Building urban livelihoods: two generations in an unauthorized settlement in Damascus
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This work represents a part of my life that began in early 2000. I conducted a fieldwork-based study in a low-income neighbourhood in Damascus. I experienced people’s problems and joys, their peace and conflicts, struggle and accomplishments. Even as social and political limitations remained in bringing the study up to an academic level, many political, economic, and social changes in the community studied occurred in the same period, emerging from regional and national shifts, and community and households levels themselves. This book is not intended to be a work of political transformation or an ethnographic study. It is instead meant to have a development focus, a holistic study bringing up the question of livelihood strategies of a ‘little community’ and participating and observing their daily life. It deals with the questions of community in terms of the livelihoods approach, taking into consideration the strategies with which rural migrants built their well being in urban setting in a particular space and time, throughout two generations, and examining their world view.

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exact names or situations. Personal characteristics are also put into different frames in order to maintain privacy and not disclose families’ secrets.

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