

plots would commute with their families, retainers, and hired workers in the winter cycle on a daily basis. Few highland farmers eventually moved and settled in the Valley, but the overwhelming majority of Valley inhabitants were dispossessed peasants from Palestine. This can be seen from the UNRWA census conducted in 1953 (Table 10:2).

Table 10:2
Western Ghor Population, by Refugee Status

	<u>Refugees</u>	<u>Non- Refugees</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% Refugees</u>
Number	59,290	25,316	84,606	70
Families	11,661	3,778	15,439	75.5

Source: Adapted from Jordan Valley Agricultural Economic Survey (UNRWA, 1954), p. 17.

Thus, while 20% of the total population of Jordan at the time was made up of refugees (i.e., refugees registered as destitute), 70% of the Western Valley population, and 84.4% of the East Valley population were refugees. Many of the tribal hamlets in the Valley mushroomed in a matter of a few months into full-fledged villages. Those included Marj Na'je, Jiftlek, El-Auja, Nwei'meh, and Zbeidat.

The population of these villages varied from summer to winter as their refugee-sharecropper inhabitants tended to hire themselves, and their families' labour, to farmers in the highlands during the summer season. In many cases (such as in the Makhrouq and Jiftlek villages) the housing units and amenities in the village belonged to the landlord so that no distinct feeling of rootedness in the village community existed (UNRWA, 1954:15-17).