WAITING, HOPES AND FUTURES: HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE DISPLACED STUDENTS FROM SYRIA IN LEBANON AND JORDAN

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Abstract

The thesis concerns the future, or futures, in young people's pursuit of higher education in refugee situations in Lebanon and Jordan. The project is an empirical study about the experiences and responses that are less visible yet central to the everyday life of the young population who are displaced due to the 2011 Syrian uprising and the subsequent conflicts. Situating higher education for refugees in the overlapping global and national frameworks of humanitarianism and development, the project asks how refugee students experience and respond to the educational opportunities and lack thereof. Acknowledging intersecting experiences in the everyday life of the young participants, the thesis also looks into the strategies students devised in hoping towards higher education, and in negotiating the period of "waiting" as a refugee and as a young person entering adulthood.

To understand the experiences, strategies, and responses to the challenges of the everyday in relation to educational pursuits, the project takes an interdisciplinary, ethnographic and reflexive approach to gather insights that focused on refugees' everyday experiences, emotions and strategies in the struggles they face. The fieldwork took place during September 2018-April 2019 mainly in the urban areas of Lebanon and Jordan.

With its experience-near interpretations, the thesis broadens the understanding of the complex temporal and affective aspects of refugees' experiences in higher education and their expectations towards the future. It fills the critical gap of research on refugee higher education in Southern contexts. By engaging with the meanings of "hope" and "the future" often presented in the practical field of refugee education, it argues that education and higher education for refugees cannot fulfil "hopes for the future" with the current dominant humanitarian logic of minimal provision and crisis-informed and temporary patchwork. It argues that meaningful participation, rather than liminal access, is what embodies education that contains a future. Education that contains a future is by no means abstract but is in the very practical sense of everyday commuting, networking, initiating, participating and hoping.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2014-2015, I conducted a study with a small group of Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon on the everyday agentive acts of negotiating the social and political exclusion while maintaining or producing the orientation towards the future. When the so-called "Europe's refugee crisis" emerged in 2015, I was in constant contact with young men and women who were preparing or waiting to embark on their trips for "a better future" elsewhere while some others stayed. For those who stayed, for various reasons, voluntary or not, I observed that education had been one of the things that students and their parents alike valued greatly and invested in fully with their limited resources at hand. Education embodies a trajectory towards the future which departs from the daily struggle of survival. It is the orientation towards the future that constitutes a life worth living. This project is an effort in continuing thinking and writing about "the future" in relation to education.

The majority of the displaced population from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region are located within the region, meaning most of them are internally displaced or located in the neighbouring countries. In Syria's case, in 2018, 6.18 million people were internally displaced, with 5.49 million Syrians in the neighbouring countries of Turkey (3.62 million), Lebanon (0.94 million), Jordan (0.67 million) and Iraq (0.25 million). While the above numbers have not included those who were not documented with UNHCR, it shows a sharp contrast against the refugees being hosted in Europe and North America which is less than one million (0.98) in total (UNHCR, 2018). This project concerns the future, or futures, of those who continue to engage with educational opportunities in the host countries of Lebanon and Jordan.

The project is timely in practical and conceptual terms looking at "futures" and the emotive element of "hope" in higher educational pursuits in refugee contexts. It is an education study engaging with a long-term perspective that will inform current policy and practices about what it means to "hope"—to invest other than material and individual terms—for higher education and the future beyond. It is also a refugee study that is in itself interdisciplinary, offering a critique on the relief logic of humanitarianism and crisis-oriented approach to education and higher education that are, supposedly, "developmental" and future-oriented.

The interdisciplinary study situates higher education (HE) for refugees in the overlapping global and national frameworks of humanitarianism and development. It explores how refugee students experience and respond to the existing educational opportunities and lack thereof. I centre the questions on the case of Syrian refugee students but critique the national and humanitarian categories in displacing the ordinary educational pursuits to somewhere exceptional and crisis-oriented. What is of concern in this work is the everyday practices of commuting, networking, initiating, participating and hoping.

The project takes as a starting point the gap in the humanitarian response to refugee education. While children's education and protection concerns humanitarian organizations and efforts were made to incorporate Syrian refugees in public schools in Lebanon and Jordan, responses to refugees' needs for higher education opportunities were slow and limited. Prior to 2012, higher education for refugees had been considered by the UN refugee agency, as

reserved for "the most deserving refugees"[1] and as a potential threat to competing with funding for primary education.[2] The late response was going against the fact that higher education massification had taken place worldwide. In Syria's case, an estimation of over 20% of the Syrians aged 18-24 were participating in higher education and vocational training prior to the uprising (See Hamadmad, 2020)[3] in 2010. This number had plummeted to 1% in Turkey, 6% in Lebanon and 8% in Turkey amongst the refugee students (Lorisika, Cremonini and Safar Jalani, 2015).

Despite most of the MENA refugees being located in the region, research on higher education for refugees outside of the Northern resettlement contexts remains in paucity (Ramsay and Baker, 2019). Specific to the Syrian case, the existing literature largely focuses on the immediate challenges and barriers facing the students and functions as reports of the current situation with immediate policy concerns (El-Ghali and Al-Hawamdeh, 2017; El-Ghali, Berjaoui and Deknight, 2017; Kamyaba, 2017; Center for Strategic Studies, 2018). Students' experiences and their acts of participation, negotiation and initiation of educational opportunities remain less visible. The thesis aims to fill this gap as it joins the emerging body of literature in students' experiences and responses to higher education opportunities and lack thereof in the refugee contexts outside of Northern contexts (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2014b; Dryden-Peterson, 2017; Chopra, 2018; Bellino, 2018; Fincham, 2020b; Fert, 2020).

[1] UNHCR. 2007. *Education strategy 2007-2009,* p. 16 note 11. [Online] [Accessed 25 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.refworld.org/docid/469201e72.html
[2] UNHCR. 2009. *Education strategy 2010-2012,* p. 21. [Online] [Accessed 25 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.refworld.org/docid/4d11de9d2.html
[3] Hamadmad (2020) argues that the truthful term to use to describe the events happened in 2011 in Syria should be "uprising" rather than "civil war", "conflict", "crisis" or "war".

Extending the literature on the concerns of access and barriers, the thesis specifically attends to Syrian refugee students' long-term perspectives about education. "Future" and "hope" are words often used in higher education scholarship programmes for refugees and media reports about students' HE journeys: "Scholarships give young refugees hope and an education"[4], nurturing "a generation of future change-makers"[5], building "an educated workforce of future leaders"[6] and contributing to "a bright future for all"[7]. Instead of acknowledging these words as passing references to what is meaningful about HE opportunities for refugees, this project includes "future" and "hope" as the central part of the investigation. By focusing on these concepts, the thesis engages in temporal and emotive aspects of educational pursuits in refugee contexts. It also means to look at students' educational pursuits in a holistic way that involves not only experiences within educational institutions such as schools and universities but also intersecting experiences about family, work and marriage.

On the other hand, "refugees" are often characterised as immobile and passive victims of conflicts and displacements or exceptional examples of individual success and resiliency in media and public discourse. Challenges and agentive acts of the everyday are often overlooked in pursuit of spectacles of suffering or aspirational stories. As Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2020) emphasises, "people who have been displaced not only *experience* but also develop

[4] Nayana Bose,"German-funded scholarships give young refugees hope and an education", UNHCR. http://www.unhcr.org/en-ie/news/latest/2016/4/5702722a6/german-funded-scholarships-give-young-refugees-hope-education.html [Accessed: 15 Nov 2021]
[5] UNHCR DAFI Porgramme. https://www.unhcr.org/uk/dafi-scholarships.html [Accessed: 30 Oct 2020]
[6] SPARK Higher Education Services (HES). https://spark.ngo/programme/higher-education-services-hes/ [Accessed: 30 Oct 2020]
[7] "EU signs €15 million grant to support Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians access to higher education", EDU-Syria. https://edu-syria.eu/eu-signs-e15-million-grant-to-support-syrian-refugees-and-vulnerable-jordanians-access-to-higher-education/ [Accessed: 30 Oct 2020]

different ways of *responding* to their own situation and those of other people" (original emphases, p. 412), this work accentuates strategies, negotiations, and individual and collective actions in responding to the barriers in participating in higher education and the future related to it.

The thesis locates refugee students' educational pursuits in the political and historical contexts of global refugee policies as well as Lebanon and Jordan's national responses to other refugees' presence prior to the displacement of the Syrian refugees. It asks:

1) *How do the students experience and respond to higher education opportunities and lack thereof under the dominant humanitarian framework of resiliency and the nationalistic framework of development?*

Acknowledging intersecting experiences in the everyday life of the young participants, the thesis intends to answer the question of

2) *What are the strategies devised in hoping towards higher education, and in negotiating the period of "waiting" as a refugee and as a young person entering adulthood?*

To understand the experiences, strategies, and responses to the challenges of the everyday in relation to educational pursuits, the project takes an interdisciplinary, ethnographic and reflexive approach to gather insights that focused on refugees' everyday experiences, emotions and strategies in the struggles they face. The fieldwork took place during September 2018-April 2019 mainly in the urban areas of Lebanon and Jordan.

While focusing on "higher education", the project does not engage with the concept of HE as an institutional sector but in a broad sense of higher education opportunities and part of the educational journey after high school, which involves official exams for high school

certification, namely “Baccalaureate” in Lebanon and “Tawjihi” in Jordan. The research recognises that HE is a continuation of students’ educational pursuits that could be fluid and fragmented, involved in basic and secondary schooling and different kinds of educational opportunities that are considered non-academic, informal or non-formal, which are common in refugee contexts.

An overview of the thesis

The project is an empirical study about the experiences and responses that are less visible yet central to the everyday life of the young population who are displaced due to the 2011 Syrian uprising and the subsequent conflicts. The thesis consists of six chapters, with Chapters 1 and 2 reviewing the political and historical contexts and literature, Chapter 3 accounting for methods and methodology and Chapters 4, 5, 6 presenting research findings.

Chapter 1 delineates the political and historical backgrounds for the current higher education access for refugees in Lebanon and Jordan. It contextualises the present situation within the overlapping political frameworks and historical circumstances at global, regional and national levels. The chapter is a response to the critiques of methodological nationalism in education research and the presentist, ahistorical accounts in refugee studies. The first part of the chapter focuses on the development of global education policies and national educational reforms in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. It explains the gaps created by a set of educational policies that emphasise national economic development and the top-down approach to reforms. The second part maps the global responses to refugee education and higher education and their political implications. The global framework is analysed along with the previous responses to refugees’ educational needs within the Arab world, focusing on

Lebanon and Jordan's experiences of hosting Palestinian and Iraqi refugees. The chapter provides a background of the multiple frameworks, histories and their interrelatedness that influence current educational opportunities and the future for refugees or lack thereof.

Chapter 2 reviews literature across multiple disciplines including refugee education and higher education and streams of literature on refugees and migrants' physical, social and temporal im/mobilities in addition to waiting and "waithood" in youth studies. By collating the literature on temporal experiences of refugees and youths, the chapter addresses the tendency to essentialise "the refugee experience". The first section focuses on the field of refugee education, explaining why it often dwells on psycho-social aspects of refugees in education, and how this project addresses the issue of concentrating on individual "vulnerability". It extends the relief and development debate that has long concerned the field by bringing in a discussion of the discourses about "the future" related to higher education in refugee contexts, including "return and rebuild" and employability. The second part of the chapter traverses from the critiques of constructing refugees as binary subjects in terms of visibility and mobility to a discussion on social and existential mobilities, waiting and waithood. These bodies of literature build up the understanding of a proposed conceptual framework of hope for understanding empirically educational hopes of the refugee young people.

Chapter 3 explains the methodological approaches and methods used for obtaining the knowledge of this project. It defines the project as an ongoing interpretive process in which the current findings are fragmentary and intersubjective, produced through relationships in the field and mediated by my translation and interpretation influenced through my ongoing engagement with the academic field. The first part of the chapter accounts for the interdisciplinary nature of this study and why and how ethnography and

reflexivity are used in order to gain insights into students' everyday strategies and temporal and emotive experiences. The second part details the process and procedures done in all phases of the research, including how I connected to the participants, their demographic, the locations of my visits and the places where interviews were carried out, and how I analysed the data. It includes ethical considerations on positionality, consent, data protection and use of categories of student/Syrian/refugee.

Chapter 4 presents the first findings chapter. It focuses on how students devise strategies in working toward higher education and how educational hopes should be considered in terms of ordinary everyday networking, commuting, participating and studying. The chapter also asks what happens when the students cannot meet the expectations or fulfil the educational hope. The first section makes sense of how high school students prepare themselves for the exams required for HE as they face barriers caused by bureaucratic procedures, lack of access to quality education and financial constraints. The efforts and strategies responding to these barriers point to the crucial idea of meaningful participation rather than liminal access. The second part of the chapter documents segments of students' experiences of not willing to or not being able to fulfil the educational hopes that are expected of them (and that they also engage with). It details how symbolic violence occurs when students cannot practically work towards the expectation. The chapter demonstrates how educational pursuits are emotional and affective processes and the exceptionality casts upon refugees as the success story has its implication.

Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the national policies of Lebanon and Jordan in regard to refugees' education and "the future". It is followed by an analysis of the characteristics and constraints of the major scholarship programmes and refugees' experiences and responses to

them. The first section brings together the investigations of education access and policies on refugees' labour participation in order to discern where the policies stand in terms of refugees' long-term presence and "the future" in the countries. It highlights the tension within the layered policy framework of refugee education and higher education itself. The constraints caused by the current paradigm of provision are reflected in how scholarship programmes are carried out, which are accounted for in the second section. It includes the periodical, phase-to-phase funding, the discourses of return and an "open future", and merit-based and youth-centred approach of the HE scholarships. The section illustrates students' collective actions and local NGO initiatives in response to the challenge of accessibility. The chapter argues that students are devising strategies to maintain hopes for the future as they face the short-term humanitarian relief approach that lingers even when the provision of education and higher education supposedly embodies the developmental approach to refugees' presence.

Chapter 6, informed by the legal and political constraints analysed in Chapter 5, aims to understand how the students experience and negotiate the period of waiting and waithood as they seek to make use of their education. The first section focuses on the participants' everyday experiences in engaging with the future, taking into consideration the various roles they play in relation to their families. It conveys students' complex experiences in feeling "stuck" while having a sense of urgency and the anxious awareness of time passing. These experiences emerge from not only the expectation to complete education and "have a job", but also fulfil the expectation of establishing oneself, supporting family and contributing to society. The second part of the chapter demonstrates the diverse strategies the students and graduates negotiate the period of waiting. The agentive acts include seeking spatial and virtual mobilities, as well as temporal mobility in which one keeps busy and maintains an outlook

towards an “open future” in order to stay in hope. The chapter argues that most of the participants experience punctuated, short-term participation in educational and training courses made available under the humanitarian-developmental framework discussed in the previous chapter.

The conclusion is presented in the final pages that highlights of its theoretical, methodological, and practical implications. Through empirical evidence, the conclusion suggests that the thesis contributes to the current theoretical debates about refugee education and its relief/development logics, refugee exceptionality and waiting and “waithood”. The thesis proposes a conceptual framework that helps to shift the gaze from vulnerable individuals to “vulnerable contexts”. The framework enables a critique of the current humanitarian/ “developmental” approach that reflects a rather temporary and crisis-informed vision of education and the exceptional hope that is accentuating on refugees’ national marker and “refugee-ness”. The chapter also reflects on the methodological limitations and possible ways forward for a more ethical and dialogical research process. It also gives thoughts to possible future research considering “the future” that has happened, and the future is in constant change.

CHAPTER 1

EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENT AND THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES TO REFUGEE HIGHER EDUCATION

1.1 Introduction

This project's enquiry into "the future" entails a necessary discussion on the layered political frameworks under which refugees seek higher education opportunities. The chapter aims to situate refugee students' predicaments in the histories and developments of the global and national educational policies and responses to refugee crises. This task of contextualisation responds to the critiques in both education and refugee research. Firstly, it responds to the methodological nationalism in higher education research in which higher education is conceived as exclusively and internally driven by nation-states (Dale, 2005; Shahjahan and Kezar, 2013). As the chapter will demonstrate, the current challenges and opportunities met by refugee students in Lebanon and Jordan are a result of the interconnected and juxtaposing political frameworks and priorities in education and refugee policies at global, regional and national levels. The chapter thus highlights the multidimensional geopolitical workings of the agenda for refugee higher education, moving away from the national containers that cannot provide sufficient context for the situation facing the students (Shahjahan and Kezar, 2013). Secondly, literature on issues pertaining to refugees has called for historicised and politicised analyses to avoid portraying refugees' circumstances as a "floating world without the gravities of history and politics" (Malkki, 1995, p. 518), or producing presentist accounts that frame the current situation as "crisis" therefore as exceptional (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020).

Recently, Brun and Shuayb (2020) argue that most refugees reside in countries where there are inherited inequalities and which are also reflected in the educational systems. Indeed, groups that are struggling for quality and equal access to education are not refugees alone. Educational reforms in the Arab world[8] have been an area of contention (see Abi-Mershed, 2009; Mazawi, 2010 on contested notions of knowledge and development) and have achieved limited results in terms of quality learning and future prospects (Akkary, 2014). The chapter therefore begins with a more general picture on global education policies and discourses and how they are enacted and embodied in contemporary Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. These sections shed light on the national-centric approach to education and higher education embedded both in global and national-level policies. The top-down approach to education reforms in the region enacted by global organizations as well as national governments has been criticized as a lack of considerations of local contexts and its communities and marginalized groups. The latter part of the chapter therefore investigates the education and higher education policies related to refugees who are in between nation-states (Haddad, 2008). It highlights the geopolitical interests presented in the frameworks adopted by the international agencies governing refugees and how the approach to refugees' future is in conflict with the experiences of the host states of Lebanon and Jordan. The countries' previous experiences with other displaced populations in the region provide further understandings of the rationales and political decisions we see today. The history and practices of circularity and hospitality in the region likewise cannot be dismissed since

[8] I use "Arab world" to emphasis the cultural and historical connections and commonalities among the countries examined. "The region" is used interchangeably while "Middle East" is used at times to describe the geographical area covering the other relevant neighbouring countries in the policy context, such as Turkey.

education and higher education access has been enacted both within and beyond the dominant North-South humanitarian paradigm.

1.2 Education and the global developmental framework

Throughout colonial and post-colonial eras, mass public education was at the heart of nation-state formation as an essential device for social control, maintaining order and providing visions of a uniform identity (Mitchell, 1991; Kaplan, 2006). Mass education, as it legitimates the power of ruling elites in the modern nation-state, has also become a central project for achieving national progress in the world of competing nation states (Boli, Ramirez and Meyer, 1985). While colonial rulers used school systems and higher education to produce bureaucrats and maintain the status quo (Bashshur, 1966), governing elites in the post-colonial states in the Arab World use education as a vehicle to disseminate normative discourses of national identity and loyalty to the state, often with centralized and authoritarian control (Alayan and Rohde, 2012). Higher education especially, serves as a symbol of national pride, "fountainhead of national guidance" (Bashshur, 1966, p. 456) and the age of liberation from colonial rule (Mazawi, 2005). On the other hand, the post-World War II era has also witnessed a proliferation of multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental efforts in influencing and transforming educational policy and standards (Mundy *et al.*, 2016). The formation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1945 and the establishment of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 lay the foundation for the global and globalized education agenda. The section gives an account of the global and regional discourses on education and higher education in relation to educational reforms in the Arab World, with a focus on Jordan,

Lebanon and Syria. The section highlights the gap between the competing views of education and the approaches to reforms involving global, regional and national actors, which often sacrifice local realities and practices as well as the views of marginalized groups of the region.

As the US and its European allies increased their funding to international development in order to contain communism throughout the 1950s and 60s, UNESCO, along with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank, became increasingly influential global education policy actors (Mundy, 1999). Mundy (1999) observes that as UNESCO expanded, it enacted the promise of universal rights and global redistribution in very limited and specific ways: it increasingly adopted formal schooling as a prototype and "constructed the purposes of educational assistance around the provision of top-down scientific planning and attention to finance" (p. 34). UNESCO's commitment to education as a universal right had become deeply intertwined with the ideas of planning and economic development, promoting a model of state-led economic modernization with productive individual national citizens (Mundy, 1999). This education-economic growth model was also adopted by the World Bank and OECD, which had developing countries formulate their education policies according to economic needs through conditional aids and loans (Resnik, 2006).

Despite UNESCO's central role as the global educational institution concerning marginalized populations, it had failed to raise adequate funding to achieve its underlying objective of equalization, including initial projects of adult literacy and mass primary education (Mundy, 1999). Moreover, educational aid, World Bank's projects, as well as UNESCO's own activities in the earlier period, concentrated on secondary, vocational and higher education, specifically in the fields related to economic modernization, framed within

theories of manpower planning (Mundy, 1999; Jones, 1992). Mundy (1999) traces UNESCO's budgets, bilateral educational aid from OECD countries, and the World Bank's lending programmes in the 1960s through 1990s in US dollars: the bilateral aid had been 10-times higher than UNESCO's budgets while World Bank's lending steadily increased and exceeded UNESCO's budgets after 1975 (p. 35). Educational policies undertaken by the World Bank and OECD countries far exceeded those of UNESCO in their influence, scale and technical sophistication (Mundy *et al.*, 2016). The majority of educational funds belonged to those of bilateral aid programmes which centred on funding countries' geopolitical interests rather than equalization (Mundy, 1999).

By the 1980s, the World Bank had emerged as the single largest source of education financing, dominating the field of education policy (Mundy *et al.*, 2016; Heyneman, 2003). Through the 1980-1990s, the Bank had shifted its lending priorities onto primary and academic secondary education while advising countries to privatise tertiary education institutions. This shift came with the adoption of "rate of return" methodologies in the Bank's analytical work: the results showed that investing in primary education yields higher returns than higher education (Heyneman, 2003; Mundy and Verger, 2016). A "short educational policy menu" emerged with common recommendations of shifting public expenditures from vocational and higher education to academic and basic education, increasing the private cost for attending universities and introducing loans schemes for individuals who now face high tuition fees (Heyneman, 2003). The policy menu had more impact in the regions of Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa than in the Middle East and Asia. However, the rate-of-return approach had been central to the Bank's overall policy and knowledge production during

1980-1990s (Heyneman, 2003). Privatisation and marketisation of higher education had also gained momentum in several countries, as will be discussed later.

Amidst the neoliberal trend were UNESCO's efforts in reforming and reasserting its role in the global education policy arena, notably its active role in the Education for All (EFA) movements from the 1990s through the 2000s. The first World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 had 155 national delegations present. However, the priorities set up to achieve universal access to primary schooling and other "basic learning needs" had been formulated by the core multilateral agencies including World Bank and UNICEF (King, 2007). Such "global" educational agendas concerned these organizations' goals and reflected the competitions and negotiations among them rather than the common consensus of the nation-states and other NGOs (Chabbott, 2002; King, 2007). This criticism also extended to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000, in which UNESCO's wider range of concerns with basic education had been narrowed to completing primary schooling that the other agencies see more numerically and politically attractive (King, 2007). The agenda of prioritizing primary schooling led to the scrutinization of funding for higher education as accelerating inequality in education access[9], which later led to the delayed attention to higher education for refugees. The quantitative approach to development targets also overshadows the consideration of education quality which is crucial in conflict-affected contexts (Smith and Vaux, 2003; Kagawa, 2005).

Higher education enrolment accelerated across the globe from 1960 and the pattern of growth was global rather than nationally distinctive (Schofer and Meyer, 2005; Meyer and

[9] UNESCO. 2014. *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2014*, p. 138. [Online]. [Accessed 10 November 2020]. Available from: https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/report/2014/teaching-and-learning-achieving-quality-all

Schofer, 2007). The mass enrolment increase also signifies the diversity among the student populations that are no longer limited to elite men (Frank and Meyer, 2007). Some scholars contend that the expansion of universities was not due to each society's level of development and its needs but rather was embedded in the universalized doctrines of individual human development and socio-economic progress of nation-states (Frank and Meyer, 2007; Meyer and Schofer, 2007). Discourses such as "human capitals" and "knowledge economy" became the drivers of the increase in national funding for education sectors, technological and research infrastructures as well as increased participation in higher education (Robertson, 2005). The common developmental ideology and pursuits led to the worldwide isomorphic educational change despite great variations of local context. Nations with stronger ties to the world polity through memberships in international agencies also expanded education more rapidly (Meyer and Schofer, 2007).

What emerged in the same period along with the concepts of "human capitals" and "knowledge economy" was the concern understood as "brain drain": the migration of skilled personnel from less developed countries to wealthier economies where they pursue better standards of living (Arndt, 1987). In 1995, the then UNESCO director-general Federico Mayor wrote about "the new challenges of higher education" in which he depicted brain drain as a challenge to poorer nations' development:

> In order to prevent nationals of those countries from fleeing with their skills to the rich countries, they have to find ways and means […] of combating an evil which is seriously jeopardizing their potential for development.[10]

[10] Federico Mayor. 1994. *Memory of the future*. UNECO Publishing. p.41-42. Available from: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000097725.locale=en

The idea of brain drain casts migration as a symptom of development failure and development as strictly sedentary and to be concerned within national borders (Bakewell, 2008a). The square focus on nation-bound development vis-à-vis the role of higher education ignores the increasing movements of people. While later, with the rise of globalization in which students seem to be increasingly spatially mobile, the idea of a nation as a unit to where students' future belongs remains significant in the higher educational programmes provided for refugees, as chapter 5 will show.

Privatisation in higher education took hold since post-Cold War. With the goal of global competitiveness, the neoliberal logics of market and meritocracy now compete with the older norms of equal opportunities and state provision for national development (Buckner, 2017). Nation-states have undergone a series of structural reforms that focus on finance and competitiveness (Carnoy, 1999). Increased marketisation of higher education goes hand in hand with the trend of liberalisation of trade and services across borders. Liberalizing higher education "services" also gives rise to the policies of international rankings and quality assurance (Robertson, Bonal and Dale, 2006). Higher education institutions, nations and relevant stakeholders have been subjected to the influence of rankings, competing for titles of "world-class", "leading" and "excellence" (Hazelkorn, 2015). What is now in tension with nation-centred HE sectors is that universities pursue higher rankings through increasing the percentage of international students (Taylor and Braddock, 2007). Nevertheless, while it might have seemed that the earlier logics of national development and progress have been displaced by the privatization and global competitiveness, scholars find that the role of nation-states remain significant while the aspects of states' engagement have shifted (Ramirez and Tiplic, 2014; Buckner, 2017). Universities are increasingly seen as contributing to the "global

common good" and addressing "planetary challenges" such as population growth, peace and environment (Buckner, 2017). At the same time, national development is also increasingly discussed with references to international development, such as the MDGs, highly standardized vision of progress. Higher education largely remains a national development matter. By examining the experiences of refugees who fall into the gap between nation-states' boundaries, this thesis complicates the relationship between higher education provision and national development.

1.3 Key developments of educational reforms in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria

While the global approach to education may be influential, various regional and national actors continue to negotiate and contest the global institutional agenda as they shape the educational policies on the ground. While countries including Lebanon and Jordan were actively participating in the EFA and its regional forums[11], the majority of the development in their education sectors reflected local and national needs for political reforms and economic development (Frayha, 2003). Indeed, educational reforms had been taking place at various stages corresponding to heterogenic national contexts. While Lebanon began its reform mainly after the 1989 Taif Agreement which put an end to its civil war (BouJaoude and Ghaith, 2006), Jordan had gone through several phases of reforms since the 1950s. On the other hand, more notable changes in Syria regarding loosening control over private schools and curricula for foreign languages emerged post-2000 (Frayha, 2012).

[11] This can be observed from several documented reviews of EFA progress, such as "The Arab Framework for Action" available from:
http://www.undp.org.lb/programme/governance/institutionbuilding/basiceducation/docs/arab.pdf

In 1951, Lebanon set up a national university and later a national centre for educational research aiming at devising new curricula and textbooks. The civil war, however, interrupted the educational process in various ways (BouJaoude and Ghaith, 2006). Emerging from a civil war, Lebanon's government reform plan in 1994 focused on reinforcing national identity—"strengthening the sense of national pride and unity among citizens" (as cited in Frayha, 2012, p. 18). The reform nonetheless emphasises that private education to be protected by the constitution and respects the right of religious groups to have their own schools (BouJaoude and Ghaith, 2006). Indeed, Lebanon has had various "educational systems" and was rather diverse in practices and ideologies than a readily centralised system like other countries (Sbaiti, 2008). As Sbaiti (2008) points out, during the French mandate period and the first two decades into independence, "multiple, discrete educational systems operated parallel to one another within the small urban place that was Beirut: Islamic, French-cum-francophone and […] 'secular' Lebanese nationalist schools" (p. 10). The subsequent reform efforts were funded through the World Bank's loans and other financial aids to improve elements such as teacher training and citizenship education. Nevertheless, Frayha (2012) observes that the government failed to involve larger sections of society in the reform process while "research institutes and unions organised conferences and continually issues statements demanding education reforms" (p. 26). The reform suffered from "improvisation" and a lack of transparency in spending loans and aids. "Much needed funds are often wasted by inflating staff members, by reimbursing highly salaried officials for meetings, cars and other services" while most schools complained about the lack of sufficient equipment (p. 27). Frayha (2012) likewise points out that the World Bank as the biggest donor has disregarded people's benefits in loans' provision and spending.

Lebanon's educational sector is mostly privatized and autonomous, which also applies to its HE institutions: Currently, out of its 47 universities and university colleges, the Lebanese University is the only public higher education institution, which has its own governance and enjoys a clear autonomy (EACEA, 2017b). Albeit supervised by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), private universities are operating autonomously, both in terms of governance and finance (El-Ghali, Berjaoui and Deknight, 2017). Higher education institutions in Lebanon are also known for their long foreign connections dated back to missionary activities and colonial rule. Recent studies shed light on the diverse and interrelated nature of education in Lebanon's history. Institutions and endeavours of various sources—Ottoman's national schools, missionary schools by the American Protestant and the French Orthodox, foreign secular schools, Islamic charitable network, and the Greek Catholic school—"stood in a complex, mutual relation of transfer, rejection, and appropriation" (Hauser, Lindner and Möller, 2016, p. 15). Two higher education institutions, Syrian Protestant College (present-day American University of Beirut) by American Protestants in 1866 and Saint Joseph University by French Jesuits in 1875, were established against this backdrop. Post-colonial era, while the national educational system was established, private education institutions with various affiliations remain dominant.[12] In the last two decades, private HE institutions have expanded rapidly. The expansion does not only respond to higher demand but also proves that HE has become a profitable, attractive business (EACEA, 2017b). To enter the first-year university programme, the Lebanese General Secondary Certificate or "Lebanese Baccalaureate" or the equivalent is required. Lebanese University requires an entry exam while other universities

[12] Nevertheless, national identities were formulated, as Sbaiti (2008) notes, through a constellation of competing and overlapping pedagogical missions and methods in these private educational institutions.

require additional qualifications (such as SAT and TOEFL) and preparatory courses in foreign languages (EACEA, 2017b).

Syria had experienced a state-led development model along with other Arab states since the 1950s' Nasser-era reforms in Egypt (Buckner, 2013). This model focused on national manpower planning and became a symbol of national development, equal opportunity, and liberation from colonial rule, leading to the establishment of large national universities in the region (Mazawi, 2005; Buckner, 2013). Nevertheless, in the 1980s, many middle-income states in the region experienced fiscal crises and followed economic reforms and structural adjustment plans which led to more foreign investment and privatisation of various sectors including education (Mazawi, 2005). Notably, since 2001, the government initiated reforms that orient toward decentralising the administration, allowing more private schools establishment and giving more autonomy to universities while still maintaining overall control over educational institutions (Ayoubi and Massoud, 2011; Frayha, 2012). The period also witnesses the support of international organizations and international cooperation, notably the EU's Trans-European Mobility Programme for University Studies (TEMPUS) also known as "Modernising Higher Education Programme" that aims to reform Syrians' HE sectors (Ayoubi and Massoud, 2011). Policies to expand university institutions and widen access also took place: setting up new public universities, allowing the creation of private universities, and the "Open Learning" cost-sharing programmes that allow lower grades students to register for newly created applied programmes (Buckner, 2013). Nevertheless, a similar critique of educational policies' lack of public engagement with local communities, industries and NGOs applies (Ayoubi and Massoud, 2011; Frayha, 2012). The increased access also comes with an

increased marketized trend with increase costs for the young people to participate in HE while future prospects are bleak (Buckner, 2013).

Jordan experienced steady phases of reforms since the 1950s while in the 1990s, the education reforms began to link to the kingdom's plans for economic and social development and executed under the umbrella projects of investment loans for developing human resources (Abbas, 2012). During this period, a number of "pilot schools", "developing schools" and UNESCO affiliated schools at the secondary level were set up to "[make] use of all available educational expertise and aids to carry out different educational experiments", facilitate new structures, and to "implement UNESCO's ideas and programs in the framework of their daily and yearly activities" (Abbas, 2012, p. 68). As for HE, the University of Jordan was established in 1962 as the first public university, and the first private university was set up in 1989. Similar to the trajectory of Syria's reform, Jordanian universities were entirely public-owned up until the 1980s' increase of private higher education institutions. Currently, there are 10 public universities and 17 private universities in addition to 51 community colleges.[13] University students enrol in Bachelor programmes after successful completion of secondary education and obtaining the secondary school certificate through the national exam "Tawjihi". Although in principle, public and private universities have their autonomy to a large extent, in reality, they are subject to constraints imposed by Higher Education Council and the Accreditation Council (Kanaan, Al-Salamat and Hanania, 2010). After a period of privatization, public universities started to introduce "parallel programmes" for students who have lower Tawjihi scores to access programmes with higher fees (EACEA, 2017a).

[13] Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. *Higher Education in Jordan.* [Online] [accessed 17 Nov 2021] Available from: https://mohe.gov.jo/En/Pages/Higher_Education_in_Jordan

In 2002, Jordan announced "the Project for the Development of Education towards the Knowledge Economy". "Knowledge economy" or "knowledge society", part of the development discourses mentioned in the previous section is a contentious term in the Arab World. Mazawi (2010) reviews the broad policy orientations that were framed around "knowledge economy", including widening access— "the creation of a flexible and continuously learning labour force which would generate economic growth and secure the employability of youth" (p. 210). In its National Strategy and Vision 2025, the government concerns the high unemployment rate amongst Jordan's university graduates and believes that the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system could be improved. It sets out to become "a vocational training hub". [14]

As also shown above, the policy of education for economic development is often tied to aid and international loan agreements. Critics of educational reforms in pursuing the knowledge economy point to the aspect of global geopolitics and international diplomacy (Mazawi, 2010). Especially in the post-911 era, the educational reforms packaged with other developmental assistance were seen as a strategy to contain Islamic fundamentalist movements (Sayed, 2000) or "surveillance of political and civic dissent and as facilitators of national and regional stability" (Mazawi, 2010, p. 217). These political aspects reflect on the depoliticized educational contents and an emphasis on completive skills and knowledge (Mazawi, 2010). In addition, Mazawi (2010) observes the absence of marginalized groups in the debates:

> […] many social groups are not accounted for in the debates over the contributions of a knowledge society to development: the poor, refugees,

[14] Government of Jordan. 2014. *Jordan 2025: A National Vision and Strategy.* p. 26, 56 [Online] [Accessed 17 Nov 2021]. Available from: https://jordankmportal.com/resources/jordan-2025-a-national-vision-and-strategy

> displaced groups, women, individuals with disabilities, and nomadic, rural and agricultural communities […] (p. 215)

Indeed, when it comes to the challenges of educational reform in the region, Akkary (2014) highlights the top-down approach that is often driven by political agenda and knowledge base that is imported rather than culturally grounded. The large-scale goals often neglect local context and priorities (Akkary, 2014). The top-down, decontextualized approach led to the neglect in building capacities of local universities and eventually "the disqualification of local and regional groups, communities, and movements (Mazawi, 2010, p. 217). Akkary (2014) suggests a new approach to incorporate action research into reform projects to ensure the reform projects are informed by knowledge in the local context. There are growing numbers of small-scale school-based reform initiatives such as the TAMAM project implemented within the region (Akkary and Rizk, 2012).

The short overview of the key developments in educational sectors in three countries reflects the country-specific dynamics, national priorities and policy directions that are entangled with the changing global frameworks of education and development. While education was emphasised as a vehicle for national unity and development in the post-colonial context, three countries have gone through phases of reform that aimed at economic growth which involved foreign loans and adjustment plans. The higher education sector has also gone through a trend of widening access through marketisation in these countries while in the meantime the sector is facing increased pressure of "internationalization" and global competitiveness. However, the national and the global-level policymaking often overshadow intra-regional cooperation and the capacities of local communities and practitioners. The developmental framework that centres on the nation as a unit often leaves out marginalised

groups who are considered "noncitizens", such as refugees. An examination of the development of refugee education provision and its politics and dynamics at global, regional and national levels may help in extending and complicating this argument.

1.4 Refugee education and durable solutions

Along with the global Education for All (EFA) movement throughout the 1990s, refugees are recognised as part of the groups lacking basic education opportunities. It is recognized in 1990 EFA's Framework for Action that educational programmes run by the international refugee agencies UNHCR and UNRWA "need more substantial and reliable long-term financial support".[15] 1951 Refugee Convention Article 22 forms the basis of education provision for refugees: "The Contracting States shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education"; " […] as favourable as possible […] with respect to education other than elementary education."[16] However, even among the signatories, the realization of education provision for refugees is dependent on the policies and practices in each signatory's national context. UNHCR is therefore positioned as the organisation in realising refugees' right to education (Dryden-Peterson, 2011), while for Palestinian refugees, who are not covered by UNHCR, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been in the position to ensure the education provision.

Education provision gained its legitimacy mainly by its protective function for children and adolescents in an emergency situation, maintaining normalcy and stability. Nevertheless,

[15] UNESCO. 1990. page 28. Above n.7.
[16] UNHCR. 2010. Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. [Online]. [Accessed 10 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10

providing education for refugees has extended traditional humanitarian response from relief to development, which brought long-term future into sight. UNHCR envisions the "durable solutions" of three place-bound futures for refugees: repatriation, resettlement, and local integration.[17] Scholars observe that since the 1980s, the focus of durable solutions had shifted from resettlement to repatriation (Chimni, 1998; Chimni, 2004; Newman, 2003). Indeed, the concept of "education for repatriation" was officially recognized during the 1990s (Sinclair, 2001; Waters and LeBlanc, 2005). The Revised 1995 Guideline for Educational Assistance to Refugees states that the rewritten text is to take account of new circumstances, and "in particular the emphasis on the durable solution of voluntary repatriation".[18] The objectives of refugee education, in the terms of the international refugee regime, are mainly to facilitate the durable solutions—the futures—of repatriation or local integration in the host country. As the Guideline states, "education can also prepare for resettlement, another durable solution, but one which is currently reserved mainly for individual security and vulnerability cases."[19] The objective is also reflected in UNHCR's approach to practical questions such as curriculum and language of instruction. This political demand for voluntary repatriation, as Waters and LeBlanc (2005) argue, compromises the right-based approach asserted by UNHCR.

In the Revised Guideline, UNHCR also laid out a range of policies for education beyond the secondary level, including scholarships for tertiary studies and vocational training. In line with the futures envisioned, these policies orient towards students' skills and work experiences needed for employment "while in exile and after repatriation". [20] German-funded

[17] UNHCR. 2020. *Solutions.* Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/solutions.html
[18] UNHCR. 1995. Revised (1995) guidelines for educational assistance to refugees, preface. [Online]. [Accessed 17 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.refworld.org/docid/421b44f34.html
[19] See paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5 of the Revised Guidelines.
[20] UNHCR. 1995. *Revised (1995) guidelines*, p. 12, para 6.1-6.4.

DAFI scholarships (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative), replacing former UNHCR Education Account funds for post-secondary in 1992, became the sole formal support for higher education for refugees.[21] Likewise, under the Guidelines, DAFI and other scholarships should be offered within the country of asylum.[22]

Following this trend, a framework on durable solutions was initiated in 2003,[23] which has a renewed emphasis on developmental assistance to "the region of origin" (Stepputat, 2004). The agenda such as "Development Assistance for Refugees (DAR)" and "Development through Local Integration (DLI)" focus on assistance to and collaboration with countries of first asylum. The approach—the developmental framework—is aligned with the post-Cold War humanitarian paradigm that had redirected its focus onto the long-term development, "self-reliance" and "resilience" in and of the South (Fox, 2001; Ilcan and Rygiel, 2015; Pasha, 2020). The increased attention on the host countries did not simply concern refugee protection. For UNHCR as a donor-dependent agency, interests behind the framework were to avoid the migration flow or "secondary movement" of refugees towards the EU and other wealthier regions (Stepputat, 2004, p. 18). Reasonably, education at various levels is under this broader trend of emphasis on developmental assistance in the neighbouring countries.

Some states have already expressed concerns about the conditionality of the "development assistance" under the framework. As the Joint Statement of the Convention Plus "Targeting

[21] UNHCR. 1995. *Revised (1995) guidelines*, p. 12, para 6.1.
[22] UNHCR. 1995. *Revised (1995) guidelines*, p. vi, para 13.
[23] UNHCR. 2003. *Framework for durable solutions for refugees and persons of concern.* [Online] [Accessed 17 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/3f1408764.pdf

of Development Assistance"[24] records, some states are concerned that the trend is going to limit numbers of refugees resettling to a third country:

> [A number of States] felt that targeting development assistance might, for example, be linked to agreements on readmission, local integration of refugees or limit the right to seek asylum (p. 4)

Despite the global agenda that pushes local integration through developmental aid, legal and social integration in the host states highly depends on the regional and national context which the following sections will demonstrate.

Under the framework that gives focus to repatriation and integration, and along with the exacerbated discourse of security threat post-911, schemes of refugee resettlement to the wealthier countries were tightened (Newman, 2003; Stepputat, 2004). Not until recently as the Syrian crisis protracted, resettlement and its complementary pathways were stressed as ways of "burden-sharing" with the host countries.[25] The complementary pathways to admission into a third country include education and labour arrangement.[26] More third-country scholarships and resettlement programmes are initiated and expanded including schemes of private and institution-based sponsorships such as the Canadian WUSC scholarship, Japan's JICA scheme and EU's Erasmus+.[27] However, these are often seen and experienced by some of my participants as limited in places and very competitive. It is also

[24] High Commissioner's Forum. 2006. *Convention Plus: Targeting of Development Assistance for Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement. Joint Statement.* [Online] [Accessed 26 February 2021]. Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/protection/convention/437d9f152/convention-plus-targeting-development-assistance-durable-solutions-forced.html

[25] For example, the 2018 Global Compact on Refugee promised to device "three-year strategy (2019-2021)" to increase resettlement and its complementary pathways. *The Global Compact on Refugees*. [Online] [Accessed 1 March 2021] Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf

[26] UNHCR. *Complementary pathways for admission to third countries.* [Online] [Accessed 1 Mar 2021] Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/complementary-pathways.html

[27] DAFI. *2016 Annual Report.* [Online] [Accessed 25 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/en-my/5aaba2597.pdf

worth reflecting on scholarship selection processes that often involve criteria other than needs which chapter 5 will discuss.

While Southern countries such as Cuba and Libya had offered educational programmes for refugees in the MENA region since the 1960s and 1970s (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2014b), higher education funding for refugees through the dominant "global" route, namely UNHCR, had been very limited. This limited attention was not reflecting the rapid growth of higher education institutions and massification that already took place since the 1960s worldwide, including in many refugee home and host countries (see Reiter, 2002, p. 141; Kapur and Crowley, 2008, p. 5). UNHCR's 2007 Education Strategy states that access to post-primary including tertiary education is limited due to donors' focus on primary education. Its scholarship programme DAFI "only makes tertiary education accessible for the most deserving refugees".[28] In 2010's Education Strategy, the agency set out to increase the number of scholarship beneficiaries but reiterated the challenge of donor reluctance "in humanitarian work" to fund beyond primary education.[29] However, wealthier countries' developmental aid to education seems to have a different emphasis: higher education scholarship programmes were dominated in the overall aid spending to education from 2005 to 2012 (Mercer, 2014).[30]

Such attitudes toward higher education for refugees have changed throughout the 2010s, finally reacting to the global trend of increased access to higher education. The change can be observed from UNHCR's 2012 Education Strategy as well as DAFI's rapid growth after

[28] UNHCR. 2007. *Education strategy 2007-2009,* p. 16 note 11. [Online] [Accessed 25 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.refworld.org/docid/469201e72.html
[29] UNHCR. 2009. *Education strategy 2010-2012,* p. 21. [Online] [Accessed 25 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.refworld.org/docid/4d11de9d2.html
[30] Mercer (2014) uses EU and UK's aid in 2010 as an example, one quarter of the aid to education was for scholarships and covering student costs in donor countries.

2015 responding to the Syrian crisis. Higher education was outlined as one of the main six main objectives in the 2012 Education Strategy. The aim was to double the number of students attending tertiary education. The Strategy justifies the benefits of higher education for refugees: other than cultivating leadership, training for future teachers, and contributing to the post-conflict reconstruction, it also includes "reducing irregular movements of young refugees in search of protection, livelihoods, or higher learning opportunities elsewhere".[31] The number of DAFI scholarships during the first half-decade has corresponded to the goal of increased provision. Figure 1 below shows the increasing numbers of funded students from 2006 to 2019 as well as the budget growth for the Middle East and North Africa region.[32] More details on DAFI's regional development can be found in Appendix 1.

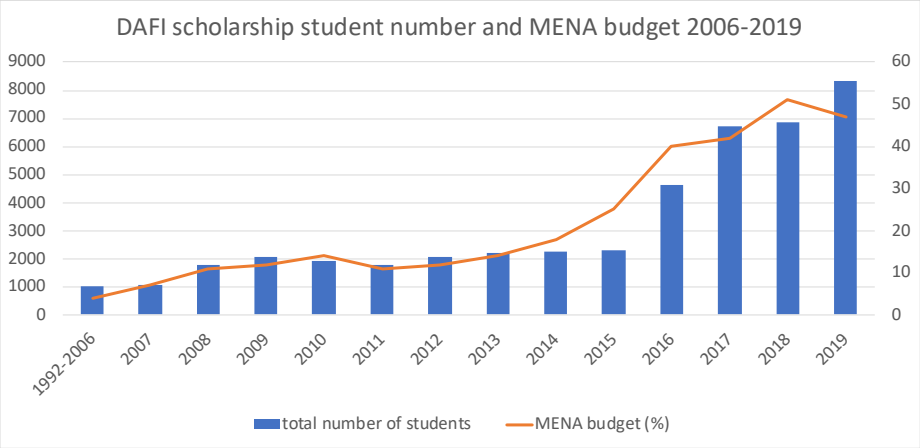


Figure 1 DAFI scholarship growth 2006-2019

The increase in funds to higher education for refugees is not for DAFI alone. Various international programmes emerged and expanded during 2015-2016 aiming to provide refugees scholarships for university education. The emergence of large-scale initiatives such

[31] UNHCR. 2012. *Education strategy 2012-2016,* p. 22. [Online] [Accessed 25 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/protection/operations/5149ba349/unhcr-education-strategy-2012-2016.html
[32] DAFI Annual Reports

as the EU Regional Trust Fund (EU Maddad Fund) and the Dutch-funded SPARK Higher Education Services reflects the demand as well as the rising interest in the field of higher education for refugees. Recognizing the emergence of these programmes, UNHCR issued a policy brief "Higher Education Consideration" for programmes assisting refugees affected by Syria and Iraqi crises concerning issues of protection, social cohesion, negative impact on existing resettlement programmes, and expectation management.[33]

Avery and Said (2017) suggest, as Chopra (2018) also finds, that the increasing interest in higher education in the region partially contributes to Europe's strategy to keep refugees at bay, avoiding more young Syrians crossing borders into Europe. Yannick Du Pont, the director of SPARK also speaks of their educational provision in terms of cost-efficiency:

> With the same amount of money that it costs to receive and finance the education of a single refugee in the Netherlands, we could support up to 20 refugees regionally, and provide them with accommodation, food and a good university education. […] It's so much more cost-efficient to invest in the region rather than to wait for people to get tired of having no hope in the region and move to Europe or the U.S.[34]

While normatively adhering to the realization of refugees' educational rights, this wave of scholarship provision is also facilitated under the political and economic considerations to devise local solutions. This reflects the broader trend of focusing on developmental assistance to the Southern states to enhance the "self-reliance" and "resilience" of refugees and the host states.

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[33] UNHCR. 2015. *Higher Education Considerations for Refugees in Countries Affected by the Syria and Iraq Crises.* [Online] [Accessed 25 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/publications/education/568bc5279/education-brief-7-higher-education-considerations-refugees-countries-affected.html

[34] As cited in SPARK. 2015. *"SPARK to provide 10,000 young Syrian refugees with regional education opportunities".* [Online] [Accessed 23 October 2020]. Available from: https://spark.ngo/spark-to-provide-10000-young-syrian-refugees-with-regional-education-opportunities/

The period from 2012 onwards marks not only the change in growing attention to higher education for refugees but also the shift in the paradigm of educational assistance from supranational support to national systems (Dryden-Peterson, 2016; Chopra, 2018). Following the focus of developmental assistance to the region of origin, UNHCR's 2012 Education Strategy states its priority of "integration of refugee learners within national systems" as it is "not a specialized education agency".[35] By the 2018 Global Compact for Refugees, emphasizing "burden-sharing" and "easing pressures on host countries", stakeholders are to continue to facilitate educational access "in line with national education laws, policies and planning."[36] To integrate refugees into national education systems, funders, international agencies and other non-state actors have to liaison with the refugee host states who also bear their own agenda and priorities (See Tsourapas, 2019).

The historical development and the crisis after crisis experienced in the region define the national approaches of Lebanon and Jordan. The approaches are divergent from the global framework in its expectation towards refugees' futures. The following sections aim to account for the regional and national developments under which the current higher education provision for refugees operates.

1.5 Education for refugees in the Arab world: circularity and crises

While political instability and insecurity have resulted in a series of forced migration in the region, what comes prior and in between these movements is the history of long-standing

[35] UNHCR. 2012. *Education strategy 2012-2016,* p. 8 and 31. [Online] [Accessed 25 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/protection/operations/5149ba349/unhcr-education-strategy-2012-2016.html
[36] UNGA. 2018. *Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: Part II Global compact on refugees*, p. 21. A/73/12 (Part II). [Accessed 27 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf

inter-state mobilities. The movements—of traders and students, of family connections, the circular and seasonal flow of labour migration—historically fall under the pan-Arabist hospitality paradigm in which the fellow Arabs are received as "guests" or "visitors" (Chatelard, 2009; Mason, 2011). The hospitality approach has been formalised through regional documents such as the "Pact of the League of Arab States", and translated into domestic migration laws in many Arab states (Mason, 2011). Foreign Arab nationals are regarded "as a special category of individuals with explicit social rights and the systematic right of entry, residency and, at times, work" (Chatelard, El-Abed and Washington, 2009, p. 5). Nevertheless, the reality on the ground often differs and the approach is subjected to change. With the domination of post-colonial nationalist governments and increasingly protracted crises of displacement, access to resources such as education for a large number of non-citizens becomes problematic. It is worth noting that citizenship in the Arab states implies not merely individual relationship to the state, but also membership in a family, a kin group, a religious community (Parolin, 2009; Joseph, 2011). Groups may be naturalized/de-nationalised, privileged/marginalized according to the post-colonial states' political purpose (Parolin, 2009). Citizenship is inaccessible to most foreigners. However, most countries accept large populations for long-term residence through "kefala" or sponsorship systems, which have been widely criticized for their exploitative application on migrant workers (Kagan, 2011). In recent Syrian refugees' case, states of Jordan and Lebanon have also used the sponsorship mechanism to grant entries, work permits and permission to leave the camps.

Moreover, most of the Arab states are not signatories of and none have ratified the Refugee Convention nor its 1967 Protocol. Most of the states have ad hoc, case-by-case refugee policies (Kagan, 2011). Their engagement with UNHCR and other international actors

regarding refugee protection and welfare is also subject to political and economic considerations (Tsourapas, 2019). Gulf states have also had a record of using migration and asylum policies as a political gesture and informal diplomacy (Thiollet, 2011).

Since the Palestinian exodus, a pattern of "surrogate state" where UN agencies are mainly responsible for refugee protection and welfare has been established in most of the host states in the region (Slaughter and Crisp, 2008; Kagan, 2011). UNRWA has been in the position to ensure the primary education provision for the Palestinian refugees. In some countries, UNRWA also runs secondary schools as well as vocational courses. Nevertheless, not only does UNRWA only covers a handful of host states, Palestinians' access to education, right to reside and work are often subject to the host country's regime change and the overall political climate. This could be observed in the refugees' enrolment changes in universities in Egypt (Yassin, 2013, p. 138) and Jordan (Reiter, 2002), as well as the numerous expulsions experienced by the Palestinian refugees in the region.[37]

As for higher education, Palestinian refugees had a history of widespread enrolment of tertiary education at Arab universities in the 1960s and 1970s. This was the result of UNRWA's teacher-training policies as well as other opportunities that were opened to Palestinians in the Arab world (Rosenfeld, 2009). Through the growth of public universities in the region during the 1960-1970s, Palestinians could be admitted under the same terms as citizens, especially in Syria and Egypt (Rosenfeld, 2009; Abu Lughod, 1973). Staff and students in Jordanian universities were predominately Palestinian during the period (Reiter, 2002).

[37] For example, the first Gulf War resulted in 1991's mass expulsion of Palestinians from Kuwait, where Palestinians who were trained in UNRWA schools and Arab universities worked as teachers, engineers and other professionals. (Rosenfeld, 2009).

Scholarships were offered to Palestinian refugees by other state governments[38], including Syria, Egypt and Sudan (Abu Lughod, 1973). Cuba and Libya also had scholarship programs for Palestinian refugees (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2014b). UNRWA had provided small numbers of scholarships since 1955 which had phased out in 1997 due to lack of funding (Abu Lughod, 1973; Sultana, 2007). The scholarship programme was reinstated in 2003 and has been relied on the contributions of its major donors such as the EU and Japan.[39] However, as UNRWA resources continually decrease since the 1990s and the political climate and crises in the host countries, the comparative advantages for Palestinian refugees to access higher education have also dwindled (Rosenfeld, 2009).

The first Gulf War (1990-1991) and its consequences of mass migration marked the beginning of UNHCR's active involvement regarding refugee affairs in the region while the states remained mostly reactive (Zaiotti, 2006). It was not until the second Gulf crisis, the post-2003 Iraqis' displacement that states started to work extensively with UNHCR (Crisp *et al.*, 2009). Indeed, prior to the international attention to Iraqi displacement, "refugees" are first and foremost associated with the Palestinian case in the region. It was also the initial responses of countries bordering Iraq, such as Jordan and Syria, to label Iraqis as guests and migrants as a continuation of previous trends of mobility and circularity (Chatelard, 2009). In Syria, Iraqis were accommodated and could access health and education services and enter easily its informal economy (Chatty and Mansour, 2011). Iraqis in Egypt, however, were

[38] Examples of Syria, Egypt and Sudan (Abu Lughod, 1973). Cuba and Libya also had scholarship programs for Palestinian refugees (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2014b).
[39] UNRWA, 2009, *"Japan scholarships for hundreds of Palestinian students".* [Accessed 7 December 2020]. Available from: https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/features/japan-scholarships-hundreds-palestinian-students; UNRWA, 2018, "The European Union supports the higher education of Palestine refugee youth in Lebanon". [Accessed 7 December 2020]. Available from:https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/videos/european-union-supports-higher-education-palestine-refugee-youth-lebanon.

among Sudanese, Palestinian, Somali and other refugee populations who in general face neglect from the state and some rely on UNHCR's provision of services (El-Shaarawi, 2015).

For refugees from Syria post-2011, freedom of movement has become constrained at borders between Lebanon-Syria and Jordan-Syria. Syria had a long-term military presence in Lebanon since its civil war until 2005's revolution marked the end of Syria's occupation. The occupation also ensued a degree of economic independence and human mobility between Lebanon and Syria in addition to the trade and bilateral agreements in 1991 and 1993 for labour needed in Lebanon's post-war reconstruction (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). At the beginning of Syrians' displacement, Lebanon began with disassociation and inaction to avoid spillover. However, the neutral position came to a halt in 2013 as divided political parties in Lebanon began to openly support the Syrian regime and the opposition groups and create further instabilities in the bordering regions (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). In 2014, Lebanon began imposing restrictions on the free movement and residency of Syrians. These include curfews and requirements of annual residency permits that require UNHCR registration or sponsorship, an exorbitant fee (about $200) and a pledge not to work. Without residency permits, refugees are subjected to arrest and exploitation at work (Human Rights Watch, 2016). More than 73 percent of the refugees are without residency (UN and Government of Lebanon, 2019). The services provided for informal settlements and implementation of curfews are varied in different municipalities by their political/confessional identifications, personalities and strategies to sensitize international organizations to the services they provided for Syrians (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). The assistance of various kinds, from basic food and shelter to education is provided and programmes initiated not only by international organizations, but also local communities, faith organizations, other refugees,

neighbours, and Syrians themselves (Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Qasmiyeh, 2017). Palestinians from Syria were subjected to strict entry requirements and in several instances denied entry (Santos, 2014).

Jordan began with an open policy as it used to be with Syrians' movement across the borders but without the right to work (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). In 2012, the government set up Za'atari refugee camp and encourage refugees to locate in camps rather than urban areas. Jordan has been denying entry of Palestinian refugees from Syria since 2012 for the fear of demographic balance and instability with its memory of the Black September fighting between Palestinian armed groups and the Jordanian army in 1970-71 (Human Rights Watch, 2014). On the other hand, while officially closed its border crossings in 2013, most of the Syrians enter through informal crossings into the camps and all being classified as refugees with UNHCR rather than visitors (Tsourapas, 2019). This also applies to Syrians who have been born and raised in Jordan. The encampment policies and official border closure are seen not only a security measure but also a strategy in making refugees' presence visible in highlighting the inadequacy of international responsibility-sharing while seeking support for its own national development (Turner, 2015; Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017; Tsourapas, 2019). Syrian refugees had not been allowed to work until 2016 where the EU and Jordan agreed on reducing the barriers on the right to work and began issuing work permits on sectors such as agriculture, construction and manufacturing (Betts, Ali and Memişoğlu, 2017). While camps often draw public and media attention to refugee situations, 93% of the Syrian refugees in the host countries across the region reside in urban areas (UNHCR, 2019).

Other countries in the region also respond to Syrians' displacement and Syrian students' predicaments. The largest receiving country Turkey has issued a series of circulars

facilitating Syrian refugees' access to school education and higher education. In addition to having to pass "YÖS", the entrance exam designated for foreigners, universities have 10% quotas for foreign students, including Syrians. Scholarships through a government fund are available (Aras and Yasun, 2016). In Egypt, Syrian refugees had "a window of opportunities" during Morsi's presidency from 2012-2013 when he announced Syrians would have the same free access to higher education as Egyptian nationals (Galegher, 2021). This was, however, a contrast to the Yemini refugees' experiences who are neglected and with considerable financial and legal obstacles in accessing higher education (Galegher, 2021). The successor administration had restricted Syrian students' access in 2016. Students would have to graduate with an Egyptian secondary diploma to be able to access universities as nationals (Galegher, 2021). Again, Egypt's case evidences that policy changes are constant in terms of educational access for refugees in the region. Different refugee populations are also subject to different treatments depending on the states' political, economic and diplomatic considerations.

While the region may be characterized by the multiple crises of displacement and while not having consistent asylum policies, a degree of protection and access to education can be observed from the above cases, in addition to student mobility for university studies. Nevertheless, such access and mobility are highly subject to states' political concerns and changes. Chapter 5 will elaborate on Lebanon and Jordan's responses that are central to this study while the following provides a background review for both states' refugee education policies prior to the Syrian case.

1.5.1 Jordan and its centralized approach

As previously indicated, Lebanon and Jordan are far from being unfamiliar with refugee populations. Both countries have experienced difficult political upheavals related to Palestinians, which also foregrounds their sensitivity to large-scale displaced populations and the economic, political and security implications they pose (Crisp *et al.*, 2009, p. 13).

UNRWA has been operating its own elementary and preparatory schools with host countries' curricula since the 1960s (Rosenfeld, 2009). While Jordan's public schools provided elementary and preparatory education to more than one-third of Palestinian refugees, and nearly all at the secondary level (BADIL, 2007), Lebanon only allowed 11 percent of "foreign" children access free public school (Shuayb, 2014). It is also the only country where UNRWA operates secondary schools (only since 1993) in light of the restrictive access (Rosenfeld, 2009). Shaped by intricate political developments, the two countries' divergent approaches in protection and educational provision for the population also significantly shape the refugees' access to higher education today.

With regards to refugees outside of the UNRWA mandate, Jordan and Lebanon are not the signatories of the 1951 Refugee Convention nor its 1967 Protocol, and as aforementioned, UNHCR had no significant presence until the 1990s. Post-1990s, both countries signed respectively a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UNHCR. Nevertheless, resembling their relations with UNRWA, UNHCR shoulder most of the burden from status determinations to basic services such as education and health care (Kagan, 2011; Janmyr, 2017).[40] To an

[40] In the MoU between the Government of Jordan and UNHCR (5 April 1998), Article (11) states: "In order to provide international protection and assistance for needy refugees it was agreed that UNHCR would provide assistance in accordance with the regulations in force." [Accessed 6 December 2020]. Available from: https://www.rescuerefugees.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/LE2JOR002_AREN.pdf; For the development of the MoU between Lebanon and UNHCR, see Janmyr (2017).

extent, the experiences with Palestinian refugees defined the governments' responses to the subsequent Iraqi refugees' needs, the encounters of which also set the tone for their responses to the Syrian crisis today. This and the following sections focus on Jordan and Lebanon's approach to the two refugee groups prior to the Syrian displacement.

In Jordan, most Palestinian refugees have, in general, access to all levels of education.[41] Prior to the 1970-1971 conflicts between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Hashemite regime ("Black September"), Palestinians, who lived in the urban centres of the Kingdom, largely had a high level of education and held most of the higher positions within academia and the Education Ministry (Reiter, 2002). However, since the 1970s, as Reiter's (2002) analyses show, through the policies such as staff recruitment and student admission quota that favour Transjordanian and rural periphery, the percentage of Palestinians within the public academic institutions have significantly reduced. Most of the Palestinian staff and students turn to private universities (Reiter, 2002). Eventually, a special quota was established for Palestinians of the refugee camps, from 1999's 100 places to 300 seats annually (as of 2010) (Reiter, 2002; Kanaan, Al-Salamat and Hanania, 2010).[42]

Despite the continuous displacement and mobility of Iraqis since 1990, the post-2003 refugee migration was magnified and made visible by humanitarian agencies, advocacies, and scholars as part of the accusation of the US government's failure in maintaining "peace" after its invasion (Chatelard, 2009). It subsequently brought about high-level humanitarian agencies'

[41] With the exception of Gazan refugees remained in Jordan after the 1967 War. Coloured-cards are issued for Palestinians came to Jordan post-1967, with different entry policies and access to social services (Al-Abed, 2004).

[42] Reiter (2002) argues that this special quota has manifested the predominance of the Transjordanians in the university admission quotas.

involvement in Jordan. While acknowledging the refugees' presence, the Jordanian government had also posed conditions that Northern countries had to continue resettling refugees and that bilateral and multilateral aid to go through the state under its development framework (Chatelard, 2009, p. 14). An assistance regime emerged, in which UNHCR avoided establishing parallel services and working through the state structures (Crisp *et al.*, 2009; Fagen, 2009a). The assistance regime was in line with UNHCR's agenda of encouraging local integration and facilitating localized approach, especially as most Iraqi refugees resided and dispersed in urban areas which made outreach more taxing and costly (Crisp *et al.*, 2009).

Such an assistance approach was especially salient in education provision for refugee children. Prior to 2007, Iraqi children were barred from public schools. In July 2007, UNHCR and UNICEF initiated a joint appeal to provide education opportunities to Iraqi children in the region.[43] Jordan's Royal Decree announced a month later before the term started that Iraqi children were allowed to attend state schools irrespective of legal status, and aid for the costs was also pledged subsequently (Stevens, 2013; Fagen, 2009a). The school fees of 20-30 JD ($ 28-42) per term and book fees of 50 JD ($ 70) were waived the year after (Stevens, 2013).

It was well-documented that over half of the Iraqi refugees in Jordan had secondary schooling and 35% had a university degree or higher prior to the displacement, which should reflect the importance of higher education among the population (Crisp *et al.*, 2009; UNHCR, 2009). Nevertheless, despite the focus on education in this particular crisis, higher education received very little attention and scant documentation. Although higher education was included in the UNHCR-UNICEF joint appeal and UNHCR's DAFI programme landed in Jordan

[43] UNHCR and UNICEF, 2007, "Joint appeal: providing education opportunities to Iraqi children in host countries" [Accessed 8 December 2020]. Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/46a9b6c82.pdf.

in 2007, the scholarships continued to be very limited (12 in the initial year and 51, 42 in the subsequent years). As non-Jordanians, Iraqi students were also charged international fees.[44] Later in 2010, Jordan did acknowledge the gap in the higher education provision, which was expected to rely on bilateral funds and to aim for their return.[45]

Informal education such as remedial courses and vocational training that were deemed important for children and youth who dropped out of formal systems were largely provided through NGOs (Stevens, 2013; UNHCR, 2009). Indeed, post-2003, due to the high profile of the crisis, witnesses a growing number of NGOs in Jordan. Nevertheless, the donor support declined in 2010-2011 as they assessed the possible return of Iraqis, the provisions thus became uncertain. The issue with external NGOs and bilateral funds remains that it is periodical and uncertain subjecting to donors' support.

1.5.2 Lebanon and the dense presence of NGO and private institutions

As mentioned earlier, Lebanon's HE sector is largely autonomous. The laisser-faire approach has also created spaces for foreign governments, international agencies and NGOs to provide opportunities for refugee students. As for Lebanon's approach to the needs of displaced populations, Palestinians' continuous presence tells a long history of turmoil and exclusion. Unlike in Jordan, the majority of the Palestinian refugees are not naturalized and

[44] International students who compose more than 10 percent of the student body pay the highest fees which could amount to 6 times more than their Jordanian counterparts in a regular programme. Take the University of Jordan for instance, the tuition fees for Sociology major (as of 2019), while Jordanian students are charged 16 JD per credit in a regular program and 45 JD in the parallel program, the international rate is 140 USD (99 JD), on top of the other admin fees each semester which are also 6 times higher. See: Fees and Tuition, University of Jordan http://ju.edu.jo/Pages/Program-Fees.aspx

[45] "Additional efforts should be undertaken to enable Iraqi refugees to pursue higher education, particularly securing bilateral funds to address this gap. Such support plays an important role in durable solutions: upon return, Iraqis with higher education will play an important role in reconstruction and good governance" (p. 51). In OCHA. 2010. *Regional Response Plan for Iraqi Refugees 2010.* [Online] [Assessed 22 Jan 2021] Available from: https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/regional-response-plan-iraqi-refugees-2010

have no citizenship in Lebanon. Free and formal education access is therefore limited to UNRWA schools, which had no secondary levels before 1993 (Rosenfeld, 2009). PLO used to assist students in continuing their education by running secondary schools and securing university scholarships in Lebanon or other sympathetic countries, but the access became increasingly difficult after the Israeli invasion and PLO's departure in 1982 (Abu-Habib, 1996). Apart from these, some bourgeoisie families were able to support their children through secondary education and higher education while a small number of the others relied on grants to access higher education (Badran, 1980). It is worth noting that, during the 1960s' universities expansion in the Arab world, establishments such as Lebanese University and Beirut Arab University (supported by Egypt) have a large number of Palestinians from abroad (Abu Lughod, 1973; Badran, 1980; Rosenfeld, 2009). There had also been student solidarity since the early days of the Palestinian exodus and support for the Resistance Movement (see Anderson, 2011).

The 1982 events had not only led to the collapsing of PLO institutions and employment opportunities they created, but also the withdrawing of foreign aid and increased strain on UNRWA's resources (Weighill, 1997). NGOs later on filled in the vacuum of humanitarian needs as the exclusion policy exacerbated, early in 2001, there were 46 Arab and 20 foreign NGOs assisting the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon (Ajial Center, 2001). Some NGOs offer vocational training and activities for children (Ajial Center, 2001) while UNRWA continues its formal education provision. Currently, UNRWA has 65 schools that also house Palestinian refugees from Syria since the crisis.[46] In 2009, the EU channelled €15 million through UNRWA

[46] UNRWA. *Education in Lebanon.* [Online] [Accessed 1 February 2021] Available from: https://www.unrwa.org/activity/education-lebanon

to fund educational projects including building 6 new secondary schools (now total 8 operating) in parallel of university scholarships €3 million over three years.[47]

Currently, Lebanese University, the only public university in Lebanon charges Palestinians the same fees as Lebanese students,[48] which is the only choice for Palestinian students without substantial financial support. Nevertheless, being considered foreigners, Palestinians continued to be barred from performing certain professions such as medicine, law and engineering (Chaaban *et al.*, 2010). This policy continues to position Palestinian students in a paradox where one had to learn Lebanese curriculum (in UNRWA schools) but simultaneously excluded from the prospects that these education opportunities were to offer (Shuayb, 2014). Nevertheless, the survey of 2010 still showed that education can still help refugees secure better jobs. Of those with a university degree, 70% work as professionals or associated professionals while many practicing outside of the law (Chaaban *et al.*, 2010; Shuayb, 2014).

Not sharing the borders with Iraq, the scale of Iraqi refugees in Lebanon was relatively small compared to those in Jordan. Among the government estimation of 50,000 Iraqis in Lebanon, about 10,000 registered with UNHCR (compared to 52,000 out of 450,000 in Jordan) (Crisp *et al.*, 2009). Lebanon was also covered in the 2007 UNHCR-UNICEF Educational Appeal and the funding appeal continued in 2008.[49] The Ministry of Education issued a circular in 2008

[47] UNRWA. 2009. *UNRWA and the European Union inaugurate a new secondary school in Taalabaya.* (12 February 2009). [Online] [Accessed 1 February 2021] Available from: https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/unrwa-and-european-union-inaugurate-new-secondary-school-taalabaya

[48] Lebanese University. *Admission (Updated on 18 Jane 2020)*. [Online] [Accessed 30 Jan 2021] Available from: https://ul.edu.lb/students/registration.aspx

[49] UNHCR. 2008. *"UNHCR faces funding shortfall for Iraq operation" (9 May 2008)* [Online] [Accessed 2 February 2021]. Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/press/2008/5/482457a24/unhcr-faces-funding-shortfall-iraq-operation.html?query=UNHCR%20Faces%20Funding%20Shortfall%20for%20Iraq%20Operation#

instructing all schools to allow enrolment of refugee children, with UNHCR providing the refugees with education grants, school kits, etc (Crisp *et al.*, 2009).[50] With regards to non-formal education, including remedial classes and vocational training, UNHCR is supported through its NGO partners (Crisp *et al.*, 2009). These non-formal educational programmes provided by community-based local NGOs were deemed important for children and adolescents who had dropped out. While schools continued to open for Iraqi children, in 2010, school fees and relevant costs continued to be identified as significant obstacles for their access.[51]

What differed from Jordan's circumstances was the density of Lebanon's NGOs. Responding to various humanitarian crises predate the Iraqi's displacement, including that of Palestinians as above mentioned and the 15-year long civil war, the NGOs in Lebanon seemed to be more ready to work with UN agencies. While in Jordan, UNHCR was not able to identify its partners initially (afterwards there was an increase of NGOs establishment), in Lebanon, episodes of competitions among new and old NGO actors were documented:

> It is apparent that some of the longer-established NGOs are a little disturbed by the arrival of new actors, who, in the words of one interlocutor, "have come because money is available," "are very good at selling themselves" and "all have their own agenda." (Crisp *et al.*, 2009, p. 47)

While NGOs' educational services in the Iraqi crisis focused on non-formal educational programmes and community-based activities, higher education seemed to be missing in both government's accounts and the NGOs sectors.

[50] UNHCR. 2010. "Universal periodic review: The Republic of Lebanon". [Online] [Accessed 8 December 2020]. Available from: https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4bcd705e2.pdf.
[51] OCHA. 2010. *Regional Response Plan for Iraqi Refugees 2010.* [Online] [Assessed 22 Jan 2021] Available from: https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/regional-response-plan-iraqi-refugees-2010

Compared to Jordan's centralized approach to refugee education, Lebanon's dense NGOs and private institutions fill in the gaps. In both countries, while various educational opportunities for refugees were made available by various regional and global actors throughout history, refugees' access to higher education remains subjected to political and geopolitical contentions and developments. The international organization responsible for refugees may deem higher education increasingly important for their developmental agenda and assistance to the host countries. However, as much as assistance to higher education indicates long-term development and futures, the region continues to experience crisis to crisis as funds ebb and flow with the rise and fall of political and media attention. UNHCR along with Lebanon and Jordan have also developed the "assistance regime". The host states bear the agenda to utilize the incoming funding for their developmental goals, while refugees' presence continues to be seen as foreign and temporary and higher education as a non-priority or of externality.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter provides a background review that aims to contextualize the current educational provision for refugee students. Understanding that students' experiences cannot be analysed merely under host states' national policies, the chapter shows the multiple frameworks, histories and their interrelatedness that influence current educational opportunities for refugees or lack thereof. The general trends on development and education at the global and national policy levels suggest a focus on national economic development as the priority, even when aids and loans are facilitated under the banner of "education for all".

Through reviewing the developments of the overlapping policy areas and their underlining assumptions, the chapter demonstrates two layers of discrepancies within which refugee education is provided today in the locations under study. Firstly, on a meta-level, the rationale of education for national competitiveness and development continues to dominate despite globalization and the neoliberal transformation of today's educational terrain. Ensuring access to education for individuals who fall in between the states, such as refugees, becomes a task for international agencies governing them, i.e. UNHCR and UNRWA. Nevertheless, as the latter part of the chapter demonstrates, educational access had been facilitated via various means in and outside of the dominant UN framework.

On the other hand, educational aids, multilateral or bilateral, have been facilitated with geopolitical and economic agendas. This can be observed through aids and loans in educational reforms in the Arab countries. Similarly, UNHCR, relying on donors' support, bears the approach that reflects certain geopolitical interests. The approach prioritizes local solutions to integrate refugees' needs into national developmental goals. This however fits awkwardly with the experiences and circumstances of the host states in the region. Lebanon and Jordan have experienced the long-term presence of Palestinian refugees and participated in numerous political upheavals related to the protracted mass displacement. Refugee populations remain to be seen and treated as temporary visitors. With this temporariness, education provision under the assistance regime is facilitated based on not simply their rights but also host states' national developmental goals.

This review, through highlighting the aforementioned discrepancies in action, also evidences the incongruity between the two dominant meta-frames of progress and justice in the modern conception of education (Chabbott, 2002). As one-dimensional (national)

progress and (economic) development continues to be prioritized both in global humanitarianism and national policies, justice through individuals' right to higher education cannot be genuinely fulfilled.

This chapter, while cautioning against methodological nationalism, paves the way to Chapter 5 which argues the significance of national policies interwoven in the geopolitical influences. Looking at the globalized trend of education and higher education, one may see its function as less and less relevant to national boundaries. Nevertheless, as the findings chapters will discuss, while a future without borders might be imagined, expected and prepared for through educational opportunities, the experiences of refugees could signal otherwise.

CHAPTER 2

REFUGEE EDUCATION, WAITING AND HOPE

2.1 Introduction

Just as anthropologist Malkki (1995) comments that a review on refugee studies is inescapably interdisciplinary (p. 516), Castles (2003) likewise notes that "the sociology of forced migration must understand itself as a component within interdisciplinary undertaking" and incorporate broader analyses of institutions and structures (p. 22). Ramsay and Baker (2019) in their meta-scoping study on higher education and students from refugee backgrounds also suggest that "education cannot be understood as a silo" (p. 77) and the field is likewise interdisciplinary in nature. In addition, Bartlett and Ghaffar-Kucher (2013) point out that the "technicist and instrumental approaches" that are often applied to the enquiry on Migration and Education "have the unfortunate tendency to naturalize political decisions and reify cultural constructions" (p. 9).

The project is therefore informed by multiple fields of inquiry concerned with structural predicaments, injustice, and suffering faced, negotiated and responded to by those who may be considered *dis*placed and *im*mobile in both spatial and temporal terms. With a focus on "futures", this chapter brings together literature on refugee education and higher education—highlighting the relief-development debate, extending the previous chapter's effort in contextualising refugee education—and streams of the literature on refugees and migrants' physical, social and temporal im/mobilities in addition to waiting and "waithood" in youth studies. By bringing both the discussions on youths' waithood and migrants and

refugees' experiences of waiting, the chapter responds to the literature on the construction of "the refugee" figure and "the refugee experience" (Malkki, 1995).

Scholarly writings specific to the Syria case post-2011 focus on the immediate barriers and practical challenges of access, documentation, fees and tuitions, curricula and languages (El-Ghali and Al-Hawamdeh, 2017; El-Ghali, Berjaoui and Deknight, 2017; Kamyaba, 2017; Center for Strategic Studies, 2018). Refugee students' experiences in these studies are to identify current barriers, inform and challenge the immediate national and humanitarian policies and programme delivery but not the further geopolitical and national political frameworks, agendas, policy labels and categories.

In a meta-scoping study, Ramsay and Baker (2019) systematically review the research published in academic journals on higher education and students from refugee backgrounds during 1999-2018 and recommend directions for future research. The study shows that the majority of the articles published on the topic was during 2010-2018 with a 2010 Special Issue of *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugee* on access to higher education. The number of articles continued to grow since 2011. Nevertheless, they suggest that the relationship between refugees and higher education remains an under-explored area of research. In addition, the empirical research conducted in protracted refugee situations is significantly fewer than that in resettlement contexts. The authors call on further research to "disrupt the pathological gaze on the 'resilient individuals'" and that our attention should shift to questions of "how the system can be adapted to better meet the needs of the diverse student body" (p. 80). The chapter will argue that for the system to meet "the needs of the diverse student body", we first have to recognize refugees as a diverse student body. The recognition, while mundane,

seems especially challenging when refugees in the "protracted situations" are labelled and seen as immobile and trapped in certain space and time (Hyndman and Giles, 2011).

The later part of the chapter therefore focuses on the concepts of "waiting" and "waithood" that help to think about experiences of refugees and migrants with those of youths across the globe. The work is responding to the critique of essentialising refugees as a fixed, depoliticised and dehistoricised humanitarian category. Drawing on youth studies, the section not only contextualises refugee situations in the broader political economy of the global South, but also serves as a foundation for the thesis' analyses—which is simultaneously soundly evidenced by the notes and narratives I was provided for throughout the field work—that "the refugees" are also young men and women, students and teachers, workers and volunteers, parents and siblings, activists and organizers.

After an examination on theories and empirical research on waiting and waithood, the chapter proceeds to complicate the passivity implied in the concept of waiting by engaging with the theories about "agency in waiting" and "hope" informed by various authors studying im/mobilities of migrants and refugees (Hage, 2003; Hage, 2005; Conlon, 2011; Andersson, 2014; Brun, 2015; Kleist, 2015; Kleist and Jansen, 2016). Hope with its relational and political quality, as the following will show, can be a useful framework to examine both the expectations of authorities—national governments and humanitarian agencies in this case—and the agentive actions and projections that the students I encountered demonstrate as they navigate the fields of education and higher education.

2.2 Refugee education: from institutional agendas to concerns about the future

The practical and academic fields of refugee education are both in close entanglement with humanitarian and developmental agendas. Refugee education as a coherent field of humanitarian practice originated in the Second World War and its aftermath (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). The United Nations assumed the educational responsibilities for displaced people, namely the post-war European refugees as well as Palestinian refugees under UNRWA's mandate. Initially, the educational provisions through the new global institutions were mainly ad hoc and schools and informal education were developed by refugee communities associated with their political struggles, decolonization and liberation movements (Sinclair, 2001; Dryden-Peterson, 2011). At the end of Cold War, UNHCR shifted its approach to larger interventions of providing primary education in line with the Education for All (EFA) movement throughout the 1990s. During this period, which Dryden-Peterson (2016) calls the phase of "Global Governance of Refugee Education" from 1985 to 2011, education was provided in the curriculum and language close to the country of origin in large isolated refugee camps separated from schools of the host communities, with the expectation of return (Waters and LeBlanc, 2005; Dryden-Peterson, 2016). The de-politicised, psychosocial focus of refugee education began and as Waters and LeBlanc (2005) argue, "planning for education is often done 'for' refugees by external actors like the host country, United Nations relief agencies, and nongovernmental organizations, rather than 'with' refugees" (p. 130). This section reviews the top-down frameworks and concepts in which education and higher education are said to be and should be "for" refugees and how recent scholarship challenges the existing discourses such as education for employability and rebuild and return.

The following shows that studies on refugee education have extended from the earlier technicist and instrumental approaches to further inquiry on how refugee education and

higher education may enable us to think more critically about new educational futures. The perspective towards a long-term future beyond the crisis frame is enabled by the ongoing relief-development debate about refugee education. The section also discusses concepts of "vulnerability" and "security" as they often underpin arguments about education's function in refugee contexts.

2.2.1 Education in emergencies and the psychosocial focus

Prior to 1990s, the majority of the refugee-related educational studies focus on the long-term resettlement context in wealthier countries (Preston, 1991). Towards the end of Cold War, literature begins to discuss education as a humanitarian response as a new ideology of humanitarian intervention emerged (Tawil, 1997; Retamal and Aedo-Richmond, 1998; Davies, 2003). This stream of literature concerns primarily educational provisions and practices for children in conflict situations located in the Global South (in earlier literature "the Third World") which is said to suffer from "complex emergencies". A complex emergency is referred to a combination of armed conflict, mass displacement, economy collapse and the disruption of basic public services including food and shelter (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000). The term, coined by the United Nations, also refers to crises that require system-wide response with a focus on (the absence of) peace, including preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and post-conflict peacekeeping (Lederach and Peace, 1997). It is complex because the double responsibilities assumed by the international agencies to do both political work of resolving conflicts as well as humanitarian work of responding to the needs of the

affected.[52] The attention to refugee education in the Global South emerged within the complex emergency framework in which the notion of peace is prioritized.

With education becoming part of the humanitarian operation in emergencies in 1990s, most of the literature is closely connected to the humanitarian field. Written mostly by practitioners in the field and connected to humanitarian agencies, case studies focus on the immediate challenges, barriers, strategies and evaluations of particular policies or programmes (For example, the collection edited by Retamal and Aedo-Richmond, 1998). Karam, Monaghan and Yoder (2017) observes that the founding of Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) in 2000 accelerates evidence-based research tailored to deepen knowledge of "best practices" in the field (p. 451). Dicum (2005) also observes that as emergency education is "steeped in the practical", researchers often have to struggle with the tension between theory and practice in education (p. 57). The praxis-oriented analyses often reflect categories and agendas of the ongoing humanitarian operations. These have been critically reflected later by authors writing at a later date (Waters and LeBlanc, 2005; Kagawa, 2005; Skovdal and Campbell, 2015).

Constructions of education endowed with the functional roles of offering protection and maintaining normalcy in emergencies, continue to follow the "medical survival model" of previous years in which the relief assistance centred on physiological subsistence (Waters and LeBlanc, 2005). At the onset, as education is increasingly recognized as a necessary part of humanitarian responses, the literature illustrates an emphasis on education's role in

[52] Inter-agency Standing Committee, 1994, "Definition of Complex Emergencies", Working Group XVI[th] Meeting. [Accessed 29 September 2021] Available at: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/legacy_files/WG16_4.pdf

improving the psychosocial wellbeing of children. The influential UN-commissioned report "The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children" by Graça Machel in 1996 highlights the physical as well as psychosocial consequences of conflict.[53] The report urges donors to support education as part of humanitarian assistance. Following the report, social conditions including schools are said to be vital in children's psychosocial wellbeing (Ahearn, 2000). Emergency education, from an emphasis on the impact of armed conflicts on education also expands the focus onto the "dialectical relationship" between schooling and armed conflicts in which formal education is scrutinized for its perpetuation of social exclusion and ethnic tension (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000). Education is recognized with its significances in complex emergencies: a catalyst of conflict to be examined, a preventive measure, and a part of the reconciliation and reconstruction process (Tawil, 1997). While a complex emergency is intrinsically political, the institutional attention is often drawn into "peacebuilding" that assumed a neutral and non-political stance. The peacebuilding agenda stresses education's role in changing "the mind"— education to "desegregate the mind" and "demilitarize the mind" (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000). Psychological and behavioural dimensions of children's life are highlighted in such an approach, with the assumption that displaced children have been exposed to violence and are typically traumatized (Sinclair, 2001; Warr, 2010). Displacement becomes associated with the marks of violence and trauma as givens and young refugees are essentialized as inherently "vulnerable"[54].

[53] Graça Machel, 1996, "The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children", International Conference on War-affected Children. [Accessed 28 August 2021] Available at: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/INTERNATIONAL%20CONFERENCE%20ON%20WAR.pdf

[54] Scholars use quotation mark for the term "vulnerability" to highlight the ambiguity of the term's usages and their potential consequences (Enloe, 2019; Turner, 2019)

Schools and non-formal education are charged with the responsibility to protect, to provide safe spaces in difficult times after experiencing violence and losing home and usual rhythm (Sinclair, 2001; Smith and Vaux, 2003; Greaves, Nabhani and Bahous, 2019). Child labour, premature marriage and radicalization are often mentioned when it comes to education's protective role for youths in displacement (Sinclair, 2001; Lăzăroiu, 2015). Beyond schooling and other educational programmes, higher education is also recommended to be a psychosocial intervention in refugee contexts (Crea, 2016). Nevertheless, Skovdal and Campbell (2015) suggest critically examining the common view of educational institutions as "islands" or "safe havens" "capable of tackling the impacts of complex social problems without significant resources and outside support" (p. 24). In reality, school actors and host governments also have different agendas and interests. Indeed, in Lebanon and Jordan, even as schools are made accessible by state policies and humanitarian aid at various degrees, refugee children continue to experience alienation, discrimination and racism due to the systematic exclusion and segregation enacted by the same policies (Shuayb, 2014; Salem, 2021). This evidences the need to go beyond the view of liminal access to education for refugees as a "shelter" which only replicates the survival/relief model that built on the assumption of fixated "vulnerability" of refugee young people.

While having the tendency to focus on refugee individuals' "vulnerability", a psycho***social*** approach in education in emergencies, nevertheless, as Kagawa (2005) argues, "acknowledges the dynamic relationship between psychological effects (i.e. emotion, behaviour, thoughts, memory, learning ability, perception and understanding) and social effects (i.e. relationships altered or distorted by death, separation, and estrangements)" while taking into consideration of local culture and community-based approaches (p. 489). Some

studies have also tried to depart from the pathological lens that squarely focuses on refugees' victimhood and emphasizes wellness, agency and coping strategies (Ahearn, 2000; Alzaroo and Hunt, 2003; Lewando Hundt *et al.*, 2004). Others highlight the importance of contextualized indigenous definitions of wellbeing, local classification of diagnostic criteria (Lewando Hundt *et al.*, 2004), and culturally appropriate psychosocial protective strategies (Greaves, Nabhani and Bahous, 2019). Often grounded in empirical data, psychosocial "vulnerability" experienced in displacement remains significant in informing policy and practice. The question is thus how to engage with the psychosocial aspects in refugees' educational journey while taking into consideration the broader institutional and political agendas and examining their impact on individual wellbeing.

By linking individual psychological wellbeing or mental health to social factors, a psychosocial focus provides an opportunity to consider "vulnerability" in relational terms. Kiwan (2019) suggests examining the psychological "vulnerability" within the theoretical concepts of emotion and body, both of which are defined as relational. That is, vulnerability does not occur within the individual body understood as "atomized and bounded being" but as "open to being affected and affecting others" (p. 4). Emotion, likewise, has been conceptualized as social, cultural and political practices, a process of movement and attachment rather than an object one has or owns (Ahmed, 2014). Through this lens, psychological vulnerability—for example, the experiences of pain and suffering—no longer can be seen as fixated as an identity of individuals, but already contextualized within interpersonal and public spheres, demonstrating a history and embedded in politics. The approach encourages us to see "vulnerable contexts" instead of "vulnerable people" (Mocnik, 2017; Poopuu, 2020). However, Kiwan (2019) observes that in the context of Lebanon,

educational NGOs emphasizes some vulnerable contexts more than others: “vulnerability is primarily constructed in economic, psychological and physical terms, rather than the vulnerability due to the lack of legal recognition per se” (p. 12). Chapter 5, therefore, accentuates the legal and political aspects that induce the vulnerable contexts in which students continue to engage with educational hope.

2.2.2 Relief-development and the future

To move beyond the liminal access model of education for the “vulnerable” refugee young people, it is necessary to engage with the ongoing relief-development debate in refugee education literature. Writing on education as a humanitarian response, authors often are critical of the short-term relief interventions and advocate for long-term development, reconstruction and rehabilitation (Tawil, 1997; Vargas-Baron and McClure, 1998; Waters and LeBlanc, 2005). Indeed, education ensues a long-term, developmental orientation and does not fit easily into the short-term relief model. Literature has long been advocating a developmental approach in emergencies while the dominant humanitarian framework in refugee contexts also transits into an emphasis on development and integration in the host countries. Enquiring into “the future” of refugee education, research also reflects critically “the kind of future” that is embedded in humanitarian/developmental discourses.

Through a long-term perspective, authors express concern about the question of what happens to education provision after emergencies (Tawil, 1997; Sinclair, 2002; Mendenhall, 2014). Sinclair (2002) discusses education finance and planning after refugees have returned, and identifies the “relief-development gap” in which UNHCR’s mandate concludes while governments have not yet been able to cover the returnees’ educational needs. Tawil (1997), on the other hand, cautions against the linear “emergency-rehabilitation-development

continuum" as dynamics of the post-Cold War conflict challenge such imagination. Some crises could re-emerge and might be considered "permanent emergencies" and therefore emergency intervention should be considered as an integral part of development operations (p. 11). Mendenhall (2014) brings in the concept of sustainability in thinking about the transition between humanitarian-development transition. She suggests the creation of "long-term education plans that promote ownership by national and local stakeholders" (p. 76). Mendenhall's recommendations for international organizations to support and build the capability of the national and local stakeholders are in line with UNHCR's official announcement of a shift in approach to refugee education in 2012. A model of assistance to host countries' national development projects to integrate refugees' educational needs is now being promoted (Dryden-Peterson, 2016).

Long-term perspectives and questions about "the future" are central to the discussions of education as a humanitarian response in refugee contexts. The discussions reflect the changing agendas and legal framework on refugee solutions facilitated and/or undermined by donor countries, countries of resettlement and global mandates. Earlier literature discusses how curricula and languages of instruction are used according to refugees' expectations of repatriation, local settlement or resettlement while taking into account the changing political landscape (Preston, 1991). Subsequently, as UNHCR's approach to education became more centralized, a critique of its agenda of education for repatriation emerged (Waters and LeBlanc, 2005). The paradox of education without a nation-state also comes to light as displacement becomes protracted with countries of origins remaining unsafe to return and wealthier countries increasingly restricting resettlement (Waters and LeBlanc, 2005; Zeus, 2011).

In recent years, as Chapter 1 also discusses, the model of refugee care and protection has shifted from direct aid and encampment to self-reliance strategies including economic empowerment and livelihoods. As an "integrated system" of providing education through host states' national systems has been prioritised, more research now focuses on how refugees can make use of their education in a protracted situation in host countries. This unavoidably engages researchers to think beyond education as one independent sector but, as Ramsay and Baker (2019) suggests, "deeply interwoven into the broader fabric of re/settlement and process of belonging and integrating that refugees are subjected to" (p. 77). In other words, an analysis of the broader, layered political framework becomes necessary as refugee education is oriented away from decontextualized global humanitarian provision towards an integrated system within the host society.

An integrated system, if host states will, might appear to guarantee access. Nevertheless, as Brun and Shuayb (2020) argue, the supposed "integrated" system remains functioning with the logic of education in emergencies, in which the right to education is conditional upon host countries and is treated as independent and detached from other rights. The logic continues to be at odds with education's objective of development and the right to which is for "being full members of society" (Brun and Shuayb, 2020, Table 1). The authors suggest in their recent examination of the Lebanese government's refugee education policy, the two-shifts system continues to operate in a logic of temporary presence and targeted intervention rather than integration. Despite the government's shift in its discourse from humanitarian reason to long-term development with the support of donors, education for refugees remains "purposeless, exceptional and segregated" (p. 26). The authors argue, "futureless and exceptional" education as such continues to resemble the humanitarian logic

in emergencies where access is the prime concern. While the survival and minimum paradigm of access remains in place, the inherent inequalities and the quality of education are left unchecked for all groups in the host country. What is needed to overcome, the authors argue, is the "confinement of exceptionality in 'refugee' status and a humanitarian reason" to enable education that entails a future (p. 27).

As the work of Brun and Shuayb (2020) evidences, an enquiry towards the future enables a deeper understanding of political and discursive elements in refugee education that are central to the outcome of implementations. A body of literature on students' experiences in situations where education remains operating in a temporary "futureless" paradigm. For example, Bellino (2018) discusses the collective expectations of refugees' contributions upon completion of their studies. In the host states where refugees are deprived of appropriate employment opportunities, refugee graduates have to shoulder and manage perceived "failure" (Bellino, 2018). In light of the perceived struggle for refugees to realize the future, scholars maintain their advocacy for long-term perspectives in refugee education, such as long-term planning (Horst and Aden, 2021) and further civic and political rights in the host countries (Shuayb and Hammoud, 2020). Notably, Dryden-Peterson (2017) sees refugee education as a long-term endeavour for an "unknowable future". Unknowable because refugees' future trajectories are not linear and neither do they "fit neatly into the established policy categories of return, local integration, and resettlement" (Dryden-Peterson, 2017, p. 21). Nonetheless, the advocacy of "unknowability" needs to be contextualized within political agendas and their dynamics. In Chapter 5, I connect the concept of "unknowable future" to the layered legal and political frameworks under which students hope for this unknowable future.

2.2.3 Higher education, employability and the "return and rebuild" discourse

Not until recently has higher education become more visible in academic and policy discussions in refugee education (Avery and Said, 2017; Ramsay and Baker, 2019). As the previous chapter mentioned, the delay has to do with the global movement on expanding basic education access. Under the Education for All framework, funding for university scholarships was scrutinized for its danger in undermining the resources for primary education (Dryden-Peterson, 2010). The concern also reflects what was mentioned earlier the awareness of the dialectic relationship between education and conflict—in particular, the uneven distribution of education that may be "creating or preserving positions of economic, social and political privilege" (Kagawa, 2005, p. 490). Higher education especially, may "serve as a mechanism of elite closure, a key tool in the maintenance of elite power, a reproducer of colonial hegemony/dominance" (Pherali and Abu Moghli, 2019, p. 5). Nevertheless, in light of the increased higher education enrolment across the globe (as mentioned in the previous chapter) as well as the ethos of even distribution of educational opportunities, expanding higher education access in refugee contexts should therefore be imperative rather than restrictive (Zeus, 2011; Pherali and Abu Moghli, 2019).

As in popular talk, higher education is closely linked to "the future"—be it livelihood, a career plan, or a "dream". Thinking about higher education in refugee contexts encourages a perspective beyond emergency to long-term development. The future associated with higher education not only points towards what happens after university but also signals a future for refugee children at school. Dryden-Peterson and Giles (2010) point out that higher education forms a part of an educational continuum or educational "pipeline". Limited access to higher education would therefore render children in primary and secondary less motivated

to persist. Crea (2016) and Crea and McFarland (2015) likewise argue the "the ripple effect" of higher education for the local communities and for the younger refugees. The benefit of higher education for the young refugees in school would require an examination of how the scholarships are provided/sustained. However, as the previous section alludes to, even as education is framed as long-term development, its provision could remain "futureless" in the way it operates. Chapter 5 will examine whether the available scholarships fulfil this long-term vision in their current modality of provision.

In addition to the long-term benefits on cohorts of young refugees, in protracted situations, higher education is argued to be a bridge between emergency response to refugees' physical and psychological security and sustainable development, in particular, post-conflict reconstruction in refugees' countries of origin (Dryden-Peterson and Giles, 2010; Sherab and Kirk, 2016). Higher education as an emergency response recalls the role of education as a protective space, where literature often points to the prevention of radicalization, marginalization and abuse for refugee youths (Milton and Barakat, 2016; Sherab and Kirk, 2016; Avery and Said, 2017). Nevertheless, the protective role of higher education is not considered as short-term per se. Avery and Said (2017) associate it with the long-term "security" achieved not by military control and repression but through fostering societal conditions that would no longer seed radicalization. The idea of shifting from state security achieved by military control to security realised through favourable societal conditions invokes the concept of "human security". Post-Cold War, the definition of security has broadened beyond the scope of nation-states to "the security of individuals" ranging from physical security to economic development (Suhrke, 2003). However, the term security not only invokes the negative "we/they" or images of "threat" (Suhrke, 2003), it is also often "an

expression of the masculine" while being presented as gender-neutral (Hudson, 2005, p. 157). Indeed, concepts such as "radicalization", "youth bulge" or "waithood" often collapse gendered experiences into neutral terms that conceal women's experiences of insecurities while representing young men as dangerous or volatile. In addition, "security" remains a constrained framework when it comes to an orientation towards "the future". It signals relief measures more than development. This work posits that the concept of human security does not provide a productive framework. Rather, the interlinked concept of "vulnerability" and "vulnerable context" mentioned earlier may be helpful as a starting point to understand refugee young people's experiences in expecting towards the future.

As for higher education's long-term benefits, many point to post-conflict reconstruction and future development of refugees' home countries (Milton and Barakat, 2016; Sherab and Kirk, 2016; Avery and Said, 2017; Zeus, 2011). Nevertheless, most literature warns against seeing higher education as a state-building project and posits that HE in refugee contexts occupies "a critical space of imagining new educational futures" (Pherali and Abu Moghli, 2019, p. 16). This critical space requires HE to go beyond the existing framework of education for "nation-building" and market-oriented "human capital" solutions (Milton and Barakat, 2016; Pherali and Abu Moghli, 2019). While these hopeful visions are proposed, recent research examining the available scholarship opportunities in the region finds that both discourses of "return and rebuild" (Chopra, 2018) as well as market-oriented employability (Fincham, 2020b) remain salient in the existing programmes' orientation. This project joins this body of literature in examining students' experiences in relation to scholarship opportunities. It extends the arguments by incorporating an emotive aspect of hope that is

constructed as relational and involved both the visions and responses of the students and the scholarship providers.

Chopra (2018) suggests that the "geographically-bound" futures such as return are scripted by the educational organizations working in the protracted context of Lebanon, while young refugees' imagined and plausible futures were linked to opportunity rather than geography (p. 115). Pherali and Abu Moghli (2019) caution that the linear notion of return after a crisis ends is "deterministic and ill-conceived" and tied to "the romanticized assumption that refugees have a place, social networks and livelihood environments to go back to or can easily be recuperated" (p. 14, 15). This assertion links to the previously mentioned argument of education for an "unknowable future" (Dryden-Peterson, 2017). Nevertheless, scholarship programmes and students alike negotiate the "vision" according to the possibility in their context (see how "hope" is defined in 2.3.4), therefore return may not be a fixated agenda even for the scholarship providers. As Chapter 5 will elaborate, since the protracted-ness of Syrians' displacement is increasingly apparent, students, scholarship programmes and NGOs on the ground also shift their strategies in maintaining educational hope.

In their mega-scoping study, Ramsay and Baker's (2019) suggest, among other themes, university-workforce transitions and economy, livelihood and higher education are overlooked in the existing research. Through empirical research on refugee students' experiences in higher education in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, Fincham (2020b) brings attention to the square objective of employment outcomes set by scholarship programmes. The neoliberal discourse and practices to turn the students into a productive workforce and to drive post-conflict reconstruction fail to address refugees' other motivations, expectations

and capabilities. These narrow agendas may work against rather than enhance refugees' agency and empowerment (Fincham, 2020b). While also probing into the legal and political frameworks about refugees' university-workforce transition in Chapter 5, this project responds to Fincham's critique by elaborating students' intersecting experiences related to HE, and how students themselves employ strategies in order to negotiate the many other expectations outside of employment.

To go beyond the "nation-building" and "human capital" paradigms of higher education, Avery and Said (2017) argue, HE is required to tackle not only local hierarchies but also interrelated geopolitical inequalities. It means "stepping out of the paradigm of colonial dependence and subordination, collective humiliations, political repression and corrupt government or political-economic elites" (p. 106). Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2011;2014) explores this critical space embodied by the educational programmes set up by the Southern states of Cuba and Libya to support Palestinian and Sahrawi refugees in their educational pursuits and a broader aim of transnational solidarity. The central approach of these programmes reflects an essential part of education as a critical space—"to disrupt the power imbalances which characterise post-colonial and neocolonial North–South/donor–recipient relations" (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2014b, p. 139). While part of the findings in this project remains its focus on the dynamic between Northern organizations and states as donors and Southern host states/refugees as recipients, it necessarily evidences that refugees along with their local counterparts are not simply recipients of aids and scholarship opportunities, but also negotiators and providers of educational access.

2.3 Waiting and hope in protracted situations

In a review of the field of international relations and forced migration, Betts (2014) contends that social scientific research on refugee and forced migration focuses predominantly on experiences of displaced people - therefore "bottom-up" perspectives, and instead needs complementary investigations on the macro-level structure. Nevertheless, the bottom-up approach, often within the disciplines of anthropology, sociology and geography (Betts, 2014), may challenge established policy categories and labels. This in turn may reveal layered geopolitical interests and power relations among states and non-state actors including humanitarian and developmental agencies (Zetter, 2007; Bakewell, 2008b; Polzer, 2008). It would, however, require a critical and reflexive approach to the categories we adopt as researchers in order to see connections between various fields of enquires, processes and power at work (Castles, 2003; Bakewell, 2008b).

In the same vein, Malkki (1995) powerfully reminds us that "the quest for *the* refugee experience" risks seeing the "very mobile, unstable social phenomena" as "essential 'traits' and 'characteristics' attached to, or emanating from, individual persons" (p. 511). In addition, by fixating the gaze on experiences of *dis*placement, researchers tend to turn away from "other commonalities and differences in the socio-historical processes that produce refugees" (p. 511). Some research on forced migration and refugees has begun to address the issue by moving away from seeing refugee experiences as situated in crisis, distinctive or exceptional and instead focusing on relationality (Kumsa, 2006; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016a; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020) and "coevalness" (sharing the same time) (Ramsay and Baker, 2019; Ziss, 2021).

"Syrian refugees", the populations of this project's concern, since the onset of the revolution and subsequent conflicts, have been marked as an exceptional humanitarian case

with the magnitude of the "crisis".[55] The exceptionality and urgency repeatedly inscribed by humanitarian discourses and practices are not without consequences. Refugees' histories of transnational livelihoods, movements and kinship ties with the host communities are being left out of the considerations in humanitarian/developmental policies and interventions (Wagner, 2019; Carpi, 2019a). This evidences that representations and discourses not merely constitute knowledge but at the same time formulate the reality and subsequent developments (Said, 1979; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2014a).

In light of previous efforts in contesting the essentialization of refugee experiences, this section delves into the literature that investigates the categories and labels that refugees are often assigned and the descriptors of situations in which they are often assumed to be. In particular, "the Protracted Refugee Situation" officially defined by UNHCR as "a long-lasting and intractable state of limbo"[56] reinforces a sense of waiting and passivity. The later part of the section introduces the concept of "agency-in-waiting" or "waiting and hope" with the intention to complicate the static representation of refugee immobility in time. The conceptual lens is considered along with the renewed developmental approach to "refugee problems" in individualizing responsibility and celebrating resiliency.

2.3.1 Contesting refugees as binary subjects: visibility and mobilities in space and time

An emerging stream of literature identifies the binary representations of refugees embedded in policy, media and humanitarian discourses and practices. Part of this body of literature anchors on voice and visibility. Malkki (1996) points out that bureaucratised

[55] "The Syrian crisis has become the biggest humanitarian emergency of our era," says António Guterres, the then UN High Commissioner for Refugees. See https://www.unhcr.org/53ff76c99.html.
[56] UNHCR. 2004. *"Protracted Refugee Situations".* [Online] [Accessed 20 April 2021] Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/40c982172.pdf

humanitarian interventions and news reporting often "leach out the histories and politics of specific refugees' circumstances" and refugees therefore become universal, psychological and seen through human essence instead of histories and political circumstances (p. 378). This lens tends to cover up refugees' own claims and knowledge of the situation, dismissing their narratives as psychological. Refugees are in this way silenced and rendered speechless (Malkki, 1996). Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2014a, 2016b) extends the observation to the makings of visible "ideal refugees" or "good refugees" and invisible "a-refugee" or "bad refugee" in which process accentuates the position of the dominant Northern humanitarianism and its power of determining who "deserve" assistance and support. Ideal refugees are either "legitimate" victims or who appear to "fit" the secular, democratic and gender-equal ideals for Northern audience (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2014a; 2016b). Furthermore, the hyper-visible "super-refugee": extraordinary athlete, successful entrepreneur, or high achieving student[57] emerge on the extreme end of the binary representation (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2017). Again, these representations often position Northern states as a centre welcoming or rejecting people moving their way; extending their support to or neglecting others afar.

On the other hand, in the context of Lebanon and Jordan, because of the language and culture similarity and the historical fluidity of the border, many Syrians have family connections and experiences of traveling, studying or working in Lebanon and Jordan. Some Syrians do not register with UNHCR and come through other legal routes or, in some cases, have had a long-time presence in, or have been born in the "host country" while being a Syrian

[57] For example, "'My parents are super-proud': Dublin-based student name-dropped by von der Leyen" *The Irish Times* [accessed 4 Oct 2020] Available at: https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/my-parents-are-super-proud-dublin-based-student-name-dropped-by-von-der-leyen-1.4356564

national. However, many experienced new legal registrations or identifications imposed by the states of Lebanon and Jordan due to the increased presence of Syrians post-2011. Tsourapas (2019) argues that policymakers in both countries engage in "rent-seeking" behaviours by highlighting the magnitude of the crisis through the active encampment and registration policy (in the case of Jordan) and imposing sponsorship and residency renewal with high fees (in the case of Lebanon). Against this backdrop, along with humanitarian services and supports targeting the refugee populations, "Syrian refugees" or "Syrians" becomes an exceptional mark. This happens parallel to discriminatory practices based on nationality rendering legal and political needs of recognition invisible (Kiwan, 2019). It is therefore important to question these policy categories and distinctions in the context where I carry out research. In Chapter 4, I examine how the young Syrians study and live in close relation to the communities they dwell in while state bureaucratic procedures, the "refugee success" image constructed by scholarship programmes, and at times, research interests, render them highly visible and exceptional.

Hyndman and Giles (2011), through the lens of mobility and immobility, examine the construction of difference between two groups of refugees: "those who stay still are viewed as genuine, immobile, depoliticized, feminized, while those on the move are potential liabilities at best, and security threats at worst" (p. 363). In other words, refugees who patiently "wait in place" in protracted situations are "real" refugees and those who move are labelled as "illegal" dangerous threats to security and the welfare state. The authors argue that the Northern states' construction of two distinct groups of refugees is gendered—while representing asylum seekers as a threat and requiring masculinist agenda of control and

security, they feminized refugees offshore as passive, helpless, static and without politics (Hyndman and Giles, 2011).

Seeing mobile refugees as a threat but immobile refugees as genuine reflect the European centre's sedentarist bias in which staying put is projected as a norm. Encamped refugees are therefore "authenticated" while being on the move is unorderly and abnormal, and therefore unacceptable (Hyndman and Giles, 2011, p. 366). In the context of Lebanon and Jordan, the distinction between the "good/bad refugees" based on mobility is less relevant especially as the majority of refugees live in urban areas rather than in camps. It is rather the legal distinction of refugee or non-refugee and humanitarian judgement of "vulnerability" that render one im/mobile dependant on where one is traveling to. For the Lebanese and Jordanian states, the incoming Syrians are not legally recognised as "refugees". Basic assistances such as food and accommodation supports are often dependent on the registration with UNHCR as a refugee, which makes traveling back and forth to Syria "legally" impossible.[58] While Syrian young men are rendered immobile due to the Syrian state's military conscription, refugee women are unable to travel back and forth due to their refugee status. Refugee status is based on the fact of fleeing from state violence, but the distinction at the same time essentialises national borders as uncrossable and refugees to be immobile, disregarding the histories and practices of border-crossing. On the other hand, demonstrating "vulnerability" which is often based on "femininity" enables the possibility of third-country

[58] For example, a UNHCR-registered Syrian may travel back to Syria in a normal route for visiting/sorting out documents/studying but would be unable to enter again as a refugee, which would mean no basic living support upon return.

resettlement. Chapter 6 engages with the mobility dynamics and “vulnerability” standard imposed by humanitarian agencies.

An earlier work of Malkki (1992) reflects on how sedentary assumptions lead scholars to perceive refugees as “a problem”. Malkki combs through how territorializing and botanical concepts such as “roots”, “soil” and “land” are built into the everyday language and meshed in “the national order of things”. Being “rooted”, connecting to the “homeland” is blindly assumed as normal, moral and natural. Such sedentary assumptions not only positions refugees to be “outside” of the national/natural order of things, but also lead us to “define displacement not as a fact about socio-political context, but rather as an inner, pathological condition of the displaced” (p. 33). On the other hand, Malkki’s thesis echoes the previously-discussed literature cautions against the discourse of refugee students’ return to rebuild—"a romantic vision of the rootings of people” and a “heroizing” “conflation of people, nation and nature” (Malkki, 1992, p. 29).

This awareness of the sedentary assumption began to brew within social sciences: “the mobility turn” enables a shift towards examining societies in relation to movement rather than fixed and given structure and social order (Cresswell, 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2006). Sheller and Urry (2006) clarify that a focus on mobilities is not to idealise movement or privilege “mobile subjectivity” (“bourgeois masculine subjectivity” or “cosmopolitan”) as critics warn, but rather to enable “tracking the power of discourses and practices of mobility in creating both movement and stasis” (p. 211). This project engages with the body of literature by highlighting multiple forms of mobilities that are relevant to participating in higher education, as the following section will elaborate.

Observing migration and development projects across Africa, Bakewell (2008a) argues how migration is often seen as a symptom of development failure. A sedentary life remains the goal of the development interventions across the continent. And those who seek to migrate are portrayed as taking desperate measures to avoid poverty. The paternalist lens again reduces migrants to helpless victims whose other aspirations in relation to mobilities are unacceptable (Bakewell, 2008a). Bakewell's argument is instructive here as the humanitarian paradigm in assisting refugees has transformed to incorporate protection and welfare into developmental projects of the host nation-states. These projects, education or livelihood, may continue to dwell in the sedentary bias, as Chapter 1 elaborates. Refugees' narratives on the desire to move or their actual movements away from the host states may be flattened to stories of mere victimhood. I reflect on students' struggle to seek existential mobility by seeking opportunities to travel in Chapter 6.

Focusing on refugees' mobilities also has the potential to complicate the picture of "Protracted Refugee Situation" which is defined as "in limbo":

> Their lives may not be at risk, but their basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile. A refugee in this situation is often unable to break free from enforced reliance on external assistance.[59]

While it is the multiple power relations—"an assemblage of humanitarian assistance, legal limbo and geopolitical interests" (Hyndman and Giles, 2011, p. 367) that produced the immobile situation, it is often the refugees who are highlighted as immobile and "unable to break free" from external aid. That is, immobile and in need of help in relation to the Northern

[59] UNHCR. 2004. *"Protracted Refugee Situations".* [Online] [Accessed 20 April 2021] Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/40c982172.pdf

centre. The mobilities paradigm sensitizes researchers to the movement and connection of people, objects and networks (Sheller and Urry, 2006). This focus not only debunks the portrayal of encamped refugees as one static mass—that camp refugees may strategize and move in various ways, but also enables the visibility of refugees who dwell outside of the destinated humanitarian camps in the host countries, who are the majority in the case of Syrian refugees (see also Bakewell, 2008b). As the Findings chapters will show, refugees in or outside of camps continue to move across exploitative and legally and politically constrained spaces.

Describing a situation as protracted—"after years in exile"—signals the aspect of time. Mobilities paradigm, Sheller and Urry (2006) argue, not only challenges the notions of spatiality but also "undermines existing linear assumptions about temporality and timing" (p. 214). Understanding how people move/wait in space-time likewise may denote the changing modality of government and power. The project explores the idea of temporal mobility by engaging with the literature on "waiting" and "hope", both of which signal a relation to power. Section 2.3.3-2.3.4 will elaborate.

In contesting the skewed binary refugee representations—passive victims versus "super-refugees", or "genuine" immobile mass versus threats on the move, studies have begun to tackle the issue with a focus to contour and situate refugee narratives or the "refugee voice" in the power-laden discursive fields such as international humanitarian regimes, national asylum courts and nation-building projects (Sigona, 2014). Refugees' political participation also emerge in the literature to accentuate refugees as active political agents (Adan *et al.*, 2018). However, singling out visible action and resistance, Haile (2020) contends, may dismiss other forms of resistance and nuanced strategies employed by

refugees. The author observes that refugees in resettling contexts often choose to remain invisible so to protect themselves "from the judgements and presumptions of spectators" (p. 38). The notion of "strategic invisibility", as Haile suggests, "destabilizes the traditional assumption of what refugee resistance should look like" (p. 38). The work complicates the notion of agency as having one form (visible resistance) and echoes previous work calling for attention to various "local and everyday resistances" in order to discern "a range of specific strategies and structures of power" (Abu-Lughod, 1990, p. 53). As Mahmood's work (2005) also instructs, the binary of "resistance and subordination" may continue to ignore "projects, discourses, and desires that are not captured by these terms" (p. 15).

While Haile's work addresses refugees' agency in (in)visibility, Brun (2015) takes a temporal turn to look at "agency-in-waiting" and the interlinked concepts of waiting and hope. The idea may have the potential to continue the effort in complicating the picture of refugees in protracted situations of "waiting", "stuck" or immobile in time. Youths in the region are likewise portrayed as being in "waithood" and unable to fulfil transition to adulthood. The engagement with the ideas of waiting or temporal immobility would extend the project's investigation on higher education and livelihood in refugee contexts. The theoretical frame offers the potential to observe the not-so-visible ways in which refugee young people negotiate the so-called "school to work transition" or employability that are emphasized by humanitarian and developmental projects. Waiting's relevance to hope also brings a more nuanced way to engage with the concept of agency in refugee/youth contexts: agentive acts by young refugees may not be as visible, "successful" (ideal image), or masculine (street protests) but rather an ongoing process of negotiations and emotive engagements with

authorities. Before diving more deeply into the literature on waiting and hope, the following section deals with the understandings of mobilities beyond and linking time and space.

2.3.2 Social and existential mobility

With education being one of the developmental projects intended to incorporate refugees' needs in Lebanon and Jordan, questions of social mobility come into sight. Especially in the context of MENA region, education is widely considered as the most important path to social mobility (Assaad, Hendy and Salehi-Isfahani, 2019). Theoretical construction of the relationship between education and social mobility often draws on the "meritocracy" debates with empirical cases in the British and American context (Themelis, 2008; Brown, Reay and Vincent, 2013). The notion of "merit" has been largely defined in two ways: it manifests in "I.Q. and effort" (Michael Young) or "educational qualifications one holds" (Daniel Bell) (Themelis, 2008, pp. 428-431). The assumption of the relationship between education and social mobility is that "the more one is educated, the more likely he/she is to enter the group of higher-earning labour force regardless of their original social class position" (Themelis, 2008, p. 432).

More recent research goes beyond the Northern context to examine higher education massification, employment and social mobility in the MENA (Cohen, 2004; Buckner, 2011; Akkari, 2021) and Asia Pacific region (Mok and Neubauer, 2016; Lee, 2016). Globalization and the increased movements of people and their networks pose another challenge in studying social mobility. Migrants and refugees' transnational movements bring in new perspectives and challenge the methodological nationalism permeated in many social mobilities research (Brown, Reay and Vincent, 2013). For example, Pascucci (2012) examines Iraqis' migration and forced migration experiences in Egypt and finds that refugee families with middle-class

backgrounds may strategize to resist downward social mobility—often in the form of investing financial capital into (children's) education. This has significant implications for both Iraqis and the Egyptian middle class. Public schools in Egypt are often perceived as of poor quality, and as such, regardless of access depending on one's legal status, many may strive to pay for private education to ensure social mobility or preserve one's social status. The strategy to invest in education, however, may not always be sustainable as private education is increasingly expensive in the Egyptian context (Pascucci, 2012). Pascucci's study demonstrates the significance of the role education in relation to social mobility in refugee context. The focus on refugees' strategies also brings out an aspect of agency that helps to highlights what matters: the education that would enable movement towards a (better) future rather than minimum education access, as previously discussed. Chapter 4 will demonstrate that both students and parents are seeking meaningful education participation and strategize to make their education experiences meaningful. The literature also shows that considerations of refugees and (im)mobilities should go beyond mobilities in physical space-time and include a focus on mobilities in social terms.

Linking physical mobility to social mobility, Hage's (2005, 2009) concept of "existential mobility" provides a useful frame to capture the relationship between the two. In analysing Lebanese diaspora's motives of migrating, Hage (2005) notes,

> In Lebanese, as in the English 'how are you going?' and in many other languages, the word used to denote 'functioning well' is the same used to mean 'moving well'. In colloquial Lebanese, to say 'I am well' you say '*mehcheh'l haal*', which literally means 'the state of my being is walking' (p. 471)

Being "walking somewhere" as being well demonstrates "a close association between the viability of life and a sense of existential mobility" (Hage, 2005, p.471). Therefore, people

desire to move in a significant manner that would involve moving across physical spaces is because "we feel another geographical space is a better launching pad for our existential selves" (p. 470). One is at least "moving somewhere" instead of "going nowhere". To assert viability of the self is to move forward in space/time— for "a better future".[60] Acknowledging the relationship between existential and physical movements allows us to explain different kinds of mobilities rather than homogenizing and labelling movers into rigid categories (Hage, 2005, p. 471). The concept of existential mobility is instructive as it encompasses a dimension of social mobility which continues to be empirically relevant. Education is also often seen as the "key to life", a source of aspiration for future social and spatial mobility in refugee contexts (Bellino, 2018). What happens when the educational journey comes to an end as graduates face immediate legal constraints in attaining further mobility? Chapter 6 takes on this question along with the intersecting aspect of waiting presented in youth studies.

2.3.3 Youth and waithood

Recent studies have begun to examine waiting as a significant facet of (im)mobilities (Conlon, 2011). These studies draw findings from empirical investigations on various forms of waiting migrants and refugees encounter as they face legal limbo when crossing national borders (Mountz, 2011; Andersson, 2014), and trapped in geopolitical constructed humanitarian spaces (Hyndman and Giles, 2011; Wagner, 2017; Sanyal, 2018). Waiting, however, is certainly not an exceptional experience for people on the move. Various authors have explored waiting as a central experience of subaltern populations who are in prolonged

[60] The concept may overlap with social mobility in the way that in capitalist society, people desire to "move upward" in terms of class and status. The concept of existential mobility/stuckness encapsulates, for example, the experience of feeling stuck (compared to the other's mobility) even when one is "climbing the social ladder" (Hage, 2009, p. 99). That is, objective, measurable social mobility does not completely guarantee the experience of existential movement.

waits for a job, papers and welfare within states and in globalisation and neoliberal transformations (Bayart, 2007; Jeffrey, 2010; Auyero, 2012). In thinking more specifically beyond "refugee time as exceptional time", about "coevalness" (see Ziss, 2021), about how people may share the similar experience of time across localities and circumstances, the body of literature on youth and waiting across the globe can be informative for the project's focus on young people. A focus on youths' experiences of waiting complicates the understanding of youth as a school-work transitional phase leading to adulthood in the Northern developmental model. With changing economic, educational and labour market conditions, many remain in a prolonged, indefinite phase facing underemployment and struggling to fulfil the linear, normative expectation of progress built through formal education (Cole, 2005; Mains, 2007; Jeffrey, 2010; Locke and te Lintelo, 2012). Similarly, in the project's context where Syrian young people pre-2011, along with their counterparts in the region, already experienced a degree of "waiting", lacking a fulfilling life path and facing injustice with regards to the country's higher education system (Fincham, 2013).

Here, youth cannot be understood as a concrete, bounded category but rather dependent on the broader structure of political, social, cultural and economic forces (Mains, 2007; Durham, 2000). Herrera and Bayat (2010) argue that mass schooling renders youth as a meaningful analytical category, as young persons around the world are expected to experience "a life of relative autonomy" where they access youth cultures and politics enabled by access to education, leisure activities, media and markets (p. 6). They distinguish "young persons" as an age group from "youth" as a social category. And to become youth, young persons need to experience and assert "youthfulness". Studying Muslim youths across different localities, they observe that in the global South, rural youngsters and especially

female may have little opportunity to undergo "youthfulness". "For they have to move rapidly from the status of childhood into the world of work, responsibility, and parenting—all markers of adulthood" (p. 7). Bayat (2010) also suggests that "youthfulness" is embodied largely in modern cities where access to schooling is more prevalent. Education has a role in "producing and prolonging the period of youth while it cultivates status, expectations, and, possibly, critical awareness" (p. 31). For Syrian youngsters moving from rural areas to cities in Lebanon and Jordan with the hopes to access education and work, the idea of youthfulness is informative. Chapter 6 will propose that an outlook toward "the future" embodies the experiences of youthfulness.

With the massification of education and higher education, the period of youth expands, but formal employment opportunities at the same time decline. The situation leaves young people across various regions frustrated and discontent with the "broken promise" of having a good life—quality education, financial independence, marriage and family formation (Buckner, 2013; Mulderig, 2013; Mok and Neubauer, 2016). Studies on the phenomenon in the Middle East and North Africa use the notion of "waithood" to describe this prolong, suspended period (Singerman, 2007; Dhillon and Yousef, 2009). The notion was picked up by others in describing youths' predicaments in Africa (Honwana, 2012; Sommers, 2012). While the phenomenon is widespread across the globe, it nevertheless more intensely plays out in the global South where the states' ability to determine socio-economic policies has been weakened by the structural adjustment programmes (Honwana, 2012). While neoliberal capitalism may be blamed for youths' waithood, Mains (2007) argues that such interpretation should attend to local specificity to avoid closing off further enquiries. For example, Mains

finds that social relationships and local values surrounding occupational status also produce and exacerbate the temporal experience.

In the case of Egypt, Singerman (2007) focuses on the "marriage imperative" that plays a vital part in determining the waithood. That is, waithood is not simply about the slow transition from school to work, but where young people "negotiate their prolonged adolescence and remain single for long periods while trying to save money to marry" (p. 6). As the marriage cost remains far-reaching for the underemployed young people, they remain financially dependent on their families, who in large part finance the costs of marriage (Singerman, 2007). While in Egypt, the groom's side contributes to the marriage cost including housing, furniture, jewellery and celebration for about two-thirds and the bride's side one-third (Singerman, 2007), the increased female labour market participation also facilitates brides and their families in contributing to a larger part of the cost (Puschmann and Matthijs, 2016).[61] This may be different in Jordan and among Syrians where grooms contribute to most of the costs. A more recent study by Sieverding, Berri and Abdulrahim (2018) based on Jordan Labour Market Survey data in 2010 and 2016 shows that the marriage costs both among Jordanians and Syrians have declined over time. The authors suggest that the higher ages at marriage is instead consistently associated with education rather than costs (Sieverding, Berri and Abdulrahim, 2018). Chapter 6 discusses the expectation towards marriage and "establishing oneself" among the young men, as well as the strategies deployed in fulfilling the expectation.

[61] Nevertheless, Sigerman's study notes that while the costs increase with the education of men and women, this could be offset by the older age of educated women, which increases the bride's side's contribution. The higher the age of women, the more her family contributes. "Education is a premium for men on the marriage market but still a liability for women and their families," Singerman writes (p. 14).

On top of marriage, Singerman (2007) suggests that waithood also refers to other processes of waiting as young people negotiate their identities while various authorities impose expectations on the youths to become "good Islamic subjects", "productive citizens", or "ardent globalized consumers" (p. 6). Waithood concerns various authorities and power who and which construct youth as a category. Sukarieh and Tannock (2016) propose an approach of "political economy of youth" in which it "addresses how (and whether) individuals and groups come to be constituted as 'youth' in the first instance" (p. 1283). Based on this approach, Wagner (2017) observes the phenomenon of young Syrian refugees in Jordanian town Mafraq participating in short-term training courses one after another. As they accumulate their NGO certificates, the young Syrians continue to be excluded from the formal labour market and have limited access to higher education. As unemployed young people in Meerut, India, who engage in "timepass" activities which emerges as a mean to negotiate idleness (Jeffrey, 2010), young Syrians in Jordan engage with constant educational opportunities to keep themselves busy (Wagner, 2017). At the same time, meaningful futures are continually delayed. On top of the financial struggles and temporary jobs, young Syrians in Mafraq, as Wagner describes, do not only experience "waiting" but "frantic waiting". Wagner attributes the phenomenon to the NGOs' depoliticized approach and their agenda of "turning disenfranchised non-youthful youngsters into model refugees of a certain kind, i.e. a neoliberal refugee youth" (p. 115). The article also highlights the overlooking of existing restrictions on female mobility in public space while NGOs are eager to "create highly mobile (preferably female) subjects" (p. 116). Likewise, refugee young men's predicaments in the culturally specific division of labour and subjections to security checks and exploitative labour may also be overlooked in some of these humanitarian projects that have gender equality on

top of the agenda (Wagner, 2017). Chapter 6 discusses further this contradictory picture of waithood and how young people I met, in turn, use the many opportunities to keep busy as a strategy to negotiate the waits. It also complicates the picture of female mobilities and accentuates the agentive acts in which one negotiates the constraints of mobilities—physical and existential—as one continues to pursue what is seen as a meaningful future.

While youths seem to wait—frantically or passively under structure conditions, social relations and humanitarian interventions, youths' own perspectives on and their roles in shaping broader political, social, cultural and economic structures are not to be neglected (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2016). As Locke and te Lintelo (2012) hold, thinking youth transition as school-to-work trajectory itself shows the "neglect of youth's own perspectives, of other areas of experience that are valued by youth, and of importance to relational and collective dimensions of wellbeing" (p. 779). Studies that engage with youth's perspectives find how youth negotiate, strategize and engage with politics in waithood (Jeffrey, 2010; Jeffrey and Young, 2012; Honwana, 2012; Locke and te Lintelo, 2012). Young men in Zambia and Northern India gather in public spaces and create "cultures of waiting"—of "waiting" or "passing time" instead of "just sitting" or "wasting time", the young men negotiate as they use the former narratives to define idleness as productive to differentiate themselves from the later stereotypes (Jeffrey, 2010; Locke and te Lintelo, 2012). The acceptability of waiting, as previously Herrera and Bayat (2010) allude to the experiences of youthfulness, is highly gendered. Mains (2007) and Locke and te Lintelo (2012) both note that in their studies, young women are less involved in such idleness as they spent most of their time in domestic and reproductive work while young men were expected to do very little. Jeffrey (2010) likewise notes that "timepass cultures" are strongly gendered, especially with young men's "masculine

performances" that "reinforce gender inequalities in access to urban space" (p. 476). It seems to be that exactly because of the absence of young women in these public spaces for idling that their (perhaps other forms of) experiences in and responses to waiting are sidelined if not disappeared in the literature. The findings chapters engage with the experiences of waiting in the case of female students juggling in between studies and childcare, and how scholarships programmes often assume the ideal candidates as "youth" without family responsibilities.

The construction of waiting, Locke and te Lintelo (2012) note, is how youth maintain aspirations as they position themselves in the progress towards a good life. A good life, the authors point out, was not expressed primarily in terms of wealth by youth, but "what it enables them to 'be' in relational terms: namely, able to ensure that they and their family can 'live well' in terms of having a stable and reasonable means of living, being able to meet their own needs and those of their extended families" (p. 787). In the meantime, values of patience, perseverance and hardworking are also stressed albeit the frustration in waiting (Locke and te Lintelo, 2012). Youth do not only negotiate the waithood but actively participate in social and political changes (Jeffrey and Young, 2012; Honwana, 2012). It is clear that if displacement is not seen as an exceptional marker that assumes exclusive experiences of time, dialogues open up between literature that tackle the diverse aspects of waiting and its intricate relationships to power. Refugee young people do not wait in terms of mobilities, but also adulthood—a good and viable life that points to collective and relational values, rather than merely "employability" as higher education programmes often stress. And just as youth negotiate and demonstrate agency in waithood, waiting in other, overlapping circumstances such as uncertainties in displacement, young refugees are likewise agentive. Their agentive acts and collective work and strategies are demonstrated throughout the Findings.

2.3.4 Waiting and hope

Waiting denotes a relation to power. Studies increasingly evidence that, waiting induced through practices of border control such as detention, retention and deportation is not only a byproduct of bureaucratic slowness but constitutive of states' management tactic to govern and control migration in transnational spaces (Mountz, 2011; Andersson, 2014). Based on observations of migrant and border workers' experiences in the Spanish enclave Ceuta on the north coast of Africa, Andersson (2014) argues a step further that Ceuta's authorities engaged in a specific form of colonization "—of migrants' experience of time, including their hopefulness or longing" (p. 805). The author details:

> Through various temporal and material strategies—thick dossiers, random rewards, potential switches in policy—the authorities maintained a faint promise of liberation while minimizing the "pressure cooker" effect of indefinite encampment. In this way, Ceuta was but the clearest example of how security forces and migrants jointly invested in the deferred hopes of the border's labyrinthine landscape of time […] (p. 805)

The idea of authorities and migrants jointly investing in hope is worth exploring. The idea signals what the concept of hope could potentially capture: both as a way of government and as an agentive act performed by the individual facing perpetual uncertainties. The "doubleness of waiting" in Andersson's term, therefore points to, on the one hand, the temporal experience that subordinates to power—feeling of "stuckness" (Hage, 2009) and "suspended" and "sticky" time (Griffiths, 2014), on the other hand, an agentive act of defiance and tactic (Andersson, 2014, p. 802).

In the notion of "strategic invisibility" Haile (2020) proposes, invisibility can be strategized as a form of resistance that centres on one's agency in taking back control from spectators. In temporal terms, studies on migration and refugees have also recognized waiting

as agentive, active, defiant and tactical (Conlon, 2011; Gray, 2011; Andersson, 2014; Brun, 2015). Waiting, while being discursively constructed as passive, static and feminized (Gray, 2011; Hyndman and Giles, 2011), is imbued with meanings—provided by the accounts of youth who value patience and perseverance despite the prolonged waithood (Locke and te Lintelo, 2012), narratives of pious Muslim women who see patience as a virtue and obligation rather than a mean to reduce the suffering of waiting (Mahmood, 2005), as well as the hope in "darkness before daybreak" that migrants and refugees held onto in protracted situation (Lucht, 2011 as cited in Andersson, 2014). However, waiting does not ensue stillness. A focus on waiting sensitizes our attention to the everyday flow of time, and scholars writing on the experiences of waiting also provide diverse accounts on how "movement continues to take place" (Brun, 2015, p. 22) and the "sickness, marriage, childbirth, local language acquisition and strategies pursued to survive […]" juxtapose with the everyday exclusion imposed by nation-states (Mountz, 2011, p. 390). As previously alluded to, Chapter 6 demonstrates the rather conflicting sense of waiting and "movements" are indeed the contour of the various kinds of waiting.

Brun (2015) takes on Marcel Gabriel's idea of "active waiting" to theorize "agency-in-waiting". The author's empirical study on the case of internally displaced Georgians expands the idea of hope and its changing dynamic with the everyday flow of time and geopolitical realities. Active waiting is understood as "a constant monitoring of likelihood that the events one is waiting for will occur and of how much time one is prepared to wait" (Brun, 2015, p. 23). It is therefore closely linked to "hope" which is defined as "generative of action in that it accesses a temporal sense of potential, of having a future" (p. 23). Hope can therefore be "a way of dealing with protracted uncertainty and making uncertainty meaningful" (p. 24). In

prolonged waiting, hope helps to navigate the uncertainty about futures based on one's experiences of the past and "a critical reflection of the future possibilities" (p. 24). As Brun argues, as navigating and reflecting the possibilities, hope changes in the everyday flow of time as well as political realities.

Hope involves a critical reflection of possibilities. That is, as "vulnerability" mentioned earlier, hope is contextualised within the interpersonal and the public and demonstrates, as waiting, a relation to power. Hope provides a useful framework in looking at students' aspirations and humanitarian/developmental programmes' expectations. An understanding of hope as deeply political and social rather than individual changes the way we see the discourse of hope which permeated in the brandings of scholarship programmes and in the talks about refugee youth and the future.

How is "hope" social and political? Speaking of hope and desire, Crapanzano (2003) describes that both "requires an ethics—of expectation, constrain, and resignation" (p. 6). That is, when facing hope, we have to make a decision of what is "a good kind of hope" and what is not. And this ethical concern is "founded on some notion or another the real—on a realism that limits fantasy and its enactment" (p. 6). Founded on realism, hope and desire are "always more than themselves" (p.20). They "evoke a world, a society, a moral order, a psychology" (p. 20). This view is shared among disciplines. Snyder (2002) who writes on hope psychology regards hope as a pattern of behaviour that is taught in the social world. Summarising hope theories written across disciplines, Webb (2007) suggests viewing hope as a "socially mediated human capacity" (p. 68). This conception of hope goes with Kleist's (2015) proposal of how we should define hope in the studies of migration: hope is situated among potentiality, uncertainty and social imaginaries, which is rooted in "the practices of a society"

(Taylor, 2004, cited in Kleist, 2015, p.2). Therefore, hope cannot be "naïve optimism" or merely individual desires but rather rooted within "the realm of the thinkable or imaginable and hence has a strong collective and normative dimension" (p. 2-3). The uncertainty and the social expectation in one's hope are well portrayed in Kleist's analysis of migration failure in the West African context. When migration fails, the deported migrants often feel shame. Members of society tend to individualise failure, even if they know very well that the journey is uncertain and difficult. Kleist argues that by individualizing failure, such collective and social hope for a better life is kept. This observation on managing failure parallels Bellino's (2018) study on how the school-leavers navigate the collective expectations upon graduating while undertaking the work perceived as "low status" and "markers of failure". Likewise, Fert (2020) explores how Congolese refugee students negotiate the expectations and discourses to be "symbols of success". She sees the lack of research on the role of higher education in the socialisation of refugee students, including humanitarian actors' agendas and on how students negotiate and position themselves in relation to the policies and discourses. This project proposes that a framework of hope could be useful in examining how the expectations are experienced and negotiated, and in broadening the scope beyond students within higher education. Hope could be similarly invested by those who do not have access yet.

This collective and normative dimension of hope may manifest a different dynamic in prolonged waiting. As in Brun (2015) and the internally displaced Georgians' accounts, hope changes with its critical reflection of the possibilities, but the prolonged waiting along with the geopolitical interests that sustain the discourse of return has produced an identity, an "ethnic", a humanitarian category turned into social status. Even when people are "moving on" and developing their lives in displacement, they continue to "live with a status that is not supposed

to last" (p. 33). The observation highlights the discursive power of hope. As Syrian refugees become increasingly marked as "exceptional" and education opportunities are charged with a vision of a hopeful future, how do the young people experience these expectations with or without the enabling resources? Chapter 4 tackles the questions.

Both empirical cases show that hope is not exempted from the work of power and the relational. Hope is, as Crapanzano (2004) explains, of an articulatory power, in which any authorised institutions can manipulate, or control, how such language can be read (Crapanzano, 1992). Hope is therefore not "without political significance, even if it is ignored" (Crapanzano, 2004, p. 99). To elaborate on hope's political significance, Hage's (2003) notion of "societal hope" may be instructive. Hage's (2003) theory is informed by Bourdieu's idea of *illusio* which Hage reads as "the deep belief in the importance of our life pursuits, our futures, and thus the deep belief in the importance of our social selves" (p. 16). And it is the social world that shapes our *illusio*. It gives us "reasons for being" (Bourdieu, 2000, cited in Hage, 2003). Therefore, "the social world is primarily a mechanism for the generation of meanings for life" (p. 16). If the meaning of being is to realise oneself in a society, then, for a society to be "decent", Hage argues, it is about its "capacity to distribute these opportunities for self-realisation" (p. 16).

The opportunities distributed for self-realisation are what Hage (2003) calls "societal hope". He mainly examines nation-states as a mechanism to produce and distribute hope: "through its ability to maintain an *experience* of the *possibility* of upward social mobility" (p.13 original emphasis). Such hope is unevenly distributed in capitalist societies. Today, the distribution of hope is not only shrinking but becoming exclusive. People who are seen as "of no use" are rejected outside of the distribution network altogether (Hage and Papadopoulos,

2004). Kleist and Jansen (2016) go further to define the mechanism of distributing hope as "a way of government": "the production, distribution and differentiation of societal hope is a fundamentally political phenomenon, constituting a way of government" (p. 382). Kleist (2015) finds that societal hope generated by the states of destination is not the biggest concern for migrants and their families in the contexts of African migration. Different kinds of social hope emerge from the widened "flows of people, goods, images and ideas" (p. 8). For this project, it is useful to consider the distribution of hope beyond nation-states, namely universities, NGOs, and humanitarian agencies.

Other authors do not see hope as a product or a possession (Ahmed, 2014; Miyazaki, 2004). Ahmed (2014), including hope as emotion and an affect, criticises Hage's idea of societal hope: the concept might be parallel to the political gesture of "the nation must take care of itself, and have enough for itself, before it can be generous to others" (p. 190, n6). The argument is in line with Ahmed's definition of emotion: Emotion is neither a property, a possession, nor "something that one has and then can pass on, as if what passes on is the same thing" (p. 10). Emotions are about relational and social practices, ongoing processes and movements. A relational framework may be useful to analyse reflexively my hope as a researcher interested in educational access engaging with the young participants who also hope for a future that could be enabled by education. While the relational frame could be informative, the following will show that seeing hope as a way of government does not negate hope's nature of dependency and, therefore, its relational quality.

Similar to Andersson's (2014) idea about hope being jointly constructed, viewing hope as something that authorities have power to distribute sheds light on the nature of hope: its passivity and dependence. Comparing hope to desire, Crapanzano (2003) explains that while

desire is effective and "presupposes human agency", hope "depends upon some other agency—a god, fate, chance, another—for its fulfilment" (p. 6). While hope might be linked to individual resilience in today's neoliberal politics (Kleist and Jansen, 2016), acknowledging hope's passivity helps us to avoid seeing hope solely as individual psychology and responsibility. This in fact aligns with some psychological writings on hope. For example, Ojala (2012), while writing on hope and climate change, notes that it is not enough to feel hope through individual motivation, "one must also have faith that other, more powerful, societal actors will do their part in reaching the desired goal" (as cited in Ojala, 2015, p. 135). Chapters 4 and 5 will demonstrate how an educational hope is a jointly constructed project.

Underlining the passivity of hope is significant in complicating the notion of individual agency in the discourse of merits, progress and ladder-climbing ethos that pervades in discussions of higher education. In the new humanitarian paradigm that orients towards resiliency and individualized responsibility, it is likewise important to recognize the interdependent nature of hope: there is a power that determines future possibilities upon which people critically reflect and act. This feeds back to the imperative to be critical of the binary construction of refugees as exceptional resilient subjects versus passive victims through a pathological gaze.

2.4 Conclusion

The chapter has collated literature across the fields of refugee education, higher education, refugee studies, youth studies, and enquiries on im/mobilities, waiting and hope. While the two sections may seem independent from each other, they both point towards questions about "the future" or "futures". Higher education and its proximity to the future

brings forth the political question about return, reconstruction and employability. Meanwhile, such a future perspective cannot be critical if it bypasses the students' expectations and hopes. Developed through the literature on waiting and its attention to migrants' and refugees' agency, the chapter has proposed hope as a framework to examine the power of authorities "providing" educational opportunities and students' own trajectories in navigating, strategizing and negotiating the multiple expectations under which they situate. The framework includes a relational dimension which allows a reflexive approach to my presence, albeit shortly, in the student participant's educational pursuits.

The chapter begins with a critique on the psychosocial focus of the field yet lands in the concept that seemingly brings the attention back to "the mind". As accounted for, waiting and hope both imply a relation to power. Hope is defined as mutually constructed and situates in between the binary of subordination and resistance. The chapter suggests that hope is a lens through which the research can shift its attention from the individual aspect that risks essentializing "the refugee experience" to the broader relational and political framework that is in constant interaction with the refugee individuals and collectives. The conceptual framework poses questions to the view of refugees as exceptional, passive and immobile, and at the same time challenges the resiliency humanitarian paradigm that increasingly responsiblise the structural limitations onto the individuals as it counts on their successful, extraordinary stories.

CHAPTER 3

ONGOINGNESS AND THE EVERYDAY FLOW OF TIME:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

"What is the point in the end of this topic?"

A social media user (and presumably a student) commented on the flyer I asked a friend (and a Syrian student herself) to post in a student group (see Appendix 2) at the beginning of my fieldwork. I kept a note to myself but did not address the question then—I was instead worried about whether it was a proper way of doing ethnography, horrifically I now read what I wrote in the field note,

> "[the friend] suggested to post on the public group with which I have no problem with, but after I read the post and comments [….] I felt maybe publicize in such a big/well-connected group is not the best idea, as if walking in a community/village and shout 'who wants to participate?' My first instinct is that it is not the way how ethnographers do things, or maybe it is the way it should be? Since it is the way [the friend] would do in her community […]" (Field note, 6 September 2018)

While in this entry I was concerned with the anonymity of research participants, I am nevertheless shocked as I revisit the note: I had literally described the community as "a village" with perhaps a late anthropologist gaze romanticising a static, exotic place to visit. The comment quoted above stayed in the back of my mind and re-emerged later and increasingly troubling as I read more attentively on the extractive nature of collecting and processing "data" within the global political economy of knowledge production and the domination of Northern institutions and their researchers in setting research agendas (Smith, 2012; Rivera Cusicanqui, 2012; Inayatullah, 2013; Tilley, 2017). Various collaborative and participatory approaches that accentuate the researched as producers or co-producers of knowledge are discussed and

practiced (Cooper, 2005; Fine, 2016; Leavy, 2017; Sandwick *et al.*, 2018; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2020). While there were institutional limitations as a doctoral student with an individual fund (see Poopuu, 2020), I had not attended to these approaches as something that I would apply to this project. My critical theoretical lens to research activities and practices had not developed until later in the PhD journey. Turning away from the comment questioning the point of the research, I missed the opportunity to allow a space to negotiate the "usefulness" of the project with the interlocutors and therefore a "solid framework for 'giving back'" was not achieved (Poopuu, 2020). While uncomfortable, it is this ongoingness of learning, reflecting, regretting, rediscovering and reinterpreting that I want to highlight as the approach to and the messy, non-linear process of this research project.

Chapter 3 proposes a framework of hope to attend to agency and power and their relationship at work: the hope and expectations of a scholarship programme, the hope of the young people in waiting and in negotiating their own opportunities. I see these hopes and the processes of producing, distributing as well as cultivating and contesting them empirical objects of the analysis. However, methodologically speaking, the framework is equally significant in my interactions with the interlocutors that are laden with expectations and unequal power in knowledge production. That is, I reflect on my own hopes as a researcher and how our expectations—the interlocutors' and mine—shape the research relationship and our interactions, and, therefore, the data produced and analysed. As the previous chapter also discusses, hope changes in the everyday flow of time (Brun, 2015). I would argue that the research is embedded in not only the empirical everyday time experienced by the interlocutors (and myself), but also in the everyday time of reading, writing, conferencing,

webinar-ing, connecting (and disconnecting) with colleagues and the interlocutors. In which time my understanding of politics, knowledge and ethics changes if not evolves.

Miyazaki's (2004) in *Method of Hope* understands hope as "a common operative in all knowledge formation" (p. 9). In observing Fijian gift-giving ritual, he argues how hope is a method of self-knowledge, "the truth about who they are" (p. 3). He foregrounds the indeterminacy of this process. In Jansen's (2016) reading of Miyazaki (2004), hope as a method concerns the indeterminacy as a mode of knowledge production in anthropology that is beyond determinism and the dead-end of critique. While emphasising the ongoing and undetermined nature of the analyses produced in the project, I do not intend to forgo the teleological sense of hope in which a better way of doing research can be achieved. I find the collaborative study done by Peterson *et al.* (2020) exemplifies the approach, in which a framework in understanding youth activism and education is proposed through "continued interrogation of the project's aims and research questions, and informed by the shared but flexible conceptualisation of key terms" (p. 8). What the work achieves, the authors say, "is open to substantiation, revision and extension through further critical investigation" (p. 16).

I remain aware and reflexive of my role and its power in the research relationship with the interlocutors. This project follows an interpretivist paradigm in which the research process is relational and dialogic: "an *ongoing* interpretive journey where researchers mediate between their own understandings and those of their interlocutors" (Poopuu, 2020, p. 33, my emphasis). I see the research findings are fragmentary, not a neutral set of facts, but situated in the research contexts and jointly constructed through relationships in the field and mediated by my translation and interpretation (Sigona, 2014). What follows details the project's approach to research, the justifications and descriptions of the project's design, the

implementation of fieldwork and analysis, and the ethical considerations regarding the research process.

3.2 Methodological approach

Responding to the displaced Syrian students' immediate and developmental needs of education, some the most current empirical studies orient toward evaluating policies and producing recommendations for governments and non-state institutions. Some of the research produced by local institutions in Lebanon and Jordan identify challenges and barriers using both quantitative and qualitative methods of survey, focus groups, and interviews with student individuals as well as various stakeholders (Center for Strategic Studies, 2018; El-Ghali, Berjaoui and Deknight, 2017; El-Ghali and Al-Hawamdeh, 2017; Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014; Basmeh&Zeitooneh, 2018).

Other studies addressing refugee's experiences in and access to higher education draw on different cases of the displacement, including refugee and diasporic populations in European and North American countries (for example, Stevenson and Willott, 2007; Lee, 1997) and countries neighbouring the area of conflicts (for example, Crea and McFarland, 2015; Dahya and Dryden-Peterson, 2017; Marar, 2011).[62] With predominately qualitative methods of interviews and focus groups, these studies address various obstacles of historical, institutional and cultural structures pose upon the displaced students while attend to individuals' agency and perceptions. Studies engaged with the affective aspects of the displaced students' life, such as aspiration and belonging, employ repeated interviews and

[62] See also the volume (2012) 'Higher education for refugees', *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, *27*(2): https://refuge.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/refuge/issue/view/1973

give priority to individual narratives (Perry and Mallozzi, 2011), their biographies (Morrice, 2013) or self-portraits (Chopra, 2018).

The central question of the project is how the students hope for—their experiences in and responses to—higher education opportunities, taking into considerations of the humanitarian and national policy framework as well as their situation as a young person navigating the life course. The project intends to answer the question by employing hope as an overarching concept in observing the aspects of time and space in one's im/mobilities—spatial, social and existential in addition to the underlining power in societal hope that authorities and humanitarian agencies may uphold. Hope as a concept and a phenomenon is described and observed across disciplines with various methodological approaches. The definition of hope drives the methodological choice of these studies. Defined as an emotive psychological state which can be objectively measured (See Snyder, 2000), studies in Educational Psychology (Snyder *et al.*, 2002; Feldman, Rand and Kahle-Wrobleski, 2009) employ experiments and scaled survey. Studies in Political Psychology discern hope in individuals' political behaviour and choice using survey, laboratory or field experiments (Panagopoulos, 2014; Brader, 2006). Anthropological studies on hope in crises-laden situations see hope as rooted in social practices, rather than the individual's psychological state (Kleist and Jansen, 2016; Jansen, 2016).

Sprung from the practices of a society, hope not only has a collective and normative dimension (Brun, 2015; Kleist, 2015) but also has an "articulatory power" (Crapanzano, 2004) and can be conceived as a form of power embodied through authorities' "ability to maintain an *experience* of the *possibility* of upward social mobility" (Hage, 2003, p. 13 original emphasis). By which definition, hope is not solely reflected in individuals' narratives,

behaviour or choice, but also embedded in common languages, shared practices and experiences. In other words, hope is a socially constructed aspect of the reality. To observe and analyse people's experiences and responses related to hope, I can only locate these "findings" in the multiple cultural, political and social context and specifically the context of research and the relationship and activities it generates, including my understanding, translation and interpretations. The project is, therefore, a qualitative inquiry. While qualitative research concerns the questions that stress "*how* social experience is created and given meaning", quantitative studies emphasise "the measurement and analysis of casual relationship" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p. 10). Since people's experiences related to hope and the hope's underlining relation to power is in question here, the project does not attend to the category, the presence/absence or the amount of hope. This renders the quantitative or mixed-method approach less relevant. What follows highlights the other inter-related methodological approaches of this project.

3.2.1 Interdisciplinary and intersecting

As the previous chapter suggests, the research focus on people's im/mobilities is necessarily interdisciplinary and investigating experiences in education likewise cannot be constrained to looking at school or higher education institutions as the only places these experiences occur or are about. On the other hand, investigating the hope as a way of government is to investigate power behind the educational opportunities provided in this project. The enquiry into the pre-existing assumption about these "hopeful" opportunities and the work of political economy behind them makes the project a critical one. Critical theory questions the hidden assumptions and existing forms of practices. It is therefore interdisciplinary in character. It concerns "not merely with how things were but how they

might be and should be" (Bronner, 2017, p. 2). The project is not critical in a sense that it readily connects research to actions or practices in transforming the status quo, that critical approach in educational research often concerns (i.e. critical pedagogy) (Gordon, Holland and Lahelma, 2007). The project might be seen a step back from making readily seen "impactful" and "policy-relevant" contributions. Nevertheless, I hope that the critical interrogations of the status quo in which the interlocutors are subjected to but actively negotiate and resist can bring a deeper understanding of the intersecting experiences and the challenges that might have been taken for granted.

In Chatty's (2014) review of the development of anthropology and forced migration studies, the latter as a discipline has developed a "holistic" approach incorporating anthropology's focus on the lived experiences with other disciplines of a humanitarian focus—such as legal studies, political sciences, medical anthropology, cross-cultural psychology. Chatty mentions that "a tension" remains between "the phenomenological approach of anthropology" and the "'refugee policy' concerns of law, politics, and international relations studies" (loc. 120). Nevertheless, she also points out that the later development in social constructivism enables a critical lens towards the natural assumption of people and "homelands" (Malkki, 1992) and ethnicity. These developments confirm the significance of the interdisciplinary studies of politics and international relations with those on refugees' lived experiences "in order to fully understand the processes of exclusion from the larger society and the state, the citizen and the non-citizen, the threats to state sovereignty and the international humanitarian regime" (loc. 124). As the previous chapter also discusses, the bottom-up approach may challenge policy categories and labels and question power relations among states and non-states actors (Zetter, 2007; Bakewell, 2008b; Polzer, 2008).

The issue of producing research using policy categories is not only being flagged up in forced migration studies. Research on education, especially in teaching and learning, often focuses on institutions that are educational in nature—schools, colleges and universities and that would profit from "cast[ing] its net wider than normal, taking in a wide diversity of educational practices, in a variety of different kinds of social settings" (Delamont and Atkinson, 2018, p. 95). Researching education and students from refugee backgrounds, authors emphasise the importance of family and household as a factor of educational challenges (Ramsay and Baker, 2019; Erwin *et al.*, 2020). This highlights the need for attention to intersectional factors that cause disadvantages in educational settings—gender and the inter-relating age and family background, for example, require more attention as Ramsay and Baker (2019) suggest. Gordon, Holland and Lahelma (2007) suggest that ethnographic approach is in the strong position to meet the required intersecting analyses in educational research. Fert (2020) similarly suggests, working in a focused way with a small number of respondents would allow social actors to be understood in the diversity of their roles and enable "knowledge of various kinds and registers" (p. 318). Section 3.4.3 details the dilemmas and ethics in using policy categories in the field.

As reiterated, Brun (2015)'s ethnographic study on protracted displacement recognises the fluidity of waiting time and the agency that emerges within. The author suggests that through identifying how "everyday time continues to flow during displacement", we may go beyond the representation of displaced persons as living in limbo consequently devoid of agency (p. 34). It is also in everyday time that interlocutors' different social roles manifest themselves and multi-layered meanings of future and hope emerge. As

circumstances allow, everyday time is the main venue where I situate myself for the field study. The following details the ethnographic approach used.

3.2.2 Ethnographic approach

Studies on waiting, hope and future in the field of migration, politics and youth studies largely rely on detailed ethnographic accounts of the lived experiences of migrants and refugees (Hage, 2005; Jeffrey, 2010; Auyero, 2012; Andersson, 2014; Kleist and Thorsen, 2015; Brun, 2015). The project with its questions focusing on how higher education opportunities are experienced and how futures are hoped and imagined within and across the communities of displaced Syrian students in Lebanon and Jordan. The expectations and hopes would most possibly reflect in moments of interaction, articulations of plans, and everyday efforts and preparations for the future. In light of the focus on the everyday taken-for-granted matters, ethnography appears to be a suitable approach in guiding the project in its design, methods, and analyses.

Ethnography can be defined as a social research method that allows researchers to participate in people's everyday contexts (Atkinson and Hammersley, 2007); a research strategy where researchers engage while studying social or cultural phenomena in action, outside a controlled environment (Murchison, 2010). The approach is based on the understanding of social life as "the outcome of the interaction of structure and agency through the practice of everyday life" (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 6). Ethnography therefore also provides the tool in investigating the ideas of hope with respect to both structural and agentive aspects of human life. The approach attends to the everyday conversations, practices and ethics. This allows a more fluid and holistic view of higher education and its relation to the future. The openness enables culturally and politically situated ideas to emerge.

Ethnography can involve in various methods in collecting different types of data including quantification during field work or survey for gaining statistical data (Agar, 1980; Reynolds, 2000), qualitative interviews and focus groups (Agar and MacDonald, 1995; Suter, 2000). However, ethnography is generally recognised by its element of researcher's participation, immersion or "being there" in conducting the research (Murchison, 2010; Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019). The opportunities of gaining information and perspectives rest in researcher's presence and her observation of and interaction with the members of the social world under study. To a certain extent, one tries to become closer to the group by doing what is required and what to abide by among the group. Ethnographer gains insights and understanding by learning to become (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011).

In positivist and naturalist paradigms, researchers try to minimize their impact on the phenomena they study in order to achieve the objectivity. This project takes the approach in which no researcher can be completely detached from the social world (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019; Murchison, 2010). Indeed, characterized by participation and engagement, ethnography examines not only the social life under study but also one's own role in the construction of the social life (O'Reilly, 2012). Conducting field work also presupposes an interpretive framework, as Agar (1996) describes, "an interpretive framework cuts into the world like a jigsaw, leaving much of the wood behind" (p. 49). This "threat" to validity can be exploited rather than minimized through reflexive accounts (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019). Section 4.2.3 addresses details on reflexivity.

The research is conducted in a way in which the researcher interprets the social world she participates in while reflecting on the impacts of her presence. The researcher as an

outsider or a stranger tries to make sense of what is important and meaningful while reflecting that she herself is not without a particular background and agenda on what is interesting and meaningful. This interpretive and reflexive framework carries on into the process of analysis—which starts not subsequent to but intertwined with the field work. The analysis "draws on previous studies and involves in intense reflection, including the critical assessment of competing interpretation" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019, pp. 4-5)

Ethnography as a practice "evolves in design as the study progresses" (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 3). The data collection process is relatively unstructured, and data collection and analysis a "dialectic" rather than linear process (Agar, 1996, p. 9). Researchers take a relative open-ended approach to start: who to interview and what to ask develop over time, and through the dialectic process, researchers develop more focused investigation. The research is therefore "interactive-inductive, moving back and forth between foreshadowed problems and theory grounded in data" (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 102). "Foreshadowed problems" are informed by the readings of literature and theories as well as personal and professional experiences (Malinowski, 1922; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019). The project started with the research questions about refugee students' experiences in accessing higher education and their expectations towards the futures. During the field work, more themes concerning this general topic arose. This includes the collective actions students undertook, the role as a young person awaiting adulthood, and the significance of gender and the role in household in HE experiences.

A general plan was devised before approaching the participants—of whom to approach, of how frequent to visit and interview, of which setting the interviews would be. However, the plans and strategies were revised, without steering away from the mode of

ethnographic enquiry, accommodating the nature of rapports, relationships, and participants' time constraints.

3.2.3 Reflexivity

In recognising that the researcher is by no means independent from the social world, the observations and reflexive accounts made throughout the research period are part of the data I analyse. While using ethnographic methods, including participant observations and interviews, in guiding my interactions with the participants, my accounts on the effects of my presence and the research activities—of comments, reactions, and emotions—may reveal assumptions and ignorance that are vital to the topic of investigation.

While reflexivity is employed in various ways, its current practices in qualitative research is seen as an effort to improve the researches' "trustworthiness, transparency and accountability" (Finlay, 2002, p. 211). It is done through "detachment, internal dialogue, and constant (and intensive) scrutiny of 'what I know' and 'how I know it'" (Hertz, 1997, pp. vii-viii). Several typologies of practiced reflexivity have been proposed (Wilkinson, 1988; Marcus, 1994; Finlay, 2002). Finlay (2002) differentiates reflexivity as "introspection" from reflexivity as "intersubjective reflection": the former utilizes personal experience in understanding and analysing the others' while intersubjective reflection reveals the dynamics of research relationship, where the "self-in-relation-to-others" become transparent (p. 216). Clifford (1986) notes the significance of intersubjective reflection, of narrating the interpersonal scenes and confrontations:

> It locates cultural interpretations in many sorts of reciprocal contexts, and it obligates writers to find diverse ways of rendering negotiated realities as multi-subjective, power-laden, and incongruent (p. 15).

To see the realities as multi-subjective and power-laden, feminist epistemology and its emphasis on reflexivity, on researchers' positioning within networks of relationships, are instructive. Such reflexivity sees the dynamic of social relations not only exist in "the field", but in every stage of the research process (Hertz, 1997) and in its afterlife (see Fassin, 2017). Abu-Lughod (1993) challenges the idea of ethnographer as simply an outsider: "What we call the outside, or even the partial outside, is always a position within a large political-historical complex" (p. 40). This situatedness is illuminated in her reflexive account on how moving between two worlds had shaped her researcher's stance on "writing *against* culture" (p. 9). Haraway (1988)'s thesis of "situated knowledge" likewise liberates us from the assumed antagonistic character of positioning in the particular:

> We seek those ruled by partial sight and limited voice—not partiality for its own sake but, rather, for the sake of the connections and unexpected openings situated knowledges make possible. Situated knowledges are about communities, not about isolated individuals. The only way to find a larger vision is to be somewhere in particular (p. 590).

And it is within communities, Naples (1999) argues, that the standpoints are negotiated and came into being, rather than achieved through individual ethnographers. In other words, the research process, the way to acquire knowledge is dialogical and relational (Poopuu, 2020). Ultimately, Fujii (2016) differentiates "reflection" from "reflexivity" and defines reflexivity as

> a thicker and more expansive concept that includes not only the kind of ongoing self-assessment […], but also a focus on the researcher's intervention *at the social level* and all the power dynamics and meaning-making that intervention entails (p. 1150, original emphasis).

Fujii quotes Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater: "to be reflective does not demand an 'other', while to be reflexive demands both an other and some self-conscious awareness of the process of self-scrutiny" (as cited in Fujii, 2016, p. 1150). Fujii argues for a more humanist and less

instrumental approach to field work. This can be done by centring the reflexivity that takes into accounts of multiple, shifting and negotiated positions and power dynamics in field relationships. The multiple positionalities I have in the field is outlined in Section 3.4.1.

Decolonial methodologies take a position that "self-reflexive" accounts of the researcher's positionality do not necessarily disrupt the assumption of the researcher as an expert of the life of the researched (Schlosser, 2014; Tilley, 2017). Instead, Schlosser (2014) posits a "critically reflexive form of fieldwork":

> […] a critically reflexive form of fieldwork would (rather than simply reflect on the researcher and her role) ask research informants for their perspective on many of our nonempirically (often theoretically) gleaned insights. In other words, foregrounding what we do not know as researchers means accepting that the truths we seek are in fact already known by those outside of the privileged walls of academia (p. 198).

I acknowledge that the accounts of reflexivity and positionality—even in an intersubjective and dialogical sense—may not be enough in achieving what Schlosser describes as "critically reflexive". I nevertheless see the project as an ongoing process of learning and an interpretive journey where it involves re-examination of the assumptions and positions I had assumed during the field work (as detailed in the anecdote at the beginning of the chapter).

3.3 Methods

As previously noted, research on higher education and students with refugee backgrounds is predominantly in settlement contexts and not in "protracted refugee situations" (Ramsay and Baker, 2019). The project is initiated with a focus on higher education opportunities and refugee students' experiences and responses in the neighbouring countries of Syria, among which, Lebanon and Jordan are the geographical focus of the study. The decision is made for my familiarity with Lebanon regarding my previous graduate education

experience. As a lone foreign researcher, getting connected to the student communities entails existing connections. My ability to communicate in Levant colloquial language also rationalized the decision to focus on Arabic-speaking countries.

The project does not intend to be comparative but rather takes a regional focus in a more fluid sense, taking into account of the complexity of the region's migration and border-crossing history (Wagner, 2019; Carpi and Pınar Şenoğuz, 2019) as well as the history of overlapping displacement (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016a). Meeting participants in multiple locations in the two countries aimed to collect diverse trajectories of the students, showing the particularity as well as the connectedness among various geographical areas. Indeed, it is common to hear the stories of voluntary and involuntary traveling and migration among the countries, caused by not only wars and conflicts but also job seeking, business opportunities and educational pursuits. Some participants have travelled through another country before I met them, the majority of them temporarily settle in Lebanon or Jordan as a result of their familiarity and the knowledge of the country through, for instance, family's labour migration history or existing kinship connections. The research includes participants in various localities in the two countries primarily led by the participants' connections and introductions which again demonstrates the mobility and connectivity among the communities.

The field work was designed to be conducted in the Lebanon and Jordan for four months each. The time frame was set in consideration of the scale and the time constraint of the study. Data collection in Lebanon started in September 2018 and ended in December the same year, during which time I travelled to Istanbul in order to renew my entry visa to Lebanon. I arrived in Jordan in early January 2019 and returned to the University at the end of April 2019. The following sections give details on methods used and the processes involved in data

collection and analysis, including how I was connected to the research participants in various locations in Lebanon and Jordan, the participants' demographic information, and details about how interview and participatory observations were conducted.

3.3.1 Research participants

The study focused on the displaced students in urban settings. This by no means negates the educational experiences of those dwelling in camps, who might have advanced their studies through formal and informal education in camps, through commuting to and from schools or universities day to day, or crossing borders in and out Syria to access education (interview, Nov 30 2019). In Lebanon, for political, security and economic reasons, governmental policy has prevented the establishment of formal refugee camps, and most of the refugees are self-settled within urban areas or villages (Shen, 2017; VASyR, 2019). In Jordan, while three official camps were set up in 2012 and the subsequent years, as of 2020, 81% of the population dwell outside of the camps, in urban, peri-urban or rural area (UNHCR, 2020). The focus on self-settled refugees is partially a result of snowball sampling, in which I relied on participants' referrals and introductions to connect to other potential participants. I initiated the process through personal connections which started from the cities of Beirut and Amman and subsequently (sometimes simultaneously) connected to participants in other areas.

Sampling methods:

Centring on experiences in accessing higher education and expectations for the future, the study's main concern is not the representativeness or generalisability of research data but participants' knowledge and lived experiences. I used purposeful sampling as a guiding method combined with snowball sampling. Purposeful sampling is strategically selecting

information-rich cases appropriate for answering the research questions (Bernard, 2006; Patton, 2015). Purposeful sampling can also be described as seeking out a "judgemental sample": the participants who are the specialists in the area under investigation (Agar, 1996). In this case, students who have been through the experiences of displacement while pursuing higher education. Potential participants' availability and willingness to participate are also the main concern in recruiting (Spradley, 1979). From the onset of the fieldwork, I set the criteria as "Syrian students who hope to enter higher education, or who are receiving higher education". The inclusion and exclusion criteria—the use of nationality "Syrians" and the implication of recruiting "refugees" in the host communities signified various challenges and ethical considerations which I reflect in the section 3.4.3.

Although the participants are non-representative, I had aimed to have a balance in terms of participants' gender, social class and educational trajectories in order to reflect on diverse experiences and strategies used by the students in responding to the challenges of educational pursuits. Therefore, as long as time and means of transport were allowed, I tried to seek and include those whose general experiences were lacking in the data already collected. Nevertheless, I did not meet all participants the same numbers of times, determined by availability and our relationships. Data gathered through my interactions with participants were inevitably uneven in terms of numbers of pages of notes, or "richness". This is a result of success and failure of rapport building, the intersubjective understandings and sometimes the usefulness of my presence to the participants (see section 3.4.2).

Connections:

My connection to the potential participants itself challenges the imagination of "refugees" as a distant and homogenous group of people. An emphasis on connection allows

a description beyond merely presenting methods of sampling research subjects but how the refugee students and myself are connected to the world in multiple and complex ways.

In Lebanon, the connections started with an acquaintance's introduction to a student group in Beirut. The acquaintance is a displaced Syrian himself who used to work in a language school I attended briefly in 2016. The student group was founded in 2017 by Syrian students who had previously experienced hardship in accessing higher education. The group is well-known among university students from Syria and has an audience over 10,000 persons on social media. I met with one of the co-founders and she agreed to post my flyer looking for research participants in the group (see Appendix 2). Most of the participants in Lebanon were met through this initial contact.

In Jordan, three contact points connected me with the majority of the student participants. Two of these contacts were known through the help of the participants in Lebanon. Rima who works for an NGO in her neighbourhood in Saida, Lebanon had conversed online with Abu T in northern Jordan through a network of the educational NGO workers in the region. When she knew about my plan to go to Jordan, she sent me Abu T's contact. Adam in Lebanon, when searching for opportunities to apply for a Canadian settlement scholarship had a few exchanges online with Bassam in Jordan, who was also struggling with the application process. After my stay in Lebanon, I had a visit home in Taiwan. A friend from university days who works in a bookshop arranged a small public talk for me, on personal and research experience with refugees in Lebanon. Among the audience was Chu, who helped me to connect to a Taiwanese woman who has a family in Jordan. Initially, I was seeking to rent a place for my stay. Over our conversation, the contact introduced me to a Syrian woman named Dana from her Muslim network.

Locations:

The nature of these connections—through online and in person—resulted in meetings at various localities across the two countries. In Lebanon, while the meetings and conversations mainly occurred in Beirut, I paid frequent visits to different homes in the Southern city of Saida. In Jordan, the contact points brought me to three different areas in Jordan which extended to two other locations. Most of the meetings and home visits happened in a neighbourhood in Amman, a village in Irbid region as well as the cities of Irbid, Zarqa, and Mafraq.

While aiming to visit the participants' homes in order to collect conversations pertaining to familial conditions and parents' expectations, as an unmarried female and close to the students' age cohort, it was often inappropriate to visit homes of male students. It was especially so with the male students who were dwelling alone or with male friends or family members. Where home visits were not possible, I asked the students to suggest a public space. As a result, we met in local cafés, restaurants, university cafeteria, or parks.

Participants' demographics:

In both countries, I reached high school students, high school graduates, and university students. I also included those who were accessing informal ways of learning taking various courses, as well as those who were out of formal school system but trying to take independent exam in order to go to the university. Observational data and interviews are centred around 12 participants in Lebanon and 17 in Jordan. A chart of participants' basic information is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Participants' basic information

Lebanon

Name	Gender	Age	Educational Status	Years of Arrival	Times met
Isra	Female	17	11th grade	2012	4
Maram	Female	18	12th grade	2013	3
Wahi	Female	17	12th grade	2013	7
Rima	Female	32	12th Baccalaureate finished	2011	3
Abbud	Male	22	12th Baccalaureate finished	2013	1
Akram	Male	22	12th Baccalaureate finished	2011	6
Adam	Male	23	University 2nd year	2016	3
Sarah	Female	21	University 2nd year	2013	4
Wissam	Male	23	University 1st year	2015	5
Ahmad	Male	30	University dropout	2011	2
Hanan	Female	29	University dropout	2012	6
Qusay	Male	27	University dropout	2016	4
Majd	Male	-	University graduate	2015	1
Jordan					
Name	**Gender**	**Age**	**Educational Status**	**Years of Arrival**	**Times met**
Faris	Male	19	11th grade	2013	5
Nour	Female	17	11th grade	2014	2
Halaq	Female	17	11th grade	2013	3
Zaina	Female	17	11th grade	2012	8
Amira	Female	18	12th grade	2013	9
Abeer	Female	19	12th Tawjihi finished	2013	4
Khalid	Male	19	12th Tawjihi finished	2013	2
Wafa	Female	20	12th Tawjihi finished	2012	10
Aida	Female	23	2-year-college finished	2012	3
Nadir	Male	19	7th grade dropout	2013	12
Ruaa	Female	18	University 1st year	2013	2
Hisham	Male	26	University 2nd year	2013	3
Hadeel	Female	25	University 3rd year	2013	2
Tariq	Male	27	University 3rd year	2013	2
Yassin	Male	22	University 3rd year	2014	3
Mohsen	Male	23	University 4th year	2013	1
Bassam	Male	25	University dropout	2014	2

Apart from the participants mentioned above, in Jordan, I did two one-off interviews with university students and graduates who were attending a scholarship program. During first setting, the interviews were conducted with 5 groups (2-5 individuals) and 9 individuals. The set of interviews were conducted with 7 individual students in a Jordanian university.

Other than student individuals and home visits to their family members, I also paid visits to non-governmental organizations, scholarship providers, formal and informal schools. With organizations, I mainly relied on student participants' introductions. When they

mentioned their participation in certain educational programs, I would ask them the possibility to visit. In addition, to have a broader understanding of the situation, I also was in touch with a few other organizations through emails and text-messages through the official contact I found online or through personal/academic referrals.

The research data therefore include interviews with self-organizing student groups, scholarship providers, non-governmental organizations and university programs providing various educational programs. In Lebanon, information was collected from one student group and 9 educational/scholarship programs providers; in Jordan, I met with organizers from two student groups and 6 educational/scholarship programs providers. The organizations I contacted are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Organizations contacted

Lebanon	
1	AUB Center for Civic Engagement & Community Service (CCECS)
2	Risala School
3	Arab Open University (Kuwaiti Scholarship)
4	Joint Christian Committee for Social Service in Lebanon (JCC) “Kanaees” School, Saida
5	“Wish and Will” Adult School
6	Amal Association
7	Eman School (closed)
8	SPARK
9	Jusoor Educational Program
Jordan	
1	After school educational centre, Irbid
2	Suriyat Across Borders (SAB)
3	SPARK
4	HOPES
5	EDU-Syria
6	Luminous vocational scholarship (volunteer recruiter in Mafraq)

3.3.2 Data Collection

The main research data consist of field notes and interview transcriptions. Throughout the field work, I collected pieces of information and documents my participants shared with

me. These included advertisements and announcements in text messages and students' scholarship applications; I also recorded and transcribed public speeches from events held by educational programs that I attended along with my participants.

The field notes and interview data were produced throughout the period of the field work, and the subsequent months after returning to the University. With ethnographic approach, following what O'Reilly (2012) describes as "passive interviewing", I took a rather passive role in the beginning of the conversations, whether it was a one-on-one meeting, in groups, or during events or gatherings. I listened, observed, and asked questions when opportunities arose (O'Reilly, 2012). The interviews ranged from semi-structured to unstructured, depending on the time limits and whether it was the first meeting. With each first meeting, to collect participants' basic information and educational experience, I asked the participants to draw a timeline in order to assist the recollection. I would put down an A4 paper and a pen and handed it to the participants. The accounts of their experiences, not the timeline itself, were what I aimed to collect. I would ask questions as they drew the timeline. Basic information such as age and the year of arrival to the host country were collected in this way. This might reduce the abrupt feeling of surrendering to certain authority as when filling in a standard survey form. Pseudonyms were used in notes when referring to the participants.

If I knew the visit was time-limited—students made time for the interview during their course breaks or had to return to study—I asked prepared questions in sequence, but followed up from what was mentioned in their answers and allowed as much as space for their elaboration, comments, and parents' or friends' participation in the conversation. If more time was allowed and if I was invited to stay longer, it would allow more observation on the interactions and speeches that occurred during the everyday responsibilities—the house

chores, school assignments, exam preparations, matters of money and commutes. While jotting notes, I tried to put down the categories and terms used contingent to the social context in pursuing "members' meaning" (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011). While preconceptions and my initial interpretations of the participants' meanings were inevitable, while writing field notes, I reflected carefully on the reactions and comments to my questions in order to see the categories and terms I imposed exogenously.

Interview questions for individual students would start from practical concerns about the everyday—tuition fees, transportation, attending schools, preparing for exams or applying for scholarships. I would then extend our conversations in terms of their hopes and "dreams" towards the futures—where will you be after graduating? What do you want to study? During the field work period, I paid attention to the themes and concepts that emerged, previously unknown or deemed insignificant to me. I then incorporated the emergent ideas and questions into the conversations with the participants. Questions on religious ideas on knowledge and education, for instance, did not emerge until the first month of fieldwork in Jordan. With scholarship programs and educational NGOs, the interviews aim to focus on the information on what are provided, and the challenges, strategies and expectations they have in recruiting students and providing services.

The time span of the visit and meeting varied contingent to the availability of the participants. Some meetings and visits last for a few hours during a day; some other visits, I was invited to stay overnight at the participants' homes given that I had travelled some distance. Apart from the visits and meetings, in Jordan, I was introduced to a home-setting Quran study group along with four of the student participants. I attended ten of the weekly

lessons. As for the one-off interviews with the scholarship university students and graduates, the conversations spanned from 10-30 minutes.

Field notes are written in detail at the end of the day from the sketches jotted down in a pocket notebook during or immediately after the meeting or stay. The notes include some short, direct quotes I noted on my sketches or from the strong impression of the moment when it occurred. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed word by word, some soon after the day of the interviews, some after my return to the University.

Most of the meetings and interviews were in Arabic dialect, with a few exceptions where the participants used English, while interviews with most of the NGOs and scholarship programs were in English. I spoke Levant Arabic intermediate level at the start of the PhD. In preparation for the fieldwork, I took Syrian Arabic lessons with a Syrian tutor regularly until July 2018 when I started the intensive Arabic course for a month prior to the field research. However, I was not entirely fluent in Syrian Arabic when I started. I was able to understand the everyday conversation and its context, but with more elaborated words and topics, I had to rely on the participants to clarify. This led to a more simplified language in use.

With longer conversations, I used voice recording to obtain full conversations. I tried to transcribe and translate the audio files as soon as possible after the meetings. And whenever in doubt of the word-by-word meaning, I consulted my Arabic tutor with me explaining the context and intended meaning of the words in order to obtain the suitable wordings (van Nes et al., 2010). I believe some of the meanings are lost in the process of translation and interpretations. I have felt, however, as a non-native speaker attempting to use the language with mistakes and stutters, I appeared to be a younger learner enthusiastic

in learning about their ideas. This was especially evident in my interactions with the younger students in the Quran study group, where they assumed the role of a senior learner, taking extra care and explaining concepts and contexts to me. This broke down the barrier of age and the assumption of being more knowledgeable.[63] As I drafted the findings, I sent an abridged version to the participants whose narratives I used and who I was able to reach to seek their comments and feedback.

While the ethnographic approach enabled the collection of most data required to respond to the research questions, the question pertaining to how students' educational hope is related to power in terms of the broader political frameworks require further data. National governments' responses to refugees' educational needs directly affect students' access to schooling and exams, and therefore their educational plans and future. Built on what has been reviewed in Chapter 1—where since the Iraqi crisis, the dominant humanitarian provision has shifted to a focus on integrated national responses. Collecting further information on national responses to refugee education in the case of Syrians' displacement would allow further analyses regarding the question. While related documents had been collected as part of the work in understanding the policy context throughout the research process, more systematic desk work in collecting national policy documents and policy review began after the ethnographic field work. To understand the national framework in educational responses, I went through primary and secondary sources and focussed on tracking the relevant policy directions from 2012 to 2018. The primary sources I have relied on are mainly sources

[63] While having native Syrian Arabic speakers assisting in conducting interviews, Müller-Funk et al. (2019) reflect on how the effort in using the language helps in breaking down the "hierarchy inherent to many interview situation" (p. 13).

published online by Lebanese and Jordanian governments, the European Union and UN agencies.

3.3.3 Data Analysis

As previously mentioned, the ethnographic approach is defined as "interactive-inductive"—an interactive process between researchers' pre-existing ideas and "theory grounded in data" (O'Reilly, 2012, p. 102). That is, a process in which the participants—through various ways and mediated through my inquiries and interpretations—challenged my previous understandings or lack thereof. Guided by the principle to enable intersecting analysis, a process that is as inductive as possible would be helpful in resisting an analysis based on pre-existing or "familiar" labels and categories—"as true to the knowledge that you gained from your informants rather than to the knowledge and assumptions you brought to the research" (Murchison, 2010, p. 175). While all ethnographical approaches aim to move from data to theory, some have the specific goal to develop a theory through the process of systematically treating the data. These studies employ grounded theory in analysing the data through systematically and repeatedly coding, memo-writing and comparing across excerpts of fieldnotes (Charmaz, 2001; Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011). While developing further theoretical depth is an integral part of the project, it is not specifically aiming at developing a theory from field data. The project's questions on refugee students' experiences and responses in waiting and hoping for the future do not expect an additional theory of hope and waiting, but rather aim at interrogating their relation to power and expecting a critique of the current frameworks in which opportunities are provided.

I adopted Murchison's (2010) analytical strategy of "analysing along the way" and "coding and sorting" using key themes identified and adjusted throughout and after the field

work. Key themes are identified "*as they emerge from the data*" (p. 116, original emphasis), in which they reappear multiple times as an indication of their significance. The key themes were noted down in the form of summaries of significant events and development in fieldwork report sent to supervisors monthly. Part of the data analysis began during the field work as I reflected on interactions, observations and events happened throughout the day. When writing the field notes, I had begun to take memos alongside the data on what is significant and why. I also took notes on what had emerged as significant as the participants conveyed to me but previously went unnoticed. This reflection is part of the analysis in challenging the pre-existing assumptions on what is significant and relevant, while more data being collected with regards to the newly emerged themes.

Murchison's strategy is to re-examine these themes and come up with a set of "key organizing themes" in order to code and sort the entire data, and from there, utilize significant moments and experiences as a "building block" to "write from the data" to answer the research questions and the bigger picture in theoretical debates (Murchison, 2010, p. 174). Nevertheless, because of the ongoing re-defining of key themes and questions and a general feeling of not having narrowed down a focus upon returning to the university, I did attempt the process proposed by Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (2011) and began open-coding.

I read line by line the field notes and interview transcriptions to identify ideas, themes, or issues while annotating connections and insights emerged through the process. Codes, the analytic categories and concepts, were derived from the data and assigned to the sections of notes and transcriptions where the concepts locate. During the coding process, instead of looking at the data to fit into the existing codes and operating on a "sorting-oriented coding procedure" (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011, p. 176), I constantly reflected and annotated my

insights regarding new ideas or concepts I sensed from the data: what is connected or similar and what is not? I created new codes as often as it required and kept notes on themes that emerged. Eventually, the themes that emerged were “establishing oneself”, “institutional provision of opportunities and hope”, “usefulness of education”, “strategies”, “responsibilities”, “expectations” and “the future” among others. I referred back to Murchison’s procedure and began writing from the building block of significant moments and reread the notes that are at length carefully.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The ethics approval of this project was sought from the Humanities and Social Sciences Ethical Review Committee on 4th September 2018 with the completion of additional risk assessment. This section addresses the ethical considerations regarding to consent, data protection, and the additional concerns emerged during the field work.

3.4.1 Positionality

Being able to reach participants and build rapport within the limited amount of time, was not simply because of the hospitality, but equally the various, overlapping and changing interpretations of my presence. I was seen more than just a researcher working on the project that might have an impact; I was also a graduate student in need of completing work, an East-Asian woman not usually seen in the communities they dwell, a foreigner associated with a British university that might possibly having information about accessing higher education abroad, a living-abroad alone international student like many of the participants, a tutor as I could help with English assignments, a non-native speaker and newly-arrived person who has need of an introduction to the cultural world, as a non-Muslim who wants to learn about Islam,

a daughter-like and sister-like friend, or a friend. Likewise, I was not building the relationships purely for the research purpose, I have wished to be identified as a supportive friend partially to ease my guilt of receiving their help amidst the increasing research activities with the displaced Syrian communities. The multiple positions I have held during the field work and until now are therefore, as described above, shifting and negotiated within the networks of relationships.

As a foreigner—neither from Syria nor the host countries of Jordan or Lebanon, I was able to access some of the information that otherwise might not emerge. This was shown in a chat with an interlocutor about the expensive blood test in order to extend my visa in Jordan, in which she told me how there has been an arbitrary provision of funds for them to go through the same test. As a graduate student, I was sometimes being called "Doctor" as a courtesy and showing respect towards someone who receives higher education. Being a degree-seeker also appeared to be relatable and was often used to be compared against their situation in terms of age and my progress in the stage of education[64]. At other times, my position as a foreign researcher seemed to invoke relatedness to international organizations and my presence was deemed useful for my participants (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2). To reciprocate participants' time and effort in speaking with me, I mostly felt glad that I could be of some use for them. If I was not asked, I often offered my availability to help with English assignments, and I had received requests to edit scholarship applications, to explain class

[64] For example, in an interview with a university student in Jordan, a conversation occurred:

> "You are 92 too?"
> "No, 1990," I answered.
> "Ah 2 years. But it's great, you've reached this stage very fast."
> "Because there was no…"
> "If the events didn't happen to me, I'd be ready and maybe I'd have been getting my doctorate now, like you." (Interview, 7 April 2019)

material, and to tutor younger kids after school. I was also very often asked about information and opportunities to study abroad. These interactions helped deepening—and complicating—research relationships, but also revealed participants' needs, strategies and care in advancing education for oneself or for the children.

3.4.2 Consent and data protection

Once the potential participants conveyed their interests in participating in the study either through online or face-to-face during our first meeting in events or gatherings, I arranged a meeting where I explained the goals of my study and the research activities it entailed using the consent form in Arabic. Participants gave consent orally. Using oral consent was a consideration of the students' stress or concerns about commenting on authorities' policies or higher education opportunities provided. Consents were either audio-recorded or noted in my notebook with pseudonyms. Some conversations that I expected to be long and topic-focused were audio-recorded with participants' consent; while other conversations happened during the everyday activities, I included in the field notes as part of the participant observations. Data I collected from the participants include pages of notes in my notebooks, their drawings of timeline in A4 papers, and audio-recording files. The digital files were locked in my own laptop, backed up in the password-protected hard drive and uploaded regularly using university's data storage.

Scholars have flagged up the issue of achieving meaningful consent in cultures outside of the Northern context (Wilkinson, 2013; Carpi, 2019b). The local paradigm of what it means to give consent outside of the document-based consent remains unknown and unexplored. This is especially relevant as ethnographic approach require researchers to be guests in people's home. "Refugees acts of hosting researchers very often is mistaken for active consent

to conduct research on their own lives" (Carpi, 2019, loc 6:13:55). I do feel that, especially when making home visits, as I tried to make myself useful and to be a good guest, it might not appear clear to the hosts that throughout the time I was also observing and noting things happened during the course of my stay. Nevertheless, I tried to send sections of my writings (in English, however) to those I visited regularly and still continue to be in contact with and sought feedbacks. I see the issue as an ongoing task to bear in mind in my future conduct.

During the initial meetings, while I explained how I would be using pseudonyms rather than their real names, some participants expressed that they would prefer that I use their real names. When applying for the ethic approval, I was considering the risk of conflicting interests or other potential risk for the participants to be identified. However, I wondered whether this should be something to be negotiated with the participants. Eventually, there was no real name used in the project. To negotiate some of the participants' wishes, I asked the participants to suggest names they would prefer and have used them in this dissertation.

In a similar vein, the project set out not to ask sensitive political questions. As I mentioned that I am not asking and collecting information on "politics", the participants would sometimes disagree and consider the political issues important. On the other hand, Masterson (2019) also notes the importance of protection of research subjects including anonymity as in the case of the Syrian crisis, refugees continue living with the presence of humanitarian organizations, local authority, security and intelligence services. How to minimize the risk while doing work that respects what the participants regard as useful/important should be prioritised when shaping future research.

3.4.3 Problems of the term-in-use and the categorisation of "refugees", "students" and "Syrians"

The ethical concerns regarding the term and the categorisation of "refugees" arose during the field work. I reflect this in a blog post[65]. The students' responses and comments flagged up the potential problems of using "refugees" as a category in defining the research subject. Researchers' uncritical adoption of policy categories could reproduce the skewed understanding of what being refugees mean and deprive the subjects of their self-definition (Bakewell, 2008b; Masterson, 2019). Although I did try to, in a sense, "verify" whether they are displaced by asking their status with the UN agency, i.e. UNHCR, preventing using the explicit term of "refugees" in the field, I had a chance to talk to students who did not consider themselves as refugees, or engaged with this identity rather fluidly—for instance, in an utility way, "if registered with them it could help me travel". These students nevertheless are affected by the social and political consequences of the events happened in Syria. Had I excluded them as the research participants, certain perspectives would have been lost.

The same idea applies to the word "students", which could also be defined in policy terms. Despite declaring myself working on a project related to "students", I was looking for anyone who was engaging in any form of learning—whether it was a religious study group, or short term computer courses for adult women; I then also came across people who were unable to get back to schools despite their high hopes. If I had excluded them for not bearing a formal status as a student, I would have missed very important aspects of researching education opportunities. In retrospective, I have used what Bakewell (2008b) suggested: an

[65] "'Who pays you?' Guilt and reservations in producing policy relevant research on refugees", *Refugee Hosts*, Available at: https://refugeehosts.org/2019/09/24/who-pays-you-guilt-and-reservations-in-producing-policy-relevant-research-on-refugees/

"oblique" approach to research in avoiding "staring too hard at 'refugees' or 'forced migrants'" and losing sight of their normality (p.449).

Because of the focus on students, I was able to distance myself from the terminology of "refugees". Yet, the subject of "Syrians" has conveyed a clear boundary of looking within the specific nationality, unconsciously adopting a nationalist view, as Turton (2005) argues, "which was responsible for creating the so-called 'refugee problem' in the first place" (p. 277). My participants' knowledge of me talking to mainly Syrians might have also increased their speech of "us" and "them", further demarcating—in research and in the field—the already sensitive divide with the local communities. I have reflected this further in the following chapter (Chapter 4).

3.5 Conclusion and Limitations

The chapter details the underlining principles guiding the research, the methods used and reflections on ethics in field research. A few limitations are highlighted below.

Non-representational data: The participants I was able to reach were contingent to my previous personal connections. This may render the data non-representational. However, the research does not aim to represent the majority of the displaced students' experiences which have been covered by reports published (Center for Strategic Studies, 2018; El-Ghali, Berjaoui and Deknight, 2017; El-Ghali and Al-Hawamdeh, 2017). The research instead hopes to understand and reflect critically on the affects and the experiences conveyed across through my interactions with the participants.

Time limitation: The ethnographic approach usually requires longer immersion and investigation within one locality, however, apart from the scale of the research, I found it quite

difficult to follow up, or “immerse” with a particular group of the students. This was partially a result of the limited availability of the students—who were often under pressure of both the school/university studies and work. Therefore, I tried to extend the effort in searching more participants. Wherever possible, I tried to arrange re-visits and follow-up meetings on a weekly basis, but it did not always go as planned. To make up this potential loss of data in terms of the time aspects, I tried to keep in contact with the students through messages to have updates on the changes occurred in the course of their educational pursuit.

Other limitations and considerations are examined throughout the chapter. The reflexive and critical lens to what can be done differently is ongoing. Haraway (2016) in speaking of ecological destruction raises the idea of “staying with the trouble” in order to avoid not only the despair of “everything is over” cynicism but also the hope or faith in “technofixes”. It is the ongoingness of thinking about methods, methodology, ethics and research as a whole that allows me to recognize the many “troubles” involved in the research enterprise while engaging with them in a way that is situated, open and meaningful.

CHAPTER 4
EMBODYING EDUCATIONAL HOPES

4.1 Introduction

While school-level education is considered a right and its protective role in displacement emphasized, higher education provision via the refugee mandate had been once very limited and only provided to "the most deserving refugees".[66] The idea of deservingness continues to linger in todays' humanitarian appeals for refugees' higher education.[67] The narratives of deservingness foreground refugees' experiences of conflict and suffering of displacement. Refugee students often have to demonstrate their exceptionality, resilience and the experiences of hardships.[68] Their hope for educational opportunity is portrayed as heroic and bearing the great mission of contributing to the future reconstruction of their country.[69] The task of this chapter is to complicate such images and ground the understandings of higher education as a hope that is situated in the everyday and enmeshed in the acts of networking, participating, connecting and commuting.

Employing the concept of hope is not an easy task. Hope, as suggested in Chapter 2, is a concept hard to define. It was, I found, particularly futile and sometimes inappropriate to ask, "what do you hope for the future?" or "what's your dream?" Some answers were already clear in our conversations about their current challenges and plans—to finish the Tawjihi

[66] UNHCR. 2007. *Education strategy 2007-2009,* p. 16 note 11. [Online] [Accessed 25 November 2020]. Available from: https://www.refworld.org/docid/469201e72.html

[67] For instance, in 2015 UNHCR's news on a camp student's struggle, the Camp Manager says, ""She wants to study medicine, and we are committed to finding a scholarship for Sondos, and many deserving students like her." News clip available from: https://www.unhcr.org/uk/news/latest/2015/7/55b7818d9/zaatari-student-wins-distinction-despite-trials-camp-life.html

[68] For example, this news clip on a medical student: "'My parents are super-proud': Dublin-based student name-dropped by von der Leyen" from https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/my-parents-are-super-proud-dublin-based-student-name-dropped-by-von-der-leyen-1.4356564

[69] The expectation of students to return and reconstruct is analyzed in detail in Chapter 5 (5.3.2).

(official high school exam in Jordan), to have a university life, to travel. The apparent uncertainty facing the students and graduates had also made more tangible questions such as "what's your next step?" or "where do you think you will be?" unthoughtful. For some, a question about the long-term future could be cruel and perhaps unethical when what was hoped for seemed improbable. The protracted displacement of, for some, more than 8 years, had made the plans for future strenuous to conceive.

Hope in this work has been conceptualized as situated, embedded in the everyday social life, its potentiality and uncertainty. The potentiality is grounded in what is possible in reality, shaped by the society's practices and constraints rather than individual fantasy or naïve optimism (Kleist, 2015). Hope carries the collective imaginaries of what is deemed a good and meaningful life within certain societies. These imaginaries inform the members' individual aspirations and prospective futures—what can be called "social hope" (Hage, 2003). It is even when we define hope as a basic desire to live, and "even if it is an intrinsic property of all human beings, cannot be separated from the effect of society on its development" (Hage, 2003, p. 24).

Thinking of students' pursuit for higher education, one might consider "aspirations" instead of "hope". Indeed, aspirations are widely discussed in education and migration literature. Nevertheless, hope encompasses both goal-oriented and non-goal-oriented dispositions (Webb, 2007), the aspirational and the wishful (Lybbert and Wydick, 2018). Hope as a concept enables my observation of students' aspirations while allowing me to understand the paradoxical situation when one cannot act in accordance with one's vision for the future. That said, it is not the type of hope, or whether one has or has not the hope towards higher

education is in question here. It is the experiences of students' hoping and having hopes—some more than the others—are of concern for this study.

Hope as social and grounded in what is practical points to Pierre Bourdieu's (1998) conception of illusio, "a deep belief in one's life pursuit" (Hage, 2003, p. 16), an investment, or "feel" for the social game in one's field. Having the feel for the game is not as designing one's life project with certain objectives, but as anticipating and mastering in a practical way the perceived future of the game (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 80). In playing the game, social agents invest their time, efforts and emotions, devising strategies and struggling in the field as the investment becomes serious (Threadgold, 2018). Hope, therefore, ties not only to the visions but also emotions and actions. Its social nature involves not only individual actions, but actions of multiple actors (Drotbohm, 2016), in this case, parents, siblings, friends as well as virtual networks, schools and other educational institutions.

Established studies have identified the common barriers to refugee education, including financial (poverty and opportunities cost), legislative (bureaucratic procedures, equivalency documents, residency status), institutional (academic difficulties, curriculum and languages) barriers (El-Ghali et al., 2019; Shuayb et al., 2020). Building on the already identified challenges of "the game", this chapter centres its focus on the experiences of students in the secondary stage with hopes to pursue higher education–the experiences of investing time and emotions, of devising strategies and struggling in the field.

Through the focus on strategies, the chapter sheds light on the agentive aspect of what hope enables while acknowledging the possibility of one's failed pursuit. The strategies described in the chapter contest the kind of static picture of a helpless situation where "one

can only hope". They embody hope as an action, requiring one's agency and constant efforts. Situating hope in the practices of the societies in which my participants live, I observe students' day-to-day concerns, struggles, living, commuting, studying, applying and participating. The chapter will provide an understanding of how hope for higher education is embodied in the everyday life of the participants. It sets out to answer the following questions:

1) What are the strategies devised in hoping towards higher education?
2) What happens when the students cannot meet the expectations or fulfil the educational hope?

The chapter consists of two parts in answering the two questions respectively. The first section compiles the journeys of the participants who were actively participating in educational opportunities while navigating the bureaucratic and financial barriers on top of uncertainty. In contrast with those who were still in "the game", the second part elaborates on how educational hopes could be violent when the students can not practically fulfil what they have hoped for.

4.2 Hopes, strategies and meaningful participation

In Lebanon, as I started to search for high school student participants, I was warned that I might have a hard time looking for them. In the early stage of my fieldwork, Ahmad, a Syrian university dropout in Lebanon, commented on this straightforwardly that there are very few of them and that "they are rich", "they are renting an apartment costing $4000, 5000. Of course you won't do the project with them." Ahmad's comment highlighted the high costs for a family to allow their children to remain in high school and to pursue university in Lebanon. And indeed, the enrolment rates for Syrian refugees in the host countries has been reported

a dramatic decrease at the secondary level (age 15-17), under 25% in all host countries (except Egypt) while estimated under 10% in Lebanon (No Lost Generation, 2019).[70] "Rich families" in Ahmad's words described those who managed to come to Lebanon through familial ties or business networks in Lebanon, and who were able to settle with "legal" residency. This also echoes the complexity of the term-in-use "refugee" which has been addressed in the Methodology chapter.

The low enrolment rate illustrates the lower number of high school participants in the project. In terms of familial situations, in Lebanon, while Isra and Wahi's families had a rather stable income from their father's occupation and were able to support all children of the family to remain in schools; Maram's family, albeit a middle-class background prior to the displacement, had struggled with bills and fees of transportation. In Jordan, in a village town in Irbid Governate, I met Amira, Faris and Nadir. While Amira and Faris were both in school and their families have relatively stable incomes, Nadir was a school drop-out and his family was also financially strained.

The following vignettes document the journeys in which the students and the parents devise strategies and invest time and efforts in maintaining the continuity of the perceived future, stepping toward higher education. The section includes the journeys of Amira in Jordan and Isra and Maram in Lebanon who navigate through the swamps of unclear information about IDs and documentation, difficult access to quality schooling, and financial strains. The work of gathering information, sorting out documentation and managing one's studies embodied the educational hope contrasting with the helpless and the extraordinary "refugee"

[70] Another source estimates the secondary education enrolment rates for Syrian refugees as low as 4.8% in Jordan and 1.4% in Lebanon (as cited in El-Ghali *et al.*, 2019, p. 20).

images. The time I had spent with the three students varied. While I was able to stay with Amira and joined her daily activities, I was only able to meet Isra for short and concentrated periods of time each time. I only came to know Maram because of my visits to her sister Sarah who was a university student. The ways in which we met and spent time have contributed to the different degrees of details in what follows.

4.2.1 Networking and participating: "the seat" in Tawjihi exam

When I was introduced to Amira and her family, she was about to start her second semester in the last stage of high school, the so-called "Tawjihi year" in Jordan.[71] Throughout the three months of my visits, she was preparing for the upcoming national high school exams in June. Amira was the oldest among the seven siblings and her two cousins and a nephew who had been adopted by her parents during the time in the camp. The family came from a rural area in Southern Syria and had been living in the small village town in Jordan since 2013. They have a circle of extended family and friends nearby. Amira's family had her father's work as a car mechanic as the main source of income. Emm Ziad, Amira's mother, had accounted for the livelihood back in Syria. She used to work on farms and take care of livestock. As the oldest girl in her family, she married young and did not complete her high school education. Amira's parents do not particularly stress religious practices. During the time of visit, the family had applied for an international NGO's cash support for their house rents. I was introduced to Amira's family through Abu Saleem, a local afterschool centre owner who also connected me to another two Syrian families in the neighbourhood.

[71] The village town has two secondary school (11th and 12th grade), one male and one female school. The female school which Amira attended has four classes at the Tawjihi (12th grade) level, two classes of 60 students in Literature branch (a choose of Geography or Computer-concentrated), one class of 20 students in Economy branch and one class of 34 students in Science branch. Amira was in the Computer-Literature class.

Amira has been studying in the school in the same village along with the Jordanian counterparts since 7th grade when they moved to Jordan. Because of the smaller number of students, there were no double shifts set up in Amira's schools. There was a less direct distinction between Jordanian students in morning shifts versus Syrians in afternoon shifts, as would be found in city areas. Indeed, Amira's school days and her pursuit in education could be described as pretty "ordinary" and my presence in the small village with mostly only Syrian families was indeed an act of drawing distinction and labelling, as the following will show.

In Jordan, attending "strengthening courses" (dawrāt taqwia) was a popular practice among the Tawjihi students preparing for the exams. Private institutes such as an educational "centre" (markaz) or "academy" (akadimia) offer after-school courses in exams subjects. Emm Ziad, had told me during our first meeting that although she had seen advertisements of courses offered for Syrian and Jordanian students, she was concerned about the fees of commuting. During my visits, I followed Amira to the group lesson that took place in her classmates' houses. Amira had been joining the private group lessons of English, Arabic and Math with her friends in the neighbourhood. They split the payment of a total of 100-120 Jordanian dinars ($140-170) for the tutors they hired. Not until later did I realize that she did not share the payment—she initially asked her friend and the tutor whether she could come along to ask questions, and eventually she joined regularly for the lessons.

Through participating in the network, Amira was engaging with the exam preparation like her classmates. This "ordinariness" was disrupted by an incident of exam registration. In mid-March, Amira's school was registering the students for the Tawjihi exams. In one of the evenings, she told me that she would be going to the school the next day to register—with 21 dinars registration fees, 2 personal pictures, and her ID card. She then discussed with her

mother, Emm Ziad, about the issue of certifying the copy of her ID card—a biometric service card for Syrian refugees. She explained that the school requires her ID card to be certified in a Civic Affairs Office, while the office they went to wouldn't certify her ID copy. Amira was the only Syrian student in her class of Literature branch, so there was no other classmate to ask. One of their relatives who had registered for the exams told them he was not asked to certify his ID. Amira asked her mother to call the school director to ask what to do. The director didn't reply. They decided that Amira would go to ask the director tomorrow. Meanwhile, she borrowed her mother's phone and wrote in a Facebook group where Tawjihi students exchanged information (see Figure 2), asking whether people know about certifying identity for Syrians. She then decided to go early the following day to ask the director.

While Amira had been attending schools in Jordan since 7th grade, at this last stage of Amira's schooling, her identity proved "not eligible enough" for acquiring a seat in a national exam until further proof and certification. The bureaucratic procedure led to worrying moments where Amira almost lost the opportunity to attend the exams.



Figure 2 (Left) Amira's post on the Facebook group.
Two responses suggest certifying the passport, not the ID card while one says he registered normally without certification.
Figure 3 (Right) The sample registration form.
Amira sketched on the sample form her own info so she could carefully fill in her form.

The next day, I asked Amira if I could go along with her to the school; I was asked to sit in the director's office—I was not allowed to go into classes or ask questions without an official permit. I saw the director coming in and out compiling the Tawjihi registration forms of the students. My presence created a lot of extra chaos that day, as the girls kept coming to ask me questions about where I was from and why I was there. I told them I was there for a research project about school students. While I did not mention a word about "Syrian" students because instinctively I felt it would be inappropriate; about twice, when teachers asked me who I came with, and I said Amira, they would identify her as "that Syrian." The school director had to ask the girls to go back to the classes after each break. Amira had to answer the questions on top of her urgent issue about the document. Retrospectively, I realize

that upon this point, not only the bureaucratic procedure had disrupted Amira's ordinariness in her school days, but also this research project.

I moved outdoors at the entrance to wait for her, and when she finally came out, she asked the school staff I was chatting to if she could borrow the phone to call her mother. I lent her mine. She walked away to talk to her mother and afterwards suggested that we go home. I asked what had happened, and she said the director had said that the ID copy still needed to be certified. Walking down the hill, she said, "If I don't get the certified ID tomorrow, there will not be exams." She stopped halfway searching for the documents in her bag. She couldn't find the ID copy but then mumbled that they could make copies there at the office. When we returned home, Emm Ziad was furious, shouting at Amira, "Why this hour? I told you to ask the director the first thing in the morning!" And then when she said she had forgotten the ID copy at school, Emm Ziad shouted even louder, asking her to go back to school and get the copy. Emm Ziad stormed from one room to another preparing to leave for the Civic Office while shouting at her. Amira eventually found the paper in the bag. Emm Ziad called if she could ask for a ride to the nearby town where the Office was, and she left. Later at night, Amira updated me that the staff who do the certification were not at work. They had called the director, and she said that tomorrow they must go to certify and at 9 am the documents must be ready at school. "Yet the employees start work at 9… If I can't get certified, I will have to go to the [Ministry of] Education." The next morning, Amira woke up early to go to school and as I was returning to Amman, I joined Emm Ziad and her friend on their way to the Office again. Emm Ziad called Abu Ziad's friend, an old man who has a car, to drive us to the town. During my next visit, Amira told me she had finally registered with the school after Emm Ziad went to the office for the third time, and someone had finally stamped for her. Despite Emm Ziad's

usual sour comment about Amira's university dream ("You watch Hindi drama, use phone all day and you want to get in university?"), her burst of anger and the trips she made have shown the care and her share of the hope for her daughter's possible success.

Amira had been living in and connected to the existing networks, neighbourhood, friendships, and online platforms as she engaged with the educational pursuit. The disruptions—of ID certification and of my visit—emerged and in turn highlighted her "distinct" national and refugee identity. The network and connection eventually were turned into strategic resources in order to navigate the confusion. Her hopes for the future in higher education were embodied through these day-to-day actions and enmeshed in the everyday participation of activities around exam preparation.

4.2.2 Seeking meaningful participation: continuous efforts

Whereas Amira in the rural area of northern Jordan was able to attend the classes along with other students, in Lebanon, the two high school students I had met, their parents had strained efforts and resources for them throughout their educational journey to participate in the "regular" school's dayshift class. Public schools in Lebanon started to open for Syrian students in 2012-2013. However, during 2013-2015 the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) had restricted the registration of Syrians in prioritizing Lebanese students' access while seeking funding from UN agencies for opening afternoon shifts for Syrian students (Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014, p. 41). Afternoon shifts for Syrian students are often seen by my participants as of poor quality. MEHE prioritized hiring Lebanese full-time teachers or contracted teachers in the public sector to teach the second shift for compensation rather than hiring new teachers (Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014). "The same teachers stay the whole day from morning to the afternoon shift," a father

told me. Disadvantages in the afternoon shift also include compressed school sessions, shorter recess and without subjects such as arts, sports and music (Shuayb and Qantar, 2016). The segregated approach is also used by other private institutions considering the language ability in learning the Lebanese curriculum (Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014).

The morning shift thus has been seen as a better, more competitive and therefore more "hopeful" place to ensure a better future. The father told me, "Not all the students can register in the morning shift, you must be the top top students." On the afternoon shift, all the stationery and school bus are provided by UNHCR, but he would rather pay for the autobus. "I don't want them just to go to school and come back, I want them to be top students." Not only parents, but children I have met seemed to have also come to this understanding. Meeting Rima's five daughters in a small town near Saida, Lebanon, when I asked the third-grader which grade she is in, she told me about her grade, and the school name and she explained herself, "but in the morning shift, not the afternoon shift." The parents I met in Lebanon often had tried to get their children in the morning shifts by means including persuasion ("we pleaded with her [the director] a lot") and managing the personal relationship with the school director ("because the director is daddy's friend"). During one of my last visits, Rima had to attend a meeting with the schoolteacher for her younger daughter in the third year of kindergarten ("KG3"). She brought me along for the visit to the public school where her other two daughters in grades 3 and 6 were studying:

> We arrived at the school, had the meeting. She asked a senior teacher to let us see the 3rd grader and the 6th grader studying in the morning shift—"My friend might leave and we are afraid she couldn't see the kids." They were in the classes, and it was such a scene (making the girl proud) to ask them to come out in the middle of the class. When we were going in between the classes, Rima asked this teacher whether she could register the KG3 girl into the morning shift. The teacher politely said, "I don't know…" She was telling

> everyone I am doing the research, and I got to see the director of the school, although she knew I am doing my research on higher education. Afterwards she recounted to her friend as well as a neighbour that "they thought she's working for Caritas [an international NGO] or responsible for some work in the UN". (Field note, 17 Nov 2019)

Rima strategically used my position as a foreign researcher which may invoke some kind of association with international organizations and in the meantime asked for the favour to move her daughter into the morning shift. These efforts respond to what Brun and Shuayb (2020) suggest—that the humanitarian relief framework of liminal access is not enough to enable a meaningful future, nor it is enough to enable an imagination of a meaningful future, as shown by the parents.

In the outskirt mountain area south of Beirut, Isra was restarting 11th grade in a private Lebanese school. She had changed school several times because of documentation, no class availability and concerns about her preparedness for the upcoming Baccalaureate exam.

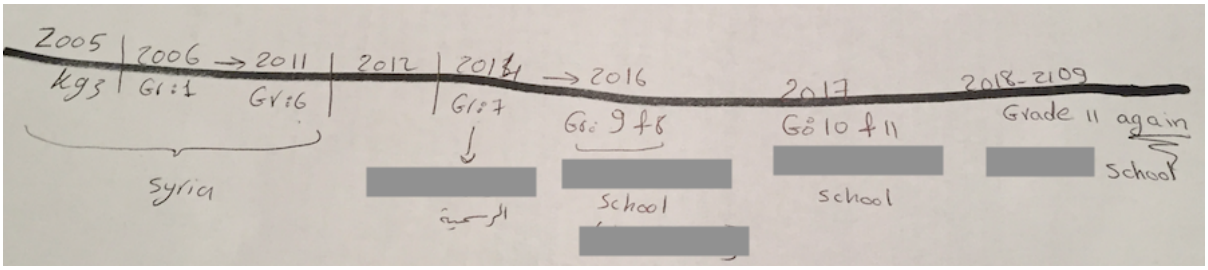


Figure 4 Isra's (17) timeline

Isra's family is from an urban area of Syria and used to have a relatively good income. As she drew the timeline (see figure 4 above), Isra explained the zigzag journey to me. After a year of no schooling when they first settled in Lebanon, she attended the afternoon shift in a public school for the 7th grade. Isra and her parents were seeking to register her into the morning shift to continue but were unable to do so, and eventually, Isra was transferred to a private school from the public school's afternoon shift. This new private school still ran an

afternoon shift for Syrian students. She stayed to continue the 8th and the 9th grade. While explaining this journey to me, Isra's mother added that the private school runs the afternoon shift because of the different levels of English: "[there are] kids who have learned English since grade one, it's not possible to put them together to learn," the mother explained, "not because it's especially for Syrians." For the secondary level, Isra was still not able to register in public high school. When I asked, she accounted the reason to the fact of having no legal residency. As I told her that another high school student I knew of was able to attend public school, she said "maybe she had an effective residency permit." Her mother believed that the public high school is not accepting Syrian students whatsoever.[72]

She then attended her 10th and 11th grade in a Syrian school, teaching Lebanese curriculum in Arabic. The materials were translated into Arabic. Isra had no textbooks but piles of papers as learning materials. As she showed me, the papers were imprinted with a logo of another school. As schools established by the Syrian community continued to face issues of accreditation (Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014), the school where Isra attended had to borrow a private Lebanese name to register their students for the Brevet and Baccalaureate examinations. During her 10th and 11th grade, she was preparing a transfer exam to a private Lebanese faith school to better prepare for the exams. During the time we were meeting, she was accepted into the new school but it was suggested that she repeat the 11th grade. I asked her how she got to know of this school, and she said that one of her friends who graduated from the school and is now at a university had helped her to register. She was the only Syrian

[72] MEHE had redistricted Syrians students' registration in public schools during 2014. Ibrahim Haider (2014) "We cannot accommodate 400,000 refugees in public schools, Bou Saab told Al-Nahar: 275,000 Lebanese students' registration is priority", Al-Nahar, 8 September 2014. Available at: https://newspaper.annahar.com/article/168707--لا-نستطيع-استيعاب-400-ألف-لاجئ-في-المدارس-الرسمية-بو-صعب-لالنهار-275-ألف-تلميذ

student in her class. Isra's family was able to financially support her through the previous two years in secondary school, which cost around $700 a year. The new private school would cost $2000 for Syrians as a discounted price (while $3,500 for Lebanese students). Isra told me that there was a gentleman in the office who offered to pay for her tuition. The mother explained, "The school offers scholarships for people who really wants to study." While already struggling with access, Isra and her parents continue to seek meaningful participation—accessing and attending schools is one thing, education for those "who really want to study" is another. This private Lebanese school emphasises Islamic values and competitive academic performance. Isra herself was actively participating in the "circle" (halqa), a weekly female gathering that discusses and studies Islam. The group was usually led by a university student and joined by a group of young female schoolers of Isra's age.

The schools—both the Syrian establishment and the local Lebanese school—had helped Isra to remain in her educational trajectory, thus, to remain hopeful in continuing climbing the ladder. The continuous navigating and seeking a better place to study has demonstrated not only a commitment of time and efforts, but also resources that were posing considerable strains for the middle-class family such as Isra's.[73]

Just as I thought Isra might have completed high school, when I received her news, she had returned to Syria with her family when the country-wide demonstrations in Lebanon began in October 2019. She rejoined school for 12th grade but the schooling went on halt when

[73] The main source of income for Isra's family was her father's job in repairing AC. But the family was able to afford, albeit straining, the four children's educational expenses on top of the $550 of rent and bills:
$700 per year for Isra' school; $400 for the 7th grade daughter; $500 for the 5th grade son; possible future tuition of $2000 for the oldest son.

the pandemic hit in 2020. Her educational trajectory has been significantly disrupted by regional and global instability, yet her pursuit continues.

4.2.3 One day at a time: progress in the face of financial strains

Without the same financial stability in Lebanon, university student Sarah's two sisters Maram in 12th grade and Hala in 9th grade struggled to maintain their attendance to school. The family settled in a mountain area where they found a base level of a three-storage mountain villa—which Sarah described as a "garage". Their daily commute to and from the university and school involved a bus trip and an indefinite wait (normally for half an hour) for a free ride from the bus stop to home. Once, I came along with the three sisters on the bus from Beirut and we waited for more than an hour for a car to pick us up:

> While we were waiting, Maram told her sister that she's stressed: "I have geography history four lessons and the Islamic study. I didn't open them yet." Sarah also told me the exam weeks are coming, this semester is very stressful, she said. (Fieldnote, 13 December 2019)

Sarah's family used to have a stable income and owned a house in one of the major cities in Syria. The situation in Lebanon had been a dramatic change for them in terms of financial resources. Sarah said during my visit, "We are afraid you're not comfortable. Because we are not comfortable ourselves. How can you feel comfortable?" She explained further, "This place is very different from what we lived in Syria." Because of the distance and the fees of transportation, the two younger sisters who were studying in 9th grade and 12th grade in an Islamic college in Beirut rarely went to school. They had classes every day but went only about twice a month to avoid the expenses. As for the tuition of $500 for each, the college allowed them to delay the payments. They would have to pay off if they want to graduate. Tuition was

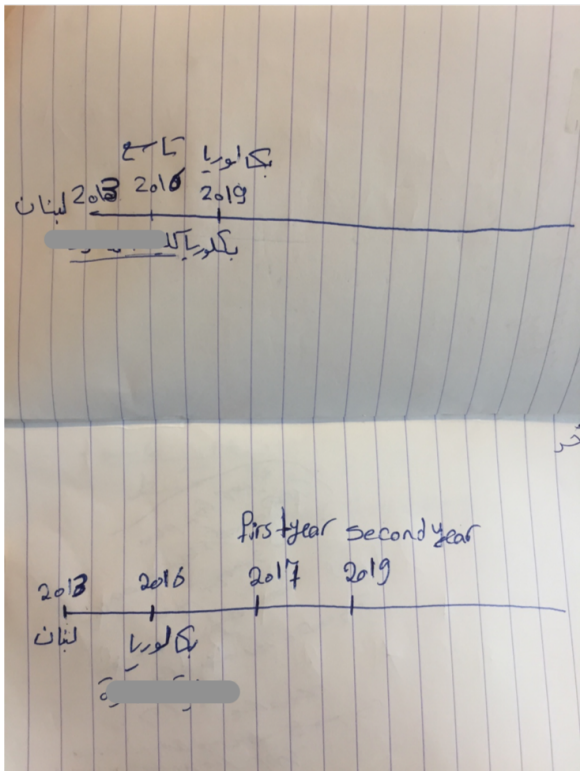
one thing, the sisters mentioned that they also had to pay for the books which cost 16,000LL ($10.6) each, and the certificate would be another cost of 50,000LL ($33).

The family of Sarah is not particularly religious, and Sarah once emphasised that she dislikes the practice of sectarian labelling in Lebanon. She accounted for her experience when studying in the Islamic college: "The school asked me what my religion is. I told them I am a Muslim, and they said, 'Muslim what?' I said, 'I don't know.' I came back to ask my dad. My dad said we don't decide things based on people's religion. And it doesn't matter. We react to people based on their behaviours." She reported back to the school saying that she didn't know. "When other people went to pray, I stayed alone in the classroom."

The Islamic college in Beirut, nevertheless, had provided a route for Sarah and the sisters to obtain Syrian Brevet (upon completion of 9th grade) and Baccalaureate (12th grade) certificates. The college only offered classes in these two levels for school-age students to prepare for the Syrian Baccalaureate official exams. Participant Wissam informed me that the college had an agreement with the Syrian Ministry of Education to bring, for the first time, the official exams outside Syria. The exam inspectors came to Lebanon to observe the exams. Through this route, Wissam and Sarah both obtained their Baccalaureate certificate which allowed them to apply for their respective scholarship programs into universities.[74] Sarah's sisters therefore followed the same route that had avoided them from taking the much rockier road that Isra did, which the family might not be able to afford. Figure 5 shows the timelines drawn by Maram and Sarah, compared to Isra's constant changes in the journey, Maram

[74] Holding Syrian Baccalaureate certificate, Wissam applied to the Lebanese University, the only public university in the country, but was required to sit for an entrance exam, which he had failed. He then found a scholarship program in a private university afterwards.

merely marked the two years studying in 9th and 12th grade while Sarah passed 12th grade and continued to the university.



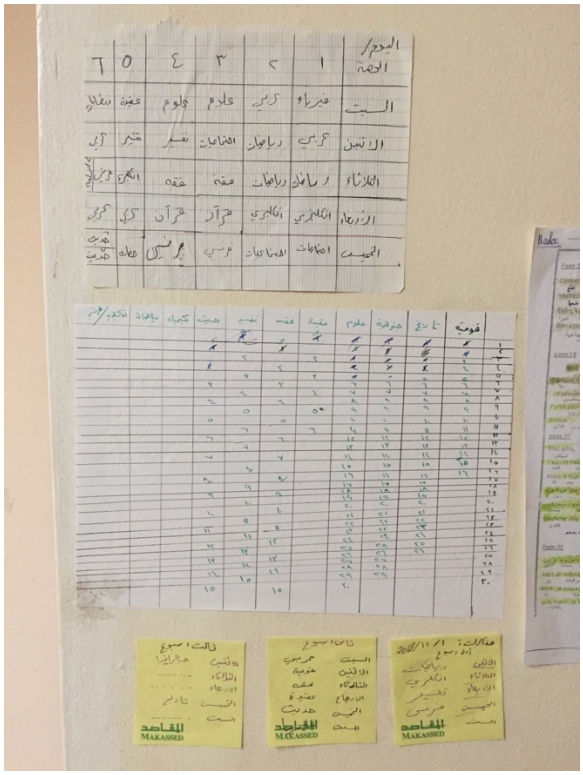


Figure 5 (Left) Maram (18) (up) and Sarah's (21) (down) timelines.

Figure 6 (Right) The 9th grader's schedule and her study plan.

The opportunity provided by the faith-based institution had helped and sustained the sisters' hope in pursuing higher education. However, the infrequent attendance meant less likely to succeed in exams, and without being able to navigate other options, the two sisters had been studying from home. As Figure 6 above shows, their school schedules were put up on the wall. In the middle, it was the 9th grader's schedule, a table of the subjects and lessons she must study to keep up with the class. She crossed out the lesson that she had finished reviewing. While not being able to participate in education in a way that could point to a future, the sisters have made it more meaningful by attending to their own progress. It was in these small crosses that I sensed "the feel for the game", the continuous expectation towards what

was coming and how one could master the game in a practical way. It was in crossing the lessons, one had moved forward when the mobility of commuting and attending school was constrained by the financial difficulties. Contrary to the extraordinary "symbol of success" that is often branded in refugee scholarships (Fert, 2020), it was perhaps in these tiny crosses that the "hope" was embodied.

4.3 Conflicting expectations and hope unfulfilled

With the students who were actively pursuing their studies, concrete steps were carried out and strategies devised in the face of difficulties. In this section, I document the cases in which the students were unwilling or unable to participate in the field of educational pursuit. I met Faris and Nadir and their families through Abu Saleem as I met Amira in a northern village in Irbid, Jordan. While I did not have much interaction with Faris, I had frequent meetings and exchanges with Nadir. In both cases, I see the conflicting expectations about one's future and education, and how these expectations and hope are mediated through the identity of being a "Syrian"—scholarship opportunities, vocational courses, and research projects. The section answers the question of what happens when the educational hope is not embodied and expectations are unmet.

4.3.1 "You Syrians have chances."

"He should have been in the first year in the university by now," Faris' mother Emm Faris said. Faris and his family moved to the village in 2013 when Faris had already finished 7th grade but the school moved him back to the 5th grade, thus the delay. Faris was in the 11th grade when we met. Throughout my visit to them, Emm Faris was always worried about him not being focussed enough on studies, while Faris himself seemed to devote most of his

attention to the tile work on construction sites. Faris' family came from an urban area in Southern Syria. Faris' father had been working in the Gulf since before the war, and the family live on a fairly stable remittance. Faris was rarely present when I visited and I spent most of my visits with Emm Faris. She had been actively seeking strengthening courses and arranging lessons for Faris so that he prepares for the Tawjihi year.

During my first meeting with Emm Faris, she told me about a place offering free courses for secondary students in the city which she had learned about through a Facebook page. It was newly open offering free lessons in English and Math. "I pay for the transportation," she said, for Faris to commute to the city to attend the lessons. She mentioned that she had been receiving relevant information via social media: "I have been following [the page] for two years now. Before I didn't know anything about it, I didn't know what's Tawjihi…" She had been reading closely about news on scholarships offered for Syrian students— "A girl with an average higher than 80 didn't get the scholarship, isn't that too bad? There is a percentage," she disagreed when I told her I knew someone who got UNHCR's DAFI scholarship without a very high average score.

During one visit, Amira's sister Khadijah came along with me. Khadijah told Emm Faris that I was on scholarship. Emm Faris then told her that she would like that Faris get a scholarship abroad too: "Now here in Jordan, you need a very high average to get a scholarship. One out of 50 gets a scholarship. The percentage is very low." She said that the best option for Faris is "to get Tawjihi and get out immediately to Kuwait, to Saudi, to Britain, to the USA…" "The scholarship will cover expenses, books and transportation. Very good." She carried on telling us that a girl was awarded a prize in the US or Britain, "everywhere there are Syrian succeeding." She showed me the photo and checked again that the awarded Syrian student

was studying in Malaysia. Emm Faris had been hoping that Faris would also get a chance to study abroad, and she had believed that there would be very little for Faris to stay in Jordan.

The only time I was invited to stay overnight in Emm Faris's place, Faris was late in returning. Emm Faris said he has finished school around 4 and had gone to the building work. When she was in the kitchen preparing a meal, I asked whether it was her who had asked Faris to start work or whether he himself wanted to go. She said she told him to go at first, "so he can gather some money." She told me, with 25 dinars each time, he would gather some for his own expenses. "Because when he will be in Tawjihi, he would need to pay for the [extra] lessons." Later after we had eaten, Faris came back and sitting afar at the corner, he told his mother that a guy (someone he knew from work) told him to go to another place to work for a few hours from 9:30 tomorrow. "It's 15 dinars or 20," he told her mom. "But then you won't make it to the school," she disagreed. "He told me he will be waiting for me at 9:30. What can I do?" Faris replied. She told him that she didn't want him to skip school. Later I asked Emm Faris, so he is not going to school? She said his afternoon shift starts around 11:30.[75] He would probably not make it. "Try to come back before that," she told him.

When it was very late and we were about to sleep, Emm Faris called him and had a long conversation over the phone with Faris and his friend Odai. She was asking Odai to arrange a group English lesson for Faris and asked him to guide Faris so he does not go astray. The group lesson would require 75 dinars. When I asked about the friend Odai, Emm Faris told me: "He is good," "he succeeded in Tawjihi." However, he decided not to continue to the university, Emm Faris explained, "because there will be no job." He stayed working at a local

[75] The afternoon shift is for all the students in Faris' school. The school was going through renovation and all the students had to move to another school to use the facility in the afternoon.

fast food shop. “He told me that ‘you are not like us. You Syrians have chances. With Tawjihi you can get scholarships and get out.’ Here there’s no job… Even people with a master, who pays from his own pocket to study a master, now is still sitting at home.” Emm Faris reminded me of the normality of expecting to be unemployed after university in the local context. The category of “Syrians” has made the project leave out the aspect of local communities (Masterson, 2019), the experience such as Odai’s. Being a Syrian, in Emm Faris’ and Odai’s view, means to be eligible for more educational opportunities and a brighter future abroad. Focusing on a national unit of observation, I was prone to assume that the other populations are not going through similar experiences.

While Faris remained committed to work, Emm Faris continued to make efforts to enable his participation in extra courses and group lessons. She told me that Faris’ cousin in Irbid was preparing for Tawjihi, “I told them to leave all the books for me. Don’t throw them.”

4.3.2 “I know what the research is about. It’s not for me.”

The first time I met Nadir was at a local afterschool centre in the same town in Jordan where I also met Amira and Faris. When I asked for help to find Tawjihi students, the owner Abu Saleem also thought of Nadir, who had dropped out since the 7th grade and had not continued any formal education since he arrived in Jordan with the family in 2013. Nadir’s mother Emm Munir had described that when they left Zaatari camp[76], her three elder sons all

[76] Reflecting the governments’ encampment strategy (Turner, 2015), moving in and out of the camp is strictly regulated. Students who dwell in the camps and commute to universities in Mafraq or Azzaqa informed me that commute in and out of the camp, one needs to apply to permit paper last for two weeks free of cost or a card costs 20 dinars for a year. In fact, the one of the students had joked: “I asked a friend in the camp where he is going tomorrow. He told me ‘I am going to Jordan.’ I asked ‘Where are you living now?’”; To move away from the camp, one needs a local sponsor, families who don’t have sponsors often pay high fees to brokers for the arrangement to leave. Nadir told me that they had paid 1000 dinars to leave and “that was all the money we had.”

wanted to work to help the family and as times went on, they had been out of school for too long to be able to go back to school. "People get help from UNICEF, but I am not a child anymore. They don't help people who are over 18. They said, after 18, now I am 'a man' not 'a child'. I only need a chance to study. There's no opportunity," Nadir commented. While UNICEF does extend their projects and resources to adolescents beyond 18[77], Nadir's comment nevertheless flagged up the common view of which he was no longer considered vulnerable. Similarly, Emm Munir had been telling me that it had been difficult for the family to receive assistance from NGOs as she had four sons and a daughter, which was regarded as less vulnerable, as men are considered able to earn a livelihood: "Family with young guys (*shabāb*), they think they'd be working. But who knows my shabāb are staying at home." On the other hand, Amira's family—which has seven girls and one boy along with the adopted three children—was able to receive cash and housing support from an NGO.

Nadir's family used to have a relatively stable income, running a small computer repair shop in one of the major cities in Syria. Nadir's parents are pious Sunni Muslims. Abu Munir, Nadir's father also used to teach Classic Arabic and religious knowledge. After coming to Jordan, the family had moved a few times before they settled in the village where their daughter married and where the rent costs half (100 Jordanian dinars, $141) than the rent in the city. Abu Munir was able to find work in a local dairy shop on the village's main street, but Emm Munir told me that he worked for 16 hours per day and only received 6 dinars ($8.46) for a full day of work. The 8th grader son would fill in for Abu Munir after school when Abu Munir came back for a meal. Their oldest son Munir stayed at home most of the time while

[77] For example, "Generation Unlimited" campaign include participants between 14 and 24 years of age, see: https://www.unicef.org/syria/generation-unlimited-syria-youth-challenge.

the second son decided to move back to Mafraq to stay with relatives in order to work. Nadir at the time was also working on and off in home décor. “Nadir is the same, 6 dinars, he got cigarettes, for his own expenses…,” the mother accounted. On top of the rent, the family was paying for the instalments of the new washing machine and stove. Emm Munir had asked her sister-in-law to lend some money for the increased financial difficulties. Once they accommodated me for a night, Emm Munir sighed when she prepared the blankets and made a bed over the cushions, “if this were in Syria, the situation would be very good.” On the day when we first met, Abu Saleem, the afterschool owner mentioning the culinary course he attended that day, funded by the Dutch NGO SPARK, “Hopefully with this SPARK scholarship, you will become something big!” He replied, “But food… It is not the job I want to do.” He turned to me and told me about his hope to travel, “I want to leave the Middle East.” But all your family is here, I said. He replied, “But for the future. I will have my future, to marry to have a family of my own. For example, why do you leave your parents? For the future!” Nadir associated being independent of parents and the formation of a family to “the future”. Chapter 6 extends the discussion on waithood and adulthood. Nadir continued, “my friend [his cousin as I found out later], who can’t even read Arabic, has already travelled to Canada and is studying doctorate.” He told me about his work experience with an international NGO where he was a photographer, volunteering for a youth development initiative. [78] “I helped I helped but no one helps me.” He then firmly, slowly explained to me: “I don’t need other

[78] Nadir sees this as a job: “[as a] volunteer because I am not allowed an official job except as a volunteer. And the organization was giving me a small amount for transportation.” Other participants have also described their volunteering posts as jobs. It is a practical maneuver used by NGOs to recruit Syrians in delivering educational and social programs. In Lebanon for instance, Fatimah explained her job as a mediator in schools for Syrian children, “When the [NGO’s] project started, they want Syrian volunteers to be present inside schools. […] It is a voluntary work, but they give me 200 dollars. They [the money] count as commuting expenses. […] You see the school is quite close, I only spent a little from the 200 dollars. I gain some from those.”

people to help me. But I need a chance to study." In the few moments of our first meeting, he had expressed his sense of "stuckness", of not feeling mobile, symbolically and physically. His vision of the future was what a culinary course could not provide.

As I tried to explain the scope of the project, on the point of the criteria of the expected participants, he cut me off and said "I know what the research is about. It's not for me. It's for those who are studying." At that moment, I told him, "I want to understand the situation better." Reading through the field notes, his comment struck me as a clear message of "what is possible for me", coinciding with Bourdieu's thoughts on the future that is practical and "fits":

> […] People are not fools; they are much less bizarre or deluded than we would spontaneously believe precisely because they have internalized, through a protracted and multisided process of conditioning, the objective chances they face. They know how to 'read' the future that fits them, which is made for them and for which they are made (by opposition to everything that the expression 'this is not for the likes of us' designates), through practical anticipations that grasp, at the very surface of the present, what unquestionably imposes itself as that which 'has' to be done or said (and which will retrospectively appear as the 'only' thing to do or say). (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 130)

Nadir had the immediate reflexive understanding of his relationship with "the game", the pursuit of accessing higher education, which he had considered not his game but "for those who are studying". My intuition back then to include Nadir as one of the participants was that he had the hope to be part of those who pursue education but was unable to. To understand the students' experiences on higher education access, wouldn't it be questionable to exclude participants such as Nadir, who had the vision of himself being in higher education? This contradiction of *having the vision* while *knowing what was practical* had troubled not only Nadir himself, but also me throughout my visits to him until this day.

4.3.3 Buying forged certificates and preparing for the Coalition exams

On my first two visits to Nadir's family, I was with Abu Saleem. On the second visit, during the sunset time, Nadir came to greet us in his suit and well-combed hair. We sat down in the guest room and he told me that he had been to Amman today for an interview—a casting—for a film that would take 24 days to shoot. It was a film about the Syrian crisis, and he was casting for the role of a member of the mafia who used to be a policeman. He knew the director and the director asked him to go casting. Afterwards, he mentioned a way of getting forged Syrian school certificates, the people who do the certificates were in Turkey and they had connections with someone from the government in Syria. According to Nadir, the forged certificate for 9th grade would cost 150 dinars and 1000 dinars for Tawjihi (Baccalaureate in Syria). He said, "I don't want the Tawjihi, because that's cheating. If I need 9th grade, I get the 9th grade one. Because I want to study film, I need to study for it." Emm Munir confirmed this later when I asked her, she said, "Someone told me these people's number. They are in Turkey. They take the certificate from Syria with official stamps and all that… but when I got this, he went to interview for jobs," she shrugged disagreeing with Nadir's move to look for jobs.

Two weeks after, on my third visit, I arrived at the afterschool centre where Abu Saleem was talking to a local English teacher. Abu Saleem showed me the textbook they were discussing, "that's Nadir's textbook for Tawjihi." (See Figure 7 below)

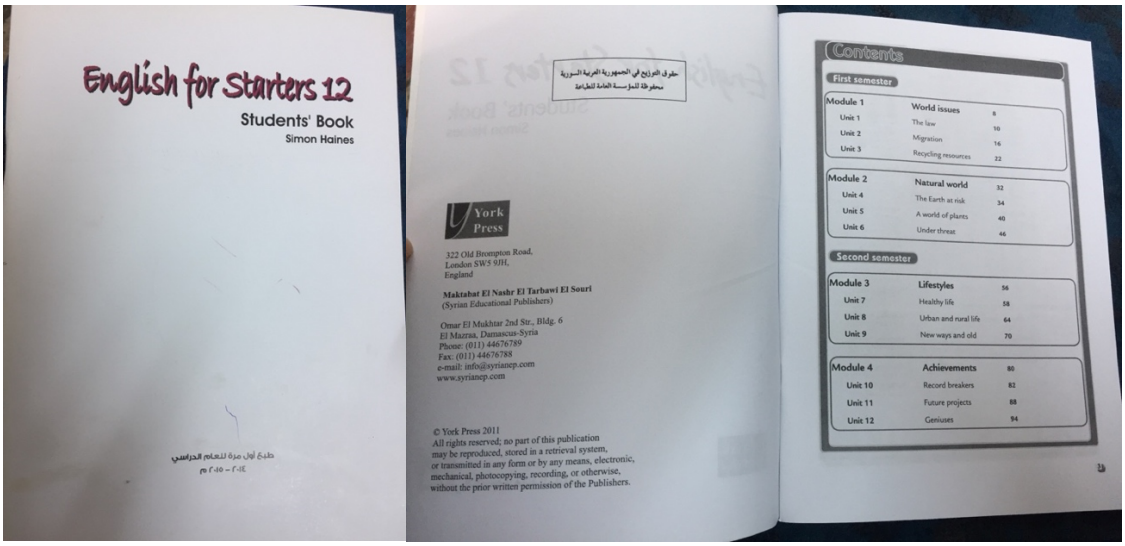


Figure 7 The English textbook for the high school exams organized by the Syrian Interim Government (Syrian Coalition and donors)

It turned out that Nadir had registered for the Baccalaureate exam provided by the Coalition government, and Nadir came to the centre to ask whether he could get tutoring in preparation for the exams. Abu Saleem was also asking the teacher how much she would like. As the English teacher was turning down the request, I told him I could tutor for free. I went to visit Nadir afterwards to make a sense of the situation. Over tea, Emm Munir told me that a friend of Nadir's father helped him to register for the exams. There would be no schooling needed, but there would be free courses in Zaatari camp for three days a week. She told me that the guy who promised them the certificate (with would have charged 200 dinars) had cancelled on them because the papers would not match—they came here legally with proof of registering with the UNHCR, and the date printed on the certificate would show that it was forged. That was why they sought another way for Nadir to continue. This friend had helped him to register for the exams in Zaatari. She said, with this Syrian Baccalaureate exam, he would not be able to attend Jordanian universities, but he might be able to continue in Syria or Turkey. Issued by the Coalition government and funded by private donors, the Baccalaureate exams use the same Syrian curriculum but adapt some politically related

subjects (such as History) omitting references to the Syrian regime. However, such a certificate is not widely recognized except for in a few countries such as Turkey, France, Mauritania, Oman, and Somalia (Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014).

Emm Munir told me the afterschool centre asked for 16 dinars ($22) per lesson for English and Math, for which they would be unable to afford. I had then offered to help Nadir in studying English, in part, to be able to contribute in return for the disturbance I caused with the research project, and in part, to have a better reason to continue coming for visits as Nadir's parents abide by religious rules strictly, and as a single woman visiting the all-boys house had caused some inconvenience. Nadir came back from his décor work in the town. There was no news of the acting job. He sat down and said that

> the work is really hard, and he's really tired after the work. He asked her mom for a cigarette. "I need this." "I am really tired, and he didn't do anything. I need help, you know? I can't study after work. I have no time to study." He? Yes he the brother who's sitting beside us. Nadir uses English to speak badly of him since he doesn't know English. He complained more than once that his brother, as the oldest one doesn't do anything, doesn't go to work, just being at home playing on the phone. (Fieldnote, 6 February 2019)

It was poignant to note this down as everyone there understood perfectly that there was no stable work to do. The oldest brother had also briefly told me before that he had thought about going abroad and doing things and studying, but the war has changed everything. It had been 7 years, and he had done nothing.

I went over the textbook and see how we could arrange the lessons. He told me that the book is too hard for him and that he wanted to begin with the easier English speaking and reading first. But I thought in order to prepare for the exam he would still need to dive into the book. I gave him the homework to look up the vocabulary and listen to my recording of the paragraph before the next lesson. I asked him whether he could take a day off or come

home earlier for the next lesson. He said yes, he would ask the director at work. Then when his father came in, he told him that he wanted a day off for the lesson. Abu Munir replied that he would make the brother work. Nadir told me that his dad is an Arabic teacher, with the Arabic subject he would be teaching him. He showed me the Arabic book and said, “for me, it’s difficult too.”

The next week, Nadir’s spirit was kept high. After our lesson, he told me he hoped in the future he could see me in the UK, and he would have a room with bookshelf and drinks. He would direct movies, “after English, I want to learn Japanese, Hindi, Chinese,” because he wants not only direct movies in Arabic, but also in Hollywood, Bollywood, ….” The speech was cheerful and hopeful. While I was investing quite practically, in the English subject for his exams with my time and efforts, he was, I found much later, through the process of sitting for the lessons, investing more of his emotions—of being hopeful, albeit it being a fleeting state.

4.3.4 Café job, Pubg game, and the failed attempt of the exam

Nadir never really finished any of the homework I asked him to do. The week after, when I arrived at 1 pm, Nadir was still sleeping. Emm Munir told me that he had stayed up all night last night. Back and forth, Emm Munir couldn’t wake him up, and I went instead. He got surprised and apologized, “I am so sorry, …My mom told me you are coming, and I told my mom I wasn’t ready, she told me again, and I told her I am not ready…She always does this.” He told me he didn’t sleep last night because he was looking for a job in Amman, I asked why, he said, “I want to help my family.” He was looking for a job so he could leave home, “I am not a child anymore you know…I want to leave.”

A week after, I got Emm Munir's message telling me that Nadir had gone to Amman for a job in a café. I called Nadir and he told me that he had asked his boss if we could continue the lessons in the morning at the café. I agreed and set a day with him.

> It rained very hard, I walked in around 10:15, Nadir wasn't there. About three men were sitting inside. I asked the man standing where Nadir is. The guy said he's coming. I waited a bit at the seat outside. And as I knew he might be quite late, I ordered a tea. And then a guy asked me to move to the seat inside, I awkwardly worked on my laptop there with a tea. Some other guy came in, they talked about me: She's Nadir's friend. Her? I greeted. And then one of them asked again: "Where's Nadir?" "He's coming" someone replied. Nadir finally came around 11. He apologized, his usual tone: "I am so sorry Wen." He explained: Yesterday was very busy. Many people came to watch the match. […] Ismaili, his colleague, came up to fix the heater. Later the owner came up to check it out and it was out of gas. He told Nadir to carry gas and change it. […] He is getting 11 dinars ($15.51) a day; the place he sleeps he pays 30 dinars for a month. It's a room sharing with colleagues. But it was bad, "there's no heater. I sleep with my jacket on." […] He didn't do the homework. He said he's busy and the job is exhausting, he worked late, and he could only sleep after work. I told him again how important it is for him to write. During the middle of the class, he ran downstairs to get himself a can of coffee and two chocolate bars. (He must be hungry; he ran straight in without breakfast.) We then got our lesson done, and toward 12, or past it, the owner might have come up and checked, which Nadir seemed a bit concerned about toward the end of the lesson. I then called it off as it was 10 past 12. (Field note, 28 February 2019)

For the next two weeks, we were not able to fix a day for the lessons, and in mid-March, he told me he had decided to go home as his boss had kicked him out. I then resumed my visit to the family. In early April, I asked whether Nadir knew when the exams would be. He didn't know. He turned to his mother, "Why no one tells me about the exams…" Emm Munir didn't know either.

Emm Munir told me Nadir had not been studying, "He was playing PUBG." "PUBG" is the acronym for "PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds", an online multiplayer shooter game.[79] I

[79] See https://www.pubg.com/en-us/.

had come to know the game quite early on in the fieldwork in Jordan when many participants were playing the game on their mobile phones. I asked Nadir and his brother what they do in the game (see also Figure 8):

> The first thing is that the company of PUPG holds competitions in which they give out some million dollars for the team (of four) who wins. Nadir said he's not in the competition, "I am just playing for maybe 100 dollars…" He suggested that there are better-skilled people out there. For him, "it's just for fun." He showed me the game, how his teammates are always online. "You see, when I open, they are online." He told me how you select a gun, and if you got shot, your teammate can revive you so you start over. "People online they teach me English, you know, they help me with English." "Not only just for the weapons' names," he added. I said I don't really like killing people. He said it's just in the game, there are no graphic views, and he is not, for example, going to kill his dad. The brother aside said that but there are some cases in which people play, and it affects behaviours. "That's that person's brain…" Nadir suggested that if you can think, you'd not bring the game to real-life (killing for example). I asked about how much time he spends whenever he opens up and plays. "Half an hour," Nadir said, while the brother was laughing and his hand up to his forehead- as to disagree. (Fieldnote, 8 April 2019)



Figure 8 Nadir's PUBG profile

17 April, I arrived at 4 pm, Nadir was sleeping and didn't show up during the 2-3 hours I was there. Later the next morning, I got Nadir's message apologizing—in English (I assumed he put it into the google translate)—

> "Hi, I apologize for yesterday. But in fact I feel emotionally tired and unable to see anyone. You can come .. Welcome at any time. But I am not psychologically interested in anything." We had a short chat. Among his messages: "I do not know that I am very tired and I have become very tired of everything .. This country has destroyed me"; "You did not ask yourself why I spend most of my time playing. Because there is no place to support the energies of young people and no place to empty my energy. And every day there is news of wars in the Arab world. You may find me happy, but happiness is a role of representation because I am sad inside. I'm sorry." (Field note, 17 April 2019)

I was informed during my visit in February that Nadir had a suicide attempt once, that the family had rescued him, and that he then stayed in intensive care for three days. Nadir had not told me about this particular past until our last meeting. It was clear that we would not resume the lessons and the exams were no longer—or had not been—the centre of the concern.

His passionate vision for the future meets not the actions directing toward the practical expectations of taking the exams. Nadir had known from the start what was actually practical. Reflecting on the episodes, my insistence on what seemed reasonable and practical—to review and to do homework—had been a violent reminder that what the vision required was not actually practical. Threadgold (2018) explains how aspiration is not only a discursive object but there are affective elements at stake:

> There are affective elements that play a role in how aspirations are present in specific situations and where one's trajectory meets moments of desire that do not match expectations or even possibilities. (Threadgold, 2018, p. 40).

Symbolic violence occurs when such a "meeting" happens. Those who had invested in the vision are complicit in such violence, including Nadir himself as a social agent taking part in the game (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 167). The idea of Nadir taking part in the game resembles the idea of hope as jointly invested—in Andersson's (2014) study by migrants who wait and authorities who maintain faint promise. Here, the side who maintains the hope is the parents who made efforts in finding the source to forge certificates, registering the exams and a researcher who approached along with a project on refugees. Reminders of the educational hope—of passing exams, of accessing university, of having a better future—are indeed prevalent for Syrian young people: scholarship programmes abroad for Syrians, as seen in Faris' case, vocational courses that Nadir attended ("Hopefully with this SPARK scholarship, you will become something big!"), and at last, research projects on education looking for Syrian refugees. While some would have "the feel for the game" and strategize in order to participate as seen in the cases in the first section, some were unable to engage meaningfully with the hope.

Throughout the four months, what was consistent and recurrent was his remarks on hoping to travel. "My cousin when he was here, he knew nothing, now he is studying doctorate in America", or,

> My friends now are youtubers…Before we were a team doing plays. One need references and some ideas... only way to get references is to get out (of the country) they have it and have some ideas and smart, success is something natural. (Fieldnote, 25 April 2019)

The news from friends and relatives' mobilities—of moving away, moving forward and upward had made Nadir's "stuckness" more palpable. The attempt of getting out of the suffocation was, however, as the section elaborates, another violent form of suffering. The dramatic

change of Nadir's family situation and the serious constraints preventing people who fell out of the educational system to "empty their energy" had necessarily contributed to this series of confusion of hope. The hope appeared to be trouble caused by the rupture—what used to be practically expected was no longer practical. On the other hand, hopes continued to be advertised, reached and sometimes maintained in various ways.

4.4 Conclusion

The chapter aims to complicate the image often associated with refugees' pursuit of higher education. It grounds the understandings of educational hopes in the everyday experiences of young people. To answer the question about what students' strategies are in their educational pursuits, what emerged from the chapter is, for the most part, the importance of "ordinariness"—of making everyday efforts in studying, commuting and networking in order to participate in the education journey, and to participate in it meaningfully. What disrupt these journeys was more often than not the bureaucratic procedures that relate to the students' national identity as Syrians. In several places of the chapter, I reflect on how the research in looking for "Syrian" students as an identifier contributes to highlighting such distinction.

While not being able to generalise these findings, both cases in the second section where Nadir and Faris were engaging with work opportunities more than education reflect the pressure of approaching adulthood—of "I am no longer a child". Poor socio-economic conditions are referred to as part of what contributes to the high dropout rate among refugees, especially among male students who would be required to work in sustaining livelihood (Shuayb et al., 2021). Nevertheless, out and about to work, as especially in Nadir's case, it was

imperative to demonstrate himself as no longer a child and that he was able to contribute to the family rather than earning income per se. Chapter 6 will continue the discussion around the significance of adulthood and its relation to education.

As the chapter shows, students engage in the vision of a better future through education, and they do not only invest in time and efforts, but also emotions. The hope is jointly constructed between, on the one hand, the young people and the parents, and on the other, educational opportunities of various kinds and visions of a successful story reached out to them by various means—such as social media and at times, a researcher.

In this chapter, hopes are embodied through students' everyday efforts and strategies as well as the violence that occurred when what was hoped was not practical. Hopes could also, as alluded to in this chapter, be present in institutional policies and practices that provide educational access and relevant opportunities. The next chapter turns the focus onto the hopes and futures embedded in the policies and practices that involve higher education opportunities and beyond.

CHAPTER 5

FUTURES UNDER THE DEVELOPMENTAL-HUMANITARIAN FRAMEWORK OF EDUCATION PROVISION

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter shows how hope as a concept is embodied in the everyday life of refugee young persons and their pursuit of higher education. As previously alluded to, hope is intrinsically social and therefore can involve multiple actors including institutions. In the case of higher education opportunities in the context of forced displacement, state regulations, funding programs, and local initiatives are where refugee students' hopes may be located. As established in the literature chapter, the production, distribution and differentiation of these hopes is a political process. As Chapter 1 suggests, the geopolitical agendas of humanitarian aid and developmental assistance to host countries play a part in the provisions of education opportunities for refugees. Host states likewise have certain agendas and expectations as they manage incoming resources and the presence of refugees. Refugee students along with NGOs on the ground continue to seek and create opportunities under these complex and often conflicting political agendas. This chapter turns to these institutional sources of hope and explores the frameworks under which scholarships and other educational opportunities are provided.

As the Introduction of the thesis mentioned, the word "future" is permeated in the region's major funding programmes' branding and discourses. Indeed, providing higher education is what critics of humanitarian work's relief focus would hope for (for example, Zeus, 2011; Brun, 2016). Education, and higher education more so, entails building biographical lives

in which futures are meaningful, moving beyond aiding the basic needs of food and shelter, "saving biological life" in a temporal mode of emergency (Brun, 2016). Albeit limited, funders' increased interests in recent years seem to also respond to the call for attending to refugees' higher educational needs and rights in the increasingly protracted context of displacement (Zeus, 2011; Dahya and Dryden-Peterson, 2017). Nevertheless, the *kind* of future underlining these hoped-for opportunities is rarely under question.

Investigating displaced students' futures raises the issue of access to the labour market. School-level education has become an essential part of the humanitarian response to displacement post-1990s and this humanitarian aspect often leaves the political questions of other inter-related social and civic rights untouched. As in Brun and Shuyab's (2020) analysis, in the paradigm of education in emergencies, the right to education is detached from other rights. The increased provision of higher education for refugees, however, brings "the future" closer to light. The question of the refugee's right to participate in the labour market becomes obvious once students begin to plan and seek employment opportunities that will allow their training to be put to use. Acknowledging that the local university graduates alike suffer from a high unemployment rate, the chapter does not wish to mark refugees' experiences as exceptional. What the chapter would like to highlight is the tension within the layered policy framework of refugee education and higher education itself. As the chapter will argue, the short-term humanitarian relief approach lingers even when the provision of education and higher education opportunities supposedly embodies long-term development rather than a relief measure.

The chapter, therefore, aims to bring together the investigations of education access and employment prospect in the case of Syrian refugees. This will enable an understanding of

the different futures imagined under the dominant humanitarian framework and the concerns of host governments. Contextualizing higher education scholarships and related assistance in the political frameworks will then help to elucidate the constraints of the scholarship programmes in their promise of futures as well as their inclusion and exclusion of certain groups of displaced students. The chapter sets out to answer the following questions:

1) *What is "the future" reflected in the national responses to refugees' educational needs? What are the gaps between the dominant humanitarian framework and the national approaches?*
2) *How do these gaps reflect the constraints of current scholarship and educational programmes? How do the students respond to them?*

Build on the background of the dominant humanitarian framework detailed in Chapter 1, the first part of the chapter focuses on the national approaches to education provision and access to labour market for Syrian refugees and its development. The national frameworks of Lebanon and Jordan focus on the period spanning from 2012-2018. It analyses the discourses and practices in Lebanese and Jordanian state policies in addition to the documents signed with the EU, as they represented a major step of Northern states' assistance to host states' "developmental approach" to the presence of Syrian refugees. The second half of the chapter gathers the accounts that reflect the constraints and gaps under the current frameworks of provision. It provides the accounts of students' collective efforts and local initiatives responding to the constraints regarding access.

5.2 Refugees' access to education and the labour market under the nationalistic developmental framework

As Chapter 1 alludes to, the paradigm of long-term development and self-reliance in and of host states—the developmental approach, the majority of which situated in the Global South, has become salient in the global responses to refugee predicaments post-Cold War. Amongst the three durable solutions, local integration and repatriation are promoted under the paradigm while resettlement became tightened and its importance underplayed. It is evident that humanitarian factors do not always occupy the centre of national as well as global responses to mass displacements. The politics of wealthier states' interests in containing migration flow from the crisis-ridden regions have also come into play in humanitarian and developmental policies and practices, which include supports and funding for education. Promoting access to education, higher education and job opportunities have become at the heart of the agenda of support for the host countries, especially in the wake of Europe's 2015-2016 "migration crisis". EU Trust Funds (EU Madad Fund), the EU-Lebanon Compact and EU-Jordan Compact signed in 2016 evidenced the expectation for the host countries to cope with refugees' long-term presence. As stated, EU's funding in various forms in response to the Syrian crisis is aimed to "foster socio-economic inclusion of refugees and increase their contribution to Jordan's/Lebanon's economic development".[80]

This section focuses on Lebanon and Jordan's national responses to Syrians' displacement 2011-2018 which also reflect the agenda of their funding partners and agencies. Focusing on the responses to refugees' needs of education and employment opportunities, the section will demonstrate that refugees' presence continues to be seen as temporary and

[80] EU Neighbourhood Policy Lebanon: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/lebanon_en; Jordan: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/jordan_en.

foreign, without a future in the host country. While education provision for refugees is at the heart of the self-reliance agenda, when it comes to their participation in the labour market, it is evident that refugees' futures are not included under the nationalistic framework of development. However, it is important to note that informal work is prevalent in both countries (Errighi and Griesse, 2016) and most of the refugees already turn to informal jobs for livelihood (Lenner and Turner, 2019). What follows focuses on the legal and political framework to emphasize the "vulnerable contexts" in which refugee students and graduates situate.

Both Lebanon and Jordan have picked up the assistance paradigm established previously during the Iraqi crisis. Instead of setting up parallel services, the UN and other relevant international agencies provide assistance through state institutions (Crisp *et al.*, 2009; Fagen, 2009b). While the first two years of the Syria Regional Response Plans (RRP) coordinating regional governments and international organizations focus on immediate refugee protection and needs, the Regional Response Plan in 2014 sets an emphasis on regional and national long-term developmental interventions.[81] Country specific plans had been initiated since 2015, namely Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP)[82] and Jordan Response Plan (JRP)[83]. These plans emphasize the role of national governments in leading the responses as well as the incorporation of the refugee response into long-term national development

[81] 2014. UNHCR. *Syria Regional Response Plan Strategic Overview.* [Online] [Accessed 1 April 2021] Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/syriarrp6/

[82] 2014. UN. *Lebanese People, "First Responders to Syrian Crisis, Now 'Stretched to the Limit', Says Deputy Secretary-General at Launch of Plan to Reinforce Stability."* [Online] [Accessed 2 April 2021] Available from: https://www.un.org/press/en/2014/dsgsm833.doc.htm

[83] 2015. Government of Jordan (MOIPC). *Jordan Response Plan for the Syrian Crisis 2015.* [Online] [Assessed 27 Jan 2021] Available from: https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/jordan-response-plan-2015-syria-crisis-march-2015-enar

plans. Nevertheless, when it comes to refugees' futures, the national agenda seems incongruous with the solution of long-term integration. For example, in the Regional Response Plans and post-2014's Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), a durable solution is mentioned solely in terms of return and resettlement to the third country. For the Government of Lebanon (GoL), it was made explicit that

> settlement/integration of non-Lebanese in Lebanon is prohibited by the Lebanese constitution. GoL's position is that a safe repatriation of displaced Syrians, beyond those who would have been resettled abroad, while abiding by the principle of non-refoulement, is the only durable solution for this crisis, and that conditions for such a safe repatriation can precede a political solution for the conflict in Syria.[84]

This position was confirmed by the EU-Lebanon Partnership Priorities agreed in 2016. Lebanon and the EU consider that "the only sustainable long term solution for refugees and displaced from Syria into Lebanon is their safe return to their country of origin, as conditions for such a return are met."[85] As for Jordan, in its Response Plans, access to third-country resettlement is part of the objective for refugee protection while other durable solutions are not mentioned. What follows will show that the plans and interventions based on the nationalistic framework, with the country's long-term development insight, do not expect a future where refugees also form part of host societies.

5.2.1 Jordan's response

Education is part Jordan's official priorities in response to Syrians' presence. The attention has been focused on school education while plans regarding higher education

[84] Government of Lebanon and the United Nations. 2015. *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-2016.* p.9 [Online] [Accessed 2 April 2021] Available from: http://www.lcrp.gov.lb/pdf/fullbrochure.pdf
[85] EU-Lebanon Association Council. 2016. Annex to the *Decision No 1/2016 of the EU-Lebanon Association Council agreeing on EU-Lebanon Partnership Priorities.* [Online] [Accessed 2 April 2021] Available from: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/11/15/eu-lebanon-partnership/

emerged later as external funding for HE and training programmes increased in 2015. The 2016 EU-Jordan Compact marks Jordan's first concrete attempt to integrate refugees into the labour market. However, the inclusion is restrictive to certain sectors as university graduates' prospects in relevant job opportunities remain unpromising. Jordan's response has prioritized its developmental needs rather than the meaningful inclusion of the displaced population.

Since the beginning of the crisis in 2011, with the assistance of UNICEF, Jordan has allowed Syrian children to access primary and secondary schools as it set up additional double-shift schools (MOPIC, 2013, p. 61).[86] Appendix 3 shows the increase in the number of schools and students of double shifts in both schools supervised by the Ministry of Education and UNRWA. It also shows that UNRWA had been running predominantly double-shift schools prior to the crisis. The required school fees for non-Jordanians are covered by donors with funds to the Ministry of Education.[87] Through these efforts, the enrolment rate had substantially increased for basic schooling (Grade 1-10) between 2014 and 2017.[88] Nevertheless, the increase for secondary schooling (Grade 11-12, "Tawjihi" years) was very small and this also reflected in the overall low participation in higher education (Tiltnes, Zhang and Pedersen, 2019). The 2017 survey data from Tiltnes, Zhang and Pedersen (2019) shows a stark contrast between higher education participation between Jordanian nationals and Syrian refugees—Figure 8 below is duplicated from their report.

[86] Jordanian schools had already suffered from over-crowding prior to the Syrian crisis and had about 7.6% of the country's students attending second shift in 2009 (MOPIC, 2013, p. 61).
[87] UNICEF. 2017. *Situation Analysis of Children in Jordan*. [Online] [Accessed 26 Jan 2021]. Available from: https://www.unicef.org/jordan/media/506/file
[88] Tiltnes, Zhang and Pedersen (2019) observe the increase: for example, in 2014, for children age 14 and 15 (lower-secondary), the enrolment rate was 49% and 22% respectively. The percentages had increased to 68% and 48% in 2019 (p. 80; Figure 32).

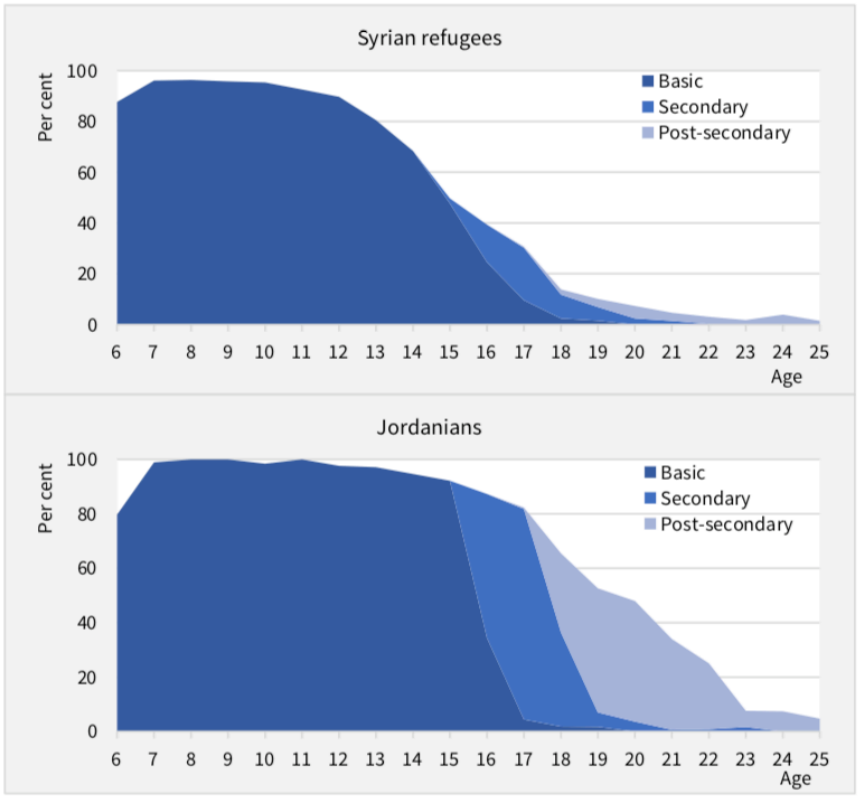


Figure 9 Percentage of individuals aged 6-25 in different levels of education

The upper graph is a survey result with Syrian refugees both urban and camp refugees in 2017 (Tiltnes, Zhang and Pedersen, 2019); the lower graph is a survey with Jordan nationals in three major governorates in 2014 (Stave and Hillesund, 2015). The graph is a duplicate of Figure 32 in Tiltnes, Zhang and Pedersen (2019)

While over 40% of Jordanians aged 19-20 attend higher education, only 3-5% percent of their Syrian counterparts are registered in higher education (Tiltnes, Zhang and Pedersen, 2019, p. 82). The data also show that while two-third of the refugee students are in private universities, one-thirds are in public universities; and 44% of the total refugee students receive a scholarship or grant (Tiltnes, Zhang and Pedersen, 2019, pp. 82-83).

The Jordanian government had not put an initial emphasis on higher education as it had for basic schooling. The 2013 government and UN's Needs Assessment Review which was to develop a three-year investment plan ("National Resilience Plan") had indicated the increased number of Syrians registered in Jordanian universities (MOPIC, 2013). However, the only policy in place prior to 2015 was permission for Syrian students to present their

equivalent high school certificate after admission (El-Ghali and Al-Hawamdeh, 2017). Syrian students also continue to be charged tuition at the international rate.

2015 marked the inflow of funds for scholarship programmes. The Jordanian government also included higher education in its Response Plan for 2015. Access to higher education is listed among the specific objectives under both "refugee responses" as well as "resilience responses" pertaining to the Education sector. The Plan includes the targets for 1,500 Syrian youth and 4000 Jordanian students to benefit from various higher education opportunities as well as the upgrading of universities as part of the Plan's resilience objectives.[89] The targeted opportunity provisions include scholarships, short-term diplomas and online learning programmes.[90] However, in terms of the livelihood sector, the Response Plans of 2015 and 2016 only mention employment opportunities for vulnerable Jordanians while Syrian refugees were included in objectives such as food access and food security.[91]

In 2016, after the London pledging conference, the government of Jordan and the EU adopted the Jordan Compact that focused on job creations for both Syrian refugees and Jordanians. [92] Supported by donors, the Compact aimed to turn the crisis into "a development opportunity". [93] Higher education, vocational training and entrepreneurship projects are

[89] MOPIC. 2014. *Jordan Response Plan 2015 for the Syria Crisis (17 December 2014),* p. 46, 111. [Online] [Assessed 27 Jan 2021] Available from: https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/jordan-response-plan-2015-syria-crisis-march-2015-enar
[90] Ibid. p. 46.
[91] MOPIC. 2015. *Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis 2016-2018, p. 88-91.* [Online] [Assessed 8 April 2021] Available from: https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/jordan-response-plan-syria-crisis-2016-2018
[92] Government of Jordan. 2016. *The Jordan Compact: A New Holistic Approach between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the International Community to deal with the Syrian Refugee Crisis.* [Online] [Assessed 27 Jan 2021] Available from: https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/jordan-compact-new-holistic-approach-between-hashemite-kingdom-jordan-and
[93] Ibid.

included in the Compact.[94] This partnership has demonstrated a clear framework under which higher education has been provided: a pathway for Jordan's development, future Syrian reconstruction in addition to refugees' "self-reliance" through entrepreneurship.

While Jordan has been known for its concrete steps of including refugees in the labour market, scholars are concerned about the scheme's ability to provide decent work and the negotiation process that excludes the participation of civil societies and refugees themselves (Lenner and Turner, 2019; Barbelet, Hagen-Zanker and Mansour-Ille, 2018). Indeed, the Compact has promised to issue work permits in specific sectors of agriculture and construction that are normally available to migrant workers or already taken by refugees informally (Lenner and Turner, 2019). Other employment opportunities that could better match university training are out of sight in this promise. While higher education continues to be within the government's Response Plan in the following years,[95] the barrier for accessing job opportunities in line with their education remains. While the crisis might be turned into a development opportunity for Jordan in negotiating trade agreements and developmental funding, it remains doubtful whether this national agenda includes the well-trained and educated refugees as part of the country's prospect.

5.2.2 Lebanon's response

[94] "ShamalStart" for instance was included in the Compact- a project that assists entrepreneurships for Syrian and Jordanian entrepreneurs. See European Commission. 2016. *EU-Jordan Partnership: the Compact* [Online] [Assessed 10 March 2021] Available from: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/jordan-compact.pdf MOPIC. 2016. *Jordan Response Plan for the Syria Crisis 2016-2018 (14 Jan 2016),* p. 46, 51. [Online] [Assessed 27 Jan 2021] Available from: http://www.jrp.gov.jo/Files/JRP2016.pdf

[95] The Response Plans in the following years up until 2020 have included higher education as part of the needs. Documents available from: http://www.jrp.gov.jo/index.html

As mentioned in Chapter 1, distinct from Jordan, Lebanon had a dense presence of NGOs prior to the Syrian crisis, and its education provision, higher education especially, is characterized by the dominance of private institutions. The government's laisser-faire approach to higher education created spaces for foreign governments, international agencies and NGOs to provide opportunities for refugee students. On the other hand, school education, especially primary education has been the highlight in the government's response to the crisis as prioritized by funding agencies. However, the adequacy and effectiveness of executing the educational funds have been questioned. While school education is being provided based on humanitarian grounds, livelihood and employment opportunities continued to be restrictive as the government assert the exclusion of refugees' future in the country.

In 2012, the Ministry for Education and Higher Education (MEHE) instructed all schools to enrol Syrian students regardless of their legal status and waive school fees.[96] The "Back to School" Campaign was initiated afterwards with the support of UNHCR, UNICEF and other agencies in the 2012/2013 school year. Responding to the unmet needs, private schools were also quickly set up filling in the provision void through community efforts and charity funds from abroad. For example, the "Insani" School (see Figure 9) was set up through Qatari funds at the beginning of the crisis, which was housing primary and secondary students until 2016 as funds were depleted and as the government had started to incorporate Syrians in formal schools.[97]

[96] UNHCR. 2013. *Syria Regional Response Plan.* p.111. [Online] [Accessed 2 April 2021] Available from: https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/syria-regional-response-plan-january-december-2013

[97] A detailed description of the school can be found in the local news clip: https://www.saidaonline.com/news.php?go=fullnews&newsid=58431



Figure 10 "Insani" school building

Concerning the formal schools' capacity, MEHE had prevented non-Lebanese students from registrating in public schools during 2014.[98] In the same year, the government announced the Reaching All Children with Education (RACE) campaign that aimed to provide "a framework for bringing the immediate emergency and longer term development efforts together".[99] The RACE campaign echoed the emphasis on national development in the country's Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) in 2015. The campaign—RACE I (2014-2016) and RACE II (2017-2021)—was set to work within the framework of the Education Sector Development Plan that includes equitable access, quality teaching and learning, institutional development. The plans concern refugees' access to the secondary level (Grade 10-12) while no mention was made of higher education.[100] The enrolment at the primary level (Grade 1-9) had

[98] Ibrahim Haider (2014) "We cannot accommodate 400,000 refugees in public schools, Bou Saab told Al-Nahar: 275,000 Lebanese students' registration is priority", Al-Nahar, 8 September 2014. Available at: https://newspaper.annahar.com/article/168707--لا-نستطيع-استيعاب-400-ألف-لاجئ-في-المدارس-الرسمية-بو-صعب-لالنهار-275-ألف-تلميذ

[99] Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). 2014. *Reaching All Children with Education in Lebanon RACE, P.2* [Accessed 3 February 2021] Available from: https://www.mehe.gov.lb/ar/Projects/التعليم%20العام/RACEfinalEnglish2.pdf

[100] Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). 2014. *Reaching All Children with Education in Lebanon RACE* [Accessed 3 February 2021]; MEHE. 2016. *Reaching All Children with Education in Lebanon RACE II (2017-*

increased over time according to the official data (See Appendix 4). However, the data for participation at the secondary level was consistently missing in earlier years, which had reflected the Ministry as well as donors' priorities (Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014). As shown in Figure 10 below, the recent data on Syrians' enrolment in public secondary schools showed little progress over the years, and illustrates a stark contrast if compared to the retainment trend of Lebanese students. Indeed, private institutions might have become the main providers for older Syrian students, especially for those who are pursuing secondary level (Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014). The delayed focus on secondary schooling and low retainment rate in public schools mean fewer would be able to reach tertiary level without financial means.

2021) [Accessed 3 February 2021] Available from: http://racepmulebanon.com/images/RACE-II_FINAL-Narrative_29AUG2016.pdf

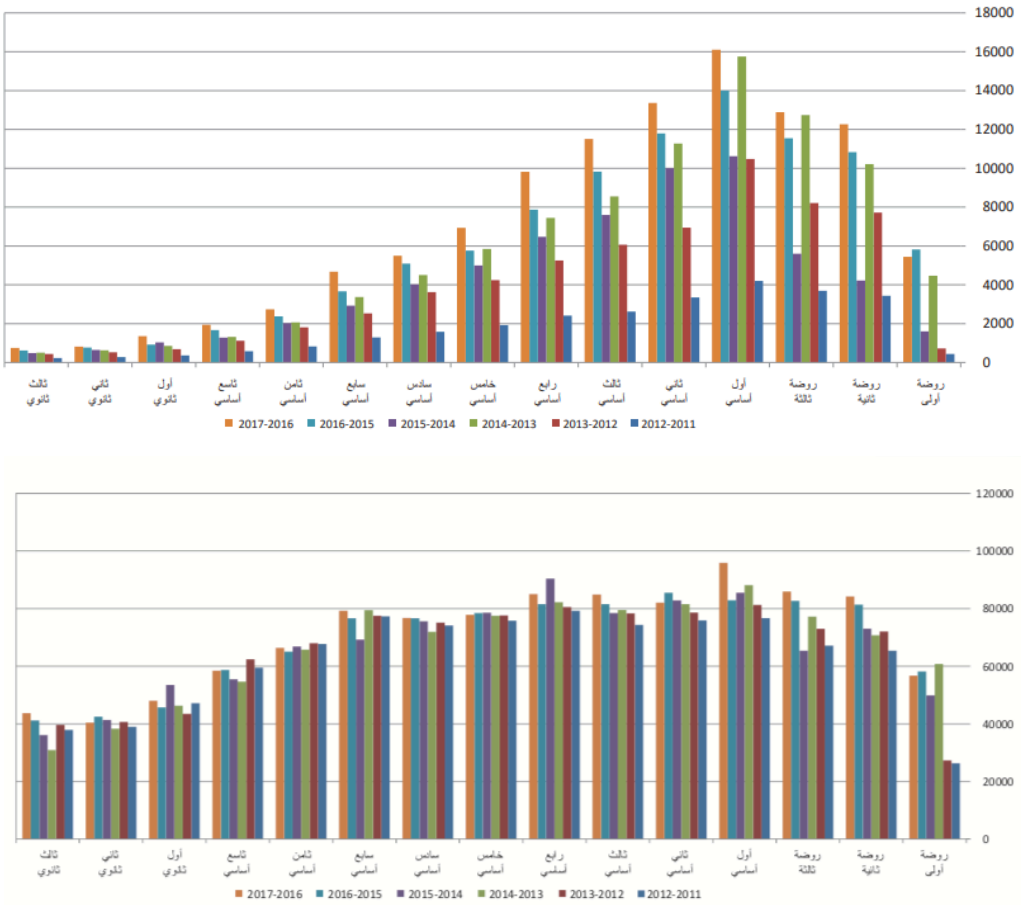


Figure 11 (Above) Numbers of Syrian students studying in Lebanese curriculum in the morning shift according to classes; (Below) Number of Lebanese students according to classes and years*

** (Above) (right to left: KG1-Grade 12) and years (bar colours; right to left 2011/2012-2016/2017). The three columns on the left are data for Grade 12, 11, 10. Graphs are copied from CRDP 2018. "*Schools in Lebanon: numbers and indicators*" (المدرسة في لبنان: أرقام ومؤشرات) p. 11 and 13. Available from: https://www.crdp.org/en/studies-and-researches/0-المدرسة-في-لبنان-أرقام-ومؤشرات*

In Brun and Shuyab's (2020) detailed analysis on RACE I and RACE II, they argue that while RACE II showed more emphasis on developmental approach such as curriculum revision, it continues to approach nationals and refugee populations as two distinct groups:

> Sustainable development such as curriculum reform and vocational education seemed to target the Lebanese population, while the focus on refugees was on improving enrolment and retention. In other words, development was for the Lebanese while a humanitarian response was the focus of refugee-targeted interventions (p. 26).

That is, the developmental approach, while aligned with major funders' framework, did not apply to the refugee population.

Moreover, lack of transparency in donors' reports as well as the inconsistency of enrolment information provided by national governments have been identified as an issue affecting the adequate delivery of aid (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Local Lebanese journalists have also investigated that the RACE program has inflated the number of Syrian students enrolled in schools (Dhaybi, 2020). In addition, there was also a discrepancy in the salary paid to teachers and hours of education recorded (Dhaybi, 2020).[101] In the report, a teacher says,

> Donors allocate $30 to each professor for each hour of instruction, while the ministry pays 18,000 Lebanese pounds per hour; this means that it does not exceed the value of $16. Also, there was often a great discrepancy between the number of hours of actual education and the number of the hours the ministry and schools administration record (as cited in Dhaybi, 2020).

Compared to the dominance of the Jordanian government in managing education provision for Syrians, there are no plans made for higher education except for vocational training on Lebanon's part. The autonomy enjoyed by the higher education institutions in Lebanon and the government's scant attention to the higher education sector has created space and opportunities for NGOs and UN actors to coordinate (Chopra, 2018). The major higher education programmes for Syrian refugees are listed in Section 5.3.1. Whether the government will take interest in the inflow of the funds and get more involved in the future remains uncertain (Chopra, 2018). For now, MEHE holds the authority to certify foreign students' baccalaureate certificates, which might have posed a barrier as students are officially required to present a valid residency permit.[102] However, the participants of this

[101] The original report "School of Sands" is reported by journalist Riad Kobaissi in Al-Jadeed TV: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bEZusgS4PM

[102] Ministry of Education and Higher Education, n.d. [Accessed 10 December 2020] Available from: https://www.mehe.gov.lb/en/Pages/Transactions/ForeignCurriculumDocs.aspx

project have varied experiences with the bureaucratic procedure, which has been arbitrary and changing.[103]

As for employment opportunities, which are of concern for university graduates, these have been unavailable in legal terms for displaced Syrians other than labour-intensive sectors such as construction and agriculture. The 2015 Lebanese Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) marks a shift of response in livelihood strategies from short-term income generation to long-term investment in infrastructure, environmental assets and equipment.[104] It was made clear that the priority for the livelihood plans is the Lebanese communities:

> Host communities and vulnerable Lebanese will be the primary target and the entry point of all livelihoods interventions, considering that employment clearly tops the needs of affected Lebanese. However, the sector will also address the needs of displaced populations, in conformity with the legal framework and the decrees of the Ministry of Labour which currently allows Syrian nationals to work in the sectors of agriculture, construction and cleaning.[105]

Other livelihood and career support such as skill training, internships, and apprenticeships, which would rely on partnered organizations, would be accessible for all groups. However, the Plan points out that for the displaced Syrians, "skills they will need upon potential post-conflict return will be prioritized, alongside a conflict-sensitive approach ensuring that competition with host communities is not exacerbated through such programmes."[106] The Response Plan confirmed the approach in which refugees are excluded from long-term national plans. For

[103] Wissam informed me, although the process (as of 2018) was strenuous, he was able to present UN registry paper instead of residency permit: The Syrian Baccalaureate certificate had to be certified in Syrian Foreign Ministry and the Syrian Embassy, then the Lebanese Foreign Ministry and finally the Ministry of Education. He was asked to present the residency permit at the Ministry of Education, "because we are registered with the UN, we show them the papers. They don't take the residency [permit], they take the UN paper with photo on it." However, Maram, attended the same institute and obtained the certificate, was unable to get her certification approved by MEHE as of 2021.
[104] Government of Lebanon and the United Nations. 2015. *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-2016.*
[105] Ibid. page 107.
[106] Ibid. page 108.

the Government, the inclusion of refugees in arenas other than the designated sectors would equate competition and conflicts and therefore any job-oriented resources such as skill training could only point to the future upon their return.

The approach of long-term investment and national development in response to the crisis was reiterated in the 2016 London pledging conference and supported by the EU. However, consistently, the access would be restricted to certain sectors, as documented in the 2016-2020 EU-Lebanon Compact:

> Lebanon commits to continue seeking, in conformity with Lebanese laws, […] with a view to easing their controlled access to the job market in sectors where they are not in direct competition with Lebanese, such as agriculture, construction and other labour intensive sectors.[107]

As such, the Compact affirmed the primacy of Lebanese sovereignty and labour laws (Fakhoury, 2021) and therefore maintained the position of restrictive access—if any formal inclusion—to the labour market for refugees. Instead of concrete issuing of work permits promised as in the Jordan Compact, the Lebanon Compact with the EU only led to "continue seeking ways to facilitate" refugees' inclusion. In practice, scholars have observed that such promises have turned out to be mere aspirational (Fakhoury, 2021). Within the restrictive sectors, until 2020, 95% of the employed Syrian refugees remain without permits.[108] The

[107] EU-Lebanon Association Council. 2016. EU-Lebanon Compact. Annex to the Partnership Priorities. [Online] [Accessed 2 April 2021] Available from: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/11/15/eu-lebanon-partnership/

[108] While in 2018, through ILO's advocacy, the Ministry of Labour simplified the process of granting work permits, but the costs remain unaffordable and it was unclear whether it would benefit refugees outside of the ILO's Employment-Intensive Investment Programmes (EIIPs). See ILO. 2018. *Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practices of ILO's Syria Crisis Response in Jordan and Lebanon.* [Online] [Accessed 7 April 2021] Available from: https://www.ilo.org/beirut/publications/WCMS_649484/lang--en/index.htm ILO and Fafo. 2020. *Impact of COVID-19 on Syrian refugees and host communities in Jordan and Lebanon.* [Online] [Accessed 7 April 2021] Available from: https://www.ilo.org/beirut/information-resources/factsheets/WCMS_749356/lang--en/index.htm

security forces had increased the crackdown on informal Syrian-owned shops or shops that employed Syrians[109] as some Lebanese politicians call for Syrians' return (Fakhoury, 2021).

While refugees continue to participate in the labour market informally, Lebanon's consistent exclusion of the displaced populations by law has been clear. Refugees have not been and will not be part of the visions of the nation's future, regardless of negotiation and developmental assistance offered to facilitate their inclusion. While education access is maintained on the basis of humanitarianism, with students being denied civic and employment rights, retention rates and secondary school enrolment will remain challenging. Indeed, as Shuayb and Hammoud (2020) suggest in an op-ed on their longitudinal study on Syrian Children in Lebanon, "Schooling must always have a long-term purpose and most importantly be linked to rights of participation in the workforce and society; otherwise, it remains at best, a literacy programme."

With different levels of involvement in refugees' education, higher education and livelihoods, both countries have engaged with the "developmental approach" to the Syrians' displacement through negotiating and planning for the developmental funds. However, the nationalistic agenda continues to exclude refugees in its future as repatriation and third country resettlement are expected to be the only meaningful long-term solutions. Resettlement, however, remains very limited in scope —less than 5 percent of those considered in need by UNHCR were resettled.[110] The 2018 Global Compact on Refugees

[109] My participants resided in Saida region informed me about the crackdown in winter 2018—see chapter 6. As the news clip documented: Michal Kranz. 2018. *Lebanese security forces crackdown on Syrians as pressure builds on refugees to return.* https://english.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2018/11/21/lebanese-security-forces-crackdown-on-syrian-refugees

[110] UNHCR. 2019. *Less than 5 per cent of global refugee resettlement needs met last year.* [Online] [Accessed 16 Oct 2021] Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2019/2/5c6bc9704/5-cent-global-refugee-resettlement-needs-met-year.html

promotes a similar approach of burden-sharing concerning livelihoods as demonstrated in EU Compacts with Lebanon and Jordan: that States and relevant stakeholders "in support of host countries and subject to relevant national laws and policies" will contribute resources and expertise to "promote economic opportunities, decent work, job creation and entrepreneurship programmes for host community members and refugees." This could be done through instruments such as preferential trade arrangements and infrastructure investments.[111] Under the current global framework, national agendas would continue to lead the responses to the protracted refugee situation as the displaced students continue to struggle and negotiate their presence and future in the host countries.

5.3 Programmes on the ground: constraints and responses

Higher education provision that emerged post-2015 partially reflects the geopolitical concern of "irregular" migration as discussed in Chapter 1 and above. While some students are able to access university programmes, the future after graduation is legally constrained under the nationalistic developmental approach. The schism between education inclusion and exclusion of labour participation manifests in how scholarship programmes operate as well as the students' accounts about them. Student organizations and other community efforts emerge in responding to the gaps and constraints under the current framework of provision. This section elaborates the challenges and responses on the ground that reflect the overarching issues at the policy levels: the periodical, crisis-to-crisis funding, place-bound and "open future", and HE for academically highly achieving meritorious youths. In the following

[111] UNGA. 2018. *The global compact on refugees.* [Online] [Accessed 9 April 2021] Available from: https://www.unhcr.org/protection/resettlement/5d15db254/three-year-strategy-resettlement-complementary-pathways.html#_ga=2.203312081.1726406015.1617966924-1323732001.1617966924

three subsections, I analyse the constraints with examples of existing scholarship programmes. The analyses are connected with the students' accounts, their initiatives and other NGO projects I encountered that were responding to these constraints.

5.3.1 Periodical funds

To observe the ebb and flow of funds for higher education in the region, this section analyses specific scholarship programmes' initiation, funding sources and number of funded students. Among the available scholarship programmes, the development of UNHCR's DAFI programme through the Iraqi and Syrian crisis witnesses the funding that attends to certain crises as opportunities become unavailable for other disadvantaged groups. In Lebanon and Jordan, the periodic nature of funding and its uncertainty are also felt by the students relying on scholarships.

UNHCR's German-funded DAFI program has run its operation in Syria since 1999, funding less than 8 refugees per year from Iraq, Somalia and Yemen.[112] As the Iraqi crisis made more visible post-2003, the inflow of funds through the UNHCR-UNICEF joint appeal between 2006 and 2007 —"a special intervention"— increases the scholarship provision in Syria. The operation in Jordan also starts as a result of another special intervention by the German Government initiating Iraqi refugees' higher education access.[113] According to DAFI's records, the graph below (Figure 11) demonstrates the changes in the numbers of funded students over the years.[114] The number of funded Iraqi students dwindled in Jordan in 2014 as funds

[112] Claas Morlang and Sheri Watson. 2007. *Tertiary refugee education impact and achievements: 15 years of DAFI*.
[113] UNHCR. 2007. *Annual Report on the DAFI Programme.*
[114] The data are gathered from UNHCR, *DAFI Annual Report* 2007 through 2019 and Claas Morlang and Sheri Watson (2007)'s *Tertiary refugee education impact and achievements: 15 years of DAFI*. Available online.

dedicated to Syrian refugees emerged. As the second graph demonstrates, in 2013, relying on the additional contribution of the German government, DAFI began its support for Syrian refugee students as they looked for additional sources of funding.[115] In 2014, Säid Foundation as a new funding source joined the programme with a multi-year contribution to Syrian refugees as DAFI set up its operation in Lebanon for the first time.[116] In 2016, more sources of funding (a tripartite agreement between the Asfari Foundation, the Hands Up Foundation and the Saïd Foundation) joined the contribution as funded Syrian students tripled. Whilst there was an increase in funding for Syrian students, fewer refugees of other nationalities were funded. DAFI states in its 2016 report that "in Jordan and Turkey, refugees from countries other than Syria have very limited opportunities to access scholarships, mainly due to the earmarking of funding to Syrians" (p. 41).[117] The fact that some more Iraqi refugees receive funds again after 2017 also shows that demands for higher education have always been there while funds are periodic and subject to agencies' and funders' reactions to crises.

[115] UNHCR. 2013. *DAFI Annual Report.*
[116] UNHCR. 2014. *DAFI Annual Report.*
[117] UNHCR. 2016. *DAFI Annual Report*

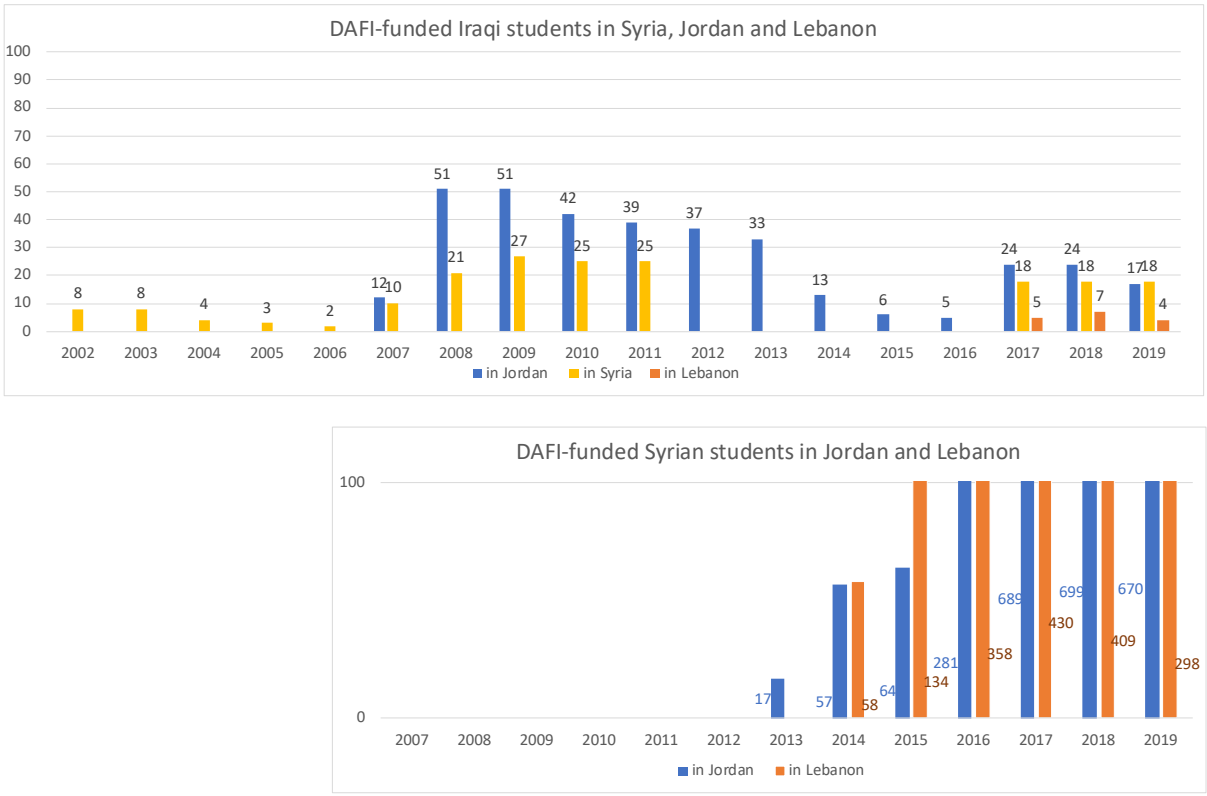


Figure 12 (Above) Number of DAFI-funded Iraqi students in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon; (Below) DAFI-funded Syrian students in Jordan and Lebanon.

2015-2016 also witnessed the emergence and expansion of other higher education programmes with funding dedicated to the Syrian crisis. Table 3 below compiles a list of major programmes providing higher education scholarships for Syrian students in Lebanon and Jordan. Other than formal higher education scholarships, various training programmes, language courses, scholarships for vocational studies as well as entrepreneurship programmes also emerged during the same period. Chapter 6 includes some of the individual students' experiences in attending these non-formal educational programmes.

Table 3 [118] ***Major scholarship programmes for Syrian students in Lebanon and Jordan***

Programmes **in Lebanon**	Year/ since	Funding sources	Target group	Number of scholarships
UNHCR DAFI	2014	German government; Saïd Foundation (2014-); Asfari Foundation; the Hands Up Foundation (2016-)	18-28; refugee populations (Syrian, Iraqi)	[2014] 58 [2015] 134 [2016] 358 [2017] 430 [2018] 409 [2019] 298
SPARK "Higher Education for Syrians" (HES, later "Higher Education Services")	2015	Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2015-2019); EU Madad Fund (2016-2019); Qatari Al-Fakhoora Foundation (2016-2022)	17-25/ 18-28; Syrian, Palestinian, and local youth	(regional total, including TVET)[119] [2015] 1517 [2016] 3148 [2017] 2014 [2018] 2203 [2019] 1356
Lebanese Association for Scientific Research (LASeR) "Scholarships for Syrian Students"	2013	Multiple local/regional and international funders	18-30 Syrians, Palestinian from Syria (PRS), Lebanese	[2013-2019] 725[120]
German Academic Exchange (DAAD) "HOPES"	2016	EU Madad Fund (2016-2019)	Syrian, and local youth	235[121]
Arab Open University	2017-2019	Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences	18-32 Syrians	100-125
MEPI "Tomorrow's Leaders" Scholarship for Syrians	2013	USAID	17-20 Syrians	25 (varies each year)
Mastercard Foundation-AUB	2016	Mastercard Foundation	18-25 Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian	90 for over 9 years[122]
Jusoor	2014-2017	Syrian and international donors, including the Asfari Foundation	Syrian and PRS	49
Programmes **in Jordan**	Year/ since	Funding sources	Target group	Number of scholarships
UNHCR DAFI	2013	German government; Saïd Foundation (2014-); Asfari Foundation; the Hands Up Foundation (2016-)	18-28; refugee populations (Syrian, Iraqi)	[2013] 17 [2014] 57 [2015] 64 [2016] 281 [2017] 689 [2018] 699 [2019] 670

[118] Information gathered through fieldwork as well as Chopra (2018), El-Ghali, Berjaoui and Deknight (2017) and Lorisika, Cremonini and Safar Jalani (2015) if not specifically noted.
[119] SPARK, Annual Reports 2015-2019 [Online] [Accessed 10 February 2021] Available from: https://spark.ngo/annual-reports/
[120] LASeR also negotiates tuitions and provides loans: https://laser-lb.org/en/statistics/
[121] European Commission, "Results: 8. Number of youths, adolescents and adults accessing higher education with EUTF support" Disaggregation by country: Lebanon. Available from: https://eutf-syria.akvoapp.org/en/project/7814/#results
[122] The programme aims to provide 180 scholarships over 9 year, half of the students to be from Africa and half from Lebanon, Syrian refugees (33%) underprivileged Lebanese and Palestinians (66%) (El-Ghali, Berjaoui and Deknight, 2017).

EDU-Syria	2015	EU Madad Fund EDU I (4 million) (2015-2019) EDU II (11 million) (2016-2019) EDU II additional (2.6 million) (2019-2023) [123] EDU III (15 million) (2020-)	18-28 Syrian, Jordanian	[EDU I] 400 [EDU II] 1000 [additional] 200[124] [EDU III] 2245[125]
German Academic Exchange (DAAD) "HOPES" (focused on access to master programs)	2016 -2020	EU Madad Fund (2016-2020)	Syrian, and local youth	115[126]

Dutch NGO SPARK is among the largest scholarship providers in the region. While SPARK operated scholarship programmes for Syrian students in Turkey and Syria since 2013 in response to the crisis, its Higher Education for Syrian programme (HES, later "Higher Education Services") began in 2015 as offices in Lebanon and Jordan were set up. In 2016, the programmes scaled up with the incoming funds of Qatari Al-Fakhoora Foundation and the European Union's Regional Trust Fund (EU Madad Fund).[127] EU Madad Fund for SPARK was planned to provide scholarships to 2,100 Syrian and limited local youth in Syria, Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Turkey and Lebanon over 40 months between 2016-2019.[128] As the project terminated in 2019, the number of funded students also reduced. In its 2019 report, SPARK also states its shift of focus to access to jobs as students finalized their studies. In 2016 when its higher education programme was expanding, the majority of the students enrolled in short-

[123] European Commission. "Vocational Education and Training & Higher Education Programme for vulnerable Syrian youth" and "EDU-SYRIA II – Additional Scholarships" Available from: https://eutf-syria.akvoapp.org/en/project/7887/; https://eutf-syria.akvoapp.org/en/project/8224/
[124] "EDU-SYRIA receives 2.6 million euro grant from EU". Available from: https://edu-syria.eu/edu-syria-receives-2-7-million-euro-grant-from-eu/
[125] https://edu-syria.eu/about/
[126] European Commission, "Results: 8. Number of youths, adolescents and adults accessing higher education with EUTF support" Disaggregation by country: Jordan. https://eutf-syria.akvoapp.org/en/project/7814/#results
[127] SPARK. 2015. *SPARK Annual Report.* [Online] [Accessed 10 February 2021] Available from: https://spark.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/SPARK_Annual-Report_2015-small.pdf
[128] European Commission. "Access to Higher Education for Syrian Refugees and IDP's to prepare for post-conflict Reconstruction of Syria and Integration in Host Communities" [Online] [Accessed 11 February 2021] Available from:https://eutf-syria.akvoapp.org/en/project/7873/#report

term courses (1715) and bachelor programmes (1016), only 18 in technical and vocational education (TVET)[129]; in 2019, SPARK's new scholarship opportunities are "in fields linked to the local labour market demands, predominantly TVET degrees."[130]

This uncertain aspect of funding was also felt by the students. In a conversation with two scholarship students in Lebanon, they had a few exchanges about when the scholarship would end. Sarah, who just started her second year of university at the time of the meeting in 2018, expressed her worry about not being able to finish by 2020: "The good students will graduate by 2020, but people who with difficulty in English will have to do one more year. And we are not sure whether they will be with us in 2021." Her colleague Yasmeen told her:

> Y: Now they have stopped, they have stopped taking new students.
> S: I heard that the funding is not fine.
> Y: It's until 2020, if I don't finish until then, it's over, I have to continue on my own.
> S: But they told me there's the possibility. Are you sure?
> Y: Until 2020 that's it.
> S: It will be finished? Sure?
> Me: So it's only for four years.
> S: What 4 years... we started in 2017…
> Y: My friend, from when I started, sure it's 4 years.
> S: For me, it's 3. Yah…I will not finish. I will not finish by 2020.
> Y: For you, I don't know, this is what they told me, the day I signed the contract.

A few moments later, Sarah reiterated her previous knowledge about the program: "They said by 2020 the program will be closed…but it's 50% chance, not sure yet, no." Yasmeen repeated that she was sure about it: "They told me it's until 2020 and it's sure. They told me 'finish before [it stops]!'" (19 November 2018)

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[129] SPARK. 2016. *SPARK Annual Report.* p. 42. [Online] [Accessed 11 February 2021] Avaliale from: https://spark.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/SPARK_Annual-Report_2016_incl-accountants-report-1.pdf
[130] SPARK. 2019. *SPARK Annual Report.* p. 16. [Online] [Accessed 11 February 2021] Avaliale from: https://spark.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/SPARK-Annual-Report-2019-with-auditor-opinion.pdf

In Jordan, EDU-Syria has become part of the Jordanian government's Response Plan[131], and is one of the major scholarship providers in Jordan. Starting in 2015, the first grant from the EU ("EDU-I") enabled around 400 students, both disadvantaged Jordanians and Syrian refugees targeting those whose education got interrupted. The second phase of the programme ("EDU-II") expanded three folds and shifted its focus onto those who were upcoming in the educational ladder in Jordan—those who passed high school exams and seeking opportunities forward.

In an interview with a student group organizer in Jordan in Spring 2019, he told me about students' frustration over the limited number of the scholarship available while applicants are many:

> […] They are disappointed. The last intake of DAFI this year, basically, the applicants are many many. They didn't take anyone besides a small number. EDU-Syria also went back, the last semester, 1600 were registered, they accepted 105 students. They rejected 1500. So, the problem is the number is very few. The scholarship opened in a month, 1.5 months, they registered, they went, they prepared their papers to register, 1600 went, and in the end, they accepted 100 students, it's nothing. […]. This disappointment made them…They became upset. They started to tell me…I was defending the scholarship: [I told them that] there's no funding, as what they told us, there's no funding, there's no support now. There was a meeting in Brussel for EDU-Syria to open EDU-Syria III.[132] They will open III. […] The students from all these universities went [to the meeting], and alhamdulillah, there's funding. In the new year inshallah EDU-Syria III will open, and they said with a large number, I don't know. (Interview, 6th April 2019)

He not only expressed students' frustration over the limited number of scholarships, but also a sense of uncertainty as well as hope for the expansion of the programme relying on the EU funding. Although the funding continues onto the next period, the phase-by-phase grants

[131] http://www.jrpsc.org.jo/test/SearchOnline/EnglishViewPage.aspx?id=2504
[132] EDU-Syria programme participates the Brussel III Conference on "Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region" on 12-14 March: https://edu-syria.eu/edu-syria-participates-in-the-third-brussels-conference-on-supporting-the-future-of-syria-and-the-region/

have also created uncertainty amongst the students who were seeking the already very limited opportunities.

Also supported by the EU-Madad fund, the scholarship programme "HOPES" started in 2016 had already phased out at the end of 2019, waiting to be extended. The scholarship manager in Jordan informed me that, since the project would end by 2019, for the third and final intake of applicants, they could only allow for master students who have one year left in their studies to apply for scholarship support. When I asked whether the fund would end, the manager told me,

> It has to be extended, and there's a high possibility that in April-May, it will be extended, but as of now, it's uncertain. (25 Feb 2019)

While the programme was extended for another eight months until August 2020, it was eventually shifted to focus on Lebanon as EDU-Syria became the main scholarship programme in Jordan.

Other scholarship programmes have also stopped in full funds for students from start to finish. Jusoor Scholarships in Lebanon for instance, after the initial three years of operation, have switched the provision to a hardship fund for students who are already in higher education institutions. Kuwaiti Fund for bachelor programs in the Arab Open University has also stopped after two cohorts of fully funded students.

Scholarships for higher education offer opportunities for refugee students that often signify a long-term vision and is officially part of elements contributing to "durable solutions". Nevertheless, if observed over time, the pattern of scholarship funds seems to tell a contradictory story of uncertainty and short-term periodical provision vis-à-vis the long-term futures of a generation in exile.

5.3.2 Place-bound and open futures

The dominant framework for refugee solutions that puts emphasis on repatriation and local integration has been reflected in how scholarship programmes convey their expectations about students' futures. The developmental agenda to keep migrants and refugees in their place similarly bears the underlying assumption of sedentary life as a good life (Bakewell, 2008a). This section elaborates the constraints of the expectations of "geographically-bound" futures (Chopra, 2018) while also witnessing the struggles and responses from students and scholarships actors. Under the circumstances of restricted job opportunities and the increasingly protracted nature of Syrians' displacement, the talks of the future continue among the educational programmes on the ground. While place-bound futures of return and employment in the host countries continue to occupy the agenda of funders, talks of innovative, entrepreneur's "open" futures also emerge as a strategic way to maintain imaginations and hopes for the students.

The future that is implied, encouraged and facilitated by the scholarship programmes, academic or vocational, points to futures of local integration and the eventual refugees' return to Syria. On the other hand, resettlement in the third country is de-emphasized if not avoided in the objectives of these programmes. These expectations sometimes are explicitly conveyed or implemented through scholarship conditions. For example, the title of the project funded by EU's Madad Fund to the Dutch NGO SPARK states the expectations explicitly: "Access to Higher Education for Syrian Refugees and IDP's to prepare for post-conflict Reconstruction of Syria and Integration in Host Communities". Chopra's (2018) research on scholarships conditions in Lebanon evidences how scholarships restrict students' tendency to move abroad.

The restriction was implemented through, for example, channelling awards through universities and the sponsorship agreement that prohibits awardees from applying for resettlement programme. While not all of the students I encountered wish to go abroad, continuing education abroad, working abroad and resettlement with their families are mostly mentioned when future prospects were discussed. Students' desire to travel is elaborated in detail in 7.3.1.

With these expectations, displacement was treated as a rather short-term crisis and its temporariness is often assumed as funders and scholarship programmes began providing educational opportunities so there would be a "No Lost Generation".[133] The discourse of return, of future reconstruction of Syria, runs deep in the majority of the scholarship and educational provision in both countries. The expectation of students' eventual return is evidenced in not only scholarships' slogans and public addresses but also admissions conditions and the opportunities provided.

Chopra (2018) elaborates how scholarship programmes' selection processes, including interview questions and clauses in scholarship contracts, signify that "a suitable and worthy candidate" is "one who would not migrate onward to Europe, study in Lebanon, and become a capable and well-educated Syrian, willing to eventually return to Syria" (p. 113). Chopra uses DAFI scholarship's application as an example in which the questions such as "how you imagine your selection of majors will contribute to the reconstruction and development of your country of origin" were asked (as cited in Chopra, 2018, p. 113). During my fieldwork, as shown

[133] UNICEF's initiative of "No Lost Generation" (see https://www.nolostgeneration.org) was echoed by projects of higher education provision: for example, https://eutf-syria.akvoapp.org/en/project/7887/#report and https://spark.ngo/interventions-for-education-and-employment-in-syria/

below in Figure 12, high schooler Wahi showed me the essay questions of the USAID-funded MEPI "Tomorrow's Leaders" scholarship application she was working on. Besides the three standard questions for all applicants on how one would envision playing a leadership role and one's future plans, there were three additional questions for Syrian applicants:

1) If selected for the Tomorrow's Leaders scholarship, how would you hope to use your education to the development of democratic Syria?
2) How would this educational opportunity contribute to your ability to become a future leader in Syria?
3) If you are not residing now in Syria, please describe below when you left Syria, where you went, and where you have been doing since leaving Syria.

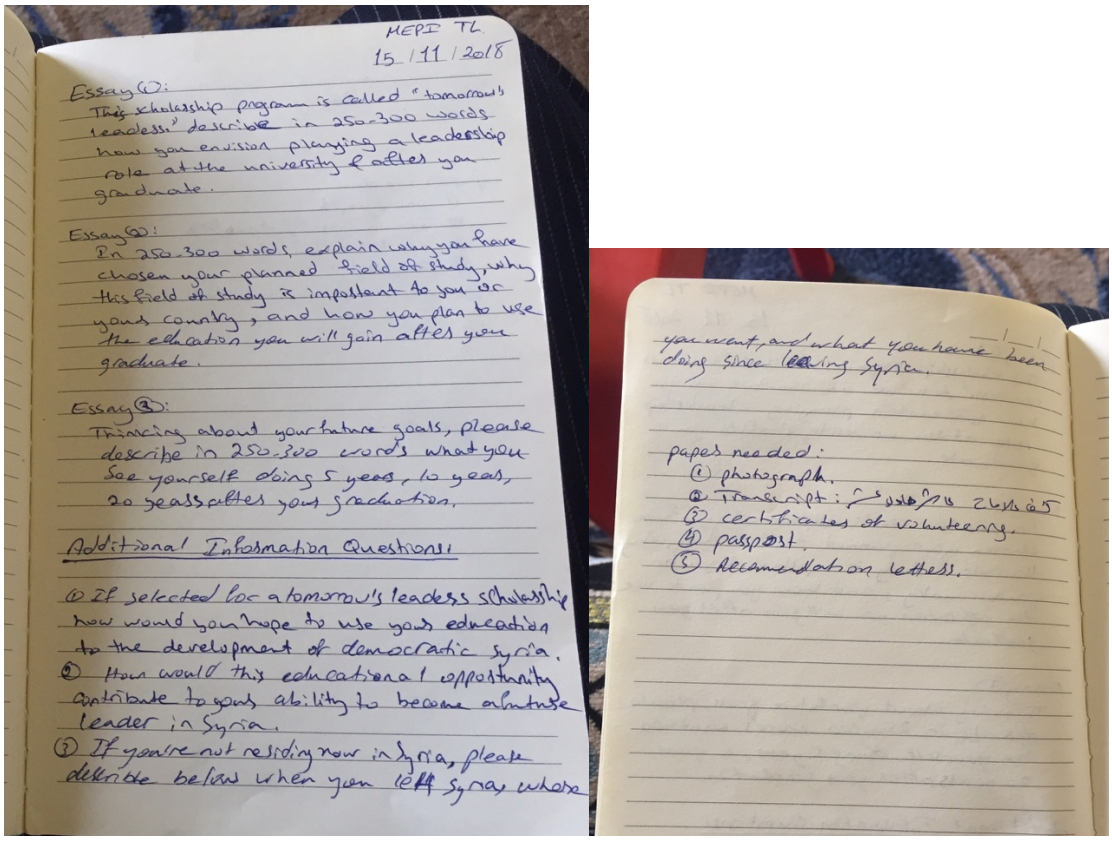
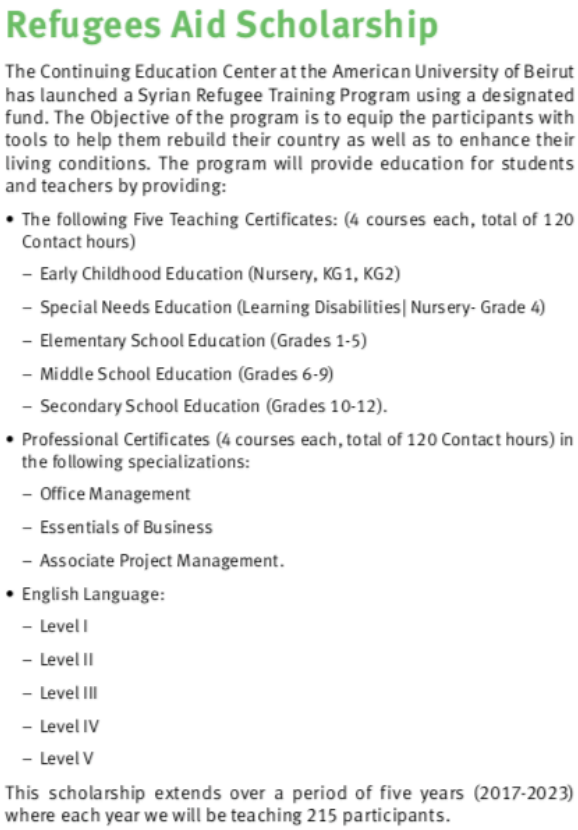


Figure 13 Wahi's notes on the essay questions and requirement documents for the scholarship application

An educational training progamme at the Continuing Education Centre at the American University of Beirut (see Figure 13 below) offers training that are designed with the need of post-war reconstruction in mind. The courses ranged from school teaching to project and business management:



Refugees Aid Scholarship

The Continuing Education Center at the American University of Beirut has launched a Syrian Refugee Training Program using a designated fund. The Objective of the program is to equip the participants with tools to help them rebuild their country as well as to enhance their living conditions. The program will provide education for students and teachers by providing:

- The following Five Teaching Certificates: (4 courses each, total of 120 Contact hours)
  - Early Childhood Education (Nursery, KG1, KG2)
  - Special Needs Education (Learning Disabilities| Nursery- Grade 4)
  - Elementary School Education (Grades 1-5)
  - Middle School Education (Grades 6-9)
  - Secondary School Education (Grades 10-12).
- Professional Certificates (4 courses each, total of 120 Contact hours) in the following specializations:
  - Office Management
  - Essentials of Business
  - Associate Project Management.
- English Language:
  - Level I
  - Level II
  - Level III
  - Level IV
  - Level V

This scholarship extends over a period of five years (2017-2023) where each year we will be teaching 215 participants.

Figure 14 A screenshot of the online catalogue of the training programmes provided by the American University of Beirut's Continuing Education Center.

A student organizer in Jordan also told me as I asked his opinion on the discourse of return and reconstruction of Syria:

> They say this a lot…engineers, it needs engineers, the scholarship once had the intake of 300 students. […] The major that was taken the most was Engineering. Why Engineering? They said it's because to build Syria.

At the school level, some educational programmes offer Identity Education as an extra curriculum. One programme manager informed me that they teach students about Syria's geography, histories and diversity in their programmes. For example, they also teach about famous Syrians, "There are astronauts, writers, musicians, artists, …not that Syria is about war […] The aim is for them to be proud of their country, and hopefully go back and rebuild it."

Nevertheless, at the time of my fieldwork (2018-2019) the crisis had gone on over 7 years and the displacement did not seem to have an end. Educational and scholarship programmes had also realised the crisis' protracted nature. A scholarship officer in Jordan sighed,

> The scholarship is to prepare them to gain the knowledge and skills that would allow them to contribute to rebuilding Syria in the post-war era... but now …

Another manager at a programme offering secondary school courses targeting Baccalaureate exams in Lebanon also commented,

> At the beginning of the crisis, our goal was [offering] education for Syrian refugees and returning them to their countries, because the future of the Syrian students is in Syria, not anywhere else in the world. We didn't think that the crisis will continue until this day.

While university studies continue to be understood and promoted as a future-oriented project, for the displaced students in Lebanon and Jordan, the future immediately after graduation is often unpromising for its prospects of employment and continuation of education. Without rights to work in various professions, students face a similar reality prior to their education. Bleak prospects have been flagged up by the scholarship programmes and were evidenced in the accounts of the students themselves. DAFI, for example, in its 2017 annual report, states: "Refugees do not have the right to work in Jordan outside the industries of construction, agriculture, manufacturing and hospitality. As a consequence, DAFI graduates often continue their voluntary work at NGOs, for which they receive monthly allowances for transport and communication."[134] In Lebanon, a similar situation is faced by the students, for most of the graduates, only informal jobs in areas such as construction and hospitality are available. Unemployment, as mentioned earlier, is pervasive also among the local young people.

[134] UNHCR. 2017. *DAFI 2017 Annual Report*.

However, the legal restrictions that directly curtail the opportunities show the contradiction in the supposedly "developmental" approach to refugees' higher education.

Seeking solutions to high unemployment among the refugee population as the displacement became protracted, the educational funders emphasize technical and vocational training, short-term job-oriented diploma and skill courses. Being one of the major funders for higher educational opportunities in Lebanon and Jordan, EU Madad Fund (See Table 3 above) includes vocational education and training as part of the higher educational packages in all of its associated programmes, including SPARK, EDU-Syria and HOPES.[135] "Improved employability prospects" therefore is included as an indicator defining programmes' results.[136] These programmes provide diploma courses ranging from electronic engineering, hospitality and tourism to teaching certificates and project management in universities and colleges.

Other smaller-scale skill training provisions are also prevalent at the time of my fieldwork. As observed, most of my participants have attended or discussed short-term courses such as English languages and computer skills, or projects specifically for the goal of enhancing employability such as CV writing and entrepreneurship programmes. For some, these programmes have become a source of household income. While they both did not own a PC or laptop, Rima and her neighbour were participating in a basic computer course that was designated to provide youth (18-32) IT skills and improve livelihood.[137] As shown in Figure

[135] Respectively, https://eutf-syria.akvoapp.org/en/project/7873/#report; https://eutf-syria.akvoapp.org/en/project/7887/#report; https://eutf-syria.akvoapp.org/en/project/7814/#report
[136] Ibid.
[137] World Food Programme. EMPACT (previously "Tech for Food"): https://innovation.wfp.org/project/empact

13, the programme provides compensation for transport: 5000 L.L (about $3) each hour of attendance. Rima counted and told me that she would be able to have 150 dollars for a month as part of the family income while her husband was without a job. While not negating the value of these courses, my participants have strategized these opportunities as additional financial support for their family as employment opportunities remain informal and the income unstable.



Figure 15 (Left) Rima showed me the advertisement for the English and Computer courses. (Right) The textbook provided in the computer course.

While various kinds of training programmes for refugee young people seem to emphasise their lack of employable skills, students' accounts on their own future demonstrate the limit of this assumption. A scholarship graduate in Jordan commented on his previous and current employment condition:

> First thing, to be honest, we were just working in something usual [we were just workers], we worked in something like clothing. The wage was little. Now one's ambition became a bit higher. One is crashed into reality. There's no work opportunity guaranteed, as the result of the circumstances, the economy, the

> conditions of the country. The priority is for the citizens of the country…we are aware of this.

While the students can be trained, the reality of unequal access to job opportunities in the country remains. The prospects of scholarship graduates' job opportunities are on the agenda of scholarship programmes both in Lebanon and Jordan. While in Lebanon, some scholarship programmes shift focus onto job creation through entrepreneurship, skill training and internships[138], in Jordan, some dialogues had been initiated to connect students to jobs in Jordan and abroad through the EU and International Labour Organization prior to 2019.[139] However, these efforts have not broken the impasse.

While in Jordan, some graduates were able to acquire work permits through their employers, the cases were rare. As Jordan actively engages with its European funders and centralized its approach to Syrian's educational and job access, students and graduates were well aware of the potential role of funders in facilitating access to the job market in the country. Some placed their hope on these funding institutions:

> Job opportunities are difficult here. Of course, I will try or if there's an opportunity to work abroad. We are communicating with them [the scholarship programme]. They as European Union, as an international authority it might be stronger than us as individuals [to find jobs]. For us, looking for a job opportunity abroad is difficult. Especially we Syrians, you know that, as what they said, we became having a sign on us. When we are supported by the official establishment, there will be better job opportunities. For example, they have sectors they were supervising, maybe they could employ us there until the situation becomes better. And then we are able to return to the country with new ideas. We return to the country to stand, as what they say, on our feet again.

[138] For example: SPARK. 2019 Annual Report. https://spark.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/SPARK-Annual-Report-2019-with-auditor-opinion.pdf

[139] For example: EU-funded EDU-Syria in collaboration with ILO. In "*My Story*" p. 68. Available from: https://edu-syria.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/MY-STORY-BOOK-EDU_SYRIA-Scholarship-program.pdf

As advertised on the educational programmes for refugees, graduates and students alike were told to try, to get trained, to do an internship, to increase one's capabilities so to increase one's employability. However, as long as the host countries' approach to refugees' inclusion and integration remain the same and pathways to resettle or to gain education and employment opportunities abroad remain constrained, the struggle for a meaningful and sustainable future would continue.

Amidst such struggle, the decontextualized, neoliberal "open future" was invoked—the discourse of "anything is possible as long as one works hard" emerges in students' accounts and is conveyed through various types of training programmes. Adam in Lebanon commented on the tuition options among the universities. The reason why he ended up choosing a private university over the only public university was that the private university allows several instalments and delayed payments prior to graduation, whereas the public university instead requires one-off payment without delays. The university he enrolled in also offered tuition deductions as financial support for students in need. His major costs $9000 for 4 years, which is half of the original amount of $18,000: "Sometimes I pay $500, it's fine. Just in the end, if I want the certificate, I have to pay it all." As we discussed his financial load and his irregular income working for different NGOs, he said, "Even it's 100% off I want to work, what is a life without any challenge?" "I want to work, work toward success."

As the protraction of Syrians' displacement becomes ever more apparent, some scholarship programmes are shifting their approach and expectation of refugees' futures: as above mentioned, programmes in Jordan had to begin liaising with other organizations to promote scholarship graduates' employment prospects, while others tend to promote

training of entrepreneurship and innovation that are for any future possibilities. As a scholarship officer in Lebanon described the shift of expectations:

> Firstly, the program was aimed to provide higher education opportunities so the refugee could return and rebuild, but in recent years, since the war prolonged, we started to focus on providing opportunities and skills so that they can work anywhere wherever they are.

In continuing to produce and sustain hopes for futures, the scholarship programmes take the approach of continuing to offer opportunities expecting students would benefit and carve out their own futures regardless of the very challenging circumstances. The idea of "so they can work wherever they are" echoes Dryden-Peterson (2017)'s emphasis on education's portability and the provision of it would prepare students for "unknowable futures". Nevertheless, I see this shift of emphasizing an open future full of potentiality a strategy utilized by the scholarship programmes and the students alike. A strategy emerged from the need to maintain hopes—of students and funders—while facing very challenging circumstances and limited prospects. While the political aspects of exclusion remain unchallenged, educated and skilful graduates are expected to be entrepreneurs and successful innovative subjects creating opportunities for themselves in a vacuum.

Students' disappointment in facing the realities of limited opportunities upon graduation was repeatedly conveyed to me: "These certificates were for nothing"; "They found that they studied for nothing. There's no job in the same field." More researches are showing the impact of this lack of future—the lack of civic, social and employment rights—also evidenced in children's school retention rates (Shuayb and Hammoud, 2020). To respond to the students' comments, I also found myself trying to encourage that open future instead

of confirming the bleak reality that requires political changes: “We don’t know, it might be beneficial in the future.”

5.3.3 Merit-based and youth-centred

Under the national framework that does not take into consideration the future presence of the refugee students, scholarship programmes end up replicating the liminal humanitarian provision of access while some make efforts to incorporate other training programmes to “develop” the skills of individuals. While access is a prime concern, students are required to demonstrate vulnerability in addition to academic merit, namely the national official exams. Tawjihi in Jordan and Baccalaureate in Lebanon are often the first thing students mentioned when it comes to accessing further education opportunities and a common experience of the young people accessing HE in the region. It reflects the global trend of universities striving for excellency and competitiveness by sieving out students with high academic performance. This section focuses on some implications of the criteria adopted by most scholarship programmes and how students and local initiatives respond in order to increase access.

For the programmes on the ground, vulnerability is deemed more important than merits as part of the criteria. A scholarship officer in Jordan explained the two criteria of vulnerability and academic level for selecting recipients:

> For example, if a student has a perfect academic record and also a very good financial situation, then she/he will not be selected. Rather the scholarship will go for the one who shows a good or very good academic profile, but more vulnerable.

Using vulnerability as a criterion may mean proof of registration with UNHCR as a refugee and their financial standing (Chopra, 2018).[140] Nevertheless, with the limited number of scholarships, the programmes mainly rely on the results of high school exams as proof of merit. The academic performance—the average of the exam score is also something my participants saw as the main deciding criterion in getting into a scholarship programme. This is especially the case in Jordan where scholarship opportunities are more limited and centralized. Being asked what the requirements are for getting accepted, a group of scholarship students answered: "high average", "a strong average…most up to 70%" in addition to the experiences of social work and volunteering. Selection dependent on standardized exam results would already exclude many students whose schooling was interrupted, who were responsible for family income and who were struggling in passing the curriculum-specific formal exams. These structural challenges have been widely discussed in previous literature (El-Ghali and Al-Hawamdeh, 2017; El-Ghali, Berjaoui and Deknight, 2017; Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014). Nadir's experience documented in the previous chapter also echoes the difficulties for drop-out students to prepare for the exams.

What had been conveyed to me as an often-overlooked criterion was the age limit set up by the educational programmes, academic or short-term courses alike. The available educational programmes target "youths" and often have an age limit up to around 30 (See Table 3 above). Rima (32), whose episode on her care for the children's schooling was described in the previous chapter, held the Syrian Baccalaureate and was seeking ways to further her education. Rima was born in a rural area in Syria, growing up working in the field

[140] Chopra (2018) details how scholarship programmes access vulnerability and students' concerns about being registered with the UN in Lebanon.

and with livestock. She had struggled to gain approval from her father to progress into high school. This time, she told me about her long journey applying for a scholarship.

> I also applied for [the scholarship], registered; and there were some requirements: certificate, must be under 30, have formal papers, not the expired ones. Everything was fine, but mine was expired, and they want 200 dollars to renew it in the General Security. […] I took a loan and managed 200 dollars, then I went to Beirut's General Security for 10 days, but the renewing stopped. [This was around 2015][141] […] The next year, I was about 29 and months, about to enter 30, the UN announced that Syrians can renew residency without charge. I went to renew, and I applied for the same scholarship, … and it's the same story again. […] I went to UNESCO Beirut to certify my certificates. I was very tired, but my husband didn't know a thing, the relatives didn't know these things. He had no idea about it. I left the children to go the Beirut and got lost. I asked a lot of questions, coming and going, coming and going. […] Finally, I went to Tyre to sign up, I found out I was older than the requirement of 30. I cried so much for it. I was 30 years and 2 months old. This was in 2016. What's your opinion? Luck, I don't have the luck. They rejected me because of my age.

Available scholarships for Syrian refugees have been framed as a vehicle for the younger generation to be educated to return and rebuild. The age limit reflects the ideal subject to be those who were already on the educational ladder readily to continue their journey. It reflects largely the developmental agenda—refugee youths are positioned as a developmental opportunity, potential entrepreneurs, viable future workforce and well-educated nation-builders. The flipped side of the coin is the exclusion of those candidates who do not seem "ideal".

The agenda of developing the capability of "youths" not only excludes applicants such as Rima but also those who have dropped out from the university for extensive numbers of reasons. At the beginning of their provision, some scholarships provide opportunities

[141] In 2015, the Lebanese government introduced new measures of obtaining and renewing the residency permit with the annual fees of $200 (Human Rights Watch, 2016).

specifically for those whose higher education was interrupted, but for the following cohorts, passing the local national exams results became a requirement:

> When it was [the first cohort], it helped students like me, who studied but didn't continue, or who had diplomas but didn't continue. And this was their goal. Now it changed with [the second cohort]. Now it became that they need Tawjihi. When it was first opened, it used to target the students who travelled and who wanted to study. In fact, I was like that, I registered with the university and I had the university ID but it was cut off, I wasn't able to continue. […] I have a friend who wanted to register with me [during the first cohort]. He was outstanding, studied 5 years of Mechanical Engineering. He had 4 subjects to graduate, and he wasn't able to get the scholarship unfortunately. Until now he has no Engineering [degree].

As Syrians' displacement became more protracted, the focus had also shifted onto the younger cohorts who had continued their secondary schooling during their displacement.

High school exams being the first and foremost requirement places a major hurdle for some refugee students and indeed disadvantageous students alike to access or continue higher education. While in both countries, local private courses ("strengthening courses" or "centres") that aid students in passing the exams exist, but they could cost from $1000-$2500 a year in Lebanon, 60-120 JD ($84-197) per term in Jordan. In Lebanon, students are able to register for exams independently without attending formal secondary schooling. This allows students who had been away from schools to attempt the Baccalaureate exams, with an age requirement to be older than 20 (Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji, 2014).[142] In Jordan, however, the regulation only allows those who have completed secondary schooling or the equivalent to sitting for the exams (Singh, 2018).[143] NGOs on the ground have devised free courses

[142] While allowing older students to take exams, the age restriction also takes away the opportunities for the younger school dropouts to rely on informal education and take exams in order to return to formal education. See p. 45 in Shuayb, Makkouk and Tuttunji (2014)

[143]Ministry of Education, Jordan. "Article 9" [Online] [Assessed 5 March 21] Available from: https://www.moe.gov.jo/ar/node/17047

correspondently assisting those who had dropped out, had failed the exams and/or those who were in school but could not afford cramming courses.

In Lebanon, Akram introduced me to the adult school that he had attended in order to take Baccalaureate exams after he stopped his schooling since 9th grade. The school was set up as an NGO in 2015 and has been running two classes (10-20 students), one for 9th-grade exams ("Brevet") one for 12th grade Baccalaureate. The classes took place in the basement of a municipality building that was free for them to use. The classes ran three times a week from 8:30-12:30 am on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. The NGO did not target refugees (see Figure 14 below): while it provided refugees who dropped out of school a place to study, it likewise provides a space for other adults who stopped education for other reasons.



Figure 16 The adult school leaflet and the classrooms (left, the Baccalaureate classroom, right, the makeshift Brevet class in the corridor)

On the day of the visit, I met a former student who had succeeded in the exams and was in his first year of university. He came back to volunteer as a tutor. He described how he was attending the classes in the morning and went to work until midnight in a restaurant. He stopped his work to prepare prior to the exams and eventually got into the university. I commented that it seemed so difficult. He responded, “it’s difficult... but that’s how you succeed.”

In Jordan, an NGO I encountered also set up classes for refugee students who were cramming for the exams. However, the regulation that students must have attended secondary schools might have excluded many others who were unable to return to schools.

This further constrained the access to higher education through alternative routes and informal learning, which was made possible in Lebanon.

In both countries, the difficult terrain in the process of returning or accessing higher education had prompted students to organize themselves in dealing with legal documents, collecting and disseminating scholarship information, exchanging tips and insights to navigate the opportunities provided. The merit-based orientation of scholarship admission and the limited opportunities led students to approach private higher education institutions to increase their access. Student organizers in both countries tried to negotiate with private universities to acquire tuition deductions for Syrian students. The organizer in Jordan told me how the online platform evolved from a group exchanging information to more collective efforts in helping fellow students:

> Yes, this [certification] was the first thing. Second, students don't know about the majors, universities, the issues of studies […]. The education system changed from one country to another. The conditions were changed. So we help them with these things. The first thing we help them with is connecting with the university that would offer deductions. […] These universities offer deductions. It offers assistance like accommodation and transportation. We make them reach these universities, and we help them to go […]. Each university will have someone volunteering to help other students as soon as they enter the university, they help them with papers and registration. They help them to get the ID, and tell them: this is the college, these are the classes, lecture halls, this is the program to follow, how to download the course schedule. With the issues of studying, we organized groups. The students in Pharmacy faced hardships at the beginning of the courses. Some started to volunteer to explain the lessons on youtube.

In Lebanon, the student group I came across also had tried to reach an agreement with a private university for a certain percentage of tuition deduction on the basis that the group advertises and gathers enough students to register with the university programmes. This had

once brought upon the group some criticism as they failed to reach the number. I summarized the episode in my fieldnote as the organizer explained it to me:

> Normally students get 35-60% scholarship deductions depending on their petition to the University. The group asked the University to give 60% off for those students who registered through the group, however, the University requires the student number to exceed 300 for a 60% deduction. In the end, the list of 300 students they gave to the University, only 85 students registered. The University therefore only gave them 50%. People criticized the group for not reaching the expectations of those who registered with them.

An increasingly marketized higher education environment has opened up a space for students to negotiate and increase access. However, many would continue to struggle with the fees as they seek means of loans and take up more informal work to fund their hope of succeeding higher education.

Under the developmental agenda as well as the increasing trend of neoliberal competitiveness and self-reliance, the idea of higher education access as a right would inevitably be compromised. As people fall outside of the ideal portrayals of young and hard-working, academically competitive refugees are being excluded; students who have means continue to struggle and seek ways to fit the expectations.

5.4 Conclusion

While access to education and higher education enables some types of hope in the short term, the futures imagined in these educational opportunities are filled with political implications which constrain the hopes for refugees' long-term pursuits. The conflicting agenda about refugees' futures emerge when the labour market inclusion is under question. While developmental funds become a global instrument to contain refugee crises, the host states' nationalist agendas imagine no viable futures for refugees' long-term presence in the

countries. An analysis of the current scholarship programmes shows the crisis-based response that reflects, not the vision of long-term solutions, but a patchwork addressing educational access and the ensuing unemployment issues as the crisis protracted. Ultimately, without meaningful political change, the HE provisions remain a relief approach to young people's need of existential mobilities—the need "to go somewhere".

Recent literature suggests education provision for "an unknowable future" that takes into consideration students' changing trajectories and avoids fixating on the expectation of return (Dryden-Peterson, 2017). What is observed on the ground is how both students and the scholarship programmes are using the concept as a strategy in order to maintain hope related to HE: an open unknowable future full of possibilities. The implications are the increasing tendency to individualize responsibilities through promoting refugee self-reliance and competitiveness.

While addressing the structural constraints, the chapter by no means negates the students' own desire of accessing HE, as the final section also highlights the strategies and collaborative efforts in response to limited access. Hope here remains a jointly invested project. What happens when the hopeful future that students invested in is out of touch? The chapter demonstrates that concerns about students' educational access and trajectory cannot be limited to education itself. How do students experience and respond to, a future that is not only about HE and employment? The next chapter looks into refugee students' experiences regarding future pursuits, as well as the process of waiting and hoping for the future.

CHAPTER 6

WAITING AND HOPE FOR FUTURES

6.1 Introduction

As displacement is increasingly protracted, Dahya and Dryden-Peterson (2017) suggests that refugee education should be rethought as a long-term endeavour so that refugee students could prepare themselves for "unknowable futures". However, the protracted condition means that most of the world's refugees continue to live in the "gaps *between* the states", simultaneously being part of the state and outside of it (Haddad, 2008). The ambiguity results in little or no pathway to citizenship rights which would allow insights to a long-term, sustainable future. Nevertheless, education in this context continues to be seen as a hopeful "key to life" (Bellino, 2018), promising future spatial and social mobility. Consequently, refugee students are caught between such promise and reality upon graduation with few possibilities to make use of their education (Bellino, 2018; Dryden-Peterson, 2016). Chapter 4 investigates how students' educational hope is embodied in the everyday efforts and ordinariness and how educational hope can be "distributed" through educational opportunities of various kinds and visions of a successful story. Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the schism between education provision and labour market participation manifested in the refugee responses in Lebanon and Jordan. This chapter will focus on students' experiences of and responses to the constraints in mobilities – physical, social and existential—educed by the schism. A focus on students' experiences serves as a response to Locke and te Lintelo's (2012) reminder that thinking youth transition as simply school-to-work trajectory risks to neglect youths' own perspectives and other dimensions of life that they deem valuable.

Recently, Fincham (2020a), looking specifically at Syrian refugee students' "desired functionings" of higher education, finds that there are nuanced, overlapping and gendered dimensions in their educational pursuits, including economic (employability prospects), intrinsic (personal fulfilment) and social (social status and marriage prospects) . While male students may view HE in economic terms as often the "breadwinners" of the family, female students often see HE as having intrinsic values and social function (such as educating children). Nevertheless, scholarship programmes often squarely focus on improving employability and producing skilled workforce as their overarching aims (Fincham, 2020a). This chapter will extend this argument by providing accounts of the complex and gendered temporal experiences in students educational pursuits. The diverse expectations related to HE not only reflect one's social roles but at the same time produce different temporal experiences and strategies.

As Chapter 2 elaborates, the young Syrian graduates are among their counterparts in the region that have been portrayed as increasingly living in a state of "waithood", a prolonged, suspended transition period to adulthood (Singerman, 2007; Dhillon and Yousef, 2009; Honwana, 2012; Sommers, 2012). In waithood, the young persons are characterised as being "stuck" in the liminal "stage of becoming" (Sommers, 2012) marked by unemployment, financial dependent, delay in marriage and family formation. The prolonged refugee situation for Syrian youths exacerbates and further complicates the conditions of such "waiting". However, scholars take issue with the framing of the protracted state: refugees are being seen as passive, helpless and without politics (Hyndman and Giles, 2011), temporally and spatially fixed, static and immobilized (Brun and Fábos, 2015). Brun (2015) observes that even in the situation of protracted uncertainty, "everyday time continues to flow through routinized

practices and survival strategies" (p. 19). In the case of a Georgian IDP waiting for return, she understands waiting as active and identifies "agency-in-waiting" which brings hope into light:

> Agency-in-waiting denotes the capacity to act in the present, in everyday time, based on the experience of displacement from the subject's history and a critical reflection of the future possibilities framed as waiting and hope. It does not indicate that people necessarily are able to control or shape their future (p. 24)

However, university students and graduates, with the experience of physical and social mobilities in commuting, participating, networking and advancing their studies, facing more closely to "the future", what does this "waiting and hope" mean? How do the students wait and hope for the future?

The previous chapter analysed the future expectations of the host states as well as scholarship programmes and education providers. This chapter returns to students' experiences and focuses on the participants' experiences of time, of waiting, hoping, and future-making. As a university student and a graduate, they had been hoping for a future along with the education they sought and worked hard on. Yet, the central question is, when and where the perceived "good" will happen? (Kleist, 2015) How do they cope with the continuous flow of everyday time as they wait for the "good" to come? The chapter aims to address the following questions:

1) *What are the students' experiences in waiting as they continue to prepare themselves for the future?*
2) *What are the strategies devised in negotiating the waits and continuing to hope?*

The first section collects the stories of university students, graduates, and dropouts and their experiences in feeling "stuck". Participants long to make use of one's education to support their families, to establish themselves and benefit others. These hopes often conveyed to me

along with a sense of urgency and the anxious awareness of time passing. Nevertheless, as the second section shows, students and graduates continue to seek ways to negotiate and break away from the "stuckness". Planning and attempting to move away is often the strategy in maintaining one's mobility upon graduation. Some resort to virtual outlets via online platforms and games. Most of the participants experience punctuated, short-term participation in training courses made available under the previously-mentioned humanitarian-developmental framework and its entanglement with neoliberal agendas (Wagner, 2017).

6.2 Waiting

The section focuses on the participants' everyday experiences in engaging with the future. It documents the common themes that emerged regarding to "the wait" in these experiences. Section 6.2.1 details some of the experiences of Hanan (29), a university dropout in Lebanon across four months. The section narrates and analyses Hanan's experiences with respect to waiting as she plays different roles in her everyday life as a student, a mother, a wife and a career-seeker. Singling out Hana's experiences as one case exemplifies the complexity of the experiences of waiting. Her experiences not only speak against the simplified description of protracted refugee situation as in limbo but also show the shifting, multiple and intertwined experiences with waiting, uncertainty, and time passing. While the section narrates chronically my encounters with Hanan, it may at times appears messy without a central event or topic. This reflects the lived, multiple, complex experiences of time as the everyday tasks, family affairs, childcare responsibilities and the uncertain situations

chaotically inject themselves into Hanan's educational pursuits. Her agency in making a future that is meaningful rather than survival manifests itself throughout the field notes.

Sections 6.2.2-6.2.3 gather themes that emerged with regards to participants' experiences of waiting and future expectations beyond education itself. The sections include participants' accounts and experiences of trying or failing to fulfil certain expectations. These emergent themes reflect participants' sense of urgency in waiting for the "good" to come. The anxious hopes to marry, to establish oneself, to support their family, and to benefit others entail the multiple social and cultural expectations intersecting with the educational pursuit. These hopes direct towards the meaningful futures that participants wait for and make.

6.2.1 "How can I wait more?" Stuckness, uncertainty and the passing time

Hanan (29) responded to the online post in recruiting participants for the research. We arranged my first visit to her home in Saida, a southern city in Lebanon in mid-September 2018. As she led me into a residential compound, she told me "this is a poor neighbourhood" as if to excuse herself. The makeshift home was among three other sheds built in the middle of the building compound. As soon as I sat down, she told me that I was her first guest since she moved in four years ago. She mentioned later about her unwillingness to invite people in, especially those "who are living in an apartment with furniture." "If they come, they might see this poor condition." During the four months we were meeting, "the room" as she called it, had been one of the main problems brought up in our conversations along with her worries about childcare and her own studies.

Hanan was from a family with a good socio-economic background dwelling in one of the major cities in Syria. She got married while studying in the university and had established

her household prior arriving in Lebanon. She was in her third-year university studies in Translation when the conflict affected her and her husband. The newly-wed's house with furniture ready for a family was destroyed. When they first arrived in Lebanon seven years ago in 2012, they were staying in an apartment up in the mountain area away from Saida, which cost them $400 a month. A few years later, when she was pregnant with her second child Farid, they decided to move down to this place, which cost $200 a month. It was during the same period that she started her university studies again with a scholarship designated for refugee students.

Moving to the room was a strategic financial choice. "Although this place is not as good, but we have money for expenses. If my kids want anything, I can bring for them. We can eat out sometimes," Hanan also told me that the first child, daughter Yara's tuition for the second-year kindergarten ("KG2") was $900 per year. She had visited public school first but once she figured that all Syrians were in the second shift, she made the decision to send Yara to a private school. Hanan's husband used to be an engineer in Syria but could only find electrician work around the city. He worked long hours every day and was earning about $400-500 a month. Nevertheless, Yara's educational expenses from the school continued to be a source of stress. Once, Yara came back from school:

> We got back into the room. Hanan checked Yara's backpack and saw a note requesting a payment of 15,000 LL (then $10). She gasped, and decided to tear it up: "No, no, I just paid last week $100…" She told me she even paid for a stack of printing papers about 200 pages. (Fieldnote, 1 December 2018)

The young son Farid was always demanding Hanan's attention when I visited. Hanan accounted the rocky journey of studying in the local branch of the Lebanese University during

my second visit. She was majoring in English Literature as a continuation of her studies of Translation back in Syria (see also Figure 15):

> Lebanese University's first year was tough, and during the year, she got pregnant with Farid. "My belly was like…" she gestured the pregnancy. She failed the semester. "They need 60 credits, I only passed 20 something…but the office helped me and told me to change my major to Social Science" But she didn't enjoy it much. "They taught us Lebanese politics, Lebanese culture…. but I am from Syria, when I go back, it's not useful… English is very useful, not many people know English there." She mentioned that she wants to open a small English cram school (she gestured a room space) for free when she goes back. (Fieldnote, 20 September 2018)

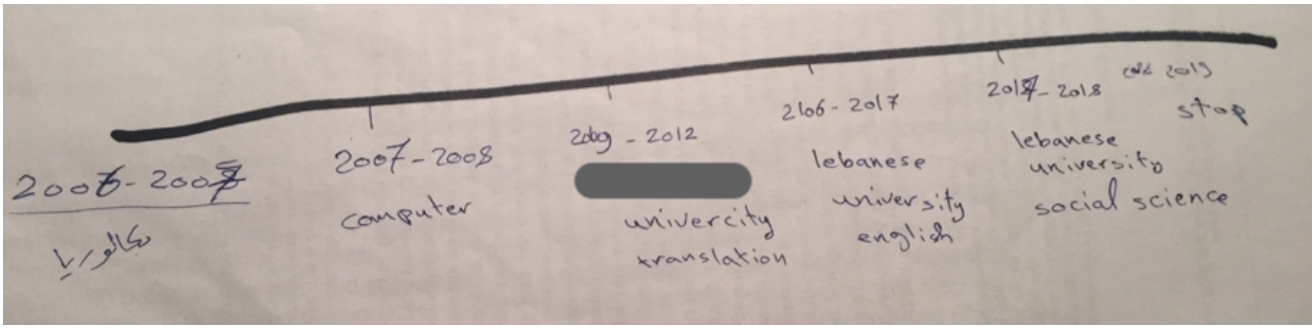


Figure 17 Hanan's timeline

Hanan had attempted to switch her major for the third time in Psychology, but the scholarship office told her since she couldn't finish, they had to give the opportunity to other people. She attributed her eventual drop-out to childcare. "The small one eats with me, sleep with me, do everything with me. For example, if you want me to come to you in Beirut, I cannot just go, I have to think—who the kids should be with?"

Critiques on gendered practices in humanitarianism take issue with the categorizations of aid beneficiaries' "vulnerability".[144] "Womenandchildren" are seen as inherently "vulnerable" as women being infantilised (Enloe, 2014; Turner, 2019). Refugee resettlement programmes severely restricts single men's access as they being portrayed as dangerous and

[144] Scholars use quotation mark for the term "vulnerability" as to highlight the ambiguity of the term's usages and their potential consequences (Enloe, 2019; Turner, 2019)

not “authentic” and “vulnerable” refugees (Turner, 2017). On the other hand, as Wagner (2017) observes, the international NGOs that target refugee young people in offering trainings and entrepreneurship courses often overlook the existing restrictions on female mobility in public space while they eager to “create highly mobile (preferably female) subjects” (p. 116). Part of the international humanitarian responses to refugee populations, higher education scholarships frame refugee students as to-be “self-reliant” and potential “change-makers”.[145] The scholarships adhere to higher education’s growing neoliberal agenda of excellency and its meritocratic discourse which values individual achievement and demand students’ singular, undivided devotion to their studies. This in turn creates a gendered consequence, as Hanan experienced with her social role in childcare. The scholarship opportunity has assumed students to be single, unattached and without responsibilities to their families.

Although having no prospect to continue with the scholarship, she had been signing up for various training, volunteering and working opportunities that popped up on the Facebook pages and groups on her phone—which was also how she responded to the advertisement of this research project. Before we met, she had just completed a digital skill course. She described how she managed her time when attending the course:

> I woke up at 6, 7 to prepare the girl for school, make her breakfast and send her onto the school bus, and then to make breakfast for my husband, and then myself. My mom would come to take care of the small one, so I can go to the course starting at 9. I came back at 1 pm, organize the house, take care of the children, and cook, …. Until everything’s done…it’s time to sleep... there’s no time. […] I faked falling asleep with them, and then I woke up to do my course work. (Field note, 14 September 2018)

[145] For example, UNHCR’s DAFI scholarship: https://www.unhcr.org/dafi-scholarships.html

During our first meeting, Hanan said she was considering registering with a Syrian university which would allow her to bring lecture materials back and only go for exams. However, she would have to start over from the first year. She told me about the university regulation: if you stopped for over 6 months, they would consider you being away for too long. “Now I am 29—30, 31, 32, 33 when I finish, I will be 33” she laughed. Even though she might have to travel back and forth, “I still want to study!” Hanan said. There was a sense of urgency in her awareness of time passing. Such feeling of “I am getting old” was also expressed to me when she mentioned that most of the scholarships have an age limit—as the previous chapter has discussed.

While the plan to return to university was put aside, she had registered and took the placement exam for an 8-month English course, part of an educational programme dedicated to Syrian refugees in of one of Beirut’s university. Hanan initially thought that the programme would take place once a week. During the period while she was waiting for the admission result, she had also come across the scholarship for bachelor studies at the Arab Open University. She hesitated to register as regularly commuting away from home to the city would be an issue. In late September, she was informed that she had been accepted into the 8-month English programme. In October, the programme had not started and Hanan had registered for another three-month course in Saida which would provide the attendees 5000 LL (then around $3) each hour, 4 hours a day, 4 days a week. She had also signed up for a volunteer opportunity with a local NGO. As she told me about the things she had signed up for, she laughed at herself, “I applied to so many things, and they will all start at the same time.”

Wagner (2017) describes how young Syrians in Mafraq, Jordan do not only experience “waiting” but “frantic waiting” as they struggle with financial stability while engage with the

opportunities provided by NGOs with a depoliticised approach to turn the youngster into "neoliberal refugee youth" (p. 115). Hanan lost her opportunity to complete her bachelor studies and the meaningful future of returning and opening a cram school seemed very far away. Her constant acts of seeking opportunities, registering educational programmes while having childcare responsibilities may resembles "frantic waiting". She kept herself busy so to pass time and alleviate the anxiety of not doing anything as she "gets old". However this may be significant, Hanan's narrations about the educational opportunities and the future showed an even more complex experiences with uncertainty, the sense of urgency and "stuckness".

As Hanan had told me about the ideal future being in Syria, I asked her several time about the possibility of return. Initially, it seemed unlikely: the place they used to live was gone, and there was no place to go back to. There might not be conflicts but there was no electricity and no job. In Lebanon, at least they could maintain their livelihood. During the second meeting, answering to the same question, she said it would still be unlikely: "I want to stay here, but not in this house…this is...this is only one room." She said in Syria there used to be roof, salon, balcony… "My husband told me to be patient, but it's been 7 years, patient… until the day I die you still tell me to be patient?"

During my third visit in October, during which she was waiting for the English course to start:

> After dinner, her sister left, and both kids went quiet. She said suddenly, after browsing her phone for a while, "I think by the end of the year, most of the Syrians will go back." I asked why, she said that recently, the General Security came to close the Syrian shops and fined those Lebanese shops that hire Syrians with a million Lebanese Lira. She added that Syrians could only work if they are sponsored. "People who registered with UN as refugees, they cannot work. They are supported by UN." "But they don't give us anything…We pay for the rent, for the electricity for the water. […] All my husband's work goes to renting this room…" At some point when she mentioned the cost of electricity

> and water, she said that the government came to cut their water valves recently. Now they have no water from the pipe and have to get bucket water from other places which they will have to pay as well. "Next month they'll cut the electricity… I want to go back to Syria to end all these payments." (Field note, 28 October 2018)

Here, Hanan's feeling of stuckness was primarily associated with the increasingly dehumanising treatment and insecurity of the living space. Yet, the majority of the household income was dedicated to the constant payments to sustain such a situation. At the same time, uncertainty heightened as the political debates around Syrian refugees' return became more heated and authorities' actions were felt.[146] It was uncertain where they would be by the end of the year. The feeling of being stuck, of not being able to move away met an increased sense of uncertainty, of not knowing where one would be in a few months. It was in this spatial-temporal uncertainty where Hanan proceeded her commitment to the English course.

When Hanan applied to the English course in Beirut, she had counted the transportation fee involved: 2000 L.L. ($1.3) on van from Saida to Beirut, 4000 L.L. ($2.6) for "service" (shared taxi) to the University, 4000 back, 2000 to Saida and maybe another 2000 to home. That would cost her almost 9 dollars per trip. However, she still thinks it's a very good opportunity. She told me, if the programme did not accept her, she would apply to another university scholarship opportunity: "Someone pay for you to learn free, why not?" "Next month I will stop breastfeeding, and the girl goes to the nursery." She implied that she would be able to focus on her attendance and study more. For Hanan, each educational programme was an opportunity to learn, to progress and to "move forward" as she tried to navigate away

[146] See Issam Fares Institute (2019) Unpacking Return: Syrian Refugees Conditions and Concerns (IFI Conference), Beirut, Lebanon. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBqLLLGuZ5M&feature=youtu.be.

from the stuckness with her everyday responsibilities, the uncertainty, the passing-time and the long-term vision.

Hanan's frustration at the space they dwell intensified as she started to juggle the commitment to the English course and the family responsibilities. In the beginning of November, I asked Hanan whether I could come for a visit and it happened to be the day of the programme orientation. I visited and later accompanied her on her way to the university in Beirut:

> When I came in, Hanan was complaining about how her husband didn't want her to go to the orientation since it would start in the evening. And repeatedly, when the neighbour came to have breakfast with us, and when she called her father's friend to see if it's possible to give us a ride to Beirut, she talked about how her patience had run out to stay in the room: "7 years… I have no patience. I can't go to study. I can't continue university... Isn't it bad that all of these just because of this room? When I was pregnant, he said wait until Farid is born, now he's growing up…. I want to go back to Syria. In Syria, staying in the street is better than staying in this room." Hanan also informed me that there is a flat for $300 a month, "he [the Lebanese renter] said If we can't pay for this month it's ok, we can just pay next month. But my husband refused."
>
> Later around 3 p.m., she suggested that we take a nap. She turned off the lights, but then the neighbors knocked on the door to borrow the steel ladder, and then her husband came back. Farid was especially grumpy today. He cried several times. I've felt restless myself by sitting in the room, calming the children and answering the door. "Does this room benefit for your study? You can write in your study that for 3 years no one has come to visit this room," Hanan told me.
>
> […] Arriving at the orientation venue, Hanan met a former colleague from the scholarship programme. We sat in the third row of the auditorium. When the presenter was emphasizing that coming to class late will be counted as absence, and how it is important not to be absent. Hanan turned to her colleague and said, "I'm afraid I can't make it." This fear met a big shock when she realized that the programme's schedule would be three times a week instead of one. The classes would take place 10:30-1:30. She couldn't believe it, and so as a new friend she met: "I have work during the day…" She appeared to be scared and didn't know what to do. (Field note, 2 November 2018)

I texted her the next day asking whether had decided to go for the course or not, she replied, "Yes. This is my last chance." I asked about transportation, she said "no, I have to pay." "24,000 [$16] a week" she added. She had also aborted the plan to go to another shorter-term English program in Saida that subsidizes. Describing the opportunity as "the last chance", Hanan saw the course as an opportunity to patch up the academic progress she would otherwise have made in her discontinued university studies. "The last chance" conveyed the sense of urgency witnessing time passing and age increasing without completing the degree that was supposed to complete seven years ago.

In the following months, her commitment to the course met of a series of struggles and negotiations around childcare responsibilities. It was also during the period that "the room" seemed to no longer be bearable and change must be made. In early December, I met her and one of her classmates after the class. As we walked her to get a shared taxi, she told me the first thing: "I have good news. My sister told me about an apartment and my husband said if it's under 300 dollars, we will rent it!" She was going to check out the place with her husband that evening. The next day, I visited her again at her home as she kindly introduced me to a local educational NGO:

> Yesterday, Hanan was excited about going to view an apartment with her husband. Today when I arrived, I asked her about it. She said, "look at my eyes. I cried until 3 am in the morning." […] Her sister and her husband went with them and offered that they would rent half (the salon and the kitchen) and Hanan's family can have the two rooms. She ranted: "My sister told me that she will take care of my children as they are hers if we move together; and her husband told A [Hanan's husband] that he will pay for the water, internet and electricity." They would just need to pay half rent of $200, which is just $50 more than what they are paying now for, in Hanan's word, "this disgusting room".
>
> She continued: "But he said no! When they were there, my sister's husband asked him 'isn't it nice?' He said 'yeah, yeah nice,' but when we came home,

> he disagreed, he said no. He's worried about there's no money to pay. What if there's a war here, you heard about this fighting [the Jahilieh event][147]. He's afraid that there'll be war in here, and he'll have no work, no money to pay for the apartment. But in Lebanon, there's always a fighting here, fighting there… He's like a donkey, there's a donkey living in his head. I cried, I pleaded with him, I told him, haram look at the Farid the baby, he's only moving from living room to the toilet… and Yara's sick because of the room…he has no feeling, no feeling, like a wall, this wall." She knocked on the wall besides her.
>
> After we came back from the local NGO, her mom held Farid sitting outside, Hanan told her: "it's enough, I am packing my bag, bringing Yara and Farid, I am going back to Syria. Leaving him here and die." Her dad came standing by the door, with the neighbours listening, Hanan started her long, animated speech again. Her dad smiled and told her: Maybe just wait a bit more. She replied seriously, "I have waited for 7 years, 7 years…How can I wait more?" She kept thinking what to do with the situation: "If I go back to Syria, it will be hard to come back. I will need a sponsor to come back." Later she said: "I have a solution, I bring the children and move in with my sister, I can bring students home and teach for some fees, I will pay [for the new place]." (Field note, 4 December 2018)

Hanan's frustration over the failed negotiation to move poignantly shows the conflicted imaginations and relations to the future. Her husband fears potential future emergencies—of war, unemployment and financial insecurity. This anticipation of an emergency to come and the understanding of present as exceptional—scholarly-termed "temporality of emergency" or "emergency imaginary" (Calhoun, 2004) —are often discussed in literature on humanitarianism. The imagery is integral to the humanitarian reason (Calhoun, 2004; Pandolfi, 2003). Brun (2016) scrutinizes the notion of emergency in relation to the future: It "tends to 'defuturize'—or empty—the future because it presents us with a heightened sense of discontinuity, rendering the future more contingent" (p. 402). The future is empty because it

[147] The Jahilieh event was marked as a security incident in early December 2018 when a bodyguard of the pro-Syrian politician Wiam Wahhab was killed during an attempt by the Internal Security Forces to bring in Wahhab from his Jahilieh home for questioning over insulting remarks about the former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and his son then PM-designate Saad Hariri.See https://www.pressreader.com/lebanon/the-daily-star-lebanon/20181204/page/1

is imagined in a way that "radically breaks with the past" and therefore does not allow biographical life (p. 402). "It is a future not to be lived but to be survived" (Opitz and Tellmann, 2014, p. 112). The critique focuses on humanitarian organizations' projection of an empty future which tends to decontextualize people's lives and overlooks their past experiences. However, the heightened and prolonged uncertainty that the couple experienced had also contributed to the similar understanding of the future. Hanan's husband imagined a future that is to be survived rather than to be lived. Nevertheless, as Hanan's candid demand to change shows, such imagination of the future was subjected to negotiation. Her struggle to seize educational opportunities was a struggle to build a biographical life, to not only survive, but live with a meaningful future.

Hanan's story shows the complex experiences with time while trying to move forward to a meaningful future: the uncertainty and the passing time, the stuckness and disruptions of her studies. In the flow of the everyday time, she not only waited but also actively strived to break away from the prolonged liminal stage of inadequate housing and the delayed studies. Getting in touch again during the time of drafting this chapter in 2020, Hanan and the family were still in the same dwelling. Reviewing the draft, she would like to emphasize how important the English course was for her: "That was like a dream for me." "I was a different person when I went to study, but when I came back home, I felt disappointed." She had continued to face challenges as she was finishing the course in 2019: "In winter with the cold and storm and the distance, I didn't want to miss any class. In the summer, I was fasting during Ramadan and pregnant at the same time. It's my dream." "Even now, if I have a chance, I will not let it go." She told me she had registered with a university in Syria and was ready to return

in order to finally continue her bachelor studies. However, due to the Covid-19 measures, the border crossings were closed, and her plan was delayed once again.

6.2.2 "In my society, I am failing."

Investigations on the topic of marriage in displacement in the region often squarely focus on the phenomenon of early marriage as a form of gender-based violence or an obstacle to further education (For example, VASyR, 2019; No Lost Generation, 2019). An intersecting lens helps to draw the attention to the "waithood" experienced by young people across the region. Specifically, the associated costs of marriage pose financial challenges and delay family formation (Singerman, 2007; Mulderig, 2013). With young people struggling with employment and with some, especially male students being away from their parents, the phenomenon may have exacerbated if not transformed. However, the dynamics, challenges and strategies of getting married and establishing one's own household are hardly being discussed as part of the predicaments facing refugee students as they go about their studies.

Amongst the participants, those who expressed the pressure and expectations to get married were male rather than female students. The female students in their high school stage or re-doing their high school exams (n=9), when asked, they and their parents often conveyed "finishing the studies/passing the exams first". While unmarried female students in university studies with no fiancé (n=2) had not demonstrated marriage as their main concern, I often had conversations with unmarried male high school graduates, university students, graduates, and dropouts (n=8) about their anxiety of not having been married and "still studying". The section will show how the social expectation of family formation continues in displacement. It documents some of the male students' experiences of hoping to establish oneself and fulfil the familial and social expectations of marriage and independence.

When I first met Wissam who responded to my participant-volunteers advertisement in early September 2018, he came along to the café with his friend and neighbour Qusay. Then it was the time when Wissam's immediate family—his parents and siblings—were returning to Syria. After our first meeting, I had texted Wissam several times to arrange the next meeting, but he had expressed that he was sad and tired with his parent's departure and the searching for a new place to move in with his uncle's family. A week later, when three of us met again, Wissam had moved away from the neighbourhood he befriended with Qusay to another area. The rent of the new place was 400,000 LL ($300) and he contributed some from his irregular tiling or construction work in between his university studies.

Qusay had been much more expressive than Wissam during our first two meeting together. It was not until I met Wissam one-on-one during our third meeting that I got to know more about his educational journey and his expectations towards the future. He narrated his educational journey as he marked on the years on the timeline, as shown in Figure 16 below.

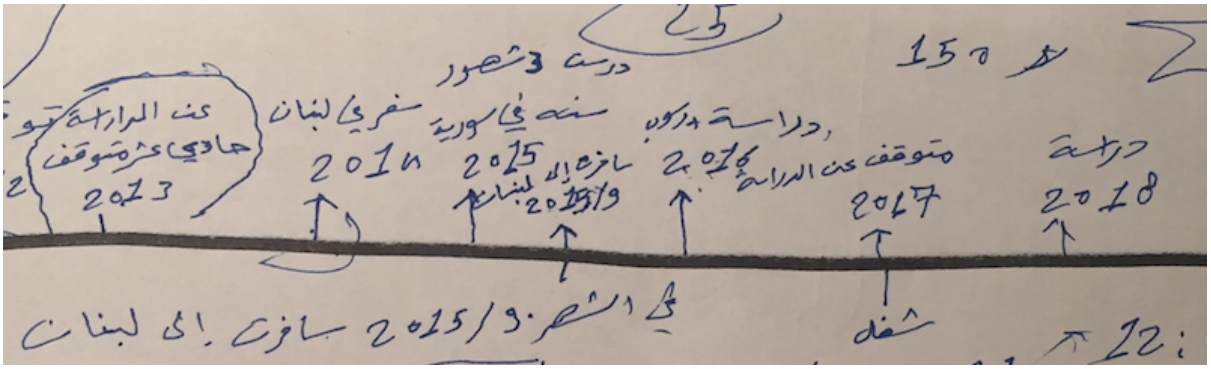


Figure 18 Wissam's timeline

Wissam's family is based in a village in Northern Syria and owns considerable land, according to Qusay. Wissam had stopped his formal school education at the 11th grade in 2013 when the bombing hit his school. He received private lessons for three months but eventually moved to Lebanon in 2015. Lebanon was not an unfamiliar place. Wissam and his family used

to visit Lebanon during summer months as his father used to do seasonal work in the country. After coming to Lebanon, through going to the Friday prayer at a mosque, he was informed about the opening of an Islamic school (see section 4.2.3). He registered and attended for a year in night shift while working during the day but failed the official exam at the end. He stopped studying and continued working until 2018 when he attended the exam again and succeeded. During the time we were meeting, he failed the entrance exam to the public Lebanese University, but then managed to enrol in a scholarship program in a private university. When I asked how he made the decision to continue studying after he failed the exam, Wissam told me how his father had encouraged him:

> I stopped studying, and my dad he likes studying a lot because he hadn't studied. He told me to study. He had been living in Lebanon for 25 years [for seasonal tiling work since 1996]. He sees, for example, an engineer comes for 5 minutes and goes. He tells us to study so to be like him, an engineer, or to become a doctor or a teacher, then our lives would be more comfortable. (Interview, 1 October 2018)

Wissam's continuation in his educational journey is encouraged by the hope of generational social mobility—"a better life" with higher education credential. He brought up the facts that how girls are usually married early in the area he lived in Syria and how her older sisters who have been studying have not yet married and might be hard for them to marry at their age. When I asked whether it is the case that there are not many girls continue to higher education, Wissam was again reminiscent of his father's determination for his older sisters' education:

> In our villages, the customs and traditions are old, and they don't accept girls to study. But my dad like schooling and [told us] 'go to school'. My uncle came [and questioned]: "Where have you sent your girls? All the way to Aleppo [the city] just to study?" […] The city is 100 kilo metres away from the village. It's an hour there and an hour back […] My sister used to go for a week and come back in the weekend.

He paused a second, and told me:

> Now, those guys who used to study together with me, they are all married. My friends, the guys, they have all left schools. I am the only one among my friends who got the Bac 2 [Baccalaureate certification]. All of them, since 10th grade to here [pointing on the timeline], they stopped. Now they are working in tiling, taxis, construction. I am the only one. There were 25 of us. […]

He continued to account how his relatives used to study in university, but ever since the war, they have all stopped and have been working in construction. I then told him, "It's good that you continue." He replied, "yes…alhamdulillah [praise be to God]" but slowly, he added,

> But now in our society, I am failing. Now they see me studying, my friends what do they say to me? 'Why are you studying? No longer anyone studies.' When I was carrying books in front of my friends, I felt embarrassed. They would told me 'Why are you studying, for becoming a teacher? How much did a teacher get? 75 dollars?' In Syria, what can you do with 75 dollars? They don't think about the future. That's it, we live in the moment and that's it.

In this long conversation, Wissam traversed from his father's expectation about education to the social pressure of marriage and the growing doubts about education's value for improving livelihood. Marriage concerned Wissam as much as it might concern his sister in Syria. It signifies independence and adulthood. Being without a family of his own had him define himself as "failing". Wissam had told me that his friends who had families were unable to continue studying as they struggled to keep up the living costs of a family. Being single enabled him to do seasonal work earning his own expenses and have time for attending university. He felt lagging behind especially when the expectation of what education would bring seems to have already met an impasse before Wissam left Syria. It is perhaps more so if he is to stay in Lebanon where decent employment for Syrian graduates is extremely unlikely. Nevertheless, Wissam also remarked interestingly the temporality of the villagers who had stopped studying back in Syria as "living in the moment". In the same conversation later, he brought it up again and made a comparison to people in the city in Lebanon:

> In Syria, the education is free, and going to the hospital is free, services from the government is free. Livelihood there is good, yes, but you live to sustain yourself. There are no building buildings, buying cars, coming and going, no. 75 percent or more of the Syrian people are living by salaries, and the rest 25 percent get the capitals and have money. As for here, people dream for the future. They open business and build buildings…

Answered to my question of what he meant by "they dream for the future", he clarified for me:

> Here in Lebanon, most of them have money. As for us, like us, our society in Syria, we in the rural areas, people are poor. We think about how to live tomorrow, not more. As for here in Lebanon, they plan for after 10 years, 15 years what they want to do. As for us, we are thinking about what to eat tomorrow, how to live tomorrow.

Wissam's narration responds to Herrera and Bayat's (2010) differentiation on young persons and youths—to become youths, the young person has to experience and assert "youthfulness" through participation of "youth cultures and politics" facilitated by access to education, leisure activities media and market. These are often inaccessible for youngsters in rural areas (p. 7). In Wissam's understanding, youthfulness enabled by material wealth and mobilities ("coming and going") is also about an outlook towards the future. Wissam compared the temporality between living day-to-day and the long-term planning, "dreaming", or future-making. To be able to "have a future", not merely to maintain livelihood, continuing education might be the only option for Wissam in his circumstance. However, the time spending in the university studies continued to compete with the time delaying for marriage and for "establishing oneself":

> After we left the café where we had the interview, walking on the street, Wissam told me, "before when I was in Syria, I thought about studying medicine or the scientific field, ... if I remained there, it'd be possible, but here…" He thought he is too old to study medicine which would require many years. "I want to establish myself before 30... I don't want to be still studying until then. I want to get married and have work." I asked why 30, he then asked me back

> and counted for me, “don’t you want to get married and work… see now you are 28, after two years when you turn 30, you would have finished and start working and get married.” (Fieldnote, 1 October 2018)

Wissam was 23 at the time we have met, and he was very conscious about the liminal stage and “waithood” he was in. While investing in university studies for a long-term future, marriage and “establishing oneself” are more so expected—both by Wissam and his social circle—to be part of this meaningful future.

Not only Wissam experienced such pressure. Akram, whose schooling was interrupted at 9th grade in Syria, had attempted the baccalaureate exam in Lebanon a year before I met him and failed. At the age of 22, he was trying again to prepare for the exams, hoping to finally get into a university. When I asked Akram whether his parents ask him about marriage, he replied, “all the time”. But Akram had not felt the urgency to marry. He said he was not prepared yet: “Studying first, and when I graduate, I will get married straight away.” He said he would continue working and earning during the university studies, so he would have enough for the marriage when graduating. Akram’s family used to own a small grocery shop in an urban area in Northern Syria, and he has been accustomed to working and earning a living since a young age. The family's financial situation has been maintained at a level that is not worrisome. During our fourth meeting, Akram invited me to visit his mother and brother who lived in the outskirt of Beirut. During the visit, I met Akram’s older brother Ahmad (who was at his 30) and their mother. As we were sitting in the living room, I asked a few questions about the family, the siblings and their education. Akram’s mother was not very talkative and would only speak when questions were asked. Later, when Akram left to buy food and his older brother left the room, I was alone with the mother. She asked me if Ahmad (the brother) is handsome— “He’s not married yet,” she said. Noting this moment in my fieldnote (26

October 2018), I had interpreted this as the mother's firm hope for the older son to be married. It was worth trying than not to imply the possibility of a marriage to me, a just-met foreign stranger.

Beside marriage, the "establishing oneself" speak was also not only mentioned by Wissam, but was brought up by the other participants, young people and older parents, in the context of going abroad and having a future. In December 2018, I visited Akram at his home again and he had invited two of his friends to join us this time: Mahmoud, who graduated with a degree in Petro Engineering but was working in delivery with a motor bike, and his cousin Tariq. During the evening's meeting, the topic was surrounding on Mahmoud's family situation. His mother and his brother's family had just left for Ireland following UNHCR's resettlement scheme. As they mentioned it, the cousin Tariq commented on how the mother was not enjoying it: "It's too bad, there is no one to talk to. If you are young, you go there to establish yourself, but older people…" The idea of going abroad to have a future is deeply linked to young people's self-establishment, to become independent, to be working and married.

All the family members applied for the scheme but only Mahmoud did not get it. "They want guys under 18." Mahmoud's case resembles many other refugee single men whose applications to resettlement are subject to the skewed ideas of "vulnerability" and the Islamophobic concerns of Muslim Arab men as threatening (Turner, 2017). "Too bad" both Mahmoud himself and Tariq sighed and half-jokingly Tariq added, "He's here alone by himself. Get married." Mahmoud joked with me, "don't marry J [my then boyfriend]. Marry me." Graduated and unmarried, Mahmoud's single status became the central concern and the subject of pity for his friends and relatives. Without the hope to be resettled, to have a future

career-wise, marriage is another future-oriented concern that is urgent and of priority in the social circles of the young men.

The host Akram himself whose mother was pressing him to get married, but as previously mentioned, he was not feeling financially prepared for marriage. Such concern demonstrates the hefty costs of marriage in the region, not only the costs of "preparing home" (*tajhiz albayt*) which may include dowry, housing and furniture, but also as what Wissam mentioned earlier about the day-to-day living expenses in sustaining a family considered men's gender role. Asking the scholarship-funded university students in Jordan about their plan to establish a family, Yasin (22) and Hisham (26) both straightforwardly answered "no", while Hisham added, "Money, there's none. Independence, none…Maybe wait until I am 60."

Qusay became one of the participants through Wissam's invitation in joining our first meeting. Qusay grew up in an urban area of Northern Syria but had lived in another city for university studies. He often compared his family background to Wissam, "Wissam, his dad has money, he could stay at home if there is no work, but my dad is dead, I must work." He told me his father passed away when he was two. He held a university degree from Syria in History and was receiving a scholarship for an extra year in a Lebanese university to acquire an equivalent degree. Qusay's story evidenced the pressure of parental expectation on marriage and how, in the context of displacement and insufficient income, marriage continues to be facilitated through familial network and its resources. During our second meeting, Qusay was expressive about not going to marry: "Me? I am not married and will not marry. I myself am unable to live, [how can I] bring someone to live at my expenses?" He told me about the experiences living in Lebanon:

> People in the films, when going to a foreign country, they think about staying, living in it, marrying and having children, but I never felt it at all. I felt choked. Even in the university, I would notice when a beautiful girl passing by, but that's it. I don't have the desire for those dreams (Field note, 11 September 2018).

The following month, I attempted to arrange another meeting with Qusay but failed four times, during which he had missed his final exams and was unable to acquire the equivalent degree as planned. A month later, Qusay invited me to his newly established home, meeting with his family:

> He got married 10 days ago. I was really surprised. He didn't mention a thing before this. [….] I asked him about his sudden marriage. He firstly told me, "My mom has been sick, and she told me 'please get married, get married.'" He added that because his wife's family is leaving Lebanon to return to Aleppo, the marriage was arranged. On the expenses of the marriage, he spent about $3000 for the wedding, the gold, and furniture at the new home. He said his brothers abroad sent him money for the wedding. "I told them I have no money to marry, they said they'd help." A brother from Dubai sent him about $1700, and another sent him money too. "I wasn't thinking about a family." (Field note, 10 October 2018)

Qusay, struggling to get by as a university graduate with his on-and-off delivery and construction work, was eventually married with the pressure of the parent and the monetary support from siblings. Previously, he was feeling "choked" and stuck with no means nor desire to "move on" in terms of marriage life. He described marriage and forming a family as romanticized stories and dreams. Students and graduates like Qusay face the pressing expectations from the elderly and the costs involved in the process. How familial network mobilized and gathered scarce resources also demonstrates the urgency and social importance of marriage.

Rarely being discussed as part of experiences facing male refugee students and graduates, the topic of marriage reflects the intersecting and exacerbated conditions of "waithood" in the refugee context. The fragments of these young men's stories also show that,

such “waiting” is not merely a personal matter, but a familial concern. When an elder cannot wait, like Qusay’s or Akram’s mother, marriage could be facilitated despite of the challenges with various efforts of persuading, arranging and gathering resources.

In the previous sections, Hanan’s struggles in childcare and living arrangement contradict the idea of studying as a bracketed time where students are single and devoted solely to pursue education. This section demonstrates marriage as a priority and a parameter of “success/failure” for the male students and graduates. “The future”, when mentioned in the discourses of higher education for refugees, marriage and family formation are rarely included. While career, personal success, or rebuilding one’s country may be part of “the future”, the more pressing, immediate task of marriage and self-establishment often present itself during the period of refugee students’ higher education pursuit.

6.2.3 Supporting families and benefiting the society

In Chapter 4, when Nadir left home for a café job in Amman (4.3.4) and he told me, “I left to help my family. My dad is old, and he should be retired at home. I am here only to help with my family. This is not to make my mom sad.” The sense of urgency to support one’s family similarly emerges as one of the main themes in my conversations with the university students and graduates. The idea of “benefiting others and the society” also appears to be an expectation towards the use of one’s education. These expectations have become the source of feeling stuck as stable employment continues to be unlikely and meaningful futures delayed.

In a conversation with a scholarship-funded third year university student in Jordan, speaking about possibilities to seek opportunities abroad:

> WY: Are they [your parents] afraid of you leaving? Away from…
> M: No no no, they don’t mind me leaving but they want me to be… okay.

> WY: Stable?
> M: Stable, exactly, or that I can support them at some point, because they, they are really going to be old, as us as well. So they don't want me… They want me at least to be able to support them. And I think this is my responsibility in this community. Our community maybe is different from the other communities. Like here we don't have uh…people must support the rest of the family. It's like the most important thing in our community. So, the family is my priority. If I were to live in another country, they will still have my support. (Interview, 7 April 2019)

Before returning to school after two years of disruption, M had been working different jobs to support the family income. The responsibility to support the family looms as a priority for any future endeavour. This is similar to Sarah's account whose family situation has been briefly mentioned in Section 4.2.3. As a scholarship-funded second-year university student in Lebanon, she had been taking as many course credits as possible each semester to be able to finish early. Answered to what she would like to do next after university, she said, "I want to graduate fast, to teach, to work…to change my family's situation." As the oldest among the siblings, Sarah's sense of urgency and the need to support the family had already evidenced in her extra work with NGOs, a summer job in hotel, and her partaking in an entrepreneurship competition and insisting through the straining and tedious process:

> She was crouching in front of the laptop she borrowed from a friend, and going through the excel sheet column by column, with each number she struggled a lot to make sure it was right. It's a competition, first place winner will get $4000, second $3000…etc. (Field note, 16 November 2018)

During my first visit to her, her project was going through a selection process for the final competition. Later in the month, she asked to stay over with me in my rented place in Beirut because of the late training course for the competition in the city and an early morning exam the next day. She could save the time of long commutes back and forth (see 4.2.3):

> I went to pick her up at the junction. She was very down and stressed. The competition was taking her lots of time and efforts, and she felt that other

> contestants are quite good. She will be waiting for a phone call today to see if she gets into the final round. “I have no luck, no luck”, she said when we were walking back to the apartment. She also has a Psychology exam at 8 am tomorrow. […] We sat down a bit, she almost cried. She said: “Nobody is understanding me, even my mom. She asked why I had to come back so late, every day going out early and coming back late. The family situation, the financial situation… ouff, ouff.” […] I told her, if the competition doesn’t go well, it’s not the end of the world. She said, “I know, but when you put everything into it, time, money…” I asked her why she joined the competition at the first place, she said, “it’s a chance [to win the prize].” (Field note, 28 November 2018)

The business plan competition was aiming to promote young people’s innovation and entrepreneurship skills. For Sarah, it also means an opportunity to earn much needed income for some family expenses: siblings’ tuitions, transportation fees and amenity bills.

A different sense of urgency was heard from Issam, a university graduate attending a career fair in Jordan, when asked what the biggest challenge is, he replied:

> The biggest challenge is the problem that one’s age has increased in vain. For example, now I am 26, but I haven’t accomplished anything in my life…That’s the most challenging thing in my life…that one’s age increased, but in vain. There’s nothing one does. There’s no basic elements (muqwmat) to do thing in one’s life, to accomplish certain things to benefit other people. There’s nothing. (Interview, 24 April 2019)

Issam’s family is abroad and does not require his support. Issam’s feeling of stuckness is not only about his inability to accomplish something for himself but also to accomplish things to benefit others. Similar to the accounts of other participants mentioned in this chapter, such worry is expressed along with an awareness of the passing time—“one’s age has increased in vain”.

For Aya, a university graduate from Zaatari Camp, Jordan, to be beneficial to the society is part of the purpose of university education:

> All of us need university education in the developing countries, especially now with the progress of technology and the new things…we are catching up in this

> age. […] Those who study majors such as engineering, mechanic matters, for building…all specializations have their importance to the society. Without these specializations, how could the society work? The ignorance will spread and there will be no progress. (Interview, 24 April 2019)

Aya's family is from the rural area of Syria and has settled in the camp since she was in the 7th grade. Her family is financially stable and highly supportive of her parents pursuing higher education. She associates education with the society's development and its place in the world. The linkage also reflects the expectation towards the funded refugee students of their role in contributing to the society. Such discourse is not only used by scholarship programs or funding partners, but also integral to the students' imagination about themselves. Aya also stated in the same conversation about the scholarship's role: "How many people have graduated, these individuals will become beneficial for the society." Not being able to make use of one's education, therefore, may become a failure to this collective expectation. This corresponds to the Bellino (2018)'s observations on the graduates in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, where educational attainment is "imbued with collective goals for nation-building" and therefore school leavers' success and failure are not only individual but also collective (p. 543).

Section 6.2 traverses from Hanan's complex experiences of time and her continuous tries in making a meaningful future, to the social expectations of marriage and self-establishment, supporting family and benefiting others. A good life, as shown in students' concerns and expressions, cannot be reduced to merely economic terms of employability, but is oriented towards various relational and collective expectations. HE in this case is not purely an instrumental or financial venture, but intrinsically social. The participants' anxious awareness of passing time runs through the section: while age is increasing, one's own expectations or those laden with social and cultural significances remain unfulfilled. The next

section turns the focus on to how they actively engage with the prolonged waits as the everyday time continues to flow.

6.3 Negotiating the waits and continuing to hope

Participants' waiting as shown above does not negate their agency in making a meaningful future. While everyday time continues to flow and urgency felt, strategies are devised not only to survive but to negotiate the wait so to continue to hope. What follows includes various strategies devised to alleviate the waits. While the physical, social, existential mobility experienced in higher education reached an end, participants seek continuing the mobility spatially and virtually. On the other hand, most of the participants experienced a hectic period with punctuated, short-term learning and training provided by NGOs. Active participation in these educational programs becomes a way to negotiate the stalemate where one might be idling amidst social expectations mentioned in the above sections. Finally, while participants know very well the nature of protracted displacement and limited potentiality in the future, investing in higher education and imagining an abstracted, far away future has become a strategy to stay in hope.

6.3.1 Like a drowning man clenching on a straw: spatial and virtual mobility

Ghassan Hage's work on migrants shows how a viable life requires "existential mobility" or symbolic mobility in which one feels being "going somewhere" instead of nowhere. Migration as a physical form of mobility is a hope for regaining the existential mobility (Hage and Papadopoulos, 2004; Hage, 2009). "Commuting" is a theme emerged from the field note containing how scholarship students often journeyed a long way day-to-day in order to attend their university classes. Sarah and the sisters' take long trips to and from the university and

school in Lebanon (see 4.2.3) and scholarship students commute from city to city across Jordan:

> I come and go. My brother lives in Amman, I have place there. It's hard for me to keep going to Irbid, to Zarqa and to Amman. I keep going and coming going and coming. Everyday I strained myself traveling 220 km. At least. 220 kilo meter these times 200 days, how many it becomes? 44000 km. Staying 3 years studying, it will become 122000 kilo meters, if I didn't study in the University, I'd travel around the earth for 3 times. Right? (Interview, 7 April 2019)

Mohsen and Tariq were accounting on how much he spent day-to-day in Jordan as Mohsen told me: "most of the scholarship are spent on books […] and transportation. Each day I spent one dinar ($1.41), for some are two." He said Tariq might have to spend two dinars ($ 2.82) each day as he dwells in Zaatari camp away from the town, "and he walks a lot. Have you seen the camp? He walks a lot." In a literally sense, educational opportunities make students move. Through commuting for university classes, they experience physical mobility. Such experience of mobility is at risk once the courses/programmes come to an end. Indeed, students' answers to "what do you expect after you graduate?" more often than not include to travel, or to continue for a master's degree—moving on or moving away. Facing the very limited opportunities available in where they were, to endure or to continue waiting might be too painful. To hope for "the future" that was promised throughout one's educational journey, many invested their time and effort in plans to emigrate.

Qusay whose marriage mentioned above was one of the participants who were exhausting means to leave for another country. Qusay had already had a university degree in Syria, he once carefully expressed about what studying might mean for him:

> If I wanted to study, I'd not have games, mobile… but if I am mentally tired, stressed... studying becomes the last thing people are thinking about. They are thinking about safety, that the parents are living well and safe. But for studying, one cheats. It's not the priority. For every Syrian here, livelihood is the priority.

> Studying, if [the chance] comes, is supplementary. If there is scholarship, they sign up because they benefit from it and there's no expenses, money comes instead.

As we were joking about cheating in exams, he said frankly:

> Actually, I have finished [with the university] but because of the 200 dollars stipend from the scholarship…I am doing this [not studying seriously]. The previous four years in the university, I was not like this. I was studying.

While Qusay's words cannot represent all the students otherwise striving hard to pursue educational opportunities, it demonstrates the multifaceted and pragmatic use of these opportunities. Facing the challenges of lack of formal employment opportunities and irregular labour income, scholarships become a strategy to survive. Qusay had attempted to travel via a smuggling route by boat from Northern Lebanon previously. During the time when he was unable to attend the final exams and the funding source was not going to fund him any longer, he attempted to apply for resettlement by forging a marriage, as I noted:

> […] Then he told me about his attempt to travel which he had spent the last four months working on: He has a female friend whose husband died and she's alone with two children. She got a chance from UNHCR to resettle and he suggested that they fake a marriage, and once they reach the UK, they can separate. She said no initially, but eventually she agreed with the plan. They went to the camp at the border, where there's a fraudulent sheikh who helped issuing them a marriage certificate, which cost him 50.000LL ($33). They went for two meetings at UNHCR. They asked him whether they love each other, and asked her whether he is violent, etc. Everything went well, they were waiting for the embassy to call, but then when UNHCR called him, his wife picked up the phone, and she got upset that he's planning to travel. She told them that she's his wife. UNHCR has now put him onto the blacklist. The woman was also unable to travel. "A pure loss," he sighed. (Field note, 28 November 2018)

After I left Lebanon, I had his news about his preparation to travel via smuggling route to Greece in April 2019, and again in November, he told me he was waiting his passport with a visa to Sudan, and from Sudan he would go to Algeria and take a boat to Spain: "from Algeria we buy a boat and sail to a place where the injustice of Arab cannot reach us."

Fadi is a university graduate in the French language and a teacher in an informal education centre in Lebanon. Fadi comes from an urban area in Syria, and his family is financially stable, able to support large sums that occurred during his visit to Syria in avoiding military conscription. Although a rather steady income compared to many others, he was still determined to leave: “The best thing is to live and work in a nice place, to not to be discriminated.” He accounted for the incident: “Unlike yesterday, the party (Hezbollah) stopped me [at the checkpoint]. They don’t let me get off the van, and told us ‘you guys are Syrians? Why don’t you go back to your country?’” Once, during a chat with Fadi, he told me that he recently got an email from a foreign organization to which he applied:

> “They asked me to send a motivation letter, but I forgot what my motivation was!” It was just three days ago. It was a Spanish organization. “I forgot why I sent it.” I suggested that he looked at the email he sent three days ago, but he only sent his CV without any other content. Trying to find a clue from the email, we used Google Translate to translate the Spanish word of “equinoterapias” from the name of the organization “Asociación Española de Equinoterapias” [Equin means horse, horse-vet so it means.] In the end we clicked the link, and while waiting for the connection, he said, “It’s probably something about horses” and the Facebook main page was a very pretty horse picture. I laughed at how ridiculous it was. He scrolled down to the page and said, “now I remember what the story is, it was a vet training or something, and I was thinking maybe I will have chance to travel.” I told him that he probably needs to narrow his target, but he said, “But I need to try. I try.” “You know there’s a proverb in Arabic: the drowning person clenches on a straw.” He explained, “when you are drowning in a sea, even a straw you grab it. Lebanon is like the sea,” he said. He would try any opportunity that he came across. (Field note, 18 September 2018)

Both Fadi’s and Qusay’s episodes show the attempt to travel as a way to manage the continuous wait for the “good future” to happen. Bakewell (2008a) critically examines how development interventions often assume that migrants leave home is because of the development failure at home and that development is to be sedentary and place bound. In the context of Africa, she writes, “there is an underlying sense that African migrants must be

desperate to abandon their families and take the dangerous journey to reach Europe as a last resort" (p. 1354). Closely reflecting on this point, I ask whether the above accounts flatten the participants' hopes for a life abroad as merely out of desperation. Indeed, "life abroad", especially in Europe and other wealthier countries, is often casted as the vision of a good life and there are more to it than merely getting out of desperation. Keeping mobile existentially is what drive Qusay's attempt to leave while Fadi also longs for a more inclusive society.

While opportunities of resettlement and scholarship abroad continue to be limited, some have resorted to virtual outlets and opportunities. Virtual courses and online degrees have been promoted as a solution for displaced students' limited access to higher education (see Pherali and Abu Moghli, 2019). Virtual employment and other innovative solutions may offer new opportunities as political solution remained an impasse, however, such opportunities' availability, accessibility and sustainability remain in question. Nadir, whose experiences documented in Chapter 4, had accounted his friend's success as a Youtuber in Turkey. Nadir believed that such success requires networks and resources that only accessible by going abroad. Practically, creative production such as videos and photography requires not only electronic equipment, but also a period of voluntary labour where one hopes for the future progress and employment (Alacovska, 2019; Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013), both were unaffordable in Nadir's situation. Nevertheless, an important outlet of "going somewhere" was Nadir's engagement in the "Pubg" game (see 4.3.4): engaging in the mobility of a virtual character in a virtual world has become a strategy to alleviate and temporarily break away from the stuckness. As described in Sheller and Urry (2006), the self beyond physical body is "spread out and made mobile as a series of traces in cyberspace" (p. 222). In Nadir's case, the

icon seen in Figure 8 in Chapter 4, becomes “the self” going to places and experiencing the mobility.

6.3.2 Staying busy is to stay in hope

Earlier in section 6.2.1, I analyse Hanan’s constant opportunity seeking—signing up for different training courses and volunteering opportunities—as a way to negotiate the anxiety of witnessing the passing time, a way to negotiate the wait. The humanitarian educational programmes may bear the agenda of turning the young refugees into “skilled”, self-sufficient, neoliberal youths (Wagner, 2019). Regardless of what kind of agenda these educational programmes may have, Hanan seized whichever opportunity that was available to her because there was no other way to engage with her vision for the long-term future.

Not only Hanan experienced such busy, frantic times of attending training courses while having other family responsibilities. Akram whose story is briefly mentioned above (6.2.2) accounted how he was attending too many programs that he failed Baccalaureate exams in the previous year. After five years since Akram stopped his schooling at 9th grade, he decided to register for the independent Baccalaureate exams for adult learners in Lebanon. He found and started attending a local charity school which offered free exam preparation lessons for adults. However, during the same period, he was also attending an English course offered by an American NGO and a British NGO’s entrepreneur and innovation program for 6 months. Having been working for a small local aluminium business in repairing window frames and doors, he said he didn’t work much that year because he was juggling between these courses, and “maybe that’s why I failed [the exam].” When I met him, he had decided to register for the exams again. Besides the exam preparation, he worked during the day and was attending yet another free English course offered by a university in the evening.

Despite active participation, some have come to see certain training courses and diploma opportunities as a way of advertising or propaganda. Qusay once stated that the university which offers diploma courses "makes Syrian students as a tool of publicity". "They are actually of no use for Syrian students' academic level," Qusay explained to me. Fadi, whose attempts to travel documented above, also participated several programs and acquired different diplomas: "I have done many…a business management diploma, a training course on household violence..." He expressed that he felt like wasting time here, he was not getting any "**academic** credential," he emphasized. During our last meeting, he was considering doing a Master program in Educational Management in Lebanon. He was weighing between two universities which—one has a discounted tuition for Syrian students and would cost about $3500 and he would be able to pay in several instalments, while the other university would be cheaper around $2400 but require payment in full, which he was unable to afford.

The value of short-term diplomas, training programs and courses, while welcomed by most of my participants as an opportunity to engage with their long-term vision, many continue to seek "real", full-time academic training as a reassurance for future plans. Hanan, for example, after years of juggling in between family responsibilities and different training courses, she was still searching ways to conclude her university studies.

For those who were enrolled in university, staying in university also became a strategy to survive and to avoid the bleak reality after graduation. Scholarship, if provided, would be a way to survive the harsh economic situation for many, as Qusay alluded to in the previous section. In addition to the scholarship stipend, as a student, Qusay was also able to get a cheaper phone line deal and have an ID for cheaper medical care. Staying in university could also delay the fact of returning to the reality of having no work other than seasonal, harsh

labour work. During a meeting with one of the student group organizers in Beirut, answering to my question of whether he had graduated from the university, he said:

> "No, not yet, [I still have] this semester and the Spring semester, but if there's no work, I will extend after Fall semester to look for a job. I will leave some courses and credits not to graduate, then I can also do work for the [student organization]." Other than the university, he is also doing a diploma at [a university] in Micro-finance. I asked what he is going to do after all these programs and diploma. He said with a gesture, "the CV will be so long, and the certificates stack… but here, there's no jobs…after all these efforts you go working for $200…It's very bad." (Interview, 26 October 2018)

In this sense, staying in the university is to keep the student identity, to still be able to engage in activities that are meaningful. No matter how many diplomas pursued, and skills acquired, the graduates were still meeting the same reality, not "the future" promised by the educational programs. Nevertheless, attending these punctuated, short-term programs continue to be a strategy for the young people to stay in hope.

In addition, quality of the universities was also key to participants' expectation towards the future. Many have the expectation that their degrees associated with universities that have oversea branches or high international standard would enable future mobilities including continuing education abroad and better employment prospects.

In Jordan, Bassam had tried twice registering with a scholarship program but failed to be admitted to a major he preferred. Bassam has a relatively good socio-economic background and relied on a relative for financial support when he first moved to Jordan. During the time we met, he had decided not to continue trying, as he felt a university degree might not help him much. Nevertheless, five years of being in Jordan, his timeline was filled with many punctuated, short-term periods of learning, working and "volunteering". We had our first meeting in Amman, after he just visited an "immigration office" which I understood

as an emigration consulting office. He was carrying a file case with all his certificates. When I asked him to put down dates and major events in a timeline:

> He started with point 1- finished high school in 2013; 2- […] I figured I should be talking to him while he's writing. […] And after some more questions, he said: how about you ask, and I answer. I then took over the job of writing the timeline while he answered to the questions. […] He lived with his aunt in Zarqa for one year while he was working in a restaurant. Afterwards, he got a job at an NGO. At some point as I was asking about which NGO, which year, he said, he's got all the certificates in that file, he showed it to me one by one. And as we lost in the certificates, titles, and periods one after another, I asked whether he has an CV—since I wanted things chronically to fit into a timeline. He said: "It's good that you remind me of the CV…It's easier for you and for me." But his CV is not listed chronologically […] Between his first job "volunteering" and now, he had attended several programs, workshops, English courses (Oct 2016-Feb 2017) with NGOs as well as a diploma courses on Hotel Management in 2016 (which last for 10 months). He also "volunteered" with another NGO for teaching finance management lessons to elderly women, and "volunteered" with UNICEF in visiting children in primary school for three months in 2017, as well as with International Medical Corps for one month. (Field note, 19 January 2019)

The jobs were officially called "volunteering", as written in all the certificates. As in chapter 5 also noted, "volunteering" is a practical manoeuvre used by NGOs to recruit Syrians in executing educational and humanitarian projects. However, it also means irregular, periodic income. He told me: "Every year I will have some months without work." During the meeting, I was expecting Bassam's experiences to be listed in a chronological order as if these experiences would tell a progressive development of one's learning and career trajectory. Yet, how could one keep track on all these supposedly "developmental" yet short-term and sporadic experiences with a coherent trajectory in mind?

The punctuated time that Bassam experienced over the years was nevertheless a way to stay hopeful for the future, as Hanan also experienced. Other than finding ways to travel,

he told me he was looking for another opportunity in the field which he had come to define as his work: social support for children, one of the work experiences he had and enjoyed.

6.3.3 The open future as the source of hope

In Chapter 6, an abstract, decontextualized "open future" is employed to maintain hope—a strategy employed both by the scholarship programmes and the students themselves. Other participants also convey this "open future" in various way.

During my visit to Hadeel's (25) home in early February 2019, she just got the term results of her third-year university study in Education in Jordan, an average of 85.3 which was graded as "*imtiaz*" (Excellence). Hadeel's family had a good socio-economic profile but was struggling at the time when we met. As she set aside the cored zucchini ready to cook later for lunch, we started a long chat about her educational journey in the living room. She brought up how many people have hoped for the scholarship opportunity she was holding and that

> It's very difficult…there were students who used to work, to help their parents, when the scholarship came out, they stop working to study. How much is studying important to us? It's very important…some people with us are married and [have] family, they also lost their jobs because of studying.

I then asked: How do you feel about your studies? Because in the future… "It's for the future," she picked up my words and continued,

> Us here in Jordan there's no opportunity to work. We are not putting hope here in Jordan, the situation is not yet stable. But maybe to the forward, when we go back to Syria, we got our certificate, we work in something…If one is expecting to emigrate…It's for the future.

Hadeel was clear about the location of hope: "We are not putting hope here in Jordan." The studying is "for the future" elsewhere. By emphasizing the future, Hadeel and many of the about-to-graduate and graduated university students also direct their hope temporally towards a spatial-temporal zone that is not here, now or the near future, but somewhere

distant and uncertain. In another word, hope is not being put in the future that is already known here, but the unknown future elsewhere. For many, investing in an open, faraway, and unknowable future alleviates the present or nearby reality of stuckness and waiting.

An imagination of an open future could disregard one's knowledge of the possible future: Akram, before our gathering with his friend and his friend's cousin (see 7.2.2), introduced his friend as a graduate from a top university in Syria but working as a delivery rider. He laughed and joked about his own effort in passing the Baccalaureate exams so to get into a university: "Now this wall is empty, I'll go study for four years just to put the certificate there." Despite the understanding that a degree might end up doing very little in the circumstances of continued political and social disenfranchisement, Akram continues his efforts in the tangible steps of educational attainment: preparing for retaking the subjects he failed at the Baccalaureate exams and applying for scholarships and university. Akram invests his hope in these small steps of progress as well as a longer-term future that is unknowable, subject to change and filled with possibilities. Similarly, in the ethnography on Lebanese migrants, Hage (2005) find that, for his interlocutor, "the promise of a better future" is "encapsulated in the 'I don't know'". "Better the uncertainty, which also means the possibility of mobility, than the perceived certainty of immobility" (p. 474). At present, for Hadeel and Akram, pursuing university itself is an experience of existential mobility.

Treating future as open to any possibilities regardless of the context may invoke the critique of how the modern industrial-capitalist societies see future as decontextualized, emptied of content to be filled with anything rather than embedded, embodied and contextual (Adam and Groves, 2014). Nevertheless, in the context of my participants, an open future serves as a source of hope for one to overcome the present impasse. Investing in it is

neither naïve, nor illusional, but a strategy to continue hoping for a meaningful future amidst of the waits.

6.4 Conclusion

Taking into consideration of the structural conditions discussed in Chapter 5, this final chapter draws attention to the refugee students' and graduates' experiences in waiting and hopes for the future. The gaps between the vision of a hopeful future that educational programmes promise and the harsh political and economic environments refugees dwell prompt the questions of "waiting"—waiting for the good to come, waiting for the engagement with long-term vision one invests in education for. Nevertheless, as the chapter shows, the experiences of waiting and hoping are more complex than the static image of the young people "being in limbo" in the prolonged transitioning into adulthood. Indeed, what emerges from the students' accounts and experiences demonstrates the opposite of idling and waiting as observed in the literature on youth and waiting (Jeffrey, 2010; Locke and te Lintelo, 2012). The participants were instead juggling informal work, familial responsibilities and educational opportunities while continue to express a sense of impasse and stuckness.

A focus on the students and graduates' experiences and responses in turn inform the intersecting analyses of the chapter: it is not only about one's displacement, refugeeness, or waiting in terms of physical mobility, but also waiting to become an adult, waiting for generational hope of social mobility, and waiting for contributing to public good. The gender dynamic of waiting also emerges throughout the chapter. Hanan's experiences demonstrates the messiness of waiting and hoping as a young woman, whose experiences of waiting don't normally appear in public spaces and in consequence less accounted for in the literature on

waiting, as discussed in Chapter 2. Marriage and establishing oneself, one the other hand, looms as an important definition for young males' success/failure. Relational and collective dimensions of life are deemed valuable and are intertwined with young refugees' educational pursuit. A simple emphasis on employability, livelihood or school-work transition may only touch upon the surface of what considered meaningful and containing a future.

CONCLUSION

Despite a consistent lack of funding, education has been established as an indispensable part of refugee responses for its protective function in refugee situations. On the other hand, attention to higher education for refugees only increased recently and had not been in line with the trend of HE massification worldwide. "Future" is often at the heart of educational programmes and popular understandings about education. Centring on this outlook towards the future, the project enquires about refugee young people's experiences in and responses to higher education opportunities in Lebanon and Jordan. The first question is informed by the political and historical contexts of global refugee policies as well as Lebanon and Jordan's national responses to other refugees' presence prior to the displacement of the Syrian refugees: *How do the students experience and respond to higher education opportunities and lack thereof under the dominant humanitarian framework of resiliency and the nationalistic framework of development?* The second question takes on the intersecting experiences in the everyday life of the young participants, acknowledging the common struggle for young people in the region and around the world in realizing a viable, meaningful life: *What are the strategies devised in hoping towards higher education, and in negotiating the period of "waiting" as a refugee and as a young person entering adulthood?* These final pages present reflections on the theoretical, methodological and practical implications and the contributions of the thesis. It ends with considerations on the current developments and directions for the research going forward.

Theoretical insights

Negotiating "futureless education"

What emerges from the chapters is a complex picture in which students strategize to maintain hopes for the future as they participate in the often crisis-informed educational opportunities. The thesis contributes to the debate of relief versus development in the field of refugee education. It has explained, through the case of Syrian refugees, how education provision in the current paradigm does not signal a long-term perspective for refugee students to live—rather than to survive—in the host states. It argues that while higher education opportunities may be understood as an enabler of the future, the long-term vision cannot be fulfilled even in the narrowest sense of a future with employment without a corresponding political and legal framework in host states. Without coherent political contexts, educational opportunities would become crisis-informed patchwork that delays, rather than enable the meaningful future and mobilities that students seek. While some literature advocates the understanding of refugee trajectories as diverse and beyond policy categories of return, integration and resettlement and therefore future as "unknowable", this thesis proposes that it is important to continue framing diverse trajectories and an unknowable future under the political frameworks of what is already known. An abstract future, which may be strategized to maintain a vision, runs against how educational hope is embodied: tangible actions and practical steps that are enabled by the possibility of opportunities to engage in education meaningfully as shown in Chapter 4.

While education and higher education can serve as a protective place and a relief measure in emergencies, the thesis contends that the humanitarian approach of providing educational "access" does not automatically "provide" or "give" a future. It extends the argument by explaining that meaningful participation, rather than liminal access, is what embodies education that contains a future. Students and parents consistently strive for, as

they negotiate the barriers that prevent, meaningful participation in education. Education that contains a future is by no mean abstract but is in the very practical sense of ticking the items of a reviewed lesson, of joining the quality education assumed to be provided in, for example, the morning shift or a private school. Meaningful participation is goal-oriented and future-oriented.

Situating Syrian refugees' case in the historical experiences of the host states enables a view critical of the exceptionality of the case. A similar modality in which liminal educational access is provided but without an outlook towards the future can be observed in, for instance, the case of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in which students study Lebanese national curriculum while continuing to face a future without a possibility to practice professions (Shuayb, 2014). While historical backgrounds and policy responses to the two cases are different and changing over time, they inhibit the political and legal frameworks in which "the future" is hard to imagine.

Negotiating exceptionality

The thesis contributes to the literature on constructions of refugees as exceptional subjects through discerning both educational hopes and barriers that are simultaneously created by the policy category of "the refugees". The thesis illustrates with original empirical evidence, that refugees constantly navigate and negotiate the futureless, temporary and crisis-informed vision of education and the exceptional hope that is accentuating on their national marker and "refugee-ness". It also demonstrates how the construction of exceptionality happens during field research. These observations are enabled by the conception of hope in which refugees are not portrayed as exceptional resilient subjects nor passive victims through a pathological gaze.

Contrary to the heroic representation of refugees in higher education and the expectations laden with a future of "return and rebuild", educational hopes are embodied in the actions of networking, commuting, preparing for exams and seeking meaningful participation. That is, in opposition to the exceptionality, educational hopes are indeed mundane and ordinary. Nevertheless, what might be experienced as hiccups and disruptions throughout students' educational pursuits is often induced by the distinction and identification of being a Syrian/refugee. The distinction is not only enacted through legal and bureaucratic procedures of documentation for school registration and exam sittings, but also through the circulation of the success story and, at times, the researcher's gaze on the Syrian refugee as a subject—and her hope of another success story. While the jointly constructed hope of an exceptional story may spark hopeful visions at times, it also tends to remove the subjects from their contexts, the ones that are unable to provide for practical steps towards the hoped-for future. As educational pursuits imply an investment of not only efforts and resources but also emotions, a failed pursuit may therefore lead to a "heartbreak".

Negotiating waiting and waithood

By discussing refugees' "waiting" in the protracted situation with youths' "waithood", the thesis challenges essentialization of "the refugee experience" as distinctive. Rather, refugee young people experience and respond to the waits that may be common to young people in the region and indeed worldwide. Empirically, contrary to the image of being physically, socially and temporally immobile in the so-called "protracted refugee situation", the refugee young people are constantly busy engaging with the educational opportunities that are short-term and temporary while continuing to experience "stuckness" in terms of a viable future.

Through examining the intersecting experiences of waiting, the thesis also contends that students' educational hopes cannot be looked at merely within the frame of higher education access and employability. The familial and collective visions of a good life challenge the narrowed frameworks of both school-to-work transition considered in youth studies as well as the emphasis of employability as a mere purpose of higher education for refugees.

Shifting the gaze to the vulnerable contexts

The conceptual framework of hope allows the interpretation of data through multiple angles as shown in the analyses. Through the framework, the thesis not only complicates the representations of refugees as exceptional subjects, but it also shifts the narratives from individuals as vulnerable to their legal and political contexts. Moreover, hope as a forward-looking process proves useful in discerning the "future" in these contexts. The "experience of the possibility of upward mobility" comes to a halt when students graduate and are unable to seek legal participation in the job market. While the various short-term educational and training programmes provide the opportunities to engage with one's educational hopes, they remain alleviating patchwork and do not allow sustainable and meaningful pathways to the future.

The quality of hope as not fully "aspirational" and agentive but dependent on another agency for fulfilment allows an examination that focuses on the vulnerable structural contexts and moves away from "the vulnerable refugees" or the obscure "human security" frame. The thesis' critique of political frameworks extends to the discourse of resiliency and abstract future, which discourse is currently employed by UN refugee agencies, developmental aids and scholarship programmes. Hope, as a relational, joint practice, cannot be constituted without some other agency for its fulfilment. That is, institutions and funding agencies (among

others, UN agencies, universities, and the national governments) have to recognize that they have a fuller role to play in educational hopes. Students cannot be "resilient" and "hopeful" on their own without a credible and sustainable vision on the structural end. On the other hand, the temporary, short-term patchwork of various training and educational opportunities are being rejected by some of the students as "none-academic" or even merely "propaganda" for marketing the university rather than opportunities that offer a meaningful engagement with the future.

Challenging the humanitarian construction of "hope"

The project takes on the concept of "hope" instead of "aspirations" that is widely discussed in Education and Migration literature. In addition to what is discussed in Chapter 4—hope allows a wider definition that enables the analyses of the aspirational and the wishful; goal-oriented and none-goal oriented dispositions, focusing on the concept of hope allows a direct examination of the increasing usage of "hope" in the current humanitarian discourse on refugees and refugee experiences. Increasingly, "hopehood" becomes a descriptor of the lived experience of refugees (Teferra, 2021) and refugees' voice of "hope" is amplified for demonstrating resiliency and appealing to continuous humanitarian attention[148]. The thesis contributes to the timely understanding of how hope is understood and enacted in educational pursuits during protracted displacement.

The thesis challenges the construction of hope in two ways. First of all, it complicates the notion of hope through demonstrating how hope is understood and embodied on various

[148] For example, the Lutheran World Federation collated and published poems by refugees living in Nairobi and Kakuma in 2020 titled "I am hope", showing "the image of light returns constantly with a radiant and obvious strength". Poems available via https://kenyadjibouti.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/documents/i_am_hope_poems-lwf.pdf

scales—individual, familial and collective. It is within these multi-scalar frameworks of hope that the participants negotiate their future and plans for higher education. On an individual level, hope is embodied in the everyday efforts and an outlook toward the future that is meaningful and tangible; on a familial level, hope is enacted within expectations, responsibilities and care for one another; on a collective level, hope is enmeshed with the meta discourses of rebuild and return, of benefiting the society and making oneself useful. Participants convey a sense of stuckness and frustration under the political and legal structure that does not provide such hope. Nevertheless, an "open future" full of possibilities, keeping busy, and seeking virtual and physical mobilities emerged as strategies for navigating the discrepancy between the discursive expectations and the reality of exclusion from labour participation. These multi-scalar structures and embodiments of hope complicate the meta-frames of emergency access to education, employability and return-and-rebuild that associate "hope" to refugee resiliency and exceptionality.

Secondly, by treating hope as a political process, the thesis politicises the concept that is often used to showcase individual resiliency. Chapter 5, with its detailed analysis on scholarship schemes and participants' strategies of navigating them, shows how legal and political reality constrains the imagination of the "hopeful future". It also shows the contrast and entanglement between the different futures implied in the scholarship programmes and imagined by the participants. The phase-to-phase short-term provision signals an emergency imaginary that de-futurizes while students' strategies to increase access and gain opportunities demonstrate the embodied hope that is future-oriented. On the other hand, students and scholarship programmes alike strategize in responding to the lack of long-term prospects in both countries. Trainings to enhance employability and entrepreneurship are

prevalent while an open horizon of one can make a future wherever they are despite the constraints becomes a way to maintain hopes. In the protracted situation, education programmes become increasingly rely on such open future for its reason for being. For the participants, an open future, contrary to what has been said in the studies of hope and migration, does not signal despair or false hope, but a strategy in itself to continue hoping while other practical steps for the faraway future are being taken.

Ultimately, the thesis puts forward a framework in which "hope" could be better understood. In the context of students' pursuit of higher education in displacement, the three findings chapters point to hope as multiple ongoing and overlapping processes. Chapter 4 evidences hope as a process involving in constant actions in realising what is hoped-for. It also shows how hope is an affective investment bringing about fulfilment but also heartbreaks. Chapter 5 analyses hope as a way of government, a political process involving the production and distribution of "the experience of possibility of upward social mobility" (Hage, 2003, p. 13), of "going somewhere". Here, I might have treated hope as an object for authorities to "produce and distribute" and for people to "own". Nevertheless, by exploring hope as something that involves a political process, I ultimately see hope as the way in which refugee students relate and connect to the authorities—scholarship programmes, schools, universities and nation states—and vice versa. In Chapter 6, I demonstrate hope as a web of relational processes concerning individuals, families and communities.

In both Chapter 5 and 6, I also explore how refugee students themselves utilise hope and open future as a strategy to navigate within the very limited options and to create more prospects in order to remain sane and hopeful. By exploring hope as a strategy, a connection could be made to a similar notion of hope-as-a-method of self-knowledge proposed by

Miyazaki (2004) as mentioned in Chapter 3. In this sense, hope as a strategy that students ustilised to keep striving amidst the constraints could also be interpreted as a method to understand themselves while pragmatically going forward with concrete, small steps. Nevertheless, while Miyazaki highlights hope's indeterminant quality and forward-looking orientation in order to reflect on anthropological knowledge production that tends to orient towards "dead-end critique" or "determinism", I find the strategy used by the students to "keep the future open" is not completely without a teleological trajectory or a goal. Students continue the journey of "go somewhere" with hope's indeterminant quality and forward-looking orientation. Similarly, such hope also reflects the approach of this thesis: an ongoing interpretive journey in generating knowledge that is open to substantiation, revision and extension.

Methodological reflections

Methodologically, the interdisciplinary approach has helped in bringing in refugees' intersecting experiences as well as a more nuanced picture of how refugee students relate to the broader political and geopolitical dynamics. The ethnographic approach to focus on the everyday enables the less visible, mundane practices of the everyday to emerge. It allows a clear picture of the emotive and temporal elements—such as "hope" and "the future"—about education that are often taken for granted. The approach grounds these concepts in the practical acts of educational pursuits and discerns the relational aspect of hope. The reflective approach allows me to reflect the expectations and hopes not "of" the participants but "jointly constructed with" sources within the participants' contexts, including myself as the researcher.

While Chapter 3 accounts for the research's ongoing "dialogical" nature, the project has not set out to be a collaborative endeavour engaging the research participants as equal knowledge producers from setting the agenda to interpretations. At times, I recognize the interpretive power that I have in accentuating what I hope for: why do I see the hope for an "open future" a strategy (Chapter 5) rather than taking the hope as it is, that people do hope for an abstract (individualist neoliberal) future? If hope is a relational process, it would most likely to be benefitting from a dialogue in a more collaborative manner. This consideration points to the question of "giving back" to the communities from whom I gather knowledge and "research data". Carpi (2019b) points out that without fully understanding the local mode of consent, "giving back to communities is just translated into the necessity to promote people-friendly policymaking" (loc 6:12:05). Interlocutors' voices and views, and an alternative way of producing knowledge are often left out as researchers' (outsiders) intellectual authority remain unquestioned (Carpi, 2019b). The research has not engaged with the question of "what's the point?" that is raised among the potential interlocutors. "Giving back" would have meant more if the research agenda is negotiated.

With higher educational opportunities that already significantly lack funding and in the case of Syrian refugees, donors' interest is gradually fading, being critical of the way existing opportunities are provided, the thesis risks doing what is the opposite of "hoping"—the dead-end of critique and determinism. Here, I find thinking with Giroux's (1986) critique to critical scholars useful. He suggests that the failure to move beyond the language of critique (that schools are seen exclusively as agencies of social reproduction, producing obedient workers for industrial capital) risks writing off schools, teachers, and students (as mere extensions of the logic of capital). With the language of critique, institutions (such as schools) are no longer

being engaged as “sites of possibility” (p. 87). While Giroux is interested in critical pedagogy that is in close connection to practices that this thesis does not set out to do, the reminder to engage with the institutions as a site of possibility remains instructive. The project’s ethnographic approach allows a space for the interpreted/mediated participants’ voices. Students themselves are often the fiercest critics of the institutions that create barriers, discriminatory practices, or unsustainable “opportunities” as they continue to hope with what is available. The thesis’ critique is not meant to dismiss the existing opportunities but to offer an opportunity to interrogate “the future” that is often presented as a neutral vision in the educational opportunities: what kind of future and whose future?

Empirical findings and recommendations for future research

The project fills the critical gap of research on refugee higher education in Southern contexts. Its focus on students’ experiences and responses indepth also enrich the current literature on the case of Syrian refugees. By engaging with the meaning of “hope” and “the future” often presented in the practical field of refugee education and higher education, it argues that education and higher education for refugees cannot fulfil “hopes for the future” with the dominant humanitarian logic of minimal provision. Therefore, education for refugees at all levels should be examined under the rubrics of legal and political frameworks in which “the future” may dwell. Through looking at “the future”, the thesis also debunks the misconception that providing higher education risks privileging elite individuals in emergency contexts—the possibility of participating in higher education makes education for students in schools meaningful and therefore critical part of the education for development as opposed to education as a relief measure.

The thesis also provides a fuller picture of what it means to participate in HE in refugee contexts including the everyday concerns and care for one another in the familial and communal contexts. It accentuates refugee students not as passive victims merely experiencing hardships, but actors who negotiate, strategize and initiative responses to the challenges and barriers. Future research may take account of the following recommendations based on a critical reflection of this work and an observation of the ongoing development of the field.

As Chapter 4 alludes to, the research's focus on the policy category "Syrian refugees" has inevitably created boundaries and risked essentialising the "refugee experience". A research project defining more fluidly its subject and scope to account for the complex, overlapping identities, histories and movements may help engage views and experiences that could tell a fuller picture and perhaps better inform the current policies and politics. Moreover, centring on higher education access "provided by" institutions and scholarship programmes, I may at times position refugee students as merely "recipients" of opportunities rather than those who also respond to displacement and who provide (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016b). This could be done differently by tuning in and accentuating more the collective endeavours (some being mentioned in Chapter 5) and modes of provisions and collaborations outside the North-to-South assistance paradigm.

While using hope as an analytical concept, the role of faith is not mentioned throughout the chapters. Indeed, large-scale educational programs and scholarships from Northern providers are predominantly addressed in secular terms while secularity is not neutral and has its own web of norms and consequences (Wilkinson, 2020). During the fieldwork, I did attend to how students participate in local religious learning centres and I

attended a self-organized Quran study group where I had a sense that these religious learning opportunities provided socializing spaces without the segregation element of the double-shift schools in both countries. These findings eventually were not included as I feel the background and literature that I had been focused on would not suffice. The previous point of tuning in educational provisions outside the Northern paradigm would have benefited from a focus on faith actors and their roles in providing educational access.

The project began to take shape in late 2017. The fieldwork began in Lebanon in Autumn 2018 and I left Jordan in late Spring 2019. "The future" in 2019, 2020 and 2021 may be very different from what we—both the participants and I—have imagined/prepared towards in the beginning. In Lebanon, 2019 witnesses the beginning of an economic crisis and a series of countrywide demonstrations against the ruling political class, banking secrecy and failed government (Dakroub, 2019). The unrest has caused university closures that some of my participants had experienced, in which case virtual classrooms were used as a solution that students had to abruptly adapt to, well preceding the school and university closures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in the following year. In 2020, both Lebanon and Jordan experienced lockdowns and curfews, in addition to Lebanon's Beirut Blast and worsening inflation. While "crises" rampaged, one after another, participants that I have been in contact with continue to seek ways and device strategies to complete educational journeys and hope towards a future not only to be survived.

Prior to these "crises", online learning has already been burgeoning as an innovative solution for refugees' structurally imposed immobilities in protracted situations (Pherali and Abu Moghli, 2019; Menashy and Zakharia, 2020). The instabilities experienced recently intensify the need for virtual solutions. However, do online classrooms enable meaningful

participation? Briefly mentioned in 2.2.3, higher education is believed to have the potential of embodying a critical space for a new educational future: the one that goes beyond the existing framework of education for "nation building" and market-oriented "human capital" solutions (Pherali and Abu Moghli, 2019), and that supports the voices and practices that challenge the current power imbalance in knowledge production, resource distribution and the ability of agenda-setting (Avery and Said, 2017). Milton and Barakat (2015) also suggest, in the Middle East, in contrast to "formative" school contexts where pupils may be "drawn from the same ethnic, sectarian, geographic, or class based groups", higher education provides an opportunity to be "transformative" on campuses where "students meet 'the other,' often for the first time" (p. 6). This underlines higher education's transformative potential in providing a physical space for students to meet and socialize. Campuses that function as critical *spaces* may not be replaced by the virtual learning opportunities that are becoming an instant solution for educational access. While not directly examining virtual solutions, the thesis has shown that even when students were restricted in participating in person due to lack of financial means to commute, meaningful participation beyond liminal access remains significant. To bring this aspect forward, more investigations on technology interventions in refugee education/education in the host countries will be timely and informative.

Policy recommendations

What can be derived from the thesis as recommendations for policymakers are listed as follows. For educational funders, it is paramount to redefine education and higher education as developmental and future-oriented rather than part of humanitarian relief for emergencies. This redefinition would entail a political process that required funders to work with the host governments in considering the right to work for refugees in professional sectors

and at the same time facilitating local graduates' participation. For funders of the potential countries of resettlement, educational funding should not be treated as a strategy of containment but a genuine sharing of resources for development, regardless of where or how students would like to develop towards. In terms of schooling, for both the funders and host governments, as Brun and Shuayb (2020) also argue, what is required is to invest in the local inclusive provision of education that tend to both access and quality and of which curriculum is not nationalist-framed but adapted to students from various backgrounds.

For higher education scholarship programmes, potential or existing programmes would benefit greatly from students' participation in the programmes' design, taking into account of diverse needs of the students, their familial responsibilities, be it paid work or care work, and the need for financial support for having to commute from afar. Especially in Jordan, students have reported that the major scholarship programme concentrates its provision in one university, which results in long daily commutes. For HE and other funders engaging in educational activities, considering a sustainable future, students would benefit from more stable and consistent funding sources. Instead of different sources of funding for short-term training programmes in competition with one another, long-term scholarships for academic credentials may be more in line with "the future". Programmes may also consider offering preparation courses for those who struggle to prepare for national exams.

For the hosting governments, students should be allowed to sit for exams regardless of their participation in any public or private school. As in Lebanon's case, students are allowed to partake in Baccalaureate exams independently, and it has already facilitated collective initiatives benefiting both refugees as well as local disadvantaged students in preparing for the exams and accessing university education (Section 5.3.3). Jordan, on the other hand, has

not allowed those who have not completed secondary schooling or the equivalent to sit for the national exams.

For UNHCR and the national governments regarding border crossings, considering physical mobilities, while safety and security of "return" is a paramount consideration, the authorities should consider refugees' mobilities across the borders for diverse reasons including education such as registering for remote courses in an institution in Syria, taking exams, and gaining certifications. That is, a safe passage should be facilitated across the borders for the refugees to continue preparing themselves for the future without losing their rights as refugees.

Concluding remarks

The project embarked on researching higher education access in the case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan. It argues that the distinctions that are imposed through the policy categories of "Syrians" and "refugees" are often setting barriers and exceptionality of which students and parents are constantly negotiating. It also finds that "access" is not enough. Without a long-term perspective towards the future, education opportunities tend to only be a patchwork series of short-term options delaying viable futures. A meaningful future is holistic, it may be an educational pursuit or a job, but also one's role as an adult in a community. The thesis places the "hopeful" language of "the future" in higher education for refugees at the centre and suggests that critical examinations of the future in the present may eventually help in shaping the future that is meaningful.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Development of DAFI scholarship relevant to refugees in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan[149]

Year	Number of students (MENA budget %)	Main events
1992-2006	1000+ (3-4%)	- The majority of the students were originated from and pursued studies in African countries. - DAFI runs in Syria since 1999 funding a very small number of students (<8) from Iraq, Somalia and Yemen.
2007	1082 (7%)	- Marking 15 years, substantial increase promised. - UNHCR-UNICEF Joint Appeal, increase of UNHCR educational budget (USD 37-70 m) - DAFI office opened in Jordan to assist Iraqi refugees thanks to "a special intervention of the German Government"
2008	1799 (11%)	
2009	2072 (12%)	
2010	1911 (14%)	- UNHCR in Syria is sponsoring about 300 Iraqi students annually from funding received locally from Italian Embassy and other donors.
2011	1779 (11%)	- New Education Strategy (2012-2016): tertiary education as core component of UNHCR's protection and durable solution mandates. - DAFI program terminates in Syria as substituted by funds channeled locally.
2012	2045 (12%)	- Syria as a refugee host country (hosting Iraqi) becomes country of origin.
2013	2221 (14%)	- Syria becomes the major source countries of refugees among Afghanistan and Somalia. - The German Government's additional contribution funds the first cohort of Syrians in Jordan and Egypt. - UNHCR looks for additional sources of funding responding the increasing needs.
2014	2242 (18%)	- DAFI sets up its programmes in Turkey and Lebanon and expands in Jordan and Egypt for Syrian refugees. - "Säid Foundation joined the programme with a multi-year contribution to 100 Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan."

[149] The data and information are gathered from *DAFI Annual Report* 2007 through 2019 and Claas Morlang and Sheri Watson (2007)'s *Tertiary refugee education impact and achievements: 15 years of DAFI*. Available online.

2015	2321 (25%)	- Lebanon held the largest DAFI programme in the region. - "Higher Education Consideration" policy brief as scholarship programmes increased. - Education 2030 Framework for Action includes commitment to refugees' higher education access.
2016	4652 (40%)	- A 98% increase, of the 2,718 new DAFI scholarships 65% goes to Syrian students. - A tripartite agreement between the Asfari Foundation, the Hands Up Foundation and the Saïd Foundation, began the support for 125 Syrian students in Lebanon and Jordan. - Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) highlights higher education's role.
2017	6723 (42%)	- DAFI program restarts in five Governorates in Syria, funded by a private partner.
2018	6866 (51%)	- UN Assembly affirmed the Global Compact on Refugees: stakeholders will contribute to facilitate access to education at all levels.
2019	8347 (47%)	- 3-year strategy on resettlement and complementary pathways.

Appendix 2: Flyer used for recruiting participants



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مطلوب متطوعين لدراسة بحثية

اسمي وين-يو باحثة دراسات عليا في قسم التعليم في جامعة برمنجهام. أنا أبحث عن فرصة لزيارة الطلاب السوريين الذين يأملون أو يستعدون للالتحاق بالجامعة أو معهد تعليم عالي آخر في لبنان و أيضا الطلاب السوريين الذين بدأوا دراستهم الجامعية بعد مجيئهم إلى لبنان.

موضوع الدراسة:

هذا المشروع هو عن تجارب الطلاب السوريين بحصول التعليم العالي في لبنان. يهدف المشروع إلى فهم نظرة الطلاب و عائلاتهم الى التعليم العالي و آمالهم المستقبلية. كما يهدف المشروع إلى تسجيل آراء الطلاب السوريين فيما يتعلق بالفرص التي توفرها المنظمات الغير حكومية و أفكارهم حول السياسات الجامعية في لبنان.

مشاركتك في هذه الدراسة طوعية تماماً وبدون مقابل مادي.

هذه دراسة بحثية سرية:

سأكون حذرة جداً و لن أجمع أو أكتب أية معلومات يمكن أن تضر سمعتك و سمعة عائلتك و أصدقائك و مركزكم القانوني.

[redacted]

September 5, 2018 ·

سلامات....
صديقتي من التايوان باحثة دراسات عليا قسم التعليم بجامعة برمنجهام.
هي بحاجه لمتطوعين سوريين طلاب بكالوريا او معاهد تقنيه وناويين يفوتو جامعه بلبنان. حابه تقعد معهم اكتر من قعده وتزورهم ببيوتهم وعند عائلاتهم لتعرف اكتر عن حياة الطلاب والصعوبات والسياسات والنظام المعيشي الخ...
المشاركه طوعيه وكل المعلومات رح تبقى سريه. بالمقابل هي رح تعلم الناس يلي رح يشاركو معها بالبحث لغه انكليزيه من خل... See More

See Translation

57 34 Comments 1 Share

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[redacted]

Appendix 3: Numbers of Ministry of Education (MoE), private and UNRWA schools and student in Jordan (2009-2018) [150]

UNRWA		private schools		MoE		authority	MoE	UNRWA
double shift	one shift	doublshift	one shift	double shift	one shift	#of student (# of school)	Total #of student (# of school)	
- (154)	- (20)	0	365905 (2140)	- (258)	- (3113)	2009/2010 (1-13, 3-1)	356947 (3371)	119903 (174)
109190 -	8767 -	0	382867 (2368)	128193 (262)	1014815 (3171)	2010/2011 (p. 6, 18)	1143008 (3433)	117957 (173)
106444 -	7919 -	0	406327 (2478)	116929 (248)	1037951 (3238)	2011/2012 (p. 4, 18)	1154880 (3486)	114363 (173)
104792 (156)	8046 (17)	0	424999 (2600)	126702 (270)	1047274 (3275)	2012/2013 (p. 9, 45)	1173976 (3545)	112838 (173)
106328 (156)	8597 (18)	0	451139 (2708)	239746 (463)	1025402 (3231)	2013/2014 (p. 9, 18)	1265148 (3694)	114925 (174)
106575 (156)	9530 (19)	0	473985 (2871)	231367 (462)	1038519 (3254)	2014/2015 (p. 9, 45)	1269886 (3716)	116105 (175)
105075 (159)	11677 (22)	0	499467 (3055)	235952 (450)	1029264 (3233)	2015/2016 (p. 11, 42)	1265216 (3683)	116752 (181)
110537 (150)	12145 (21)	0	515432 (3221)	362578 (708)	973789 (3083)	2016/2017 (p. 23, 56)	1336367 (3791)	122682 (162)
113235 (159)	6928 (12)	0	534809 (3211)	384826 (746)	994015 (3089)	2017/2018 (p. 25, 59)	1378841 (3835)	120163 (171)
113474 (156)	7849 (13)	0	552530 (3354)	384418 (724)	1039070 (3141)	2018/2019 (p. 23, 54)	1423488 (3865)	121323 (172)

Appendix 4: Number of Syrian students in KG-Grade 9 in morning shift and number of non-Lebanese students in afternoon shift (2011-2019)[151]

Type of school	Public (morning)	Public (afternoon) (non-Lebanese)	Private (free)	Private (paying)	UNRWA (Palestinian from Syria)	total
2011/2012	18935	-	8299			-
2012/2013	43537	-	16827			-
2013/2014	63435	-	8702	17001	418	-
2014/2015	39791	83675 /59024*	7585	15681	487	147219/ 122568*
2015/2016	57934	85804	11209	22770	645	178362
2016/2017	61774	124140	12839	30739	749	230241
2017/2018	54707	154209	12954	33752	893	256515
2018/2019	48797	153268	11834	36479	936	251314

[150] Data gathered from the *Report and Statistics* section of the Ministry of Education website. [Online] [Accessed 26 Jan 2021] Available from: https://www.moe.gov.jo/en/reports. The data sources per year are hyperlinked above.

[151] The data are compiled from the following sources 1) CRDP. 2018. "*Schools in Lebanon: numbers and indicators*" (المدرسة في لبنان: أرقام ومؤشرات) p. 12. Available from: https://www.crdp.org/en/studies-and-researches/0-المدرسة-في-لبنان-أرقام-ومؤشرات; 2) CRDP. *Statistics Bulletin. (2013-2014 onward)* Available from: https://www.crdp.org/en/statistics-bulletin; 3) MEHE. 2019. "*RACE II fact sheet".* Available from: http://racepmulebanon.com/images/RACE-PMU-Fact-Sheet-September-2019.pdf [all accessed on 3 February, 2021]; *Ambiguous data.

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