1	A Socio-Eco-Efficiency Analysis of Water and Wastewater Treatment Processes for
2	<b>Refugee Communities in Jordan</b>
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12	Abstract
13	As of 2017, the United Nations has estimated that there are 68.5 million displaced people in
14	the world which live in refugee camps (RCs) in 125 host countries. RCs frequently encounter
15	water scarcity issues which lead to a low daily limit of water consumption, as well as face
16	management difficulties such as septic tank overflowing which contribute to the development
17	of health problems. Considering the need for more sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene
18	system in RCs, a socio-eco-efficiency analysis (SEEA) framework is proposed for the analysis
19	and comparison of different wastewater treatment methods. The SEEA framework consists of
20	the integration of the economic and environmental aspects analysed by an eco-efficiency
21	analysis (EEA) with the social aspects evaluated by a social life cycle assessment (S-LCA)
22	using the analytic hierarchy process. The SEEA framework was applied to compare different
23	wastewater treatment methods in Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan. The SEEA results show
24	that, if adopted, an effluent water reuse-based treatment would increase economic efficiency
25	by 75%, decrease environmental impacts by 57%, and increase social sustainability by 57%

compared to the current operation of the camp, where a wastewater system connects groups of seven to nine households to communal septic tanks. A ternary diagram is used to represent the comparison of different wastewater treatment methods for an RC. The diagram shows the degree of socio-eco-efficiency of each wastewater treatment method, in terms of its social impacts, environmental impacts, and cost by normalizing results of the EEA and S-LCA into one score.

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33 Keywords: Life Cycle Assessment, Life Cycle Cost, Social Life Cycle Assessment, Wastewater
34 Treatment, Analytic Hierarchy Process.

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# 36 1. Introduction

37 Refugees include those who have crossed the borders of countries where they previously resided, internally displaced people, asylum seekers, people in refugee-like situations, and 38 stateless people. The causes of displacement include armed conflict, violence, disasters, famine, 39 development, and economic changes (UNESCO, 2017). In 2016, the number of new refugees 40 due to conflict and violence was 11.8 million (38.6%), while those of disasters (termed 'climate 41 refugees') was 18.8 million (61.4%) (IDMC, 2018). These figures are expected to rise in 42 response to the increase in disasters, as current forecasts on climate refugees vary from 25 43 million to 1 billion in the year 2050 (Kamal, 2017). 44

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) field operations for water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services (2008) have "fundamental responsibility of providing legal security, physical safety (against natural or man-made threats) and material assistance (necessities of life)" for refugees. Water and adequate sanitation including excreta disposal are among the necessities of life (UNHCR, 2008). Once 2 years elapse from the time of the original emergency, a refugee setting transitions from a 'communal' phase to a

'household' phase. Guidelines for wastewater management and treatment processes for a 51 refugee setting during the 'household' phase recommend boreholes as a source of water, 52 53 surface source and treatment, a pipe network, and a sewer network with desludging treatment (UNHCR, 2018). Sludge management practices in refugee camps (RCs) have included 54 'lagooning', directly disposing sludge into a water body, or drying beds before discharging 55 sludge into dumpsites (UNHCR, 1992). These wastewater treatments and sludge management 56 57 options are widely applied in RCs around the world because of their low cost and simple installation in emergency situations. 58

WASH services in RCs or similar communities have been studied for their technical, social, economic, and environmental implications through multicriteria analysis (Garfi & Ferrer-Marti, 2011), decision algorithms (Fenner et al., 2007), mental models (Kosonen & Kim, 2018), hydrogeological assessments (Eggen, 2019), surveys (Nyoka et al., 2017), and input-mediatoroutput models (Kosonen et al., 2018). However, these analyses did not integrate environmental, economic, and social aspects of WASH services with the specific objective of achieving longterm and sustainable WASH services in RCs.

A widely used decision-making aid tool for the quantification of environmental impacts in 66 the water and wastewater treatment field is life-cycle assessment (LCA) (Byrne et al., 2017). 67 To complement the environmental insights provided by LCAs, some studies have included 68 69 economic components by integrating a life cycle cost (LCC) analysis and combining these results in an eco-efficiency analysis (EEA) (Kicherer et al., 2007; Lam et al., 2017). LCA and 70 data envelopment analysis have been combined in an EEA framework for the study of eco-71 72 efficiency in wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) (Lorenzo-Toja et al., 2014). Even though numerous studies have evaluated the environmental and economic impacts of different 73 74 wastewater treatment systems (Abdallah et al. 2020; Lam et al., 2015; Shiu et al., 2017), few studies have integrated social considerations into the analysis (Appendix A). The inclusion of 75

social aspects of RCs is vital because refugees are a vulnerable population in need of safe and
adequate water and sanitation health. In light of these considerations, new designs for refugee
settlements are shifting from being efficiency-oriented to people-oriented, and from temporary
to permanent (UNHCR, 2018a). Conducting an LCA that includes an analysis of social impacts
can thus inform the implementation of more socially sustainable policies and practices, leading
to more beneficial outcomes for stakeholders.

Methodologies for the integration of social factors with environmental and economic 82 analysis of different products or processes are under development (Kloepffer, 2008). For 83 example, the Baden Aniline and Soda Factory (BASF) developed a method called the 84 SEEbalance®, which calculates socio-efficiency using social indicator systems and specific 85 86 databases such as the EU classification of economic activities (Schmidt et al., 2004). The BASF method was applied to determine the socio-eco-efficiency of crop livestock forestry systems in 87 Brazil (Costa et al., 2018). Opher et al. (2018) combined analytic hierarchy process (AHP) with 88 89 a life-cycle sustainability assessment framework for the comparison of urban water reuse at different centralization scales. AHP involves drawing from expert judgments when weighting 90 sustainability criteria and producing a composite score of the weighted sum of all criteria. 91

Studies related to RCs or similar settlements using life-cycle tools have especially focused 92 93 on housing (Alnsour & Meaton, 2013; Atmaca & Atmaca, 2016; van Kempen et al., 2016). 94 Aside from housing, other necessities must be analysed to ensure the well-being of displaced communities. The objectives of this study are: (i) to develop a socio-eco-efficiency analysis 95 (SEEA) framework as a decision-making aid tool in accordance with the tripartite sustainability 96 97 model for water and wastewater treatment, and (ii) to compare the environmental, economic, and social implications of different WASH services in Jordan as a case study. In addition to its 98 contributions to methodological development, this study provides practical analysis for 99

science-driven decision-making with particular attention to water reuse as a sustainablesolution for water scarcity in refugee settlements.

## 102 **2.** Methodology

# 103 2.1 Case study – Zaatari Refugee Camp

Since 2014, more sophisticated wastewater treatments have been adopted in some RCs. 104 105 For example, the Azraq RC in Jordan is the world's first camp to adopt an on-site WWTP that utilizes a modular moving-bed biofilm reactor (MBR) along with pre-treatment and 106 chlorination. The Azraq RC is seen as a 'model refugee camp' as its facilities were designed to 107 overcome problems experienced in the older Zaatari RC in Jordan (Knell, 2014). Located in 108 the Mafraq governorate, Zaatari RC serves approximately 80,000 refugees from Syria 109 110 (UNHCR, 2019). As of 2017, UNHCR has implemented a long-term master plan for WASH in Zaatari RC. One analysis, comparing the cost-effectiveness of the water supply and treatment 111 network in Zaatari RC to the UNHCR long-term plan, recommended that the camp undergo an 112 113 integrated transition—including technically, socially, economically, and financially optimized solutions—from the emergency phase to long-term sustainability (van der Helm et al., 2017). 114 The analysis also recognized that a decision-making aid model for the processes involved in 115 active disaster response situations is needed to provide better water management and treatment 116 facilities in refugee communities (Kosonen et al., 2018). 117

Jordan is one of the most water scarce countries in the world, thus the Ministry of Water and Irrigation's National Water Strategy 2016-2025 has aimed for more resilience in the protection of the nation's WASH sector coordination system and access to safe, affordable, and adequate water supply and sanitation for all citizens (MWI, 2016). The current water supply in Zaatari RC is within the limits of the camp demand. Yet, there are several WASH problems regarding sewage disposal and treatment methods that require improvements. Responsible NGOs in Zaatari RC conducted surveys throughout the camp to a) identify primary household

sources of drinking water, b) assess the prevalence and suitability of WASH infrastructure 125 across all households, c) record primary wastewater and solid waste disposal practices across 126 all households and d) gauge refugee community perceptions of the adequacy of WASH repair 127 and maintenance services within the RC (UNICEF & REACH, 2017). Several issues with the 128 WASH infrastructure and service were identified by the surveys, such as blockages in the sewer 129 wastewater network (WWN), overflowing septic tanks, and inefficient communication of 130 131 WASH infrastructure problems to the primary NGO in each district (UNICEF & REACH, 2017). Thus, the UN prepared a long-term plan to tackle these issues as well as improve 132 133 community outreach and services (UNICEF & REACH, 2017).

An SEEA framework (Figure 1) was developed in this study to evaluate wastewater treatment options specifically for refugee communities and similar settlements. The framework, which includes EEA and S-LCA, aims to systematically calculate the social, economic, and ecological scores for an array of wastewater treatment scenarios for RCs. The results of each step are to be interpreted on a progressive basis.



140 *Figure 1 – SEEA framework, which includes steps in the 1) Eco-efficiency analysis (EEA), 2)* 

141 Social life cycle assessment (S-LCA), and 3) Socio-eco-efficiency analysis. LCA: Life cycle

142 assessment; LCC: Life cycle costs; O&M: Operation and maintenance; AHP: Analytic

143 *hierarchy process.* 

# 144 2.2 Eco-efficiency analysis

EEA is a management tool for LCA that integrates the analysis of the environmental impact 145 and cost-effectiveness of a product's or service's life cycle (BASF, 2018). In this study, the 146 147 EEA was based on the modified method presented in Lam et al., (2017), which integrated the BASF, and the Kicherer et al. (2007) normalization approach. The economic aspect is 148 149 integrated through an LCC, while the environmental aspect with an LCA. The results of an EEA are typically represented in an eco-efficiency portfolio which consists of a graph where 150 the x-coordinate represents the costs, while the y-coordinate represents the environmental 151 impacts (Kicherer et al., 2007). The methodology for the eco-efficiency portfolio calculation 152 can be found in Appendix B. Eco-efficiency is achieved through low costs and low 153 environmental impacts. 154

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# 5 2.2.1 Life cycle assessment

LCA consists of four main steps described by ISO14040 (Finkbeiner et al., 2006). In the 156 LCA, the goal and scope are first defined, a life cycle inventory (LCI) is collated, and a life 157 cycle impact assessment (LCIA) is then conducted. The goal of this study was to quantify the 158 environmental impacts of three wastewater treatment scenarios to improve the current WASH 159 facilities in Zaatari RC for sustainable improvement in living conditions. The functional unit 160 used for this study is 1 m<sup>3</sup> of treated wastewater. The system boundary includes the impacts 161 from the operation and maintenance (O&M) of the water treatment system in Zaatari RC. A 162 20-year time boundary was selected, which has been used in previous studies for similar 163 infrastructure (Guereca et al., 2011; Lopes et al., 2018). The geographical boundary was based 164 on Jordan for foreground information, while background information was taken from the 165

ecoinvent v.3.2. database. The data sources for the LCA include primary and secondary data.
Primary data on RCs are available in UN reports, namely from UNHCR and UNICEF.
Secondary data was gathered from the literature and life-cycle databases such as the ecoinvent database.

The LCI focused on direct emissions, groundwater consumption, and electricity 170 171 consumption (Appendix C). Direct emissions include water, air, and soil emissions from the wastewater treatment process. The emissions to water included biological oxygen demand, 172 total organic carbon, dissolved organic carbon, ammonium (NH4<sup>+</sup>), nitrate, and chemical 173 oxygen demand (COD) (UNICEF, 2014). The air emissions for each scenario are presented in 174 Appendix D, showing the emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs), such as nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) 175 and methane directly from untreated NH4<sup>+</sup> and COD respectively, that contribute to climate 176 change. The emissions for GHGs were estimated using primary WWTP data from UNICEF 177 (2014), IPCC emission factors (2007), and recommended GHG emission values for an effluent 178 179 discharge without treatment (Godin et al., 2012). The soil emissions were based on ecoinvent data for agriculture application in similar systems of wastewater treatment processes i.e. WSP, 180 MBR, and TF. 181

In the LCIA, the inputs and outputs in terms of materials, fuels, electricity, and heat are 182 accounted for, as well as the emissions to air, water, and soil. Emissions from the construction 183 184 phase of the case study were not included as the impacts were negligible. Emissions associated with electricity consumption and chemical usage, along with direct emissions from untreated 185 effluent, were included in the LCIA. The ecoinvent v.3.2 database was used for background 186 187 information applied in SimaPro software. ReCiPe Endpoint (H) v1.12/World ReCiPe H/A was selected as the impact assessment methodology. The LCIA impact categories considered in this 188 method were: terrestrial acidification, marine eutrophication, photochemical oxidant 189 formation, particulate matter formation, terrestrial ecotoxicity, freshwater ecotoxicity, marine 190

ecotoxicity, ionising radiation, water depletion, human toxicity, freshwater eutrophication,
agricultural land occupation, urban land occupation, natural land transformation, metal
depletion, fossil depletion, climate change, and ozone depletion.

Three life-cycle impact categories were identified as being relevant for wastewater 194 treatment systems in the RC: i) water depletion, ii) human toxicity, and iii) freshwater 195 eutrophication. Water depletion and freshwater eutrophication were chosen due to the critical 196 197 water scarcity in places like Jordan (Schyns et al., 2015, Abu-Allaban et al., 2014) and the need to improve conditions of water management in refugee settlements (van der Helm et al., 2017). 198 199 Human toxicity refers to the effects on human health caused by toxic substances in the environment, and accounting for this toxicity is critical to ensuring that the health of refugees 200 and surrounding communities is not compromised. 201

# 202 2.2.2 Life cycle costing

According to the US General Services Administration, LCC refers to an economic 203 analysis used in the selection of alternatives that impact both pending and future costs (GSA, 204 2017). In environmental life-cycle costing, a framework is provided for evaluating decisions 205 with consistent yet flexible system boundaries as a component of product sustainability 206 assessments (Swarr et al., 2011). Hence, LCC is a tool for the quantification of the costs of a 207 system or product incurred during its lifetime. The system boundary of the LCC of WWTPs 208 209 generally includes capital costs (CC) and O&M costs. The typical data comprising O&M costs include the cost of electricity, maintenance, transportation, labor, and equipment (Hong et al., 210 2009; Lam et al., 2015). 211

The CC for the construction of the three scenarios were equal in terms of the on-site WWTP, and an additional cost for two of the options was from the simplified piped network system. All three options included the usage of boreholes but in different quantities, though the cost difference is minimal as the technology used in borehole construction is simple and inexpensive. In a study focusing on WWN, the CC for installation of boreholes and a simplified
piped network in Zaatari RC represented less than 10% of the differences among the scenarios
when compared to the overall LCC (ACTED et al., 2014).

The O&M costs were calculated using data from a water network study (ACTED et al., 219 2014), which considered Jordanian inflation rates and sensitivity analysis of recurrent costs at 220 discount rates in net present cost. Typical discount rates used in these systems range from 2.5% 221 222 to 9%, throughout a forty-year period (CEIC, 2017). The O&M costs included water trucking services, borehole operation, on-site WWTP, and waste stabilization ponds (WSP). Under 223 224 transportation costs, the data analyzed included truck capacities and travel distances in present values. For water trucking services and borehole operations, costs were taken from the water 225 network studies for Zaatari RC (ACTED et al., 2014). The costs of the WSP, trickling filter 226 (TF), and MBR operations were based on comparable technologies used in India (Khalil et al., 227 2008). This cost estimate source was chosen due to the similar GDP (in terms of purchasing 228 power parity) per capita of India (#113) and Jordan (#100) (World Bank, 2016). Cost analysis 229 data for water effluent reuse was estimated from the USEPA Handbook (2016). In this study, 230 economic output was omitted as the main stakeholders are non-profit organizations. A 231 summary of all the data as well as assumptions and sources of data used in the LCC are found 232 in Appendix E. 233

# 234 2.3 Social life cycle assessment

The S-LCA framework presented by Opher et al. (2017) involving AHP was applied and adapted in this study to evaluate wastewater treatment options in RCs. The S-LCA framework consists of three main steps: applying AHP, evaluating social impact indicators, and rating the indicators through the ideal mode approach. Developed by Thomas L. Saaty (1980), AHP arranges the criteria of a specific goal into a hierarchy. The AHP method utilized by Opher et al. (2017) includes making pairwise comparisons of elements within each level of the hierarchy

to produce a pairwise comparison matrix, normalizing the matrix, and averaging the 241 normalized matrix to determine the relative local weight of the elements. A final homogenizing 242 243 of the relative local weights produce a single social benefit score for each alternative scenario. The AHP approach used in this study included the Goal (Level 0), Stakeholders (Level 1), 244 Categories (Level 2), Indicators (Level 3), and Alternatives (Level 4). The UNEP/SETAC 245 Methodological Sheets for 31 Sub-Categories of Impacts for S-LCA (2013) were used to 246 247 choose the categories for the S-LCA. The selection of social impact categories should be analyzed on a case-by-case basis because stakeholders constantly vary in contrast to a typical 248 249 residential area as they include temporary settlers and humanitarian organizations. The UNEP/SETAC (2013) guidelines considered several stakeholders and subcategories as a 250 framework for the S-LCA of products or systems. The stakeholders considered in this study 251 were *community* and *consumer*. Other stakeholders mentioned in the guidelines, such as *society*, 252 local community, and workers, were not included. The chosen sub-categories were derived 253 from the community and consumer issues, such as 'safe and healthy living conditions' 254 (community), or 'feedback mechanism' (consumer). The social impact categories were chosen 255 from the guidelines based on the impact of the wastewater management project on the WASH 256 practices in Zaatari RC and the residents' perceptions of the adequacy of the WASH facilities 257 (UNICEF & REACH, 2017) as explained in Appendix F. The S-LCA proposed in this study 258 emphasizes treated effluent reuse as a sustainable solution for the water scarcity frequently 259 260 experienced in this type of settlement.

The social impact categories chosen for the S-LCA were *safe and healthy living conditions*, *equity, community engagement, consumer health & safety,* and *feedback mechanism*. Quantifiable social impact indicators were then chosen for each social impact category. For the category *safe and healthy living conditions,* the two indicators chosen were *adequate ownership of WASH facilities* (AO) and reduction of desludging issues (RD). In the *equity* 

category the two indicators were increased population access to improved WASH facilities 266 regardless of the district (IP), and higher water supply equivalence (HE). For the community 267 268 engagement category, the indicators were increased diligence of residents in reducing damages (ID), and management efforts by NGOs to curb damages (ME). In the consumer health & safety 269 category, the indicators were a lower incidence of water-related illnesses (LI), and reduction 270 of chlorine taste in water (RC). Lastly, in the consumer feedback mechanism category, the 271 272 indicators were more sustainable septic tanks to reduce the need for repairs (MS) and increased awareness of respective districts' NGO services (IA). The alternatives were three 273 274 wastewater treatment scenarios in Zaatari RC.

As the S-LCA in this study favors non-objective data, it was necessary to consult 275 experts in the field for their opinions on the social impacts of wastewater systems and WASH 276 facilities in RCs. The experts surveyed for this research assisted in the weighting of social 277 criteria based on their judgments on the importance of several social impacts on the refugee 278 communities when subjected to different water treatment methods. The experts were selected 279 based on their experience in Zaatari RC and/or WASH management in similar temporary 280 settlements. 16 respondents of varied occupations and locations were approached to complete 281 the survey including two pilot surveys, with a final number of 8 experts being chosen for the 282 AHP due to their high relevance in expertise and location. The small number of 8 survey 283 respondents were chosen to provide more knowledgeable judgment in the criteria weighting 284 from experts who were directly involved in Zaatari RC or worked in the camp. Out of the 8 285 respondents, 6 were based in Jordan while 2 were based overseas. In terms of their occupations, 286 5 were engineers while the other 3 were either NGO officers or WASH advisors. 287

The survey was carried out individually, using an online questionnaire to solicit responses. The questions included ranking the importance of the different criteria through pairwise comparisons of the elements in each level of the hierarchy using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1

meant equal importance between the two criteria compared, 2 meant that one is moderately 291 more important than the other, 3 indicated that one is more important, 4 indicated that one is 292 293 much more important, and 5 meant one option is extremely more important than the other. In the original development of AHP by Saaty (1980), a scale of 1-9 was used for pairwise 294 comparisons. This scale was adjusted to be 1-5 in this study due to certain limitations of the 295 original Saaty scale when conducting pairwise comparisons. A study by Aupetit and Genest 296 297 (1993) suggested reducing the scale to 1-5, as the number of pairwise comparisons  $(n^{*}(n-1)/2)$ may become very large when using the Saaty (1-9) scale. Furthermore, past studies have 298 299 concluded that users (i.e. individuals surveyed) may not consider their past assigned value when giving new input value; which in turn creates inconsistency (Hossain et al., 2014), 300 especially when the scale of judgment is large as it becomes a lengthy task (Macharis et al., 301 302 2004). Hence, a smaller scale was used in this study to reduce inconsistency in the responses. The pairwise comparison of elements within each level resulted in a pairwise comparison 303 matrix, whose elements are normalised into a normalized column matrix and then averaged to 304 get the local relative weight of each element at each level. An example of the comparison 305 questions for the set of elements in Level 2 (Community) is: "Which of the two (safe and 306 healthy living conditions or equity) has a greater influence on the social implications of a 307 selected sewage treatment method for the camp? By how much more? (Choose 1-5 on the 308 scale)". As Level 2 (Community) consisted of three elements, three questions were asked for 309 310 the comparison of the three elements, two at a time. Therefore, for every set of n elements, there were  $n^{(n-1)/2}$  pairwise comparisons. A sample of the questionnaire can be found in 311 Appendix G. The judgements for each pairwise comparison were collected and the calculations 312 of the respective weights of the elements in each level of the hierarchy were performed for each 313 expert. For sets of comparisons with n > 2, a consistency ratio (CR) was calculated using the 314 AHP method (Saaty, 1980) as shown in Appendix H. The threshold for CR is typically set 315

below 0.10. CR is dependent on matrix size (Wedley, 1993) and for a greater matrix size, a 316 higher CR is acceptable. Furthermore, to account for a wide range of responses in group 317 surveys, a higher CR is accepted (Ho et al., 2005). Hence the threshold for CR was set at 0.2, 318 as done in past studies conducted using AHP to account for the wide range of responses from 319 experts in different fields (Ho et al., 2005; Kumar et al., 2009). From the AHP, the overall 320 weights for each social indicator were finally calculated by multiplying the relative local 321 322 weights for each element in descending order from Level 1 to Level 3 to obtain a single overall weight (%) for each indicator. All overall weights (%) from respondents were then averaged. 323 324 In the present study, an evaluation of the social impact indicators was done through a separate pairwise comparison to determine the ratings of the different social impact indicators through 325 defining numerical values to non-quantitative data. After pairwise comparison, a normalized 326 column matrix was produced, averaged, and an ideal mode approach was applied to calculate 327 a rating for each social impact corresponding to the different water and wastewater treatment 328 scenarios. All ratings from all respondents were then averaged for each social impact indicator. 329 The averaged overall weights (%) from all respondents were multiplied with the averaged 330 ratings of the social impact indicators to get a final social benefit score for each indicator. The 331 indicator with the highest final social benefit score thus had the largest social benefit in this 332 study. 333

# 334 2.4 Socio-eco-efficiency analysis

The normalized results of the LCA, S-LCA, and LCC were inputted into the OriginPro software to obtain a ternary diagram. Ternary diagrams have been widely used, especially in the field of chemistry, to plot the composition of a mixture of 3 components (Stringfellow & Greene, 1969). The minimum factor chosen was 0.

#### 339 2.5 Scenarios

To conduct the EEA, three wastewater treatment scenarios were considered for Zaatari 340 RC (Figure 2). Scenario 1 (S1) represents the original WWT operation in Zaatari RC upon its 341 establishment in 2012. In S1, groundwater (approximately 3,600  $\text{m}^3/\text{d}$ ) was drawn from 3 342 boreholes, then chlorinated and distributed via 82 water trucks into the camp (UNICEF & 343 REACH, 2017, and UNHCR, 2016). About 2,100 m<sup>3</sup> of wastewater was generated daily, from 344 345 which 20% was transported by desludging trucks and treated by a municipal WWTP approximately 45 km away that employed WSPs. As of 2016, the municipal WWTP had 346 347 already approached its capacity (MWI, 2016a). The remaining 80% of the wastewater was treated by an on-site MBR and TF containerized package plants to form potable water. Effluent 348 from the WWTP was used in irrigation of crops (USAID, 2005). 349

Scenario 2 (S2) is the UNHCR long-term plan and current operation of WWT in Zaatari 350 RC where groundwater (approximately  $3,800 \text{ m}^3/\text{d}$ ) is drawn from 4 boreholes then chlorinated 351 and distributed via a simplified piped network (van der Helm et al., 2017). The 260km 352 integrated pipe network supplies water at the household level. In addition, the simplified sewer 353 WWN and bathing units are improved along with private WASH infrastructure at the 354 household level, increasing the percentage of households having at least one private toilet from 355 91% in 2015 to 98.4% in 2017 (UNICEF & REACH, 2017). This is a vast improvement from 356 2013, where there was only 1 toilet for every 50 people (IMC & UNICEF, 2013). In the present 357 study, it was assumed that about 2,217 m<sup>3</sup> of wastewater generated daily is treated at an on-site 358 MBR and TF containerized package plants (UNICEF, 2014). Effluent is used for irrigation of 359 crops. 360

361 Scenario 3 (S3) incorporates effluent water reuse into the UNHCR long-term plan. It was 362 assumed that about 2,534 m<sup>3</sup> of wastewater is treated daily by an on-site MBR and TF 363 containerized package plants with a reuse option of the effluent water in the camp. The higher

wastewater quantity in S3 compared to S2 was deduced from the wastewater production per 364 water supply in S1 multiplied by the assumed water consumption percentage in S3 (part (v) 365 found in Appendix C Table C.3). As the majority of the water supply is used in bathing (29.4%), 366 the assumption that a higher flowrate is diverted to the WWN and bathing units rather than to 367 the simplified piped network was made. The higher water supply is attributed to the increase 368 in wastewater reuse as effluent. Hence, with a higher water supply in S3 compared to S2, the 369 370 wastewater production increases. Higher water production is considered for S3 as the current daily consumption in Zaatari RC falls significantly below the daily consumption in Jordan. The 371 372 daily limit of water consumption per capita in Zaatari RC is 35 liters per day (UNHCR, 2020), which is only 29% of the average urban water usage of Jordanian citizens at 120 liters per 373 person per day (Water Authority of Jordan, 2010). Hence, there is currently a discrepancy in 374 the average daily water usage for each resident in Zaatari RC. Effluent for non-potable water 375 use (i.e. toilet flushing or usage in washing) is supplied to the households through the WWN 376 with flush toilets and bathing units (UNHCR, 2018). Groundwater is obtained via a borehole 377 then chlorinated and distributed by the 260km simplified piped water network (removing the 378 need for 3 additional boreholes in S2 and 2 additional boreholes and the water trucks in S1). 379 The enhancement of septic tanks through household plumbing upgrades is also incorporated 380 into S3 as proposed in the UNHCR WASH manual (UNHCR, 2018). This scenario aims to 381 continue the usage of available treatment plants and the UN long-term plan water network with 382 added reuse of effluent treated by the on-site WWTP. 383



Figure 2- Process flow and boundaries of scenario 1 (S1), scenario 2 (S2), and scenario 386 3 (S3). Solid arrows show the sewage flow. Inputs are shown in rectangles followed by dotted 387 arrows. Outputs are shown in diamonds with dotted arrows. MBR: membrane bio-reactor; 388 WWTP: wastewater treatment plant; WW: wastewater; WSP: waste stabilization pond.

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#### **390 3. Results and discussion**

## 391 3.1 Eco-efficiency analysis

#### 392 *3.1.1 Life cycle assessment*

Groundwater consumption was particularly relevant for this study due to the severe water scarcity in Jordan. In order to assess the LCI of groundwater consumption, the water extracted from groundwater was calculated based on the water pumped from boreholes in each scenario. To deduce the life cycle impact, the lower the percentage of water consumption attributed to groundwater consumption, the more eco-efficient the scenario is deemed to be. The groundwater consumption (m<sup>3</sup>/day) from pumped boreholes is 3,600 for S1 (ACTED et al., 2014), 3,800 for S2 (Van der Helm et al., 2017), and 950.4 for S3 (estimated from ACTED et al., 2014). The addition of effluent reuse in S3 also increases the daily total water supply to
4,344.4 m<sup>3</sup>/d, which increases the water consumption limit to 54.3 liters per person per day.
Another assumption made in the LCI is the percentage of water usage in the RC (Cronin et al.,
2008) to account for the quantity of potable water needed, which is assumed to be 26.4% of
the total water usage attributed to drinking, cooking, and rearing animals (part (v) of Appendix
C Table C.3).

406 For WSP in S1, the electricity consumption was calculated from the electrical consumption rate in Jordan (USD/kWh) and the electrical costs from the water network studies 407 408 in Zaatari RC (ACTED et al., 2014). For the MBR (in S1, S2, and S3), the average electricity consumption of an MBR was calculated based on the different input flows using electricity 409 consumption data gathered from a 2014 UNICEF report and Shin et al. (2014). For TF (in S1, 410 S2, and S3), the electricity consumption was estimated using primary data on electrical costs 411 (ACTED et al., 2014) and on the average electricity consumption of TF according to the 412 different input flows of each scenario (Young and Koopman, 1991). Lastly, for borehole pumps 413 (in S1, S2, and S3), electricity consumption data was drawn from the water network studies on 414 Zaatari RC (ACTED et al., 2014). 415

The normalized LCIA of the three scenarios is presented in Figure 3. Of these scenarios, 416 the one with the lowest environmental impact in water depletion is S3. This is due to the reuse 417 option in S3, which offsets the increased water usage of the camp overall by 37.5% (reuse of 418 419 950.4  $m^3/d$  of 2,534  $m^3/d$  of wastewater produced). For human toxicity, S2 and S3 had zero impacts due to the removal of the usage of water trucking services, hence reducing CO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, 420 CO, and other emissions to air from transportation. Other sources of emissions leading to 421 human toxicity include heavy metals released into the environment. For freshwater 422 eutrophication, S3 does not include the option of irrigating crops, hence removing the 423 possibility of freshwater eutrophication from untreated nitrates and phosphates. Lower 424

425 agricultural land occupation is also seen in S2 and S3 due to the removal of WSP usage and



426 further removal of borehole (including elevated water tanks) in S3.

427

- 428 Figure 3- ReCiPe Endpoint normalized results for scenario 1 (S1), scenario 2 (S2), and
  429 scenario 3 (S3).
- An environmental portfolio was derived from the results of the LCIA. The values denote
  the relative performance of each scenario (0 to 1). The closer to the center the values are on the
  environmental portfolio, the less impact the scenario has on the environment.

As seen in Figure 4, S2 has the least environmental impacts overall except in 'water 433 depletion' and 'freshwater eutrophication', where S3 instead has the least impact. For S1, the 434 process which contributes the most to direct emissions was the WSP, as the amount of air 435 emissions in the form of N<sub>2</sub>O from untreated NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup> is much higher than the emissions of N<sub>2</sub>O 436 from the on-site WWTP, which was the main treatment option in S2 and S3. For water 437 emissions, the high impact of freshwater eutrophication in S1 is due to the possibility of 438 untreated nitrates and phosphates spreading during the irrigation of crops. In S2 and S3, the 439 emission with the highest impact was COD. However, this result is attributed to the higher 440 wastewater effluent flow of the on-site WWTP in both S2 and S3 as compared to S1. 441 Ecotoxicity was found to be higher in S1 (and attributed to soil emissions due to heavy metals) 442

than in S2 and S3 (also attributed to soil emissions but due to irrigation), while emissions to
water and atmosphere contributed to eutrophication, climate change, and acidification, which
were all the highest in S1 due to higher N<sub>2</sub>O emissions. A limitation of the LCIA results derives
from the usage of soil emissions from the ecoinvent database, as primary data was not available.
Hence, the results of impact categories affected by emissions to soil due to heavy metals should
be interpreted with caution.



450 Figure 4- Environmental portfolio of LCAs for scenario 1 (S1), scenario 2 (S2), and scenario

451

# 3 (S3).

452 *3.1.2 Life cycle cost* 

The results of the LCC show that S1 accounted for 21.13 million USD/year from which 7.86, 0.19, 12.71, and 0.37 million USD/year were from water trucking, boreholes, on-site WWTP, and WSP, respectively. In S2, only boreholes with 0.25 million USD/year and on-site WWTP with 12.71 million USD/year comprised the total cost of 12.96 million USD/year. At a lower total cost of 11.3 million USD/year, S3 included 0.06 and 11.24 million USD/year for boreholes and on-site WWTP, respectively. Thus, S3 saves 9.83 and 1.66 million USD/year 459 compared to S1 and S2, respectively. Appendix E shows the data and assumptions made for460 the LCC.

Figure 5 shows that S3 performs most favorably with the lowest LCC, while S1 has the highest costs. The LCC incurred by S2 represents savings of 8.17 million USD/year compared to S1; thus, the UNHCR long-term water cycle plan has significant improvements over S1 while the proposed scenario S3 is the most cost-effective The most significant cost avoided in S2 and S3 is the water trucking service, with the LCC for on-site WWTP in S3 being lower than that for either S2 and S1, due to the reuse of effluent, leading to 1.47 million USD/year in avoided costs (USEPA, 2016).



468

469 Figure 5- Life-cycle cost (million USD/year) for scenario 1 (S1), scenario 2 (S2), and scenario
470 3 (S3). WSP: waste stabilization pond; WWTP: wastewater treatment plant.

471

# 3.1.3 Eco-efficiency portfolio

The eco-efficiency portfolio was calculated using the results of the LCC and LCA to determine the position of each scenario (S1, S2, or S3) in the portfolio as presented in Figure 6. S1 is in the completely eco-inefficient area of the portfolio, S2 is in the completely eco-efficient area of the portfolio, and S3 is in the half eco-efficient area. The EEA results show that S2 is 14% and 12% more environmentally friendly than S1 and S3, respectively. In terms of costs, S3 had





479



480 *Figure 6 - Eco-efficiency portfolio for scenario 1 (S1), scenario 2 (S2), and scenario 3 (S3).* 

# 481 *3.2 Social life cycle assessment*

Survey responses from individual experts were incorporated into the AHP starting with pairwise comparisons of elements within each level, then a normalized-column matrix, which is then averaged into the relative local weight for each indicator. The results for Level 1 (Community or Consumer) for one respondent is shown in Figure 7. By averaging all the relative local weights of all elements from responses in the survey, an averaged relative local weight can be calculated for each element across all levels. The averaged local relative weights across all levels are shown in the hierarchy in Figure 8.



# 490

491

Figure 7- Comparison matrix, normalised-column matrix, and relative local weight of each element in Level 1 for one respondent.



stakeholder, social impact category and indicator.

# 493 *Figure 8 - AHP hierarchy used in the S-LCA with the relative local weights of each*

494

495

492

3.2.1 Overall weight (%) of social impact indicators

The AHP responses were analysed to produce the overall weights of the different social impact indicators. The overall weight (%) of each social impact indicator in Table 2 was derived by multiplying the local relative weight of each element in Level 1 with the local relative weight in Level 2 and finally the local relative weight in Level 3. For example, for Level 3 - IA, the local relative weight for the *consumer* was multiplied by the local relative weight of *feedback mechanism*, and finally multiplied with the local relative weight of IA. Thus, the overall weight was 2.55% for that indicator. According to the experts surveyed, the most important social impact indicators with the highest weights were LI (17.61%), ID (14.36%),

- 504 and AO (14.26%).
- 505 *Table 2. Summarised results from the AHP indicating the overall weight of each social*
- 506

impact indicator av	eraged from all	respondents
---------------------	-----------------	-------------

Stakeholder	Commu	unity					Consu	ner		
	Safe &	healthy								
	living				Comm	unity	Health	&	Feedba	ack
Category	conditio	ons	Equity		engage	ment	safety		mecha	nism
Indicator	AO	RD	HE	IP	ID	ME	LI	RC	MS	IA
Weight										
(%)	14.26	12.14	7.21	11.27	14.36	6.76	17.61	8.29	6.55	2.55
Total sum										
(%)					10	)0				

507

#### 3.2.2 Evaluation of social impact indicators

For each social impact indicator in Level 3, a separate pairwise comparison was generated 508 509 through attributing numerical values to a conceptual scale (Opher et al., 2017) and applying an 510 ideal mode approach to obtain a rating for each social impact indicator. The evaluation process for each social impact indicator is described in depth in Appendix I. Pairwise comparison was 511 performed by creating a 1-5 scale of each indicator, and responses were gathered to produce 512 the pairwise comparison matrix, followed by the normalized column matrix, a priority vector, 513 and finally the ratings where the highest priority score in the priority vector was set as 1.00 and 514 the other scores were calculated proportionally. Table 3 was generated by compiling all the 515 ratings of the social impact indicators in Appendix I. 516

517

Table 3. Ratings of social impact indicators

	Community					Consumer				
	Safe & healthy			Community		Health &		Feedback		
	living con	nditions	Equity	7	engage	ement	safety		mechar	nism
	AO	RD	HE	IP	ID	ME	LI	RC	MS	IA
<b>S1</b>	0.2	0.2	0.16	0.16	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>S2</b>	0.2	0.2	0.41	0.41	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>S3</b>	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

AO = Adequate ownership of WASH facilities, RD = Reduction of desludging issues, HE =
 Higher water supply equivalence, IP = Increased population access to improved WASH
 facilities regardless of district, ID = Increased diligence of residents in reducing damages, ME

521 = Management efforts of NGOs to curb damages, LI = Lower incidence of water-related 522 illnesses, RC = Reduction in chlorine taste in water, MS = More sustainable septic tanks to 523 reduce the need for repairs, IA = Increased awareness of respective districts' NGO services

# 524 3.2.3 Final social benefit scores and interpretation

525 The final social benefit scores as shown in Figure 9 were deduced by multiplying the 526 overall weight (%) of each indicator as calculated in Table 2 with the rating of each social 527 impact indicator as calculated in Table 3. The scenario with the highest and most beneficial 528 social score based on the expert judgements and social impact indicators ratings is S3.



529

According to the UNEP/SETAC (2011), it is not recommended to aggregate the results of the three life cycle methodologies (LCA, LCC, and S-LCA). However, it is our opinion that some degree of aggregation is necessary to provide holistic sustainability information to stakeholders and to further develop multi-objective methodologies. For the SEEA a ternary diagram was generated to integrate the results of the S-LCA and the EEA. The normalized results of the S-LCA, LCC, and LCA were combined in OriginPro, producing a ternary diagram

Figure 9- Final social benefit scores for S-LCA indicators for scenario 1 (S1), scenario 2
 (S2), and scenario 3 (S3).

<sup>532 3.3</sup> Socio-eco-efficiency analysis

that shows the normalized social impacts, environmental impacts, and costs of S1, S2, and S3. 539 The most socio-eco-efficient scenario is closest to the bottom left side of the diagram (Point 540 B), whereas the least socio-eco-efficient scenario is closest to Point A of the diagram. Figure 541 10 shows the respective positions of S1, S2, and S3 on the socio-eco-efficiency ternary diagram. 542 The squares represent points normalized from the SEEA results. The summation of the 543 normalized values for EEA and S-LCA scores must add up to 1 for each scenario. The diagram 544 545 illustrates that S3 is positioned closest to the 'Most socio-eco-efficient' (Point B) end whereas S1 is positioned closest to the 'Least socio-eco-efficient' (Point A) end. Based on the 546 547 normalized results, S3 is 57% more environmentally friendly than both S1 and S2. In terms of costs, S3 exhibits 75% and 65% better performance than S1 and S2, respectively. Lastly, S3 is 548 57% and 44% more socially sustainable than S1 and S2, respectively. 549

550



551

552 *Figure 10- Socio-eco-efficiency ternary diagram showing the normalized social impacts,* 

environmental impacts, and costs for scenario 1 (S1), scenario 2 (S2), and scenario 3 (S3).

#### 554 *3.4 Limitations and challenges*

The limitations of the study include the exclusion of the construction phase and end-of-555 life phase in the LCA, i.e. dismantling of the camp. This was explicitly done as there is a lack 556 of certainty in the dismantling impacts of a refugee settlement. Previous LCA studies for urban 557 water systems also show that infrastructure construction and end-of-life phases cause negligible 558 559 impacts when compared to the operation phase (Friedrich, 2002; Lundie et al., 2004). There 560 are several limitations inherent to the nature of the LCA in connection with the inventory and impact assessment methodologies. Regarding the inventory, the heavy metals considered in the 561 562 soil emissions and the percentage of water usage in RC were not directly measured in Zaatari RC. Also, emergent contaminants have not been included in the calculations. 563

In terms of the S-LCA, the data collected could be improved by conducting surveys 564 with the main stakeholder (refugees) to gain refugees' inputs and perceptions. It is important 565 to note that in the survey, the indicators given were relative statements such as 'lower incidence 566 of water-related illnesses' and 'higher water supply equivalence' as compared to the current 567 situation in the RC. Users of this method may find that the use of relative or comparative 568 statements such as the above may promote bias in the responses, thus indicators with 569 independent statements are recommended for future studies. Independent statements can help 570 reduce uncertainty in the responses as different individuals may have different perspectives on 571 the current situation in the RC. Another limitation to note would be the non-inclusion of 572 questions that capture the potential unwillingness of residents in using reclaimed water, 573 expressing the downside of water reuse in the RC. This might bias results when gathering 574 information on expert views on using reclaimed water, as consumer preferences or concerns 575 could not be collected in the S-LCA. Hence, a more balanced approach should be taken when 576 designing the questionnaire in future research. 577

The SEEA results must be interpreted cautiously as the use of OriginPro adds a normalization step which requires the components to add up to 100%. Using primary data is recommended to improve the overall accuracy of the SEEA when applied to similar refugee community cases. Furthermore, the results of this study must be interpreted cautiously because single score results usually include several assumptions that can lead to increased uncertainty.

583

# 584 **4.** Conclusion

585 The SEEA framework can be used in a broader context because it provides a means for 586 complementing the efforts of current wastewater treatment research that analyzes just one or 587 two aspects of the tripartite model of sustainability.

As clearly illustrated through a ternary diagram, the SEEA identified that the proposed 588 scenario with non-potable water reuse integrated into the UN long-term plan (S3) is 589 environmentally, economically, and socially advantageous as a wastewater treatment method 590 alternative for Zaatari RC when compared to the original wastewater management approach in 591 Zaatari (S1) and the UN long-term plan consisting of the installation of a simplified piped 592 network (S2). The main characteristics of S3 are the reuse of treated effluent for non-potable 593 activities, reduced need for chlorination, enhancement of the WW network, and a wastewater 594 treatment system that consists of on-site MBR and TF containerized package plants. 595

As distinct from the results of the EEA, which identified S2 as the most eco-efficient scenario, the holistic approach from the SEEA identified S3 as the most socio-eco-efficient scenario. This demonstrates that the lack of social considerations present in EEA may affect recommendations for decision-making and is therefore an important addition to the overall assessment.

601

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606	
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