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From Tent to Makeshift Housing

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Case study - Faysal's family in Zaatari camp

During regular visits in Zaatari camp between 2012 and 2017, we interviewed several refugee families and conducted housing surveys. This revealed some aspects of refugees' daily life, the problems they face and the coping strategies they developed to circumvent restrictions and economic difficulties.

Faysal, his wife and four children left Bosra in October 2012. At this time, informal crossing point were still open between Syria and Jordan. Similar to all the refugees who entered Jordan after July 2012, the family was directed towards the Zaatari refugee camp. In May 2017, they were resettled in France and left the camp.

In Syria, Faysal lived with his parents, brothers and family in a small house in the ancient and medieval town centre of Bosra. Each family had a room set around a small courtyard. A large garden next to the house belonged to the family. In October 2012, Faysal, two of his brothers and their families were forced to leave Bosra because of the war. Upon their arrival in the Zaatari camp in October 2012, the family was given a tent by the UNHCR in the third district (Fig. 2, n°1). Sometimes, several families had to share

one of these tents - almost 6m long and 4m wide, 24 m2. At that time, the kitchens and the sanitary blocks (showers, toilets, laundry) were collective and built in concrete. Because of the lack of space inside the tents, families used to spend a significant part of their daily life in the only space available, the streets; the tent was used for eating meals, as a bedroom and a *madhafeh*. A few months later, refugees began to transform their tents by themselves, adding a wood-



1. Zaatari. The main street of the camp, called Shari' as-Souk, in 2017 (P. Piraud-Fournet 2017).
مخيم الزعتري، الشارع الرئيسي الذي يدعى شارع السوق، في 2017 (ب. بيرو - فورنيه، 2017).

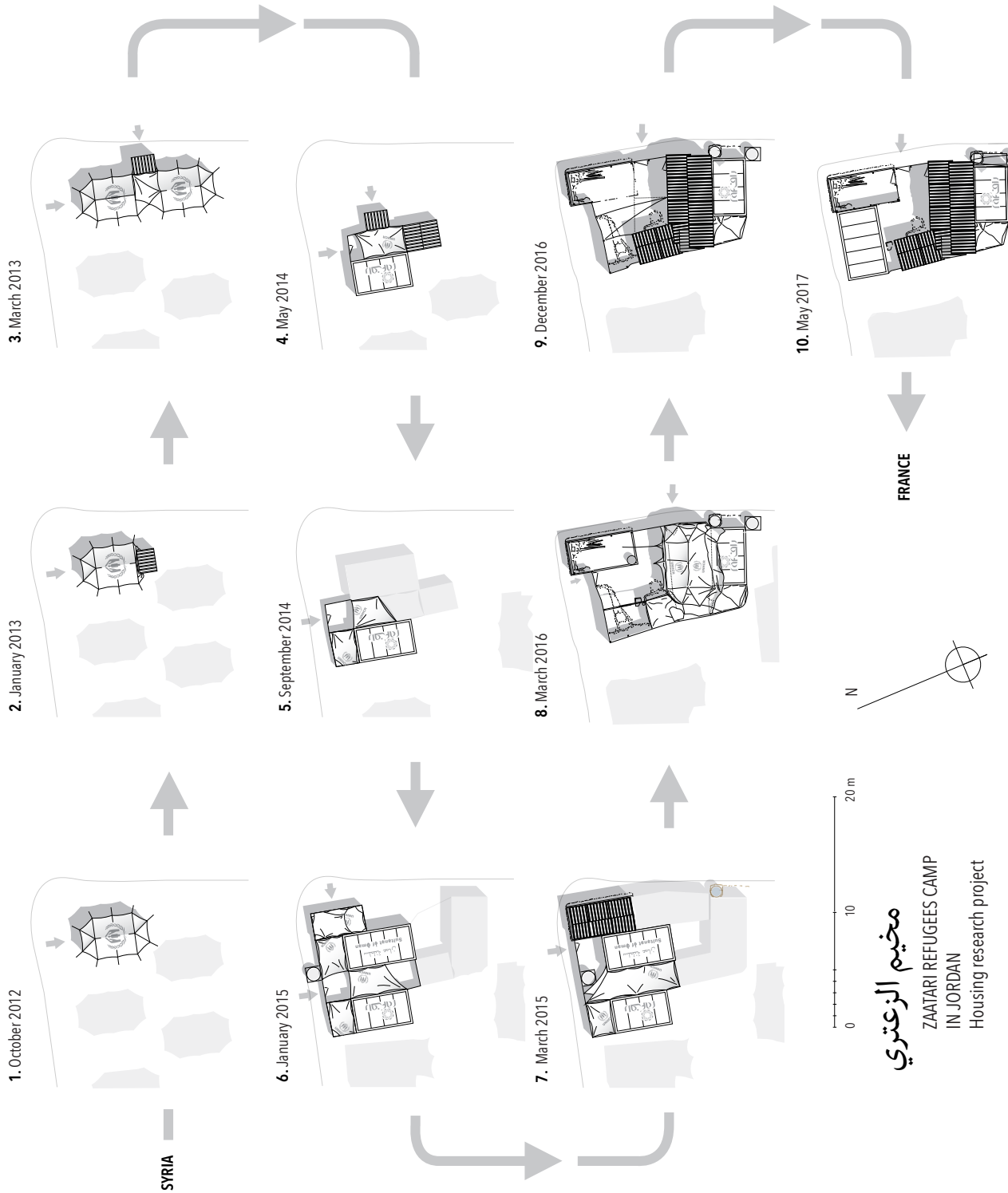
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en structure, used as a store room, with walls and roof in corrugated iron (*zinco*) (Fig. 2, n°2). In March 2013, Faysal acquired a second tent that he connected to the first (Fig. 2, n°3) and doubled the surface of

its housing. One served as a bedroom, the other as a kitchen and bathroom. The corrugated iron construction was transformed into a small informal shop, next the tents, where Faysal started selling second



استبيان للخطط المتلاحقة لمنزل فيصل بين عامي 2012 و2017 (ت فورتيه وب - فورتيه، 2017).
 2. Measured survey of the successive plans of Faysal's house between 2012 and 2017
 (T. Fournet and P. Piraud-Fournet, 2017).

...التي كانت تستخدم كغرفة نوم، والآخر كغرفة مطبخ وحمالة. تم تحويل البناء من الحديد المجعد إلى متجر صغير بجانب الخيام، حيث بدأ فaisal ببيع...

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