Online Appendix: Research Methodology

In this online appendix we describe our research methodology, including our recruitment and interview process, both for transparency purposes and because it is difficult to interview military personnel in contentious environments. Our research was conducted with Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from The George Washington University and The American University in Cairo. The target interview population consisted primarily of current and former military personnel in the armed and security forces in the countries we studied. In addition, we pursued interviews with civilian conflict witnesses to better understand the uprisings studied as well as form leads for military interviews. Given the sensitivities of the target interview population, we recruited participants via snowball sampling, and relied on multiple initial contacts to diversify our population of respondents. In total, we conducted 114 interviews, in Bahrain (15), Jordan (46), Turkey (3), Lebanon (23), Yemen (17), and Washington, DC (10).

A research mission to Bahrain was conducted in March 2013. This included interviews with a former Bahrain Defense Officer, journalist, human rights activist, civil society members, political society members, government employees, defense lawyers, and a Bahraini close to an insubordinate police officer who was imprisoned.

In Yemen, three weeks of field research were conducted in Sanaa during January 2013. We interviewed two serving military officers, Yemeni and foreign security experts, academic staff at Sanaa University, representatives of human rights groups, and journalists.

Interviews on the Syria case study were conducted in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. Both Syrian civilians and former military and security personnel were interviewed. Syrian civilians were conflict participants and observers, and the interview pool included at least one individual
who strongly supported Al-Asad’s regime. Former military interviewees held varied ranks and assignments, and were from different hometowns in Syria. We interviewed individuals from the following ranks: conscripted soldier, non-commissioned officer, sergeant major, warrant officer, first lieutenant, captain, colonel, and general. Interviewees had served in a variety of capacities, including with the security services, Air Force, Army infantry units, military intelligence, military finance, military engineering, military judiciary, and the Special Forces. Soldiers were from locations ranging from Deraa, to Homs, to Baniyas, and other areas in Syria. All interviewees were Arab, with the exception of two Druze research participants. All interviewees were Muslim, with the exception of one Christian participant.

In Jordan, our Syria interviews were conducted in Amman, Irbid, and Ramtha; interviews took place in summer 2014 and winter/spring 2015. All interviews in Jordan were conducted outside refugee camps, in what are termed “host communities.” It should be noted, however, that nearly all Syrian former military personnel had previously spent time in Al-Rajehi camp, which specifically hosted former Syrian military personnel who had crossed into Jordan. In Lebanon, research participants were based in Beirut, Tripoli, Aley, and Aarsal, and interviews were conducted using a structured questionnaire in May and June 2014. In Turkey, we conducted semi-structured, open-ended interviews in March 2013 with three defectors from the Syrian army who were, at the time of the interview, staying at Kilis refugee camp close to the Turkish-Syrian border. Since the Turkish authorities did not grant us access to the gated camp itself, we relied on the service of an interlocutor who was able to contact our interview partners in the camp. As refugees at the time were allowed to leave the camp, the interviews were conducted outside of the gated confines of that refugee community.
In Washington, DC we met with country experts, one representative of an organization representing the political opposition to Bashar al-Asad, as well as a Bahrain Defense Force officer.

The sensitivity of our topic and security concerns for both the researchers as well as interlocutors demanded various restrictions to empirical research conducted in the Middle Eastern countries. First, several interview partners were uncomfortable with recording the conversations in open-ended interviews. We respected our interlocutors’ concerns and refrained from using recording devices whenever that was requested. In these cases, we took written notes of our conversations. Second, anonymity and confidentiality were key concerns to almost every interview partner, and we do not disclose the identity of our interview partners, which also complies with our IRB requirements. The situation in Lebanon during our research mission in May/June 2014 was especially problematic in this regard in great part because our target community—Syrian army defectors—felt particularly vulnerable during this time period. We therefore resorted to using an anonymous, structured questionnaire that was distributed by local research assistants who had contacts in this community. Six of those interviews were conducted using Skype, because security concerns prevented the researcher from traveling to Aarsal, in the Lebanese-Syrian border region.

Using such go-betweens to connect the researcher and respondents increased the anonymity of the interview process and hence trust among our interviewees. We also used this structured questionnaire during some of our interviews in Jordan and Turkey; in total, 60 of our interviews were conducted with the help of the structured questionnaire. The questionnaire instrument is attached to this memorandum. We include an English version for reference, although the following Arabic version was used when distributed to respondents. The questions
used in that instrument also shed light on the questions we asked in personal, open-ended conversations.

Personal interviews and conversations were open-ended and questions varied by case study. The questions generally assessed the individual’s occupation and seniority, where he was located from 2011-2013, the climate within the armed or security forces during that period, and whether he left his position and why. To shed greater light on the interview process, we provide the following example of our interview research process in Jordan on the Syria case study.

In Jordan, we located initial contacts through two human rights organizations in Irbid, Jordan; a contact through our network in Syria; and a contact through a volunteer network in Amman. Interviewees often provided contact information that led us to a next set of interviews. We pursued each referral, as the target population was difficult to locate and number of referrals small. Potential research participants were administered informed consent according to our IRB approval. Participants were not comfortable audio recording the interviews, and so we relied on type recording field notes. Interviewees in Jordan ranged from conscript to general officer rank; individuals originated from southern, northern, and central Syria; and there was variation in how long these soldiers stayed in the military once the uprising began and whether they left the country or fought with the opposition. We began interviews by asking the soldier to describe, “How did you get here?” This provided an entry point into a discussion of the conflict and personal experiences.
Survey Administrator(s): ______________________
Country: ______________________
Province: ______________________
Location: ______________________
Date: ______________________

Thank you for participating in this study!

1. Part One

1.1. In what year were you born?
   Year: __________________________________________

1.2. Where were you born?
   Town: __________________________________________
   Governorate: ____________________________________

1.3. Where did you live in March 2011?
   Town: __________________________________________
   Governorate: ____________________________________

1.4. Where did your family live in March 2011?
   Town: __________________________________________
   Governorate: ____________________________________

1.5. What was your marital status in March 2011?
   O Single, never married
   O Separated/divorced
   O Married
   O Widowed
1.6. Do you have children?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

1.6.1. If yes, how many children do you have?
   Number: 

1.7. What is your highest level of education?
   ○ No school
   ○ Some primary school
   ○ Finished primary school
   ○ Some secondary school
   ○ Finished secondary school
   ○ Some university
   ○ Finished university

1.8. What is your father’s highest level of education?
   ○ No school
   ○ Some primary school
   ○ Finished primary school
   ○ Some secondary school
   ○ Finished secondary school
   ○ Some university
   ○ Finished university

1.9. What was your father’s occupation?
   Occupation: 

1.10. What was your family’s monthly income in March 2011?
   ○ Below 5,000 SYP
   ○ Between 5,000 and 10,000 SYP
   ○ Between 10,000 and 15,000 SYP
   ○ Between 15,000 and 20,000 SYP
   ○ Between 20,000 and 25,000 SYP
   ○ Between 25,000 and 30,000 SYP
   ○ Above 30,000 SYP

1.11. What is your ethnic group?
   ○ Arab
   ○ Kurdish
   ○ Assyrian
   ○ Circassian
   ○ Turkmen
   ○ Other: ____________________________

1.12. What is your religion? Are you:
   ○ Sunni Muslim
   ○ Alawite
   ○ Christian
   ○ Other: ____________________________
2. Part Two

2.1. In what year did you join the military?
   Year: ________________________________

2.2. In March 2011, what described your military service:
   ○ Conscription
   ○ Voluntary

2.3. In what unit did you serve in March 2011?
   Unit: _______________________________________

2.4. Where was this unit’s main base?
   Town: _______________________________________
   Governorate: _________________________________

2.5. What was your rank in March 2011?
   Rank: _______________________________________

2.6. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

2.6.1. In March 2011, I trusted my immediate superior in my military unit.
   ○ Strongly disagree
   ○ Disagree
   ○ Agree
   ○ Strongly agree

2.6.2. In March 2011, other members of my unit were close personal friends.
   ○ Strongly disagree
   ○ Disagree
   ○ Agree
   ○ Strongly agree
2.6.3. In general, it is important that members of a unit share the same religious beliefs.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

2.6.4. In general, it is important that members of a unit come from the same region.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree
3. **Part Three**

3.1. When the uprising began in Syria, many military units were ordered to stabilize protest areas. Was your unit ordered to do so?

- Yes
- No

3.1.1. If no, please proceed to question 3.2 on the next page.

If yes, when were you first deployed, following the initial protests of March 2011?

- Month: __________________________
- Year: __________________________

3.1.2. If yes, in what area were you first deployed?

- Town: __________________________
- Governorate: ______________________

3.1.3. If yes, did you face violent protests in the area in which you were deployed?

- Yes
- No

3.1.4. If yes, did you have to use live ammunition against protests?

- Yes
- No

3.1.5. If yes, were you in close contact to protests, such as being able to see the individuals you were deployed against?

- Yes
- No
3.1.6. If yes, were you ever *explicitly* ordered to use lethal force, such as live ammunition, against protests?
   - Yes
   - No

3.1.7. If yes, did you ever pretend to use lethal force, such as shooting over people’s heads?
   - Yes
   - No

3.2. If not deployed to stabilize protest areas, what activities did your unit undertake between March 2011 and September 2012?

Open-ended:

3.3. In spring of 2011, what was your opinion of the opposition movement in Syria?

Open-ended:

3.4. As time went on, did your opinion of the opposition movement in Syria change?
   - Yes
   - No

3.4.1. If no, please proceed to Part Four below.
       If yes, what changed your opinion of the opposition movement?

Open-ended:
4. Part Four

4.1. When did you leave your unit?
   Month: ........................................................................................................
   Year: ...........................................................................................................

4.2. Can you remember any significant events that happened right before you left your unit?
   Events: ........................................................................................................

4.3. Where were you based when you left your unit?
   Town: ........................................................................................................
   Governorate: ............................................................................................

4.4. Where did you first go once you left your unit?
   Town: ........................................................................................................
   Governorate: ............................................................................................

4.5. How did your military service end?
   ○ Unit demobilized
   ○ Home leave
   ○ Defection
   ○ Completed military service
   ○ Other: __________________________

4.6. Were you offered any financial offers to stay in the military, such as a cash bonus?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No
4.7. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.

4.7.1. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I felt leaving would mean betraying the other soldiers in my unit.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

4.7.2. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I felt my family’s physical safety would be in danger if I left.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

4.7.3. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I felt my own physical safety would be in danger if I left.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

4.7.4. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I was worried about not being able to financially support my family without my military employment.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree
4.7.5. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I was worried about the difficulty of planning defection.
   ○ Strongly disagree
   ○ Disagree
   ○ Agree
   ○ Strongly agree

4.7.6. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I was worried about fighting against Syrians if I stayed in my unit.
   ○ Strongly disagree
   ○ Disagree
   ○ Agree
   ○ Strongly agree

4.7.7. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I wanted to fight against the regime.
   ○ Strongly disagree
   ○ Disagree
   ○ Agree
   ○ Strongly agree

4.7.8. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, staying in the army seemed more dangerous than leaving.
   ○ Strongly disagree
   ○ Disagree
   ○ Agree
   ○ Strongly agree
4.7.9. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I wanted to defend my community.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

4.7.10. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I wanted to support a specific political/military group.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

4.7.11. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I felt it was my religious duty.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

4.7.12. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I considered how strong I felt the regime was.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree
4.7.13. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I felt it was my duty as a soldier to stay in my unit.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

4.7.14. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I was afraid of what could happen to my family if I left my unit.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

4.7.15. When deciding whether to stay in or leave my unit, I felt that I had to fight for the future of my country.
   - Strongly disagree
   - Disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly agree

4.8. If you did not defect, thank you, the survey is complete.
   If you defected, please answer these final questions:

   4.8.1. Were you on duty or off duty when you left your unit?
   - On duty
   - Off duty

   4.8.2. Did you leave your unit individually or as part of a group?
   - Individually
   - As part of a group
4.8.2.1. If you left as part of a group: Which of the following best describes the type of group?
- The whole battalion
- A group of friends
- Members of my community
- Fellow soldiers
- Other: ____________________________________________

4.8.3. Did you warn your family before you left your unit?
- Yes
- No

4.8.4. Were you offered money to leave your unit?
- Yes
- No

4.8.5. What did you do after defecting?
- Joined a non-violent protest in Syria
- Joined a militarized protest movement in Syria
- Did not join any protest movement, but remained in Syria
- Did not join any protest movement, and immediately moved outside Syria

4.8.6. Had you attempted to leave your unit prior to your successful defection?
- Yes
- No

4.8.6.1. If no, thank you, the survey is complete.
If yes, why did your previous attempt not succeed?
Open-ended: ____________________________________________

__________________________________________
الجزء الأول

1.1 أذكر تاريخ ميلادك.

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<th>صفحة</th>
<th>السنة</th>
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1.2 أذكر مكان ميلادك.

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<th>مدينة</th>
<th>المحافظة</th>
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1.3 أذكر مكان سكنك في مارس 2011.

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1.4 أذكر مكان سكن أسرتك في مارس 2011.

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1.5 أعرب عن حالة الأسرة.

- ○ مطلقة أو منفصل
- ○ منزوع
- ○ أرمل
- هل عدد أولادك؟

1.6 هنالك أولاد؟

- ○ نعم
- ○ لا

1.7 هل أكملت دراسياً?

- ○ لم ألتحق بمدرسة
- ○ فشلت في التعلم الابتدائي
- ○ حصلت على الشهادة الابتدائية
- ○ فشلت في التعلم الإعدادي
- ○ حصلت على الشهادة الإعدادية
- ○ فشلت في التعليم الجامعي
- ○ حصلت على الشهادة الجامعية

1.8 أذكر أعلى مؤهل دراسي حصل عليه والدك.
1.9  اذكر مهنة والدك.

المهنة

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<td>1.10</td>
<td>اذكر الدخل الشهري لأسرتك في خلال شهر مارس 2011.</td>
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<tr>
<td>أ</td>
<td>أقل من 5,000 الليرة السورية</td>
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<td>ب</td>
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<td>أكثر من 30,000 الليرة السورية</td>
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1.11  ما هي طائفتك العرقية؟

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1.12  الديانة:

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الجزء الثاني

2.1 متى إنتحلت بالخدمة العسكرية؟

السنة

2.2 ماذا كانت طبيعة خدمتك في مارس 2011؟
○ مجند
○ متطوع

2.3 بأي فرقة عسكرية قضيت خدمتك في مارس 2011؟

الوحدة

2.4 اذكر مكان الفرقة

المدينة

المحافظة

2.5 اذكر رتبتك العسكرية في مارس 2011

الرتبة

2.6 حدد مدى اتفاقك مع الجمل التالية

2.6.1 وضعت نتفتي في قائد وحدتي المباشر في مارس 2011.
○ أعترض بشدة
○ أعترض
○ أافق
○ أافق بشدة
2.6.2 ربطتني علاقة صداقة وثيقة بزملائي في الفرقة في مارس 2011.
- اعترض بشدة
- اعترض
- اتفاق
- اتفاق بшدة

2.6.3 من المهم أن ينتمي أعضاء الفرقة إلى نفس الديانة.
- اعترض بشدة
- اعترض
- اتفاق
- اتفاق بشدة

2.6.4 من المهم أن يكون مسقط رأس جميع أعضاء الفرقة من نفس المنطقة.
- اعترض بشدة
- اعترض
- اتفاق
- اتفاق بشدة
الجزء الثالث

3.1 طلب من بعض الوحدات العسكرية التعامل بالقوة مع المتظاهرين. هل تلقت وحدتك مثل هذه الأوامر؟

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في حالة الإجابة بلأ، إنظر السؤال 3.2 في الصفحة التالية.

3.1.2 هل تستخدمت منطقة خدمتك إلى أعمال عنف من قبل المتظاهرين؟

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3.1.3 هل تستخدمت الزخرفة الحية ضد المتظاهرين؟

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3.1.4 هل تلقيت الأوامر مباشرة باستخدام القوة المفرطة ضد المتظاهرين؟

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3.1.5 هل تلقيت أوامر غير مباشرة باستخدام القوة المفرطة ضد المتظاهرين؟

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3.1.6 هل تلقيت أوامر باستخدام القوة المفرطة مثل التصويب فوق رؤوس المتظاهرين؟

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3.1.7 هل تظاهرت باستخدام القوة المفرطة مثل التصويب فوق رؤوس المتظاهرين؟

3.2 في حين عدم الاستعانة بوحدتك في التعامل مع المتظاهرين، ما هي الأعمال التي تولت وحدتك القيام بها في خلال مارس 2011؟

3.2.1 | нет
---|---
| 3.2.2  |  |  |

3.3 في مارس 2011، ما كان رأيك في حركة المعارضة في سوريا؟

3.3.1 | أجب بوضوح
---|---
| 3.3.2  |  |  |

3.4 هل تغير رأيك في حركة المعارضة السورية مع مرور الوقت؟

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3.4.1 في حالة الإجابة بل، انتقل إلى الجزء الرابع من الأسئلة من فضلك.

في حالة الإجابة بل، اذكر الأسباب التي أدت إلى تغيير رأيك في المعارضة السورية؟

أجب بإستفاضة.
الجزء الرابع
4.1 متى غادرت وحدتك؟
الشهر
السنة

4.2 هل تذكر أي أحداث قبل مغادرتك الوحدة؟
الأحداث

4.3 أن كنت نقطة خدمتك حين قررت مغادرة الوحدة؟
المدينة المحافظة

4.4 ما هو أول مكان توجهت إليه بعد مغادرتك الوحدة؟
المدينة المحافظة

4.5 كيف انتهت خدمتك العسكرية؟
ilihan تشير الوحدة
أعمال
تركت الخدمة العسكرية
تممت الخدمة العسكرية
غير ذلك

4.6 هل عرض عليك مبالغ مالية في مقابل استمرار في الخدمة العسكرية؟
نعم
لا

4.7.1 في أثناء اتخاذي لقرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، شعرت بأن هذا القرار خيانة لزملائي في الوحدة.
اعتراض بشدة
اعتراض
وافق
وافق بشدة

4.7.2 في أثناء اتخاذي لقرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، شعرت بأن قرار الفرار تترك الخدمة سيعرض سلامة أسرتي للخطر.
اعتراض بشدة
اعتراض
وافق
وافق بشدة

4.7.3 في أثناء اتخاذي لقرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، شعرت بأن قرار الفرار تترك الخدمة سيعرض سلامة سلامتي للخطر.
اعتراض بشدة
اعتراض
وافق
وافق
4.7.4 في أثناء اتخاذ لقرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، شعرت بالقلق من عدم قدرتي على إعالة أسرتي بعد تركي
للخدمة العسكرية.
- أ disagrees
- النقاش
-افق
-افق بشدة

4.7.5 في أثناء اتخاذ لقرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، شعرت بالقلق من عدم قدرتي على تنفيذ خطط الهروب

بنجاح.
- أ disagrees
- النقاش
-افق
-افق بشدة

4.7.6 في أثناء اتخاذ لقرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، قلت من إمكانية حدوث مواجهة مع أبناء الشعب السوري إذا
استمرت في الخدمة.
- أ disagrees
- النقاش
-افق
-افق بشدة

4.7.7 في أثناء اتخاذ لقرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، أرادت محاولة النظام.
- أ disagrees
- النقاش
-افق
-افق بشدة

4.7.8 في أثناء اتخاذ لقرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، بدأ لي أن البقاء في الجيش أكثر خطرا من تركه.
- أ disagrees
- النقاش
-افق
-افق بشدة

4.7.9 في أثناء اتخاذ لقرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، أرادت الدفاع عن مجتمعي.
- أ disagrees
- النقاش
-افق
-افق بشدة

4.7.10 في أثناء اتخاذ لقرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، أراد الانضمام إلى فصيل سياسي أو عسكري بعينه.
- أ disagrees
- النقاش
-افق
-افق بشدة
4.7.11 في أثناء اتخاذ قرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، شعرت بأنه واجب ديني.

4.7.12 في أثناء اتخاذ قرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، قمت بتقديم قوة النظام.

4.7.13 في أثناء اتخاذ قرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، شعرت بأنه واجبي كعسكري أن أبقى في وحدتي.

4.7.14 في أثناء اتخاذ قرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، شعرت بالخوف على أسرتي بينما قد ينتج عن تركي لوحدة.

4.7.15 في أثناء اتخاذ قرار تركي للخدمة العسكرية، شعرت بأنه واجب علينا أن أحارب من أجل مستقبل بلدي.
4.8.1 هل قمت بالرحيل أثناء تأديتك الخدمة؟
- أثناء تأدي الخدمة 
- خارج الخدمة

4.8.2 هل قمت بترك الخدمة بالمفردة أو كجزء من مجموعة؟
- بمفردي 
- كجزء من مجموعة

4.8.2.1 في حالة تركك الفرقة في مجموعة، اختر الإجابة المناسبة لوصف المجموعة.
- الوحدة بأكملها 
- مجموعة أصدقاء 
- أفراد مجتمع واحد 
- أفراد من الجيش 
- غير ذلك

4.8.3 هل قمت بتحذير أسرتك قبل مغادرتك للوحدة؟
- نعم 
- لا

4.8.4 هل عرض عليك مبالغ مالية في مقابل تركك للوحدة؟
- نعم 
- لا

4.8.5 لماذا فعلت حين غادرت الخدمة؟
- انضمت إلى المعارضة المسلحة في سوريا 
- انضمت إلى المعارضة المسلحة في سوريا ولكن لم أغادر سوريا 
- لم أنضم لأي جهة معارضة للنظام ولكن لم تغادر سوريا 
- لم أنضم لأي جهة معارضة للنظام ولكني غادرت سوريا فوراً

4.8.6 هل قمت بمحاولات هروب فاشلة قبل قيامك بمغادرة الوحدة؟
- نعم 
- لا

4.8.6.1 في حالة الإجابة بالا، شكراً لقد انتهت الأسئلة.
- في حالة الإجابة بنعم، اذكر أسباب فشل تلك المحاولة.

أجب بإسفاطة:

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