

WORKING PAPER 27: SUMMARY IN THE MEANTIME: GENDER, RACE, NATIONALITY, AND “PARA-SOLUTIONS” FOR REFUGEES IN AMMAN, JORDAN BY SARAH NANDI

INTRODUCTION

The traditional durable solutions for refugees, namely resettlement to a third country, local integration, and voluntary repatriation, are no longer accessible for the majority of forced migrants. Resettlement is accessed by less than one percent of refugees, voluntary repatriation is rare, and integration remains politically infeasible in many host states (UNHCR 2022a).

As a particularly salient case of how refugees of different nationalities and gender identities are navigating the lack of formal solutions, Jordan is host to an estimated 760,000 registered refugees and an unknown number of other forced migrants who have been left out of formal refugee recognition (Turner 2023). This research focuses on how these different refugees strategize and aspire to craft solutions for themselves during the “meantime” in Jordan.

Given the inaccessibility of the traditional durable solutions, we introduce the idea of “para-solutions”, which we define as the parallel pathways that refugees create for themselves in order to access some of the benefits associated with residency rights or limited forms of establishing a life outside of Jordan.

Para-solutions can be understood as parallel pathways that often come with enormous risk but nonetheless help forced migrants access some of the benefits associated with residency rights in what we call para-mobility, which includes activities such as the ability to travel out of the country-of-asylum through educational or labour avenues, and para-residency, which includes the ability to attend school at various levels and to navigate possible opportunities to eke out a living.

More broadly, we find that attention to these para-solutions reveals two key insights about the larger concepts of belonging and liminality. First, in contrast with the repeated assumption that only the host community can grant access to acceptance and belonging in integration, our attention to para-residency practices showed that refugees also make their own belonging by fostering commonality with members of the host community and even other refugee communities in the settings offered by CBOs and NGOs. Second, our exploration of para-mobility revealed that in spite of the enormous constraints imposed by liminality, refugees continued to hope for their futures, which was often expressed through planning travel out of Jordan.

Together, these insights underscore the central role that refugees play in attempting to produce their own solutions as alternatives to the traditional durable solutions that are inaccessible to them, an interest that is also reflected in humanitarian actors' recent focus on "complementary pathways" which can be understood as an umbrella term for several means of gaining lawful stay in a third country through humanitarian, education, employment, sponsorship, and family reunification.

1.1.CONTEXT

The context in Jordan is complex as the country continues to host six diverse communities of people who have been displaced throughout the past 75 years, despite the Kingdom not being a signatory to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. These communities include Palestinians from the West Bank, whose presence has shaped the state's refugee responses and policies in every ensuing situation; Gazan Palestinians who have little formal recognition; as well as Iraqis, Yemenis, Somalis, Syrians, and Sudanese people.¹

Jordan hosts refugees through its open border politics, but it is not involved in finding solutions for those who enter the state. Instead, a large consortium of international organizations (IOs), civil society groups, private sector organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), and refugee communities themselves have stepped in to address the situation of refugees (El-Abed et al. 2023).

As El-Abed (2014: 82) explains, "Labels given to 'forced migrants' have varied according to public policy practices" and "represent a discursive 'act of state' in which power is rationalized, drawing boundaries as to who can be included within the process of subjectification and who shall be excluded". This complex and shifting system of labeling (El-Abed 2014) creates immense barriers for refugees seeking long-term solutions for their situations, as well as challenges for day-to-day well-being. Nationality not only determines who can receive refugee status in Jordan, but also the varying conditions faced by the six main groups in the country. Since 2019, UNHCR, in coordination with Government of Jordan, stopped registering any new refugees coming to the country. As a result, many of the Iraqis, Yemeni and Sudanese entering Jordan could no longer register as refugees.

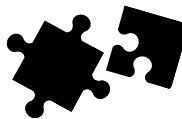
¹ In the Global Compact on Refugees, complementary pathways are defined as, "safe and regulated avenues for refugees that complement resettlement by providing lawful stay in a third country where their international protection needs are met." Complementary pathways are an umbrella term that includes, humanitarian pathways, such as humanitarian visas, education pathways, such as scholarships or apprenticeships, employment pathways, including job opportunities, sponsorship, and family reunification procedures (Global Compact, 2023).

Containment is a series of Global North policies that seek to hold refugees in their regions of origins by providing financial incentives and development aid in the host state. This practice has significantly weakened resettlement and amplified the xenophobic rhetoric directed against those coming to the Global North from other regions or continents (Alienikoff 1992). Funding by the Global North to contain refugees in their own regions now takes up the majority of spending allocations and international negotiations on refugees (Watkins 2022). In Jordan, containment has become so normalized that scholars have described the situation as a classic case of “refugee rentierism” (Freier et al. 2021; Morris 2020). Refugee rentierism or commodification can be understood as the “external income linked to the treatment of forcibly displaced population groups” (Tsourapas 2021a: 251) or when states use refugees as “instruments of interstate bargaining” (254). A rich body of literature has explored this containment and the ensuing rentierism of refugees in Jordan (Pasha 2021; Anholt and Sinatti 2019; Dionigi 2023), demonstrating the ways in which negotiations, such as the Jordan Compact, and other humanitarian-development nexus solutions, such as resilience-building, act as containment strategies to ensure that refugees do not travel outside of Jordan while channeling ample funding to the state to secure this outcome. As Costello (2020: 18) summarizes, “containment evidently has an immense cost in human lives” and the suffering that it engenders amongst refugees in Jordan has become the norm.

Thus, given the reality that the traditional pathways appear to be far out of reach for most refugees in Jordan, this research examines the ways in which refugees find alternative strategies, or “para-solutions”, that target one or two of the benefits embedded within these traditional solutions, such as access to education, employment, or health.

1.2. METHODOLOGY

To investigate the status of solutions in Jordan, this research began with the following question:



Given widespread lack of access in Jordan to the traditional “durable solutions,” how do gender, race, nationality, class, and other identities shape perceptions of what “solutions” to displacement might involve, and how do refugees manage key challenges in their daily lives in the meantime? (e.g., access to services, education, and work).

To address these questions, the researchers drew on qualitative, semi-structured interviews and focus groups conducted in Amman, Jordan over the course of three months in 2022. The researchers conducted interviews with 21 refugees from Syrian, Somali, Sudanese, and Yemeni nationalities as well as 25 IO, CBO staff, and state representatives, for a total of 46 interviews.

Participants were recruited through a mixed approach of snowball sampling. The researchers also held two focus group sessions with 31 total participants. The first focus group was comprised of Syrian women. The second was a group of other nationalities – namely Iraqi, Yemeni, and Somali people – and also included a mix of gender identities.

2. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

We adopt three interrelated theoretical frameworks that provide the basis for our analysis of the para-solutions: (i) intersectionality with a focus on gendered and racialized Othering; (ii) liminality and uncertainty; and finally, (iii) humanitarian bureaucracies. The Othering that refugees experience exacerbates the liminality and uncertainty that they encounter, which is reinforced by humanitarian actors that aim to offer resources, assistance, and protection, but frequently fall short due to the complex arrangements of the state and their inability to operate independently, particularly in non-signatory contexts. Because of these experiences, refugees increasingly seek para-solutions as a means of responding to Othering by crafting belonging or attempting to leave. They cope with their liminality by insisting on planning for the future anyways.

2.1.OTHERING AND INTERSECTIONALITY

First, refugees in Jordan face pervasive Othering based on their gender, race, and skin tone. As an intersectional approach reveals, social identities overlap in ways that often produce different forms of Othering.

For example, we found that Syrian boys face specific forms of gendered bullying in school that can deter them from continuing on while Somali, Sudanese, Iraqi, and Yemeni parents struggle to access primary education for their children at all. The experiences of Othering taking place in Jordan require an intersectional analysis because the challenges that refugees face even when attempting to access para-solutions are not defined homogenously but rather through specific overlapping of categories.

2.2.LIMINALITY AND UNCERTAINTY

This study builds on theories of liminality and uncertainty given the prolonged periods of displacement that each of these refugee communities endure, with the majority of participants explaining that they had been in Jordan for ten years or more and struggling with a lack of clear, longer-term solutions to their predicament. Defined by Turner (1967) as waiting on the threshold in a state of “betwixt and between”, liminality fosters precarity as refugees wait to move from one phase of life to another and is the focus of an extensive body of literature in refugee studies given the increasing normalization of protracted displacement. Liminality fosters a sense of uncertainty about the future that impedes refugees’ abilities to plan for their future or securely navigate the present. Studies show that liminality and uncertainty have significant impacts in constraining the situations and options available to refugees and that this uncertainty weighs on their mental and physical well-being because they cannot assuredly plan for what comes next (Schaefer 2014; Mason 2011; Löbel 2020; Maas et al. 2022).

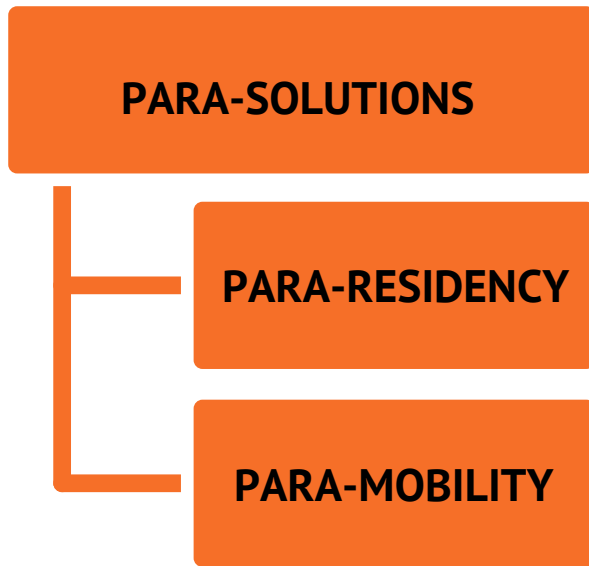
2.3. HUMANITARIAN BUREAUCRACIES

In pursuing their own para-solutions, refugees also must navigate complex humanitarian bureaucracies that exacerbate liminality and operate through Othering. We find that Yemeni, Iraqi, Somali, and Sudanese refugees often struggle to gain recognition from UNHCR and many are given the status of an “asylum-seeker” for years while they wait in Jordan. This lack of clear institutional support can exacerbate children being refused education, exclusion from resettlement procedures, limited or a lack of monthly financial support, and other harms that make the state of liminality that refugees experience in Jordan unbearable.

The power of humanitarian bureaucracies to exacerbate, rather than resolve, some of the problems that refugees face is a well explored topic in research on liminality. Everyday hurdles, such as requiring non-expired passports for aid delivery or national barcodes for access to children’s education, were consistently named as serious difficulties in our interviews, as participants often explained how these processes became both a daily and a structural constraint that significantly impeded their well-being. When asked about how different organizations responded to the needs of “non-Syrian” refugees, most organizations insisted that they turned no one away. However, few produced any evidence that their programs could reach or be accessed by other refugee communities. The legal requirements that many refugees lack, and the absence of assistance that refugees receive in obtaining them, create formidable and often gendered and racialized barriers that impede access even to para-solutions.

Overseeing these labyrinths, as Napier-Moore (2011) calls them, “humanicrats” are paradoxically welcoming while also engaging in hostile practices, resulting in little practical help to find solutions for many refugees and leaving them in harmful states of enduring liminality. As Kibreab (1993) has shown, humanitarian perceptions of the refugee population considerably influence how they are addressed in programming, and how their needs are considered. When asked about how they work with refugees on durable solutions, one UN participant explained, “we spend a lot of our time trying to manage these expectations...in many ways we are just expectation managers” (Interview 3 2022). As opposed to providing refugees with better knowledge of the programs available or helping them find short-term solutions, refugees feel that these actors offer little, stressing the lack of support and solutions in most interviews. These acts are a part of ‘bureaucratic violence’, wherein refugees are exposed “to structural and physical violence by being forced to live in precarious states of indeterminate waiting.” (Martinez 2023: 2). This bureaucratic violence is an enduring condition that exacerbates the precarious conditions in the lives of refugees.

3. PARA-SOLUTIONS



Para-solutions approaches show that refugees in Jordan are maneuvering their present positioning and strategizing their futures despite the constraints and failures of their political environment. Given the importance of the future in solutions planning, para-solutions involve both immediate responses to everyday challenges, as well as long-term dreams. Para-residency involves refugees making plans to stay in Jordan (despite their lack of secure legal status) and establishing ties in the country through educational and vocational training, as well as volunteering with IOs, CBOs, and NGOs. Para-residency can also entail refugees seeing themselves as a part of communities in Jordan and feeling a sense of belonging. Rather than understanding this as de-facto integration, this study specifies these strategies and actions as para-residency because of the effort and the agency that refugees put into shaping their own lives and making their own luck, rather than as an ad hoc process that simply unfolds before them.

Para-mobility can take the form of working abroad, either through remote employment or through labour migration, family reunification, scholarship, or educational programs, or dreaming of ways to do so. In the following sections, these two para-solutions are examined in detail while also exploring how access to para-solutions is deeply shaped by racial, gendered, classed, and nationality-based factors.

In doing so, this study notes the many challenges that refugees face even when attempting to access para-solutions. This research repeatedly found that the experiences of these groups are markedly distinguished from one another, showing how the often-used categories of “refugees” or even “Syrian refugees” or “women refugees” are not meaningful frameworks or full representations. What is viable as a para-solution shifts drastically depending on whether an individual holds formal refugee status, status as an “asylum-seeker”, a “guest”, or informal status, which primarily hinges on nationality, but is also influenced by factors such as race, gender, and class.

Notwithstanding refugees’ critiques of the hostile humanitarian bureaucracy in Jordan, we found that IOs and CBOs are actively participating in the production of para-solutions both in the programs that they offer as well as in their definitional practices. For example, many NGOs in Jordan have redefined the language of durable solutions to “finding ways to strengthen resilience, self-reliance” (Interview 1, 2022) instead of referring to the processes of resettlement, local integration, and voluntary repatriation.

3.1.PARA-RESIDENCY

Para-residency operates by seizing some of the benefits and social security that come with localized citizenship, such as a sense of belonging and access to socioeconomic support, even if tenuous.

3.1.1.PRIMARY EDUCATION

Education is highly sought after by different refugee communities but remains largely inaccessible due to restrictions around nationality and class. Refugees who can access primary and secondary education in spite of immense barriers gain relationships that ease their navigation of life in Jordan, thus facilitating the para-residency process. However, this access is largely determined first by the policies and the legality of status, followed by a combination of factors relating to class, race, nationality, and gender.

Syrians are at times portrayed by NGOs and government reports as having more access to primary and secondary education (Interview 10, 2022; Karasapan 2022), but in reality, they face many challenges that extend beyond legal access to education and that are shaped by gendered and classed dynamics. Only 145,000 Syrian children are enrolled in Jordanian schools, which is estimated to be approximately half of the school-aged children in the country (Karasapan and Shah 2018; Karasapan 2022). A Human Rights Watch study listed the following as the main reasons for low and declining enrollment

rates of Syrian children in schools: poverty, lack of transportation, poor quality, lack of future opportunities linked to education, administrative barriers, and a lack of accommodations for disabled children (Stauffer 2020). For those who do manage to enroll in school, the Ministry of Education implemented the “double-shift” program wherein Syrian students attended school at night, after Jordanian children. This program has been identified as contributing to worsened education outcomes (Salem 2021), and limits relationship-building opportunities that are integral to para-residency for both boys and girls. Furthermore, although public education is free for Jordanians and Syrians who fall under the Jordan Response Plan, education can be costly in Jordan with fees ranging from 40-60JD (approximately 60-100 USD). While not overtly high, these fees can cause “indirect discrimination” for refugees with limited income (Interview 14, 2022). Only Syrians’ education fees were waived because of the allocated funds following their mass influx. As an education specialist working for an NGO commented, “if most families could do private school, they would without hesitation, but it places a financial burden that refugee families and the bottom half of Jordanian society cannot afford” (Interview 46, 2022). Class size also limits the educational options available to Syrians and other refugee nationalities. Despite the fact that since 2014, almost 200 schools in Jordan have operated in two shifts (morning and afternoon), the classes are reported to be overcrowded.

The gendered dynamics at play in Jordanian-Syrian interactions between young men and boys often involve accusations from Jordanians that Syrians are “effeminate” or “soft” as a justification for bullying that consequently prevents greater social inclusion. While the situation for Syrian girls in schools remains underfunded and restricted, no participants described the same types of bullying from Jordanian students against their daughters. In addition to localized gender dynamics, this situation could also be owing to the fact that NGOs frequently focused on girls’ education as a site of intervention and provided more accessible funding for girls to attend schooling that secures transportation and safe mobility, which was confirmed in an interview with a prominent NGO in Jordan (Interview 27, 2022).

However, for Somali and Sudanese children, access to education is much more difficult as these communities struggle to enroll their children in schools at all and face broad problems even with para-residency. For Somali refugees, this is also in part because many do not speak Arabic very well, and that they lack formal permission to enroll in Jordanian schools. These bureaucratic processes create barriers for Somali and Sudanese refugees as well as Iraqis and Yemenis in part because these groups do not have consistent access to refugee status, especially after 2019 when registration with UNHCR was no longer an option.

As an education specialist for a foreign development agency commented: “the most attention is given to Syrians. We only mean Syrians when we talk about refugees” (Interview 51, 2022). Because of this, other nationalities are addressed by the government in an ad hoc manner and receive mixed assistance from NGOs. This situation means less access to resources for refugees, limiting their ability to engage in para-residency due to the fact that no funding from the international community is earmarked for non-Syrian refugees.

As an additional barrier, racist behaviors also push Black refugees out of schools even if they have managed to gain access. Phenotypical differences between Jordanians and sub-Saharan African refugees mean that these refugees are often easily singled out. With the bureaucratic requirements for enrolling in education becoming nearly impassable and as instances of racism continue to exclude Somali and Sudanese from schooling opportunities, access to para-residency declines. The consequences of this exclusion have both long-term and short-term implications. For example, many participants highlighted how there are no programs even to teach Somali parents Jordanian Arabic. One Somali woman explained, “Especially Somalis. They don’t speak Arabic at all. So they can’t integrate with the society as well” (Interview 38, 2022).

An informative example of the ways in which members of refugee communities are providing solutions for themselves can be found in Sawyian, a NGO founded by a Sudanese activist and Somali educator hoping to provide education to Somali and Sudanese children as well as other members of the community. As a means of crafting para-residency, this refugee-led initiative offered English lessons and sought to ensure a sense of a community for people who are treated differently. When discussing this, one of them explained: "I wanted to do everything I could for my community. I will teach what I know from my own kitchen if I must" (Interview 47, 2023). Their work proves that despite an apparent lack of support, refugees are providing education for each other even under enormous constraints.

3.1.2.VOCATIONAL TRAININGS

While the formal labor market in Jordan is largely closed to refugees, funded vocational training programs by local and international NGOs have become important spaces for pursuing para-residency. Even for Syrians who can access the labour market, bureaucratic hurdles and complex financial requirements have made accessing a Jordanian work permit nearly impossible for most of the population, especially in the professional sectors (Kattaa and Byrne 2018). Iraqi, Yemeni, Somali, Sudanese, and refugees of other nationalities have limited access to labour permits and remain outside international negotiations on labour market access unless they can secure a Jordanian employer's sponsorship (Morris 2020).

Part of this restriction is believed to be from the Jordanian Government's view that refugees have placed an immense economic burden on the country through competition for housing, resources, healthcare, schooling, and jobs (Interview 9, 2022). Since 2016, the international community funded the work permit cost for some 200,000 Syrian refugees, yet no money was allocated for non-Syrians. This decision rendered work permits for non-Syrians very expensive and thus working rights have become inaccessible.

Administrative hurdles and the confusion that they produce compound the precarity that displaced people experience by fostering a sense of fear surrounding registration, taxation, and other aspects of formally and legally running a business in Jordan. Non-Jordanians can only operate their own shops and register them at the municipality if they have the amount of JD50,000 to register the business and all affiliated services such as water and electricity. As a result, the majority of refugees seek to partner with Jordanian businessmen. However, these partnerships often result in imbalanced power dynamics.

In response, NGOs often aim to provide legal aid to those interested in navigating this system and efforts are being made to bring bureaucrats and refugees into the same room to address these concerns. However, the results have been limited in creating positive, long-term solutions. In spite of these challenges, both IOs and refugees conceptualize vocational training as a form of inclusion that advances para-residency both conceptually and practically by helping refugees progress towards having a licensed business.

Facilitating this form of para-residency, CBOs and NGOs are working to develop the skills of Syrian refugees in Jordan and to find them work by offering frequent job training opportunities in many different sectors. By not separating the two groups, these organizations are able to offer a rare setting where refugee community members and Jordanians can encounter and interact with one another.

In terms of who can access vocational training, Syrian women have a clearer pathway to running a small business than other nationalities due to the focus on female empowerment by NGOs. However, the division of labour is still highly gendered despite NGOs' attempts to bring women into what they call "non-traditional fields for women," such as car mechanics and plumbing (Interview 22, 2022; Interview 2, 2022). Syrian women typically participate in beauty training, home kitchens, and other "feminized" forms of labor (Focus Group 1, 2022; Interview 13, 2022). In contrast, Syrian men often work in either the informal sector or in computer work, carpentry, and other forms of "masculinized" labour (Interview 22, 2022; Interview 4, 2022). Regardless of the persisting structures of gendered labour, NGO staff working in employment and vocational training still see their programs as a space where Syrian women can transgress these boundaries (Interview 12, 2022; Interview 15, 2022; Interview 27, 2022).

Despite the increased barriers to their participation, Yemeni, Somali, and Sudanese women also work with NGOs and CBOs to engage in para-residency through participating in vocational training and establishing small business opportunities. A notable example is a henna training program led by Sudanese women and supported by a CBO (Interview 37, 2022).

3.1.3.VOCATIONAL TRAININGS

In addition to these para-residency strategies, volunteering with different NGOs also plays a crucial role for refugees of all nationalities. As a way of advancing para-residency, volunteering challenges the notion that host community policies and practices definitively determine integration possibilities by showing how refugees can build their own sense of belonging with others, even across nationalities.

3.2.PARA-MOBILITY

Para-mobility can take different forms, such as remote work conducted in Jordan, or travel to other countries seen as more hospitable through alternative pathways than resettlement. These maneuvers and the hopes associated with them are gendered in how they are accessed, with men receiving more encouragement to engage with alternatives and women more frequently either hoping to remain in Jordan or to be selected for traditional resettlement.

² Although official statistics are difficult to confirm, the number of the issued work permits is estimated to have exceeded 380,000 by 2023 (Pearson 2021).

However, conflict and forced migration can upend traditional gender norms and create new opportunities, especially for women (Martin 2004; Snyder 2008).

3.2.1.SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Ideally, pursuing international educational is a form of para-mobility that grants refugees of all nationalities the opportunity to travel outside of Jordan and establish the foundations for a new life elsewhere. Participants viewed education as an inherently important and desirable aspect of life that Jordan did not offer, but they also connected educational opportunities to a potential life outside of Jordan. Although accessing international education is highly limited by factors such as socio-economic status, age, and ability, many refugees see education as their only viable opportunity to pursue life outside of Jordan, even if only temporarily.

3.2.2.LABOUR MOBILITY

Refugees also engage with other forms of para-mobility through informal, temporary, and sometimes remote employment outside of Jordan. Many refugees pursue work outside of Jordan through the informal sector, short-term contracts, or by learning how to freelance online. Although precarious, this aspect of para-mobility provides short-term income through the ability to work outside the country and, oftentimes, to provide for families in Jordan.

However, just as access to scholarships is shaped by factors such as gender, race, nationality, and class, so too are labour opportunities. Informal labour sought by traveling outside of Jordan through informal or smuggling routes, although a common strategy, lies outside of the scope of this study, but has already been covered extensively in other existing literature (Mora and Piper 2021; Brell et al. 2020; Ruhs 2019).

Two different methods of work – temporary regional contracts and remote work – connect refugees with markets and experiences outside of Jordan. First, due to the inability to work formally or to make ends meet through informal employment in Jordan, many Syrian men and some Somali men have gained access to short term or temporary employment in the Gulf states. The families of these men commented that though the work is “on a month-by-month basis” and is “without a license, social security, nor health insurance”, they feel that these are crucial opportunities that open up the possibility of moving to those states (Interview 20, 2022). When talking about her husband, who works as an engineer in the UAE, a Syrian woman noted: “I might go to Gulf countries, the UAE for example, if I get the opportunity, I would go. The UAE has a lot of work opportunities, especially for my husband” (Interview 20, 2022). However, these positions are often uncertain and bureaucratically complex. Although opportunities are dangerous and limited, refugee men pursue these short-term opportunities to work outside Jordan in order to provide for their families, and in turn their families continue to have hope for more access and stability in the future.

When contracts conclude, respondents reported that the way back to Jordan was barred as the state neither wished to permit re-entry nor did Gulf states permit external travel. As a result, searching for further employment or clandestinely returning to Jordan was the only possibility for them. While this predicament remains difficult, the hope for a future possibility is a key benefit of para-mobility.

3.2.3.FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND REUNIFICATION

A third means for engaging in para-mobility is through formal and informal relational processes, such as marriage, dating, and family reunification. Marriage or planning these relationships between family members and other resettled refugees can be a way in which some refugees can secure the opportunity to move away from Jordan, ideally to more stable and prosperous circumstances. Finally, family reunification can be a way through which refugees gain access to solutions outside of Jordan. In each case, gender, class, nationality, and race also shape the ways in which refugees think about and gain access to this specific approach to para-mobility.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that the experiences of refugees in conceiving and accessing para-solutions varies by race, nationality, class, and gender. Overall, the study demonstrates that there is a larger spectrum of solutions that merits attention. In our case, para-solutions include forms of para-mobility, such as pursuing scholarship opportunities outside of Jordan, short term work in the Gulf, remote work freelancing, and movement via relationships. Each of these para-mobility strategies imagines a life outside of Jordan, where opportunities are limited, and attempts to make this movement achievable. While some refugees pursue para-mobility, others focus on para-residency strategies, attempting to better root themselves in Jordan despite barriers to integration. Some choose to advance a multi-pronged strategy, simultaneously looking towards para-mobility while trying to better establish themselves as residents in Jordan. Para-residency encompasses strategies to access primary education, vocational training, and volunteering. Rather than seeking to leave Jordan, each of these strategies connects refugees to members of the local community and helps to develop a sense of community belonging for themselves.

