crucial factor for the implementation of humanitarian assistance, this perceived shift can be interpreted as a step towards the improvement of the IHS.

However, most interviewees also expressed their skepticism about these trends. Several interviewees reported that local staff in some cases takes over responsibilities that were previously done by internationals (IP1; IP3; IP8; IP9). Nevertheless, this increase in employment and responsibilities of locals does not necessarily translate into better working conditions. Accordingly,

IP1 explained that the shift does not lead to more job-securities or promotion opportunities for locals:

> *"This is the point in general, you will not find that the [local] employees are hired for an organization [...]. They hire you for a specific project and your contract will finish when this project is finished. You are not a staff member of the organization you are a staff member of this project which means that you will not get the chance to get promoted to a higher position"* (IP1, Pos.100)

In addition, IP6 stated that the UN shifted their model towards hiring local organizations as 'service providers' which went along with a reduction of liability of the UN towards these local employees that are no longer considered as staff members:

> *"So, as a service contractor working with the UN, there are some aspects that they say that they are not responsible for anymore. You are not a staff member anymore, you are a contractor. So, liability changes. So, I think it's a fluid relationship, but it changed over the last 15 years. But for me, I don't see it having changed for the good. I think it's adapting to a not so good situation let's say"* (IP6, Pos.43)

Furthermore, the increase in responsibilities does not necessarily translate into an increase in salary. Correspondingly, IP3 gave the example of a local colleague taking over the responsibilities and tasks of an international employee who left, while neither getting the same contract nor the salary that the international employee had. In line with the latter example, the perception that funding considerations of cheap labor influenced the increase in local employment appears repeatedly throughout the interviews (IP4; IP5; IP7):

> *"If you get like a fund of one million in grants from, let's say from Japan for UNICEF for example. Do you spend all of it on salaries for expats? Or do you appoint one or two and then have everything being done by locals? So it is also a funding issue"* (IP6, Pos.42)

While employing cheap local labor is not a new tendency within the IHS, IP6 emphasized that the current increase of local employment might be linked to the ongoing decrease of funding for many humanitarian projects:

> *"I think it [localization] might be happening, but only because of the reduced funding. If there were enough funding, believe me, there would be so many internationals over here, but because of the reduced funding, they have to employ local staff"* (IP6, Pos.101)

As such, while most interviewees perceived a trend towards more local employment, these tendencies come along with an increase of work under precarious working conditions within the IHS.

Moreover, most interviewees did not have the impression that the increase in local employment goes alongside a shift of decision-making power. While IP8 did witness a moderate shift towards more local staff in sub-management positions, he also emphasized that the powerful managerial

positions still remain in the hand of international predominantly Western staff. Similarly, IP9 stressed her perception that localization takes place on the level of field staff but that the decision-makers remained international Western staff:

> "*It is like this. And it becomes even more of a divide when there's all those lower positions are always left to nationals to fill out these quotas and then the decision-makers on top will remain from Western countries. And I think that's a problem that I don't think will be solved anytime soon*" (IP9, Pos.96)

While more work is executed by local employees, the inequalities between local staff—who remain to conduct work under precarious working conditions—and international staff—mostly in managerial positions—prevail. Instead of reducing dependencies and power inequalities within the IHS, perceived localization processes are rather perpetuating the global division of labor between the hierarchized groups of humanitarians. Hence, the increase of local employment as perceived localization processes sustains problematic tendencies instead of leading towards decoloniality in the IHS.

7.2 Essentialist perspectives: 'Locals' and the exclusion of the underprivileged

Findings from the interviews disclose that the trend towards more local employment is not necessarily perceived to improve the appropriateness of humanitarian agendas and projects. Instead, an ignorance of differences among local knowledges and power dynamics within perceived localization processes result in an exclusion of underprivileged locals and their relevant knowledges.

The relative increase of locals in the humanitarian sector necessarily comes along with a shift in specialized knowledge and experiences—such as an increase in communication skills due to more Arabic speakers. However, as outlined above, the high competition over jobs in the sector favors those Jordanians with high education, a wealthier socio-economic background or good family connections. IP7 emphasized that people from such privileged backgrounds, such as those from wealthy neighborhoods like Abdoun in Amman, have little insights into living conditions of Jordanians in underprivileged neighborhoods. Likewise, he remarked that Jordanians living in Amman do not necessarily have insights into living conditions of Jordanians in rural and/or socio-economically less privileged areas outside of Amman, such as Zarqa:

> "*I know for example, my friend, he worked with X4. So he is from Zarqa and he knows a lot of people from Zarqa. He is from that community and not from Amman. […] So it was only him from Zarqa. All the other people working at X4, they were all from Amman no one from outside. And this makes a lot of difference in the work. So, yeah, they don't think about it*" (IP7, Pos.188)

The quote further illustrates that the different backgrounds of Jordanians are not taken into consideration by employers even though they are relevant for humanitarian work. Accordingly, IP7 (Pos. 188)—when asked if he perceived an increase of local staff to be beneficial for humanitarian assistance—answered: *Yeah, of course, but the right people. Not people coming from Abdoun*".

Following the same argument, both Syrian interviewees reported that the increase of Jordanians working in humanitarian projects detracted from the hiring of more Syrian employees for humanitarian assistance targeting Syrians (IP1; IP7). Accordingly, IP7 stated that Jordanians do not necessarily have knowledge on Syrian realities on the ground. Nevertheless, the hiring of Syrians was reportedly difficult; IP7 gave the example of his friend who risked her job by supporting the hiring of a Syrian employee:

> "*She said, we are working on a Syrian project, we need a Syrian guy, we don't want another Jordanian guy. So they almost fired her because of this. And now there is a lot of difference because there is a Syrian who knows what he is working*" (IP7:190)

These examples illustrate that perceived localization processes, at times, go along with an essentialist and undisputed notion of 'locals'. This turns a blind eye on the socio-economic or cultural differences among local staff and the power hierarchies into which local actors are embedded. Subsequently, those perceived localization processes grant relatively privileged locals uneven access to employment in the IHS. Moreover, the ignorance of social and geopolitical locations of locals—which is a basic component of coloniality—neglects the diversity of knowledges. The ignorance of diverse knowledges among locals, coupled with the silence on local power relations, and the unequal access to employment, leads to the exclusion of certain underprivileged local actors and their knowledges. However, the finds emphasize that the diversity of social identities and epistemic locations of local staff is relevant for the outcomes of humanitarian assistance. The finding hint to the importance to question who is employed as local with presumable contextual knowledge and who is excluded. Decoloniality asks to empower those subjects that take subordinate positions within the given CMoP to increase their agency and question hegemonic knowledge. However, perceived localization processes under an essentialist notion of 'locals' follow the logic of coloniality and do not only perpetuate above-mentioned problematic trends within the IHS but also reduce the potentially beneficial nature of localization processes.

7.3 Localization processes as the rejection of the international humanitarian communities' responsibilities

The next finding shows that aspirations towards localization and the way that it is implemented depend on the humanitarian organizational mandate which, again, is influenced by political decisions. As the interviews demonstrate, certain local and governmental actors are skeptical of localization since they associate it to go hand in hand with a rejection of the international communities' responsibilities towards the refugee crisis in the Middle-East.

In regard to localization aspirations of his employer, IP5, who works in an UN organization, reported that he neither perceived a considerable shift towards the localization of processes and people in his unit, nor localization to be on the top agenda of his unit. Instead, he pointed out that those processes that include the employment of local organizations or staff to implement humanitarian projects are related to specific operational considerations rather than part of more profound localization aspirations. When asked about perceived localization processes, IP5 replied:

> "*So I don't think it is more of a localization, it is more on where the unit is heading to. There is no certain rule if you want to localize or not to localize. It depends on where you want to go and if it is better to get a local or international organization involved based on the service that you are providing*" (IP5, Pos.91)

IP5 (Pos.89) emphasized that the missing drive towards localization as a consequence of his UN organizations mandate in Jordan. As previously explained, the Jordanian government, while maintaining overall sovereignty, clearly places the responsibilities and coordination for humanitarian response for refugees in Jordan into the hands of the UN. As such, IP5 explained that the UN as an international actor has a clear mandate to not hand over responsibilities:

> "*[…] it is based on the international agreements that a country has with the UN or other international organizations or other countries. This will define the role of the UN agencies within the country. For example, the registration part should be with the government […]. So it should be localized but we cannot do that here because it is the agreement between Jordan and the UN*" (IP5, Pos.89)

The reluctance of the government to take over the responsibilities for humanitarian responses to refugees fits into the political stance of Jordan as a refugee rentier state that has a considerable interest in receiving international funding. Framed as an international responsibility, the Jordanian government does not appear to envisage the refugee response under more national responsibilities:

> "*So at least for Jordan, because you know we have Syria, we have Iraq and before that we had Palestine and the Middle East crisis. So in Jordan there are a lot of refugees. So Jordan […] as a still a developing country, doesn't have the resources and the power to host all these refugees. So they can provide the land and that's it. So I think the UN system, or at least X2, is doing part of the international communities work where Jordan provides the land and other countries will provide the expertise or the money to give their share of the project. Because it's an international thing, it is not only for Arabs or for Jordanians*" (IP5, Pos.36)

The findings reveal the importance of the link between localization aspirations and considerations of international humanitarian responsibilities. The data outlines that localization processes are partially seen critically by local/governmental actors as they are perceived to come along with a rejection of the international community's responsibility to react to the Jordanian refugee crisis. However, given that Jordan is disproportionally impacted by refugee crises in the Middle East, the international community's responsibility is crucial—especially when considering Jordans dependency on Western finances as refugee rentier state. Framed in this way, rather than moving towards decoloniality, localization is associated to yet another way in which Western powerful actors reject their responsibilities based on their privileged position in the CMoP. The skepticism on localization by local/governmental actors influences the mandates of international humanitarian actors and hampers localization commitments that exceed pure operational discussions and include localization as an aspiration towards decoloniality.

7.4 The COVID-19 pandemic as a window of opportunity towards meaningful localization?

As a response to the global COVID-19 pandemic that took place during the research, the Jordanian government took severe measures already since early 2020. Directed by King Abdullah II, the government enacted the National Defense Law that set the country under emergency military law (YOUNES 2020). Concomitantly, the military was deployed to enforce what was called "*one of the world's strictest lockdowns*" (PICHETA & QIBLAWI 2020), including the closure of education facilities, government offices and stores. Moreover, the Jordan government limited human mobility into and within Jordan considerably by periodical bans (YOUNES 2020). As the data reveal, the interviewees had diverse and at times diverging perceptions of how the pandemic and the stringent governmental measures impact Jordan's humanitarian assistance and localization processes.

Both, because many international humanitarian employees left during the pandemic and because of the restrictions of new arrivals, IP3 had the impression that a window of opportunity was opened for filling positions or tasks normally reserved for internationals with locals:

> "[…] *after the lockdown, a lot of international people give up from the hard work they tried to do during lockdown. They leave and since there was no way of hiring new international people, they start to hire national people. The lockdown, we are very very lucky in our office by the lockdown. And that made me feel happy. Not because no international staff came but because I can make a good relation with national staff and learn from them*" (IP3, Pos.69)

However, not all interviewees perceived that the pandemic has an impact on localization processes. IP4 described that in her experiences a lot of international staff still remains in the country and that no considerable impact is felt given that international staff can work remotely:

> *"I think it's still the same. I mean, if there was something else that we needed to do an assessment on, the Jordanians still would have done all of the work but the reports would be sent to a manager who is an international. I don't think it changed that much no. A lot of foreigners also stayed, a lot of them"* (IP4, Pos.145)

As another important point, several interviewees perceived the response to the pandemic to entail a certain shift towards a more national-oriented response to humanitarian needs. This includes accounts of local and national, as well as governmental and non-governmental agencies (IP2; IP6). Accordingly, IP2 outlined that national and local actors executed broader responsibilities:

> *"For me, what I saw is a huge transformation for Jordan because of Corona because everything they're doing, they did it themselves […] [F]or example, the online learning and free TV for public schools because the students are learning through TV. All of this was national. They made a new application that was actually also done by locals. Have you heard about 'Application Amman'? The one that tells you if in this area someone had Corona or something like that. Actually, who invented this application was a Jordanian person"* (IP2, Pos.115)

However, IP1 emphasized the humanitarian response to COVID-19 by NGOs as well as by the government is insufficient. As IP1 stressed, especially the humanitarian response to COVID-19 for Syrian refugees is weak given that IP1 did not witness any activities of NGOs related to that. Moreover, IP1 stressed that it becomes clear during the crisis that the government fails to provide sufficient assistance to meet all citizens' needs which he attributed to a failure in securing sufficient funding:

> *"[…] unfortunately, it was very clear for everybody during this crisis that they were not able to respond in an effective way. They were not able to secure the needed funds to cover all these losses of the people and to cover all the people who lost their jobs, which is like a national crisis"* (IP1, Pos.103)

As such, the pandemic highlights the dependency of humanitarian responses in Jordan on international funding, which during COVID-19 times might be even harder to access.

The analysis shows that the pandemic indeed opens up opportunities for local and national actors to be more engaged in and execute humanitarian responses as illustrated by the example of the use of new innovations invented in the country. However, the findings also highlight that accounts on increased governmental agency within humanitarian responses raise the question to what extent a shift towards governmental agency, including local and national authorities, are to be considered as localization processes. Accordingly, certain shifts within the responsibilities for humanitarian responses that were part of the governmental COVID-19 response went hand in hand with an increase of power in governmental and military hands and away from Jordanian's civil society. As described, the Jordanian government shifted authorities towards the nation-state by activating the National Defense Law executed by the government and the military to the expense of citizen's agency. These processes appear as a push towards nationalism as defined by GROSFOGUEL (2006:

178), who describes nationalism as reinforcing the nation-state as "*privileged location of social change*" while ignoring struggles above and below the nation-state. Although the response to the pandemic reportedly includes more governmental agency from local to national level, it remains to be discussed if these processes are perceived as localization, depending on whether governmental actors such as local and national authorities are considered as part of localization processes. This highlights that localization—depending on its definition—does not necessarily come along with decoloniality given that the enhancement of local/national governmental agencies to the detriment of civil society's agency enables the type of nationalism that follows the same logic of coloniality. Moreover, the findings show a lack of sufficient funding from the international donor community that leads to shortcomings in humanitarian responses. This highlights that newly emerging shifts in humanitarian responses, as part of national responses to the pandemic, are based on the same problematic financial dependencies within the IHS, and do not necessarily entail an improvement of the latter.

7.5 Utopian visions of localization - Towards a humanitarian pluriverse?

The data reveals that most of the interviewees support localization aspirations and see beneficial potentials of localization for the improvement of the IHS. When asked about their understanding of an ideal localization of humanitarian assistance, most interviewees opposed a complete rejection of all international Western actors. Instead, they transmitted a utopian vision of localizations that builds on balanced humanitarian responses between local and international employees and organizations.

Throughout the interviews, the desire towards localization was repeatedly mentioned in terms of an increased appreciation of local knowledges (IP2; IP4; IP8), the enhanced inclusion of local actors into decision-making processes (IP1; IP8; IP9), the strengthening of local capacity through training and support (IP3; IP6), as well as an increased independence of local actors from funds and agendas of international actors (IP1; IP6). All of the latter processes were associated to a possible improvement of the delivery of assistance.

Despite some criticism on the IHS, none of the interviewees completely rejected the overall relevance of the IHS and international actors. Instead, the importance of the IHS was repeatedly emphasized despite certain shortcomings that it contains. When asked if the IHS in his opinion plays an important role, IP1 responded:

> *"Of course... Jani [English: I mean], we have a saying in Arabic that a small stone can help a big jar to stand. So if you have a jar which is about to fall down, if you put a small stone there it will help to stand. So regardless if this is enough or not, the aid is helpful for most of the people"* (IP1, Pos.24)

Especially in regard to humanitarian assistance for refugees in Jordan, many interviewees highlighted the importance of international actors (IP1; IP2; IP5; IP8). Next to the relevance of international humanitarians as link to Western donors and funds (IP1; IP2; IP7; IP8), most interviewees highlighted the relevance of having international actors since they bring new perspectives, different ways of working, and insights from different humanitarian contexts (IP1; IP3; IP5; IP8; IP9): *"It's good to have people from different ethnicities and different backgrounds working together in an NGO. It is insightful. You get a lot of things that you never looked from their side of the story. So it's interesting"* (IP4, Pos. 83). Moreover, interviewees mentioned the importance of international actors to have a certain distance towards the targets of aid, as well as towards local power (IP3; IP9).

The findings highlight that rather than completely rejecting international—mostly Western—actors and their work, interviewees highlighted their incompleteness and stressed the wish for a more diverse and balanced interaction within the IHS (IP4; IP3; IP9). Especially in relation to the distribution of decision-making positions, this wish was repeatedly mentioned from local as well as international interviewees:

> *"It's a good way if there is equity between national and international staff. […] In tasks and in decision-making. […] We need international staff. […] They can learn from us and we can learn from them. But we need to be close to each other. Not delete all internationals. Maybe 50/50. We can do it together actually"* (IP3, Pos.122)

Many interviewees' utopian ideals of localization mirror basic components of decoloniality: First, it includes the de-linking from the supposed superiority of the knowledge of Western employees and local elites and moves towards the appreciation of pluriverse knowledges. Moreover, it is based on the dismantling of both international and local power inequalities by collectively shifting decision-making power towards the agency of those that are not in privileged positions. Based on the findings of this chapter, localization in a utopian and decolonial sense, would indeed transform the IHS to create room for a humanitarian pluriverse that improves the outcomes of the IHS and helps to shift it out of its crisis of legitimacy.

8. Discussion and concluding thoughts—Towards a meaningful decolonial localization

Based on the emergence of localization as the latest buzzword to move the IHS out of a perceived crisis of legitimacy, this research set out to analyze the impacts that coloniality has on the IHS and

its problematic outcomes, as well as to investigate extent and benefits of localization as aspiration towards decoloniality. A theoretical analysis of the link between coloniality and humanitarianism in the first part of the research process suggested coloniality as a constituent of the IHS. The case study of Jordan as current hub for a competitive international humanitarian landscape gives valuable insights into the diverse ways that coloniality impacts the IHS and its negative outcomes in a given context.

A closer look at challenges and difficulties of humanitarian employees reveals the diverse ways in which coloniality—as the entanglement of multiple heterogenous hierarchies that impact power, knowledge and being—impacts the IHS and its outcomes in terms of humanitarian assistance. First, the case study sheds light on problematic power asymmetries and material inequalities within the IHS that privilege international, mostly Western/White actors in terms of decision-making, access to funds, and employment opportunities. In addition to more evident power inequalities, the findings disclose more covert ways in which coloniality influences the IHS and its outcomes through the domains of knowledge and being. The findings show a differentiation of humanitarians into volunteers, locals, and internationals that is epistemologically created based on socially constructed markers such as race, ethnicity, or nationality. These markers are hierarchized along the logic of the CMoP which has problematic implications. First, the hierarchization comes along with the bifurcation of humanitarians and their knowledges into superior/inferior or modern/backward. This creates a hegemony of Eurocentric knowledges within the IHS that privileges Western humanitarian agendas as universal, Western educational backgrounds as superior and Western employees as inherently neutral. Simultaneously, it silences diverse relevant knowledges of subordinate local actors. Second, the epistemological division translates into problematic tangible outcomes. The data reveal that the divide places most local employees and volunteers into subordinate positions that come along with precarious working conditions, reduced material and immaterial benefits, barriers to employment, and lesser access to decision-making. This reduces the crucial agency of subordinate local actors within the IHS. In addition, the case study reveals the various ways in which coloniality impacts humanitarians in their most personal sphere of being—as humanitarian work for locals/volunteers exposes them to disproportionately high risks to their livelihoods, as well as physical and psychological well-being.

In addition, the research shows diverse and at times diverging perceptions on the existence of localization processes and their usefulness in the improvement of the IHS. Perceived trends towards a relative increase of local actors and an augmented inclusion of local knowledges in the IHS are partially linked to improved outcomes of humanitarian assistance. By increasing the agency

of local actors in the IHS, as well as a higher appreciation of a pluriverse of knowledges, these tendencies can be associated with decoloniality. However, the case study further reveals that perceived localization processes do not automatically enhance humanitarian assistance. First, the relative increase in local employment does not necessarily translate into more space for decision-making, improvement of working conditions, or enhancement of tangible benefits for local subordinate actors. Moreover, perceived localization processes at times came along with an essentialist notion of 'local' that ignores inherent power dynamics and privileged local elites, while further excluding subordinate local actors. In addition, perceived shifts of responsibilities to local actors are partially seen as critical by local/governmental actors as they are associated with the rejection of the international communities' (financial) responsibilities. Moreover, the example of the increased governmental agency within the humanitarian response to the COVID-19 pandemic that went with an increased power of the nation-state away from social society's agency sheds light on fuzzy boundaries between perceived localization processes and tendencies towards nationalism. In consequence, the data reveal that perceived localization processes do not necessarily entail trends towards decoloniality nor do they necessarily lead to an improvement of the IHS and its outcomes. However, the findings indicate that localization in a more utopian decolonial understanding, contains the potential to lead the IHS out of its crisis of legitimacy.

In terms of methodological considerations, by drawing from decolonial scholars, especially those from the MCD school of thought, I propose coloniality/decoloniality as a salient lens through which to examine existing paradoxes of the IHS that add to its crisis in legitimacy. It reveals the manifold ways in which coloniality creates power asymmetries while additionally disclosing its impacts on more covert domains of knowledge and being that traditionally gain less attention in prevalent criticism on the IHS. However, the methodological approach also poses considerable challenges. Given that decolonial scholars emphasize the importance to view decoloniality as more than just a theory but also as practice, the lines between coloniality/decoloniality as theory, as a research focus, and as applied research methodology became blurry and at times made it hard to clearly separate. Nevertheless, by demanding of me as researcher to constantly reflect upon and scrutinize my own research, decolonial methodology did not only enrich my analysis but also shed light on the limitations of my research.

To be mentioned as first limitation, the profound reflection and scrutiny of power dynamics during the research revealed that my positionality as White Western researcher impacted my interviews. Several quotes of Jordanian participants illustrate that interviewees at times were hesitant to openly speak about their perceptions on Western/White persons, or at least were highly aware about their

choice of words. To exemplify, IP2 stated: *"Also this is a problem… I am sorry to say that because you are also an expat"*. It has to be assumed that additional thoughts or opinions were held back. Moreover, while basic Arabic language skills were useful to connect with my interviewees and understand colloquial language and cultural nuances, the limits of my Arabic skills restricted my research to interviews conducted in English. As the interviewee demographic shows, all interviewees contain higher education and my interviews lack crucial perspectives of local employees that did not speak English due to factors such as a reduced access to higher education or international circles.

Additionally, the limited scope of my research reduced my interviews to a certain number. This did not only limit the possibility to interview more employees within local NGOs but also excluded other actors, such as governmental workers. These perspectives, nevertheless, would have been a valuable addition. Moreover, ethical considerations led me to refrain from interviewing those subjects that are targeted by humanitarian assistance. I did not perceive the scope of my research as sufficient enough to generate a research environment which is equally beneficial for me, as the relatively privileged subject, and the targets of humanitarian aid that are already in difficult situations. However, given that discourses on decoloniality and humanitarianism call for placing those at the receiving end of humanitarian assistance at the focus of inquiry due to their specific position within the CMoP, the perspective of the targets of aid would have been relevant. Limited perspectives of local actors, coupled with the specific nature of my case study that is highly context specific, make the outcomes of my research neither complete, nor generalizable.

Furthermore, it is crucial to emphasize that the research took place during the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic that heavily impacted its implementation and outcomes. First, the research period had to be extended various times due to constraints to conduct in-person interviews. Similarly, it became problematic to find time and space to work on the research given the stringent lockdown measures that impacted the lives and livelihoods of my host family and me. Moreover, the research timeframe increased from the originally intended four weeks to almost four months. Lastly, the impact of the pandemic and related stringent measures put many Jordanians in difficult socio-economic situations, in which case I refrained from asking for an interview given that they might have had other priorities. This limited the number of informants to a reduced circle that I accessed through personal connections to ensure that interviews were appropriate under these circumstances.

Despite its limitations, the research is one of few empirical studies that explore the link of coloniality/decoloniality and international humanitarian assistance—especially in the context of

Jordan. It reveals relevant insights into existing difficulties and challenges of the IHS and sheds light on potential benefits of localization as aspiration towards decoloniality. Aspirations towards decolonial localization raise important questions about the IHS and its underlying understanding of humanitarianism and points to crucial necessities that need to be changed to meaningfully improve humanitarian assistance and the mechanisms through which it is delivered. First, decolonial localization ask to reject essentialist notions of 'locals'. Instead, it calls for more genuine and critical discussions that consider how far the social construction of the notion 'local' in itself is influenced by and perpetuates coloniality. Moreover, it rejects essentialist understandings of localization that leads to other forms of colonial power structures, such as in the case of localization processes that are embedded within nationalism.

Given that decoloniality moves away from sole theoretical discussions, decolonial localization moreover calls on all engaged actors in the sector to actively dismantle given power asymmetries and inequalities. Additionally, it asks everyone to scrutinize ones' own mindset to break the silence on the prevalence of Eurocentric, racist, patriarchal and capitalist structures and mindsets. As such, it demands to question the alleged superiority of White/Western knowledge, agendas, and agency that remains hegemonic in the IHS. Furthermore, decolonial localization places the agency and knowledges of subordinate local actors—that were previously silenced and excluded—at the core of any attempts to improve international humanitarian assistance. As such, it asks for the reduction of barriers of subordinate local actors to decision-making, employment, tangible benefits and work securities in the IHS. Simultaneously, it requests powerful actors—such as UN agencies, larger INGOs, and other in-country Western employees—to commit to the decolonial project and actively dismantle power asymmetries and inequalities. Decolonial localization does not completely reject international mostly Western agencies within the IHS, since committed humanitarian actors currently implement crucial assistance to people in severe humanitarian needs. Instead, it highlights the responsibility of the international community to react to humanitarian crises as the products of global inequalities and power asymmetries. In conclusion, decolonial localization heads for more balanced humanitarian responses that de-link from the hegemony of the IHS and its underlying Western humanitarianism and turns towards a pluriverse of humanitarianisms and humanitarian responses. As such, the very act of challenging hegemonic humanitarianism is crucial to achieve better outcomes of assistance in light of increasingly complex humanitarian challenges such as the current COVID-19 pandemic.

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Annex I: Questionnaire

Page 1/2 of the questionnaire

CHAPTER TOPIC	TOPIC	SUB-TOPIC		SUB-TOPIC - QUESTION
Interview introduction	Personal **background**	Basic participant information	1	*If you feel comfortable with sharing this information, would you shortly explain where you are from and how old you are?*
		Educational background	2	*What is your **educational** background?*
	Personal **experiences** in the humanitarian field	Past experiences	3	*For **how long** do you already work in the humanitarian field? **Which jobs** did you have?*
		Current experiences	4	*Can you tell me a bit more about your **current employment: Where** are you working, what is your **position** and your **broader tasks**?*
	Entering the humanitarian sector	Personal motivation	5	*Why did you **choose to work** in the humanitarian field?*
		Relevant factors to be able to enter humanitarian sector	6	*Was it relatively easy or **hard to find a job** in the humanitarian field? What did you perceive as **relevant factors** for you to be able to get a humanitarian job?*
International humanitarian assistance in Jordan	Relevance/impact of **int. hum. landscape** on Jordan	Relevance	7	*Do you perceive that international humanitarian assistance plays an **important role in and for Jordan**? Why?*
			8	*Based on your experiences, which tasks do international humanitarian organizations fulfill that local ones **can/do not accomplish**? And vice versa.*
		Challenges	9	*Which **difficulties/dissatisfactions** emerging through the work of international humanitarian organizations in Jordan did you witness? Can you give examples?*
	Note on procedure: If interviewee works in a local NGO continue with 10a, if he/she works in an international NGO continue with 10			
	On humanitarian **employees** and teir work realities	Relevance	10a	*Do you perceive that a differentiation of the **employees** in your organization into locals and internationals is playing an important role in your organization? If so, why? **If not**, which attributes seem to play a more important role?*
			11a	*In your opinion and based on your experiences, what are specific **benefits of local** employees in an international organization?*
			12a	*In addition to the work of locals, which **benefits and challenges** does the **presence of international humanitarian workers** bring?*
		Division of work	13a	*How is the **division of labor/tasks** in your organization? Are there differences between locals and internationals or **among locals**?*
			14a	*Do you perceive differences in the **decision making power** based on the **being a local/international employee**? If so, can you give examples?*
			15a	*How do you perceive the **working conditions** in the humanitarian sector?*
			16a	*Do you perceive **differences in the aforementioned working conditions** of the employees in your organizations? If yes, can you give examples?*

		Working conditions	17a	If yes: **Why** do you think these differences exist?
			18a	What do you find **most difficult/challenging** about your job in the humanitarian field?
			19a	Do you believe the challenges you are facing are **different** to the ones international employees face?
			20a	How do you perceive your work to be **valued** in contrast to the work of international employees?
		Interaction of employees	21a	How is the **collaboration** of local and international staff within your organization?
			22a	How is the **personal interaction** between employees in the company? During work, breaks, after work?
	International organizations vs local/national organizations	Working conditions	10b	How do you perceive the **working conditions** in the humanitarian sector?
			11b	What do you find most **difficult/challenging** about your job in the humanitarian field?
			12b	How do yo perceive the work of your organization to be **valued** within the international humanitarian field? For example by other local or by international organizations.
		Interaction of organizations	13b	How is the **collaboration** of your organization with international organizations? Do you perceive any **challenges within this collaboration**?
		General challenges within the int. Hum. System	14b	What are the main **challenges** that your organization faces within the international humanitarian landscape?
			15b	Do you think that local organizations face the **same challenges** as international ones? If not, can you give examples where they differ?
		Funding	16b	Who are your **main donors** and in how far do they **impact** your organizations work?
			17b	Do you perceive **differences in challenges to access funds** between local and international humanitarian organizations?
Localization and it's benefits	Existance and relevance of localization tendancies in the international humanitarian system in Jordan	Trend of localization	22	Within your time working in the humanitarian sector, did you **perceive an ongoing trend** towards an increased **inclusion** of local humanitarian agencies within int. humanitarian responses? If so, **how/where**? If not, do you rather see a trend towards the other direction?
			23	If previews question yes: Do you also perceive an **ongoing shift in decision making power** towards local agents?
		Role of localization in current **national responses** to major humanitarian challenges Example: Current **Covid-19 pandemic**	24	Relating this topic to what currently moves all of us: Do you perceive that Jordanians national responses to the current **Covid-19 pandemic**, such as the closure of the borders, lead to a **shift in increased local humanitarian agencies** in relation to international ones?
			25	How did you perceive the impact of the **Jordanian Corona response** on your organizations work?
			26	How was the **personal impact** on you and your co-workers? Where there **differences** for internationals and nationals? If so, can you please specify.
	Links of localization and decoloniality	Disirability of localization	27	Regarding the challenges (a, b, c,...) that we discussed, in your opinion, is it **desirable to move towards a localization** of aid? If so, why?
		Implementation of localization	28	If (question above) yes: What would be **needed to further implement** this localization?
		Scientific + Practical humanitarianism	29	Apart from localization, **what else would be needed** to tackle the before mentioned challenges (a, b, c) of international humanitarian interventions?
Additional information	Additional information	Additional information	30	Are there any question from your side? Or do you have anything else to add that we haven't discussed?
		Snow-ball	31	Do you have connections to other people working in local or international humanitarian NGOs that you could connect me to for another interview?

Annex II: Sample Table – Participant Demographics

Sample Table - Participat Demographics	
Age	23; 24; 24; 25; 26; 32; 33; 38; 50
Nationality	British; Jordanian (x4); Jordanian/Palestinian; Syrian (x2); U.S.American
Gender	Femle (5); Male (4)
Educational attainment	Graduated Economics; Graduated English Literature (x2); Graduted Journalism; Graduated Modern Languages, French and English; Graduated Political Science Major; Graduated Political Science and Arabic; Graduated Unknow Major; Unknow educational attainment
Type of humanitarian organization where participan collected working exeriences*	International non-governmental organization (x8); International organization (other than United Nations) (x2); Local non-governmental organization (x2); United Nations Organization (x6)
Years of working experiances in the humanitarian field	1,5; 2; 2,5 (x2); 6; 7; >7 (not further specified); 8; 17
Types of contracts*	International employee (x2); Local/National employee (x7); Volunteer (x2)
Interview lenght in minutes	24; 69; 75; 77; 79; 85; 95; 96; 109
* The overall number exceeds the interview particpant number since all different working experiences throughout the participants' careers are taken into consideration	

Annex III: Consent Form

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY

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Declaration of consent

This information sheet informs you about the interview procedure and conditions. Please take your time to read the paper carefully and complete and sign it if you would like to participate in the interview. To confirm that you **agree** with each statement, please check the boxes below:

Please check if applicable:

☐ I affirm that the purpose and nature of the study were explained to me and that I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

☐ I am aware that my participation in this research project is voluntary and financially unrewarded. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. If I should I not wish to answer any particular questions, I am free to decline at any time.

☐ I confirm that I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I am aware that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and will not be identifiable in the resulting products of the research.

☐ I agree that this interview is audio-recorded. I am aware that the audio recording made of this interview will be used only for analysis and unidentifiable quotations. I understand that no other use will be made of the recording without my written permission, and that no one outside the researcher will be allowed access to the original recording.

☐ I agree that my anonymised data will be kept for future research purposes such as publications related to this study after the completion of the study.

☐ I agree to take part in this interview.

I would like to:

☐ ….review the interview transcripts pertaining to my participation before information is used

☐ …receive a copy of the final report

_____   _____   _____

Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____

Name of Researcher   Date   Signature

Annex IV: Overview of Codes

Overview of codes	
Codes for research question 1: Division between humanitarian employees and their challenges and difficulties	**Number of coded segments**
Barriers to accessing employment in the humanitarian field	48
Challenges in verbal communication and intercultural communication	14
Corruption, wasda and lack of neutrality/indipendence	23
Dependencies on international/Western actors	25
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Annex V: Interview transcripts

The full transcripts can be found on the CD provided with this hardcopy.

Annex VI: Turnitin report

The full Turnitin report can be found on the CD provided with this hardcopy.