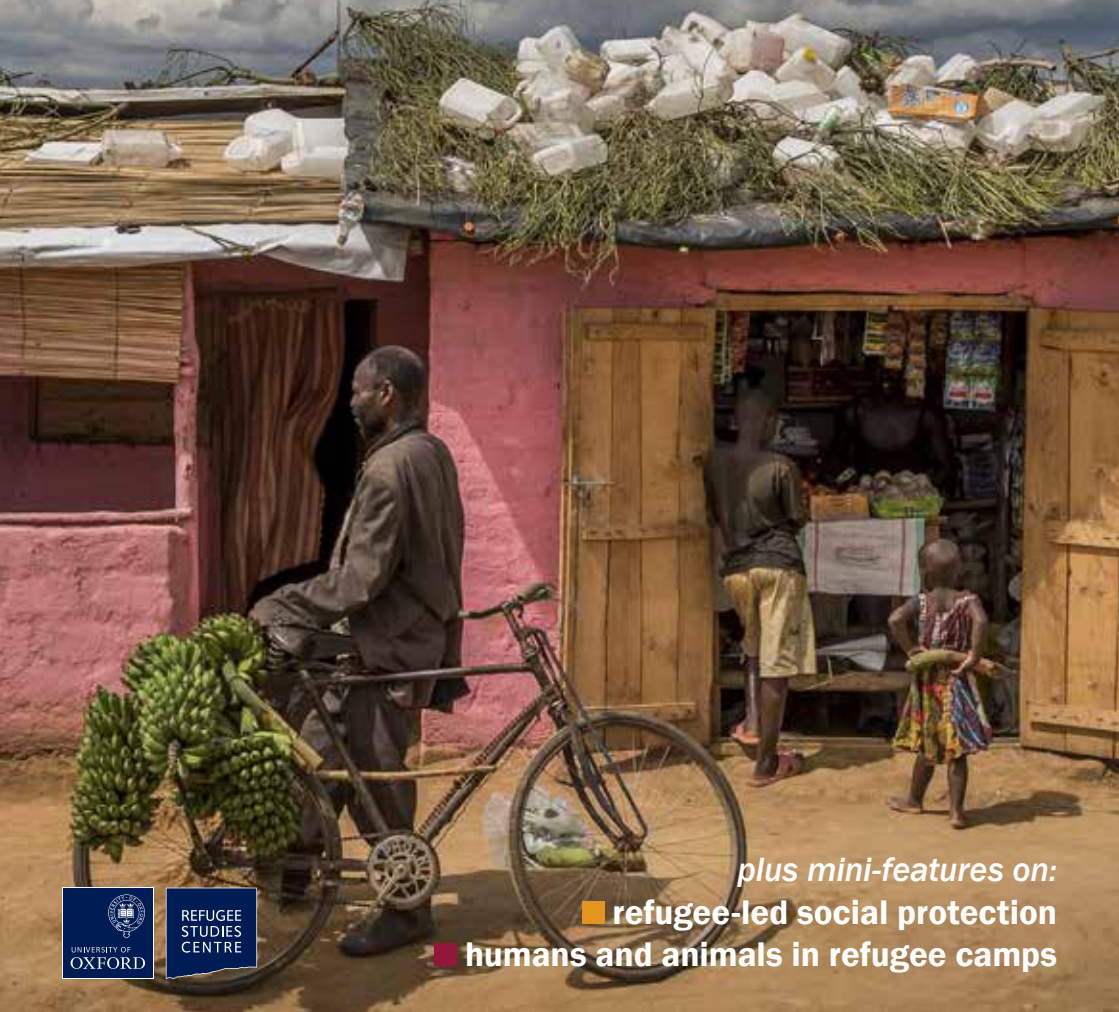


FORCED MIGRATION review

Issue 58

June 2018

Economies rights and access to work



plus mini-features on:

■ **refugee-led social protection**

■ **humans and animals in refugee camps**

Forced Migration Review

(FMR) provides a forum for the regular exchange of practical experience, information and ideas between researchers, refugees and internally displaced people, and those who work with them. It is published in English, Arabic, Spanish and French by the Refugee Studies Centre of the Oxford Department of International Development, University of Oxford.

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From the editors

When people are forced by conflict or other circumstances to leave their homes, they usually also leave behind their means of economic activity and subsistence. In their new location, they may not be able, or permitted, to work to support themselves. This has wide-ranging implications not only for people's immediate earning capacity and well-being but also for community relations, economic development and the capacity of future generations to lead fulfilling lives. In our main feature on **Economies**, authors explore the complex interactions of the constraints and opportunities involved, drawing on case-studies from around the world and highlighting the roles of new actors, new technologies and new – or renewed – approaches.

We are also pleased to include two 'mini-features' in this FMR, one on **Refugee-led social protection** and one on **Humans and animals in refugee camps**. (See the back cover if you are interested in collaborating with FMR on a mini-feature – or a full feature.)

We would like to thank Karen Jacobsen (Tufts University) and Khalid Koser (Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund) for their assistance as advisors to the Economies feature theme. We are also grateful to the following donors for their support of this issue: ESRC-AHRC (Economic and Social Research Council and Arts and Humanities Research Council) Global Challenges Research Fund, the Global Program on Forced Displacement of the World Bank Group, Mercy Corps, UNHCR Division of Resilience and Solutions (Livelihoods Unit) and the Wellcome Trust.

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- FMR 59: Twentieth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (October 2018)
- FMR 60: Education (February 2019)

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Marion Couldrey and Jenny Peebles
Editors, Forced Migration Review



Front cover image: A 27-year-old Burundian refugee and former truck driver in front of his grocery shop, Kashojwa village (Nakivale settlement), Uganda. UNHCR/Frederic Noy

Editors' note: In selecting the cover image, we debated whether it was too stereotypical, and if we should instead use an image reflecting new work technologies, or global organisations run by refugees, or validation of refugee qualifications... But in the end, as no image could reflect all the aspects explored in this issue, we opted for this one: not only a great photo but one that shows personal initiative in difficult circumstances.

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Refugees' right to work and access to labour markets: constraints, challenges and ways forward

Roger Zetter and H elo ise Ruauadel

For refugees, the right to work and access to labour markets are key for becoming self-reliant, building their lives and securing dignity, and allowing them to contribute to their host communities. Host countries need to assess the potential for opening their labour markets to refugees, and enhancing access to decent work.

The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees accords refugees the right to work¹ but many host countries are reluctant to allow this right. This reluctance reflects varying concerns about labour market distortion and limited capacity to absorb new labour, the crowding of certain sectors, availability of jobs for citizens, reduction in wages and decline in working conditions. Host governments may also be swayed by popular opposition to refugee rights to work and by security concerns about large-scale refugee populations settling and working. Of the 145 States Parties to the 1951 Refugee Convention, almost half declare reservations, and even States that grant the right to work usually impose conditions on access to labour markets. The same limitations apply to many of the 48 States that are not States Parties to the Refugee Convention.

For refugees, however, the right to work and access to labour markets are prerequisites for allowing them to secure sustainable livelihoods, thereby reducing vulnerability, enhancing resilience and enabling a dignified life. Acknowledging this, intergovernmental organisations such as the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) now promote access to labour markets and the right to work as core elements of development-oriented, sustainable refugee programming, especially for those living in protracted displacement.

A desk study and comparative analysis undertaken in 2016² investigated the role and impact of international legal provisions – specifically Articles 17-19 of the 1951 Refugee Convention – that provide and protect refugees' right to work and access

to labour markets. The study covered 20 countries, including low- and middle-income countries that together host the majority of the world's refugees but also upper-income countries. Both signatory and non-signatory States were included.

Frameworks, policies and other factors affecting labour market access

A restrictive approach to the right to work prevails in most countries, even upper-income economies such as the United Kingdom. In many countries that have received greater numbers of refugees, the barriers can be tougher, such as for Colombian refugees in Venezuela, while a formal prohibition exists in many countries, such as Bangladesh (for Rohingya refugees) and Sudan (for Eritrean refugees because of their lack of legal status in the country). These constraints force refugees to use irregular pathways both to enter and to work in the country. Even in countries that adhere to the relevant articles of the 1951 Refugee Convention, the legal entitlement to work for refugees is rarely unconditional. In Iran, for example, refugees can only work in 16 professional categories.

In general, these protectionist policies characterise countries with limited labour market capacity, more narrowly based and weaker economies, and less resilience to economic shocks – such as Chad, Zambia and Pakistan. While in some sense an obvious point, this has a bearing on how international donors should support wider strategic objectives for sustainable development-led responses in countries where the presence of refugees has a significant impact.

There is little consistency in implementing the right to work, and there are significant

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variations between signatory States, for example Italy, UK, Germany and the United States (US), as well as – perhaps less surprisingly – between non-signatory States, such as Pakistan, Lebanon and Jordan. Signatory States do not necessarily offer ‘best’ or ‘better’ practice than non-signatories – demonstrated, for example, by the leadership shown by Jordan (a non-signatory State) in providing a quota of work permits to Syrian refugees as part of the donor-supported Compact.

A key finding of the study is that assessing refugees’ right to work based simply on a country’s legal and normative frameworks and its policies towards refugees is rarely sufficient. Certainly, providing refugees with a legal right to work is insufficient without corresponding compliance and enforcement mechanisms.

Additional constraints and mediating factors

Refugees often need a work permit (usually obtained through a costly and administratively burdensome process) and/or residence permit in addition to their refugee status, or need a job offer from an employer before they can obtain a work permit – as in Lebanon and Zambia, for example. In other countries there are limitations, albeit indirect, on refugees’

entrepreneurship and ability to accumulate capital: in Pakistan, refugees cannot hold real estate or own a business without a Pakistani partner; in Ecuador and Turkey refugees have limited access to financial institutions to obtain loans; and in Zambia there are high fees for refugee business start-ups.

Indirect barriers to the right to work take other forms. Backlogs in status determination, in a country like South Africa, slows down access to formal labour markets, while immigration offices in Venezuela are located in hard-to-access remote border areas. By contrast, the Turkish government now allows Syrian refugees who possess temporary identity cards and have resided in Turkey for six months to apply for work permits.

Restrictions on the right to work force the majority of refugees to work informally. This is evident in Bangladesh and Pakistan, where work outside camps is tacitly accepted despite being illegal, and in countries in the Middle East hosting large numbers of Syrian refugees, where informal economies have expanded. In upper-income countries, refugees also work in the informal sector, although in smaller numbers. Such work entails significant disadvantages and risks – limited livelihood sustainability, marginal wages, lack of decent work, and exploitation.

Other factors affect access and type of work. In Ecuador, Colombian refugees are



UNHCR/Rocco Nuri

A Congolese refugee feeds tilapia at a fish farm collective run jointly by refugees and locals on Lake Rwamunga, western Uganda.

treated the same as economic migrants, who generally experience limited job opportunities and poor working conditions. Negative gender stereotypes, gender-based social discrimination and violence against women are prevalent in labour markets across our sample. For instance, female Myanmar refugees in India are grossly overworked and underpaid; female refugees are harassed in the workplace in Ecuador and Colombia; and refugee widows and unmarried women in Uganda may be targeted for abuse by employers. There is also evidence that the lack of formal employment opportunities and right to work for adults increases levels of youth and child labour, such as in Lebanon, with obvious short- and long-term negative effects.

A significant implication of all these limitations – and others beyond those mentioned here – is that refugees are rarely able to accumulate sufficient capital or skills either to finance their own legitimate pathway to self-reliance (and possible integration) or to support their return and reintegration to their home countries.

Tackling the constraints

There is some evidence that governments, international organisations and non-governmental organisations are beginning to tackle some of these constraints, albeit unsystematically, such as through easing processes for obtaining work permits, providing incentives for refugees to find employment, recognising qualifications and improving skills training.

In Chad and Uganda refugees are allowed to settle in host communities and some are granted arable land for agricultural production. The International Labour Organization (ILO), UNHCR and the government of Ethiopia are collaborating on an 'out-of-camp' policy which allows some relaxation of restrictions on movement and place of residence and eases access to employment/self-employment in camps and surrounding host communities. Community-based organisations in Kenya provide fellow refugees with practical assistance and language lessons and facilitate links to labour opportunities. Germany's National

Integration Plan, adopted in 2012, covers language tuition, education provision and social and labour market integration for refugees, aiming to maximise the contribution of refugees to German society.

Proactive policies, usually in upper-income economies, often reflect strict government expectations for refugees to become economically self-sufficient as soon as possible, as in Germany and the US. However, this may mean that refugees miss out on training opportunities or are compelled to take work that does not reflect their skills and qualifications. Unsurprisingly, accreditation of prior skills and qualifications and opportunities to access education, language training and skills development can significantly enhance access to employment for refugees. Countries such as Ecuador, Germany, the US and Zambia all have procedures to recognise foreign professional diplomas.

The more recent efforts towards enabling refugees to contribute to the economy of host countries and to achieve greater self-reliance have been triggered by the response towards the Syrian 'crisis'. Once the host countries in the region and donors realised the protracted nature of the displacement they attempted to adopt a coherent response with development objectives alongside the humanitarian response, as illustrated in the Syrian Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP). Receiving significant support from the international community, countries like Jordan shifted their policy towards refugees, opening up access to employment by providing a quota of work permits.³ This model is also being tested in other contexts such as Ethiopia with the creation of a Jobs Compacts, an ambitious endeavour given the poor record of industrial parks across Africa on job creation.⁴

Positive attitudes among employers can of course improve the conditions for decent work for refugees and can help reduce xenophobia. Many employers, however, may be reluctant to employ refugees because of lack of clarity over the legal provisions allowing refugees to work. In Ecuador, for example, there appears to be confusion among employers over the varying right to work for refugees

and for foreign nationals, while the study found that in South Africa refugee documents state that they are allowed to work but employers do not recognise this entitlement.

Social capital and ethnic or linguistic ties play an important role in access to labour markets and type of work. In Uganda and Kenya these networks help refugees, notably Somali refugees, obtain employment from co-national businesses, while there is some evidence that Somali refugees in South Africa find work with South African Muslim businesses. Common language and culture or marriage may ease access to work; Eritrean refugees from the Tigrinya ethnic group now in northern Ethiopia have a strong advantage over other Eritreans in securing employment opportunities.

Ways forward

Governments, with the support of donors and international actors, should better align refugee law and practice with national employment policies. Often, these seem to work in opposite directions. Better coherence would enhance access to labour markets and make the right to work a reality for many more refugees. To this end, better coordination between ministries involved with refugee/immigration affairs and those responsible for labour rights would enhance implementation of refugees' right to work and labour market inclusion, removing some of the administrative and bureaucratic barriers discussed above.

Labour market policies that lead to more sustainable livelihoods and better economic conditions for refugees (and their hosts) are essential. Too often the lack of the right to work or constraints on this right prevent refugees from engaging in decent work in the formal sector, leaving them more exposed – in the informal sector – to precarious incomes, the absence of contractual rights, and greater risks of exploitative working conditions.

Employers, employers' organisations and trade unions can also contribute to proactive policies that deliver access to labour markets and decent employment. They can promote good practice among their membership and work with governments and local authorities

to promote effective legislation, regulation and compliance. At the same time, national governments, employers, trade unions and civil society all share the responsibility to promote equality of rights and to counter negative discourse or stereotypes of refugees which limit their participation and integration. These initiatives should also include developing a better awareness, among refugees as well as among judiciary and regulatory agencies, of refugees' workplace rights; too often refugees are unaware of or frightened to exercise their rights and are poorly protected by the authorities.

Improved training, education and language/skills development are critical elements for enhancing refugees' access to labour markets, and employers and training providers need to design innovative ways of promoting and delivering these.

Donors and international and intergovernmental organisations should play a more significant role in addressing crises of forced displacement through introducing policies providing for refugees' right to work and access to labour markets, especially in poorer countries hosting large numbers of refugees where labour markets are most constrained. Here the international funding and underwriting of labour market developments and job promotion should be buttressed by support for legislation, policies and standards for decent work.

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1. See Articles 17-19 www.refworld.org/docid/3be01b964.html
2. Zetter R and Ruaudel H (2016) *Refugees' Right to Work and Access to Labor Markets – An Assessment, Part 1*, World Bank Global Program on Forced Displacement (GFPD) and the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD) Thematic Working Group on Forced Migration <http://bit.ly/KNOMAD-Zetter-Ruaudel-2016-1>
3. See articles on the Jordan Compact in FMR 57 www.fmreview.org/syria2018
4. Ruaudel H and Morrison-Métouis S (2017) 'Responding to Refugee Crises in Developing Countries, What Can We Learn From Evaluations', OECD Working Paper 37 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/ae4362bd-en>

Supporting recently resettled refugees in the UK

Marwa Belghazi

Organisations supporting recently resettled refugees to find employment should focus on providing them with the tools to navigate the employment market in a sustainable way that leads to their personal development.

Our organisation supports refugee families who have recently been resettled in the UK. We help them navigate the welfare system, claim relevant benefits and we also set up a support plan that takes into account their objectives in terms of professional development. We accompany adults to their first appointment at the job centre, where the discussion with the centre's work coaches is about employability and being job-ready. The question for our organisation is always about expectations – do we encourage the people we support to dream big or to lower their expectations and look for a source of steady income? In the first weeks and months following resettlement they are eager to find a job, to reconnect with that part of their identity as providers for their families. The initial excitement, however, is slowly replaced by bitterness and a feeling of failure as obstacles emerge. From our experience of supporting refugees in their search for employment we present some lessons relating to the following areas:

Continuous support to navigate a new system: We run weekly outreach surgeries where we discuss the frustrations that families encounter in their daily life in the UK. We discuss the importance of work contracts, national insurance and tax systems, minimum wage and living wage, expectations versus reality, and personal development. We respond to doubts and anxieties in a group conversation environment and also offer individual conversations with the help of bilingual support workers as we have found that addressing issues and working on personal development plans in refugees' first languages helps them better assimilate information. In the group environment, people share their strategies for looking for work. For example, making door-to-door

calls to potential employers is the main tactic used by our group of adults (initially in the local diaspora, although promised jobs often do not materialise); as this is their preferred approach, it seemed unrealistic to suddenly change their approach so we instead helped them prepare CVs and print enough copies to take on their door-to-door visits.

Language as an asset, not an obstacle: When discussing work opportunities for recently arrived refugees, we tend to focus on their low level of English. But what if the combination of two languages compensates for lack of fluency in English? A refugee's first language could well be an asset in bilingual positions, for example as teaching assistants in schools where there is a need for professionals to liaise with parents and to support the pupils who speak that same language.

Professional mentoring: We try to find mentors who have a similar background. This allows the refugees to have conversations about their interests and to tell their stories of past work to someone who can relate to them. Through this relationship they can adapt their expectations to the reality of what that job entails in the UK (for example, working as a lawyer in a country in the Middle East is not the same as in a city such as London in terms of earnings, working hours and laws). Where possible, it makes an even greater impact to foster peer mentorship between members of different families who arrive through the same resettlement scheme. When there is a success story within the community, people are able to feel more inspired by it. And it's a win-win situation: the peer mentors feel empowered by their positive impact on newcomers and can tangibly measure how they have progressed since they themselves arrived. For their part, the newly settled

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refugees can project themselves into the future through their interactions with their mentors and aim to reach a similar level of independence and initiative.

Universal vulnerability: For adults who have spent their lives being independent, providing for their families and taking on different roles in their societies, it is difficult to find themselves suddenly reliant on other people to provide them with support and on agencies to provide them with means of subsistence. In this context, it is important to embed the support provided to refugee families within a framework of universal vulnerability. We are all vulnerable to differing degrees and our vulnerability is situational. Although we as practitioners act as role models and respond to the questions and requests of the families we support, we should find ways to share reflections with them on our own vulnerabilities. Doubt and self-consciousness are an inherent part of entering the job market, no matter what our background.

Time to heal: It is important to acknowledge that, sometimes, although a person presents all the skills necessary to find employment, they might not be ready to enter the labour market. Traumas endured and the upheaval of displacement can require long processes of healing. Mental health provision is an essential aspect of support that goes hand-in-hand with restoring the ability to provide for the family. Therefore we should be able to encourage those individuals who require respite, and create support plans that take into consideration their mental and physical health needs. This might mean focusing on restoring confidence and building resilience through different activities, all of which contributes in the long run to preparing the person to re-join the search for employment.

Challenging perceived failure: Having an application rejected can be very distressing and discouraging. It is good to encourage feedback from employers or partner organisations so the person understands the reason for it. For example, the application of a client whom we had referred to a business

incubator to help him develop his idea and build skills in business administration was unsuccessful, and the client considered the rejection email from the organisers as a failure. On contacting the organisation for feedback, however, they explained that the person's business plan was not clear and his level of English insufficient for the project but that they were keen to offer him other options of training within their structure. We then discussed those programmes with the client, and how their requirements fitted with his ambitions.

Motivating employers: Many of our clients seem to be ready to enter the labour market but the market is not ready for them. Taking time and employing creativity to attract employers' attention therefore becomes essential. By building on the current momentum around citizens and organisations interested in helping refugees we can harness the interest of institutions, agencies and individuals and potentially turn them into employers.

Exploring new opportunities: In their attempts to reconstruct their lives, sometimes refugees remain attached to the positions they occupied in their home countries and hope to be able to do the same thing again. This is completely understandable but it can also pose an obstacle in terms of forming realistic plans. The process of obtaining equivalent professional status in the host country can be very complicated and difficult, and refugees should be encouraged to consider what skills they have that could be used in other roles. For example, many people we support show great initiative in terms of supporting other families, offering peer mentoring and guidance that improves the quality of life of many others, although they have no experience of working in a charity or in the community care sector. It is important to explain to these community champions that their initiative and sense of empathy are great skills that could be used in a professional setting.

One example of our organisation's work illustrates these recommendations. A child resettled with their family needed a one-to-

one assistant at the nursery but the nursery struggled to meet this child's specific needs. We saw that if this support were provided in the mother tongue of the family, it would allow the assistant to be of greater use to the child and enable greater communication with its parents. Furthermore, having an understanding of displacement and resettlement would also be beneficial.

We identified a candidate among the group of people we work with who had a lot of experience in teaching and early years work. The obstacles to this person filling the position were several: lack of work experience in the UK, insufficient level of English and lack of appropriate training. However, we acted as facilitators, working with the child's parents, with health professionals and with the nursery to agree on the core skills needed for the position. We demonstrated that our candidate had them and then worked on a plan to address the missing elements. We contacted partner agencies to help with the required training and arranged suitable

ESOL classes around the working hours. We provided support throughout the induction and stayed in close contact with the employer, providing, for example, a character reference.

Ultimately, it was the promise of on-going support to both the employer and the candidate that reassured them. The creation of the position of nursery assistant was also made possible through a Home Office provision specifically for the educational needs of children resettled within this refugee scheme. In this way, a refugee was offered a paid position to support another refugee and the local authority facilitated this by applying for the appropriate funds allocated to the project. The results changed the life of the child's family, the nursery improved the service it was offering, and the person employed secured a stable and stimulating job matching their skills and aspirations.

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Integrating refugees into the Turkish labour market

Ximena V Del Carpio, Sirma Demir Seker and Ahmet Levent Yener

The granting to Syrian refugees in Turkey of the right to access formal work was a first step towards their economic integration but a number of challenges remain. With support from the international community, the Turkish government is taking action to overcome some of these.

Turkey hosts nearly 3.3 million registered refugees, mostly from Syria. The country has shown exemplary openness, and has made considerable efforts to support Syrians despite the strain on social services. It has facilitated their access to critical public services including health, housing, education and social assistance.

Recognising that refugees cannot rely solely on social assistance, however, the government of Turkey passed a regulation in January 2016 to allow Syrian refugees¹ to obtain formal work permits. The goal was to help Syrian refugees be economically independent, graduate from social assistance, and contribute to the Turkish economy.

Economic development varies widely across Turkey and in some cases divergence between regions has increased over the last few years. Rising general unemployment (peaking at 13% in early 2017) and persistent youth unemployment (with a national average of around 19%)² highlight that the number of jobs available is insufficient to absorb all job seekers.

Ominously, many of the provinces with a large population of Syrians relative to the local population and to the total Syrian refugee population in Turkey are among the most disadvantaged, having significantly lower density of formal businesses, low net formal job creation, a less educated

population, lower labour force participation and higher unemployment rates than the national average. Statistics compiled by Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Agency, the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization suggest that at least half of the over two million working-age Syrians work informally. Of these, most are men; the percentage of women working is low, peaking at 7% among women aged 30 to 44.

Barriers to formal economic integration of refugees

Refugees currently receiving cash support from the EU-financed cash transfer (social assistance) programme risk losing benefits if they work formally. There are also location-related disincentives since the place in which a refugee is registered determines where they can seek formal work. Therefore, many Syrians who have moved to more dynamic labour markets such as Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir cannot seek formal employment there unless they change their registration location – a cumbersome and costly administrative procedure.

Low education levels and limited data on the types of skills and experiences of Syrians living in Turkey are further barriers to facilitating their employment. Data from before the war show that in the provinces near the Turkish border, Syrians' educational attainment was low compared with that of Turkish people. Around 20% (from Aleppo and Idlib) were educated to secondary- or post-secondary levels. Estimated figures are lower (15%) for people from Raqqa and higher (40%) for those from Lattakia. In Turkey, on average around 45% of people have completed secondary or post-secondary education. Syrian refugees' lower levels of education and lack of recognised or formally documented skills are associated with the low issuance of formal work permits.

The Ministry of Labour (MoLSS), Turkish Public Employment Services (ISKUR), the World Bank and the European Union are collaborating on two joint programmes to adapt services that are already available to Turkish citizens in order to support Syrians. These programmes, Employment Support for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Host Communities, and Strengthening Economic Opportunities

for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Host Communities in Turkey, were designed in 2017. Their activities are aimed, respectively, at addressing supply-side challenges (relating to employability) and demand-side challenges (relating to employment and economic activity) and will be implemented from 2018 to 2021. During the current pilot phase of each project the aim is for services – and, where possible, jobs – to be provided to 15,700 people; the systems now being set up will later provide for thousands more.

Labour supply-side activities

'Supply-side' activities in the case of Syrian refugees in Turkey address challenges which hinder their access to formal work (namely, access to a work permit), as well as employability challenges that hinder job placement. Activities include language training, setting up systems for assessing skills, counselling and job search assistance in Arabic, and a variety of financial incentives and support. Beneficiaries can also be referred to the Vocational Qualification Authority for validation of their foreign credentials or assessment of their educational level and work experience.

There is a need for better information to be provided to job seekers about how to obtain a work permit, and for improvements to the still largely manual application and issuance processes. 15,022 work permits were issued by MoLSS to Syrian refugees between January 2016 and November 2017, which was fewer than expected and is indicative both of information barriers faced by refugees and employers and of IT system-related issues hindering the processing of permits. The Employment Support for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Host Communities programme focuses on conducting outreach campaigns via multiple channels and languages to improve knowledge of the process, and on improving the IT system.

Many efforts to provide language and vocational skills for Syrian refugees have been made by various humanitarian and development actors from the first years of their arrival. Some of these efforts were effective in imparting valuable skills that

helped many refugees enter the economy, albeit mostly informally. However, many of the programmes offered were limited in scale, designed largely outside government institutions, almost fully dependent on external funds, and not built on the existing system of labour integration used for the local population. As a result, many training courses delivered were not formally recognised by the Turkish national education system, making it difficult for refugees to secure relevant credentials or formal credit for such training.

As part of the programme, ISKUR has been mandated to help refugees enter the formal labour market, building on its experience of providing employment support services for over three million Turkish citizens annually.³ It is designing a tool to assess refugees' language, cognitive and technical skills; with this information, ISKUR can help Syrian refugees find jobs, and identify those who require additional training prior to being integrated into the workplace. As with the local population, the training programmes to be offered to refugees will be delivered by public training providers or private training providers certified by the Ministry of National Education, accompanied by a financial stipend for participants.

ISKUR's active labour market programmes for Turkish citizens – such as on-the-job training, entrepreneurship training and cash-for-work programmes – are also being modified in order to be provided to Syrians. During on-the-job training, the participant is employed, with the programme financing the net minimum wage and covering insurance premiums for accidents at work, occupational diseases and health insurance. Receiving on-the-job training

and obtaining Turkish work experience can help beneficiaries remain employed or facilitate their transition to another job.

For those who are the least employable, cash-for-work programming is more suitable, although it is the last resort because it does not, alone, lead to permanent employment. The target populations are women and young people aged 15–29, residing in selected localities. ISKUR finances the gross minimum wage and work permit costs for these workers. Those taking part in cash-for-work programmes are given extensive support to develop familiarity with the workplace, increase motivation and build their networks. Refugee job seekers will be provided with continual support through counselling, job-search assistance, and support when starting a new job, delivered by trained counsellors from ISKUR, and supported by interpreters when needed.

Labour demand-side activities

An important challenge faced by all stakeholders investing in skills training is the gap in knowledge of the occupations and skills most in-demand by employers, especially in locations where most Syrians reside. The limited availability of reliable information has hindered training providers from designing and imparting appropriate skills programmes to encourage sustainable employment. The first activity as part of the Strengthening Economic Opportunities for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Host Communities in Turkey programme is the creation of a data-based system that assesses employers' demand for occupations and skills, with a special focus on provinces with the greatest numbers of refugees. The information gleaned from this exercise can guide training providers, with changing demands being continuously monitored.

Promoting economic activity and entrepreneurship is also at the core of the demand-side activities. Such activities are being designed jointly by the World Bank and the Government of Turkey to promote entrepreneurship, business start-ups and formal job creation among Syrian refugees and Turkish citizens residing in selected local communities.

Syrian women, particularly those coming from border provinces where very low levels of



UNHCR/Claire Thomas

education are common, are unlikely to become economically active in standard private sector wage employment. Thus, the social entrepreneurship support project within the wider demand-side interventions includes an activity targeting women who are bound to a specific location (either within their home or their city) for cultural or family reasons. It promotes the creation of social enterprises to produce goods for sale. Activities include technical assistance to support the government and local authorities to develop and implement a sustainable business model for social enterprises engaging self-employed females, financial support for the creation of the social enterprise, business-related support, and support to document the experiences of social enterprises for scaling-up similar initiatives. The model will prioritise sustainability to ensure that more women become economically active after the initial investment.

About 6,000 formal businesses were established by Syrians in Turkey as of 2017, a figure rising to 20,000 when informal businesses are included.⁴ As part of the programme, and with the support of development partners, a micro-grants scheme is being designed jointly with the government to encourage Syrian entrepreneurs to set up and register new businesses or to formally register currently operating informal businesses. A second micro-grant scheme is being designed to target existing Syrian- or Turkish-owned formal businesses located in areas where large numbers of Syrians reside to enlarge their production capacity in order to hire new workers. The pilot phase of the programme will enable the effect on new business and job creation to be measured.

Evidence and monitoring

During the preparation of the various programmes, expert teams relied on the evidence available from Turkey and around the world. However, the lack of assessments and impact evaluations of labour-related programmes targeting refugees limited the team's ability to build on previous experience, either in Turkey or in similar contexts. Fortunately, all stakeholders agreed on the importance of learning from this experience

to guide future work in Turkey and elsewhere. The teams have therefore designed a strong monitoring and evaluation framework and will undertake periodic assessments. Two lessons have emerged to date.

First, it is critical to identify contextual barriers to employment and employability from the outset in order to address them early on. There is a clear advantage to having knowledge early on about the disincentives for institutions to promote formal employment, for employers to offer formal employment, and for workers to seek formal employment, in order to set out realistic expectations of regulatory changes and investments, and to preempt unexpected (negative) behaviours.

Second, investments to serve people should be made in such a way that they are sustainable and increase the efficiency of spending and effective use of resources. As early as possible, actors should seek to ensure the strengthening of national systems rather than create separate structures that depend on external financial and technical support. In so doing, development practitioners can support governments in strengthening their institutional systems for the provision of critical services, ensuring the sustainability of investments, and better supporting refugees in their transition to self-reliance and to becoming contributors to the economy.

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1. Officially referred to by Turkey as 'under temporary protection' but for ease of reading referred to here as 'refugees'. Law No. 6458 on Foreigners and International Protection, adopted in 2013, and Regulation No. 29153 on Temporary Protection of Syrians, which entered into force in 2014, regulate their protection. Syrians who entered the country after 27 April 2011 were retroactively placed under temporary protection.

2. www.turkstat.gov.tr

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4. Karasapan O (2017) 'Syrian businesses in Turkey: The pathway to refugee integration?', Brookings Institution <http://bit.ly/Syrian-businesses-Turkey-2017>

From refugee to employee: work integration in rural Denmark

Martin Ledstrup and Marie Larsen

The launch of Red Cross Denmark's Fast Track programme, which focuses on early refugee employment, offers an opportunity to explore the relationship between local employment of refugees and the sustainability of rural life.

Since 2015 Denmark has turned the employment of refugees into a national strategy. Through a tripartite agreement with the Confederation of Danish Employers and Local Government Denmark (the union of municipalities) this reconfiguration of thinking about integration has reverberated throughout municipal and corporate Denmark.

for example, by providing translation of a refugee's documentation into Danish – to understand the educational background of a particular refugee.

Many of these initiatives are tied together by a newly launched, practice-oriented and state-initiated programme of employment education, the 'Integrationsgrund-suddannelse' (IGU), or 'basic integration education', which – through a combination of formal schooling and practical internships – is aimed specifically at aligning competencies of refugees with demand in the Danish labour market. But while the IGU is oriented towards recognised refugees, the new Red Cross initiative begins in the asylum phase.

The Fast Track programme

The Fast Track programme is an effort to facilitate early access to the local labour market for refugees while they are still in the asylum phase, and it has been tested and implemented in five Danish municipalities between 2015 and 2017. Normally refugees in Denmark are distributed across its 98 municipalities, in effect detaching the locality of where they claimed asylum from the locality where they come to live as refugees. With Fast Track, however, the asylum seeker signs up for the programme at a Danish Red Cross-run asylum centre and the immigration authority places the participant, if granted refugee status, in the local community in which they have claimed asylum. When the asylum seeker is not someone in transit but has the potential to remain as a refugee, it naturally motivates both local people and refugees to invest in their mutual relations.

Asylum seekers prepare for Fast Track by undertaking a skills assessment. The eight-week Fast Track programme then provides



The 'Me and My Friendly Neighbour' photographic exhibition on World Refugee Day in Copenhagen, Denmark, telling stories of refugees and Danes who have become close friends.

For example, a major initiative was set up by the eight municipalities of Copenhagen to establish refugee internships, for which promotional posters have been distributed around the capital. Employment initiatives aimed at refugees have also been established in larger companies such as IBM, Microsoft, Danfoss, Grundfoss, Arriva and NCC. In addition, in order to facilitate quicker assessment of refugees' work competence, the government has sponsored a phone hotline to provide assistance to municipal authorities, in particular to help employees –

participants with a hands-on introduction to Danish culture, language skills, vocational training and potential local internships, techniques for job search, information about local work culture, network building and sustaining motivation. Taken together, these represent a holistic effort to link employment integration and local belonging. Throughout the months of waiting in asylum centres, this facilitates a crucial sense of purpose. The new resident might have a job or internship to continue when moving into the local community, thus making the transition from asylum seeker to refugee more a continuous process than a series of new beginnings.

Previously, municipalities often reported that refugees arrived with unrealistic expectations about housing and employment opportunities. But according to feedback from both municipalities and refugees, we have found that refugees who have been through the Fast Track programme are less disappointed and more realistic, as well as, generally speaking, less confused, more motivated and altogether more confident in beginning their life in a locality that is already well known to them.

Of the 70 participants over these two years who were granted refugee status, 61% are now self-supporting, 9% have moved to other municipalities for various reasons, 4% are on maternity leave, and 26% have continued internships that are preparing them for mainstream jobs.

Implementation in rural and island communities

In 2015 a team of anthropologists from the University of Copenhagen concluded research on the encounters between asylum centres and rural societies.¹ They found anxieties about crime and declining house prices, but at the same time these familiar concerns were entangled with a surprising local optimism. In rural areas where asylum centres successfully form part of the social fabric, alongside nurseries, schools, supermarkets and local associations, they were seen as a much-needed boost to local sustainability.

Changes in Denmark's approach to refugee employment are taking place as part of a

growing conversation about the depopulation of rural Denmark, including its island communities. The island of Bornholm, for instance, has lost nearly 20% of its population since 1965. The islands of Samsø, Ærø, Læsø and the Association of Danish Small Islands have therefore actively been promoting themselves as locations that are particularly suitable for asylum seekers and refugees.

In March 2018 the Fast Track programme began on Bornholm, a socio-economically vulnerable island of 40,000 inhabitants, located far away from urban Denmark, in the Baltic Sea. Bornholm's vulnerability is due not least to depopulation and lack of skilled labour. Our interviews on the islands of Bornholm and Samsø, conducted in 2016 and 2017, presented three main findings that identify the challenges that lie ahead. While the interviews were conducted in light of the Fast Track initiative, they concentrated more generally on asking about the encounter between refugees, integration, and the local labour market.

The first and most often repeated challenge, perhaps unsurprisingly, is language; although having sufficient Danish to function in the workplace is key to stable employment for refugees, continuous language development is needed for career advancement as well as to extend interactions beyond the context of work.

The second challenge relates to the uncertainty around whether refugees will stay in the local community after the mandatory three-year placement period. For the local municipality, there is an important difference between asylum seekers and refugees. While the state is responsible for all expenses connected with asylum seekers, those expenses connected with refugees are the responsibility of local municipalities. In interviews with representatives from the municipality of Samsø, the most important question raised was rooted in deeper concerns about how local investment in refugee employment can at the same time be part of the struggle against depopulation.

Thirdly, the type and size of workplaces are significant in terms of facilitating integration. Typically, larger workplaces are able to assign refugee employment to certain

employees, often on a voluntary basis, as a specialised task within the organisation. Smaller workplaces obviously do not have the same organisational means to work with refugees. In addition, there is an acute demand for skilled labour but not for unskilled labour. This means that when refugees come as skilled workers, they play a crucial role in local sustainability, but when refugees search for unskilled jobs they compete with local Danes. More research is needed, however, in order to understand more fully the resulting perspectives of locals and refugees.

A municipality that performs statistically better in terms of including refugees in the labour market is also seen as a success with regard to integration. But because rural refugee populations are often too small for statistical research, they are often not included in surveys. For instance, while the island municipalities of Samsø and Ærø have been deeply engaged with and affected by refugees, they are not included on comparative maps of

refugee employment in Denmark. This means that the islands and what we can learn from them do not form part of discussions around the question of integration. In addition, stable employment and successful integration are often assumed in statistics to be mutually dependent but we know nearly nothing about whether and how this connection unfolds in daily life. The Fast Track programme offers an opportunity to explore just that.

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Integrating refugee doctors into host health-care systems

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Refugee doctors face a number of barriers to practising medicine, despite the significant contributions that they can make.

Despite being highly motivated to practise medicine, refugee doctors¹ in the United States (US) and elsewhere often find themselves working in low-skilled jobs while waiting to get into residency programmes.² They may face difficulties in communication, providing documentation and verifying previous training. This may represent a missed opportunity not only for the refugee doctors themselves but for the host country's own health-care system, especially in countries or areas with doctor shortages and/or a high proportion of immigrant or refugee populations.

The authors of this article are themselves former refugees or asylum seekers, immigrants to the US and/or have immigrant

or refugee backgrounds. This issue is close to our hearts as medical professionals and we would like to explore how we can empower and assist refugee doctors to join the workforce, resuming their professional lives and identities and helping to fill gaps.

Lessons from other countries

Integrating refugee doctors into a host country's health-care system requires the involvement of different stakeholders including medical associations, regional and national health services, private organisations and universities. The UK, for example, recognised that overcoming barriers such as recognition of equivalency of qualifications and training, and employment

regulations, would require specific national and local policy changes to enable refugee doctors and dentists to practise in the UK.³ UK-wide policy initiatives included the creation of the Refugee Health Professionals Steering Group which supervised the development of programmes to help retrain refugee doctors to National Health Service standards, cover examination costs and relocate doctors to under-served areas. Many local programmes assisted refugee doctors to register with the General Medical Council and pass the Professional Linguistic Assessment Board exam. Although subsequent immigration laws have since made it more difficult for refugee doctors to enter the workforce rapidly and remain in the UK permanently, most of the refugee doctors participating in these projects have remained in the UK to practise.

In 2015, the Swedish government 'fast-tracked' refugee doctors into their health-care system by rapidly verifying their credentials and providing individual training, mentoring and Swedish language lessons. And in Turkey, Gaziantep University and the World Health Organization teamed up to train and employ 500 Syrian refugee doctors to help care for the Syrian refugee population, with local clinics providing opportunities for the doctors to familiarise themselves with the Turkish health system.⁴

The current situation in the US

To practice medicine in the US, refugee doctors must undergo a process that is very intensive in terms of time, labour and finances, involving certification, examination, residency periods and licensing. While advocates of this system point to the need to ensure the best and most consistent quality of care for patients, other experts argue that foreign-trained doctors have more advanced bedside clinical skills than domestically trained doctors, having generally practised medicine in settings with less technology. A recent study, for example, showed that older patients in US hospitals treated by International Medical Graduates (IMGs) were less likely to die within 30 days of treatment than those treated by US-trained graduates.⁵

A number of private, public and non-profit programmes have been established to support refugee doctors in the US:

The Welcome Back Initiative (WBI), founded in 2001, used the untapped pool of IMGs living in California to provide linguistically and culturally competent care to local populations.⁶ The WBI has since expanded to a national network of 11 centres in nine states, serving almost 15,000 individuals from 167 countries. These centres provide free services to refugee doctors, including orientation, career counselling, support in obtaining credentials and licences, assistance in exploring educational programmes, job and volunteer opportunities, and alternative career options. Success has been modest: 23% of participants obtained employment in the health sector for the first time, 21% passed licensing exams, and 87 doctors were accepted into training programmes.⁷

The Minnesota Department of Health's International Medical Graduate Assistance Program aims to increase access to primary care in rural and under-served areas by providing clinical readiness assessment of IMGs and funding non-profit organisations to provide career guidance, additional clinical experience and primary-care residency positions for IMGs willing to practise in under-served areas.

In 2014, Missouri was the first State to pass legislation creating a new category of licensed 'assistant doctors' who can provide primary care under the direct supervision of a doctor in a health-care shortage area for the first 30 days, and thereafter with indirect supervision from a doctor who practises within a 50-mile radius. Although there has been criticism of the law,⁸ as of May 2017 127 doctors had applied for the licence with 23 being issued a licence, 55 deemed ineligible, and the others under review.

Several US academic institutions, such as University of California San Diego and University of California Los Angeles, have created programmes to place multi-lingual, culturally competent family doctors in areas with large immigrant and refugee communities.

Recommendations

Despite the creativity and early successes of some of these US programmes, what almost all of them have in common is their small scale. Compared with other refugee-hosting countries, the US lags behind in making concerted efforts to recognise the training of refugee doctors and to find more streamlined ways of harnessing their knowledge, talents, language and lifesaving skills to benefit our communities. We propose:

- A task-force consisting of stakeholders from federal and State governmental, private and public organisations, medical boards and professional associations, as well as refugee doctors themselves, to collect basic statistics on the number of refugee doctors, their demographics and current specialisms and to study other countries' approaches, review certification requirements and explore the integration of refugee doctors into different clinical roles.
- Training incentives for residency programmes that are geographically or specialism-focused, based on local population needs; this may also include the restructuring of observerships (shadowing), internships and fellowships specifically tailored to refugee doctors.
- Easing re-training requirements as a temporary or permanent solution for some, alongside other measures to strengthen job opportunities that recruit refugee doctors in other roles initially (to gain exposure to the US system).
- A more centralised scholarship and needs-based grant or stipend system to help with the significant financial burden of re-certification and licensing exams.
- Robust, accessible programmes to provide supervision and guidance through the complex certification and licensing process in the US, as well as instruction on the US health-care system.
- Free, easily accessible toolkits including national and State-based resources, communication modules, test-taking strategies and information about the application process.

Finally and critically, refugee doctors themselves should help drive new initiatives. Professional development efforts may help identify leaders who would run IMG-support programmes, seek partnerships in strategic planning, and organise – and perhaps partner with – existing IMG advocacy organisations.

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Refugees' engagement with host economies in Uganda

Naohiko Omata

Multi-sited fieldwork in Uganda allows for an exploration of the complex patterns of engagement between refugees' economic activities and local economies, in urban, emergency and protracted settings.

The Government of Uganda has made self-reliance central to the country's approach towards hosting refugees. Currently, Uganda hosts more than one million refugees of diverse nationalities, including from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, South Sudan and Rwanda, who live in both rural camps and urban areas. Refugees in Uganda generally enjoy the right to work, freedom of movement within the country, and access to basic services. Such policies have an important role in facilitating refugees to engage in business activities and enable them to become embedded within local and national markets and industries in Uganda.

Between 2013 and 2015, my colleagues and I conducted a study on refugees' economic lives, looking at their interaction with local host communities across four sites with three different contexts: Kampala – the capital city; Kyangwali and Nakivale – long-established camps; and Rwamwanja – a newly established camp.¹ This multi-sited research offers an interesting comparison of economic relationships between refugees and hosts over time and in different geographical environments.

Kyangwali and Nakivale: 'import and export' economies

Nakivale settlement has existed since 1959 and Kyangwali settlement since 1989. They are formally designated as 'settlements' rather than 'camps' because of their relatively open layout and the economic freedoms afforded to refugees. Both are located in the rural south-west of the country but though geographically remote they are far from economically isolated. Not only is there diverse economic activity within the settlements but also their economies are embedded in wider

economic structures that extend beyond their geographical boundaries. Goods and services are imported and exported, with refugees playing an active role in these supply chains.

Upon arrival, refugees in both settlements have historically been given access to a plot of land to cultivate; not surprisingly, therefore, commercial farming is the most common economic activity. Kyangwali settlement is known widely among Ugandan crop traders for its good-quality maize. During the harvest season Ugandan trucks and minivans regularly travel out of Kyangwali, loaded high with sacks of maize purchased from refugee farmers and destined for sale in local markets, in Kampala and other Ugandan cities, and even in neighbouring countries such as Tanzania and South Sudan.

While agricultural activities dominate both settlements, over time an array of vibrant businesses has emerged and become deeply embedded within both national and regional commercial networks. In fact, many of the well-established shops in both Kyangwali and Nakivale buy goods from existing supply chains run by Ugandan wholesalers who regularly come to the settlements and sell goods to satellite shops.

"Kyangwali settlement is one of our important selling points. In Kyangwali, we have seven refugee shops that we sell our items to." (sales manager for local Ugandan brewery)

In Nakivale, we observed similar commercial interactions between refugees and Ugandan wholesalers. Many Somali business owners in particular would regularly import products including milk, pasta, camel meat, clothing, cosmetics and medicines to the settlement from their Somali-Ugandan counterparts in Kampala.

Rwamwanja: an emerging economy

Rwamwanja settlement opened in April 2012 in a rural village in Western Uganda in response to the emergency influx of Congolese refugees. By late 2013, when we did our initial research, people were still arriving. New arrivals are provided with food rations and relief supplies, including cooking items, a hoe, blankets, jerry cans and machetes. Similar to Kyangwali and Nakivale, the refugees are allocated a plot of land for their residence and cultivation.

According to refugees who came to Rwamwanja when it was first established, economic activity inside the settlement emerged almost immediately, with the first visible commercial transactions based around the exchange of food and non-food aid items between refugees. Soon Ugandans from neighbouring villages joined in the bartering, despite the refugee and host populations having very little pre-existing ethnic or cultural affinity or shared language. Refugees exchanged bags of maize or cooking oils for Ugandan crops such as bananas and cassava, and sold non-food items. These initial trading activities have since transformed into more organised refugee markets. For instance, the market in Kaihura village, one of 36 villages in the settlement, currently attracts about 2,000 sellers and customers, including both refugees and Ugandan nationals, every market day.

The arrival of refugees and aid workers into this scarcely populated rural village has stimulated local economies in the surrounding areas. According to Ugandan villagers who live nearby, many new businesses began to appear after the influx of refugees, including restaurants, bars, guesthouses and shops. Henry, the Ugandan owner of a popular restaurant located at the entrance of the settlement, established his business in January 2014:

"I used to run a small restaurant in Kampala. I came and checked the area and found no good restaurants so I decided to move here. Currently, I receive about 200 customers per day. Many of them are working for the aid agencies but some of them are refugees and Ugandan business people visiting the camp."

Owners of pre-existing businesses in the host area have also benefited significantly from the presence of refugees and humanitarian workers. One local family renovated their bar to target the growing population; the business grew rapidly and in 2014 the family expanded it to create a lodge with a restaurant just outside the entrance of the settlement.

Compared with Nakivale and Kyangwali, refugees' economic activities in Rwamwanja were still embryonic and less extensively connected with national and transnational economies. Nevertheless, Rwamwanja reveals the dynamic process through which a new 'refugee-induced economy' emerges following a mass influx of refugees even in an underdeveloped host region.

Kampala

With an estimated population of more than 1.5 million, Kampala is the largest city in Uganda. Here refugees live and work side by side with both Ugandan nationals and migrants from across the continent. Most Somali refugees live alongside Somali-Ugandans and Somali economic migrants in Kisenyi in Kampala, taking advantage of their ethnic ties with the vibrant Somali-Ugandan economies and filling gaps in labour demand in sectors where most non-Somali Ugandans would not seek employment. Several large-scale Somali-Ugandan enterprises in the oil, petrol and retail industries hire a large number of Somali refugees. A Somali-Ugandan manager from one of these companies explained that hiring Somali refugees is a simple decision:

"We feel more comfortable working with Somali people because we have a lot in common such as language, religion and cultural habits."

In contrast, Congolese refugees live scattered in several areas in Kampala such as Nsambya and Katwe, and live alongside Ugandan communities. While they are associated with a range of economic activities, the selling of *bitenge* (traditional Congolese fabric) is the most common, for two main reasons – firstly, the up-front investment needed is relatively small and, secondly, positive stereotyping of Congolese

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Fresh produce exporters load the chilli peppers they have bought from Congolese refugee farmers at Rwamwanja settlement in Uganda.

craftsmanship among Ugandans provides a helpful market opportunity. These Congolese refugees find mutually beneficial economic links with Ugandan merchants; these Ugandans have come to rely heavily on Congolese refugees, who act as the primary distributors and retailers for their products.

Countering prevailing perceptions

Among policymakers, there is a prevailing perception that the presence of refugees intensifies competition for employment with national populations in a host country. Contrary to this perception, however, in Kampala, Congolese and Somali refugees have sought their own economic space in the wider host economy, not necessarily in conflict with nationals. And in each of our study sites, the presence of refugees' economic activities has resulted in interdependence between refugees and host communities, rather than a zero-sum game of economic rivalry.

In the protracted refugee contexts of Nakivale and Kyangawali, refugee settlements have become embedded in regional commerce through 'import and export' of items and have become active trade hubs in their remote, rural locations. Even in recently established Rwamwanja, refugees' business activities are being gradually linked with surrounding economies and appear to play a role in revitalising host communities. While the ways in which refugees position

themselves in host economies differ in each setting, refugees clearly play an important, perhaps indispensable, role in wider commercial sectors in Uganda.

Some implications for policy and practice follow from this analysis. Often, attempts to support refugees' income-generating activities are conceived in abstraction rather than with an understanding of wider market contexts. Actors working to enhance economic opportunities for refugee and host populations need a clear and better understanding of the relevant economic systems and structures. Furthermore, interventions should aim either to build upon existing markets and businesses or help refugees to more effectively engage with those markets. And, finally, external actors need to help create an enabling environment. Refugees can be market creators if certain conditions and rights are granted, enabling them to identify and employ unique livelihood assets while avoiding intensifying competition with host populations.

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Refugees and host communities in the Rwandan labour market

Özge Bilgili and Craig Loschmann

In Rwanda, Congolese refugees have the same freedom of movement and right to work as Rwandans but the experiences and economic activities of these two populations are very different.

Of the approximately 164,500 officially registered refugees residing in Rwanda today, 45% are from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The Rwandan government has adopted a relatively progressive policy approach to support the integration of refugees, and refugees have the freedom to move outside their designated camps and the right to engage in wage-earning or self-employed activities. This enabling environment helps increase the economic and social interaction between refugees and local populations, and as a result one might expect the areas around the camps to have a labour market freely accessible to locals and refugees alike.

Analysis of the experiences of refugees and locals, however, brings to light the varying dynamics, opportunities and challenges for both groups. As part of a project examining the impact of Congolese refugees on host communities in Rwanda,¹ in May 2016 we conducted household surveys with refugees in three of the largest camps – Gihembe, Kiziba and Kigeme – and with locals living nearby. For the latter we differentiated our sample between those living within 10km of the camps, and those living more than 20km away, in order to identify the highly localised effect of being in contact with the refugee population on a daily basis. We also organised a number of separate focus group discussions among refugees from each camp as well as with host community members living at various distances from the camps. A key finding is that although Congolese refugees officially have the right to work, in reality their experiences in the local labour market differ considerably from that of local Rwandans.

Congolese refugees are significantly more likely to be unemployed than locals, and a major reason for this, given by the refugees

themselves, relates to local employers' lack of knowledge of the refugees' right to work. According to the focus group participants, finding a job outside the camp is rare due to the fact that they do not have the appropriate identity papers requested by potential employers. As one participant from Kiziba camp said, "They mostly ask if you have an identity card to prove that you are a Rwandan citizen. So, if you do not have an identity card then you can't have a job".

It is not sufficient simply to provide the right to work; there needs to be practical follow-through. This may mean issuing specific identity documents to refugees that local employers recognise and accept and/or an information campaign targeting employers to help make sure the refugees' legal rights are clear to all.

Focus group participants also mentioned that most work opportunities were in local commercial hubs far from the camps, and that the considerable travel costs involved and low earnings often deterred them from taking these jobs. Providing cheaper transportation can make it more viable for refugees to find employment well beyond the immediate camp areas.

Jobs and skills in camps

Job opportunities for refugees are quite limited outside the camps but within the camps themselves non-governmental and international organisations employ a significant number of refugees. It is clear, however, that these organisations cannot address the employment needs of all refugees. This situation also raises the question of refugees' dependency on humanitarian organisations beyond basic protection and needs. It seems evident that the more refugees are able to integrate in the wider Rwandan economy and not remain

within the confines of the camp-based setting, the better off they will be in the long term.

Unsurprisingly, we found that the work-related experiences of refugees differ also by skill level. Those refugees with professions and who have diplomas are in a more advantageous position than others with fewer skills. As a participant from Kiziba said, "There are [refugee] teachers and even health providers but ... ordinary people have nothing to do." Keeping this heterogeneity in mind is key when designing policies to facilitate greater participation in the local labour market.

Locals in the labour market

Our research finds evidence of a shift away from subsistence agricultural activities among locals in the host communities. More specifically, working-age individuals within 10km of a camp are more likely to be engaged in wage employment (that is, working for an employer with steady pay) than in farming or livestock production. In addition, we observed that females living near a camp are more likely to be self-employed than those residing further away, illustrating an important gender-specific dynamic to this adjustment in the local labour market.² Focus group discussions again uncovered more nuanced findings. For instance, it was often stated that refugees from Gihembe have small shops or hairdressing salons outside the camp that employ local people, while locals are also hired in the camps for construction projects. As one participant from Gihembe said, "Since [the refugees] arrived here, economic activities have increased. Many houses were built and selling activities multiplied. There are different market centres which were created because of the camp."

Finally, the discussions also shed light on some distributional effects among the local population with regard to who benefits from the presence of refugees. Participants who live near Kigeme, for example, emphasised differences in economic interaction based on personal circumstances, in particular that it tends to be the financially better-off from their community who engage commercially with refugees and who presumably benefit from

that interaction. Again, this demonstrates the need to consider heterogeneity within the host community as well, when trying to understand how a refugee camp may influence local populations.

On a positive note, we found that locals' labour market activities do not seem to be negatively affected by refugees; indeed, the resulting, more dynamic local economy provided increased opportunities for wage-earning jobs and self-employment. Moreover, we did not find evidence of either increased competition in the labour market or resentment from local people due to the presence of refugees. On the contrary, the economic and social interaction between groups was given as an explanation for the good relations between the two populations.

For Congolese refugees, however, the experiences were more mixed. Being granted the right to work and thus to access the local labour market is not sufficient to promote sustainable self-reliance, and a more comprehensive strategy is needed to provide opportunities for the wider refugee population. This strategy could incorporate standardised identity documents for refugees, information provision for local employers, and better transportation provision outside the camps. We hope that these observations can guide not only the relevant actors in Rwanda but also the governments of other refugee-hosting countries in adopting effective measures to promote economic and social integration for the benefit of refugees and host communities alike.

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2. See also Bilgili Ö, Loschmann C and Siegel M (2017) 'The Gender-Based Effects of Displacement: The Case of Congolese Refugees in Rwanda', KNOMAD working paper 21 <http://bit.ly/KNOMAD-WP21>

The role of rural grocery stores in refugee reception

Zachary Whyte, Birgitte Romme Larsen and Mona Schaldemose

Our research with rural grocery store managers in Denmark suggests that the integration of asylum centres into the local social and economic life in rural areas is a key factor in successful refugee reception.

In Denmark, asylum seekers are required to stay in asylum centres while their asylum applications are processed. During this time they are not allowed to work or pursue education but are provided with accommodation and a small stipend to buy food and other essentials. Waiting times range from around six months to more than ten years in some extreme cases, and the number of asylum centres fluctuates with the number of asylum applicants and the length of processing times: in 2007 there were only seven asylum centres in Denmark; in 2016 the number exceeded 100, and it is currently 22. While the Danish Immigration Service is responsible for asylum seekers in Denmark, they subcontract the work to asylum centre operators, either the Danish Red Cross or one of several rural municipalities. Rural municipalities now administer more than half of the centres.

Rural communities in Denmark, across the Global North, are characterised by an ageing and reducing population, declining job opportunities, and the closure of local businesses as well as welfare institutions such as schools and retirement homes. There are therefore good economic arguments for rural municipalities to host asylum centres.

First, the closure of many welfare institutions in rural areas means that there are unoccupied buildings – often municipally owned and relatively cheap to rent – that can be quickly refitted. Second, rural municipalities are particularly interested in the jobs and secondary economic benefits derived from the asylum centres, such as the creation of demand for other services including remodelling and maintenance, which means more work for locals in a context where the creation of even a small number of jobs has a big impact. Third, the enrolment of asylum-seeking children in

local schools can stave off school closures. Similarly, asylum seekers of all ages can support local associational life, for example by participating in local football clubs.

Finally, because of the relative isolation of many rural asylum centres, asylum seekers often have little option but to spend their money locally, which in particular means buying their food at local grocery stores. When we asked grocery store managers to rate the importance of asylum centres to their overall business only one felt the centre had no positive effect on their business; seven reported a small effect, eight a medium effect, and three a powerful effect. Three managers told us that their stores were dependent on the business from the asylum centre for their survival.

Social hubs and gatekeepers

As well as being merchants, the store owners and managers whom we interviewed saw themselves as upholders of their communities. One said, “We say that we are kind of an unofficial mayor. It is important that we are present at town events and support local initiatives.” Partly as a result of the closure of other informal social meeting places such as schools, stores were increasingly central to local community life. They provided locals with a place to meet and talk but they also supported local associations and institutions in a deeply interwoven circuit of economic and social exchange. The threat of closure of such stores was understood to have real economic consequences for the entire community.

In this context, grocery stores could function as gatekeepers for asylum centres. One store manager on the island of Langeland, for example, asked his staff to only speak positively of the town’s newly opened asylum centre, feeling that so long as there

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had not yet been any negative experiences it was important to support it as he would any other new institution in town. This was in part due to his appreciation of the custom that the asylum centre brought to his store but also as a way of bolstering the collective spirit in the town and showing that the community could make it work. For him this also meant working with local voluntary associations (particularly the local football club, which he sponsored) to create opportunities for asylum seekers to participate.

Another store manager explained that she quickly found herself helping asylum seekers to navigate her store, the local community and in some cases even the asylum system, and so had become a contact point for interactions between the asylum centre and the local community.

For asylum centres, having good relations with local communities can open opportunities for cooperation with local institutions and voluntary associations, which can widen the social opportunities of asylum seekers and combat the sense of isolation and frustration that tends to characterise their waiting time.¹

Social and economic incorporation

While polarised national debates often frame asylum seekers as either victims in need of saving or threats to the social order, local communities tended to be more pragmatic through experiencing asylum seekers' participation in local community life, for example as consumers, football players or school pupils. One of our rural respondents said, "Now that [the asylum centre] is here, the question is 'How do we make the best of it?'".

However, local communities sometimes complained about the relative seclusion of asylum centres from local community life – often understood as a lack of involvement with local institutions and a certain obscurity as to their daily operation – as well as a perceived lack of communication from authorities and centre operators. The resulting disapproval could exacerbate the local isolation of asylum centres and those living there, as well as put local political pressure

on the hosting municipalities to limit their cooperation with the Danish Immigration Service. At best, this would mean a failure to capitalise on the opportunities available through local cooperation; at worst, this could spell the closure of the local asylum centre.

There is thus important work to be done in building and expanding relations and communication with local associations and institutions. Managers and staff at the asylum centres may contribute to this shift by buying necessities for the centre locally, using local venues for events, and hiring locals, thereby involving the institution in local economic life. These steps in turn create dialogue and intersections with local associations, who can provide opportunities for asylum seekers and voluntary support for the asylum centre. This might mean developing and sharing a local playground rather than building a separate one for the asylum centre, or asking local associations if they can use unneeded furniture from the centre rather than throwing it away.

Local communities prove useful partners for asylum centres but this relies on actively working to interweave asylum centres with local social and economic life, rather than operating them as isolated – and isolating – institutions.

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Collaboration with criminal organisations in Colombia: an obstacle to economic recovery

Christopher M Hays

Those seeking to support economic development for internally displaced people in Colombia need to understand how and why many IDPs collaborate with armed groups and criminal organisations.

To date, the Colombian government has registered over 7,300,000 victims of forced displacement as a result of the nation's many years of conflict.¹ Given that forced displacement is known to result in high levels of extreme poverty (affecting 85% of those displaced from rural to urban environments²), economic development is a priority. Among the many factors which create challenges for the economic recovery of victims of the Colombian conflict, one that is often not sufficiently taken into consideration is the incidence of collaboration by internally displaced persons (IDPs) with armed groups and criminal organisations.

These armed groups – guerrilla organisations, paramilitary groups, drug cartels, and local mafia and gangs – have a dramatic impact on the local economy of displaced communities. Furthermore, collaboration with armed groups can significantly undermine third-party efforts to foster economic development through the creation of new income-generating activities and the pursuit of formal employment. It is therefore vital that those involved in economic development with Colombian IDPs appreciate how and especially why IDPs collaborate with armed groups and criminal organisations.

Numerous obstacles impede the study of this phenomenon, in particular the risk of reprisals facing both the researcher and the research population. Additionally, displaced people settle in highly diverse and sometimes remote locations, and so research must be similarly wide-ranging. In undertaking this research, the author interviewed 15 community leaders and NGO workers in three major cities (Medellín, Bogotá and Cartagena), two municipalities (Tierralta and Puerto Libertador, in

Córdoba) and two small rural communities (in the regions of Córdoba and Cauca).

Forms of collaboration

Given their isolation and economic vulnerability, and the lack of government and police presence, IDP settlements are seen as conducive to organised crime. IDPs are known to collaborate with criminal groups both directly and indirectly; some will engage directly in the illegal activities of the criminal groups, most prominently drug trafficking and the extortion of protection money (called *vacunas*, 'vaccinations'), while others will provide the groups with support, for example, providing supplies or transporting gasoline to those cultivating illicit crops.

Additionally, armed groups in certain communities will control the supply of water and the sale of basic foodstuffs such as eggs and *arepas* (a Colombian staple, made from maize dough). They also control transportation in and out of the community. Under such conditions, local vendors, drivers and anyone who needs water are all drawn into various degrees of complicity with or submission to the criminal groups.

Reasons for collaboration

It is essential to understand **why** IDPs collaborate. Without such understanding, economic development efforts can founder, and agencies may put themselves and those they seek to help in danger, should their activities be perceived to threaten illegal actors. The reasons that IDPs are complicit with or directly participate in the activities of armed groups are far more complex than many appreciate.

One reason given is the perceived lack of economic opportunities. Interviewees



Displaced community in Colombia.

report that, at least for some IDPs, having an alternative way to support one's family would dissuade them from engaging in criminal productive activities. Interviewees also highlight the inducement of 'easy money'. María Esperanza³ (a social worker with a community development faith-based organisation in Bogotá) summarises the dynamics as follows:

"Marginalised, excluded, segregated communities are an excellent environment for hiding organised crime. The trafficking and the fact that these communities have such needs, especially economic ones, and the culture of easy money make it very likely that they [the IDPs] will resort to illicit businesses."

The culture of 'easy money' is no doubt the result of a combination of factors, chief among which are probably the influence of drug cartels and the dependency dynamics created by government and non-governmental aid.⁴ But when one combines that culture with the realities of low wages or the low profit margins of much agricultural production, one begins to see why collusion with a criminal organisation becomes attractive. As Jorge Miguel (a pastor and

the leader of a community development organisation which works with IDPs) puts it:

"The justification is that ... [since] 2 kg of coca is worth around 4,600,000 pesos, then I am going to dedicate myself to cultivating coca and not corn. They justify it because the price of corn often goes through the floor, and the farmers ... almost always lose."

IDPs whose involvement is limited to supporting roles, such as transportation, may find it easier to justify their collaboration since they are not producing or selling narcotics directly.

Fear is unsurprisingly one of the most frequently cited reasons why IDPs go along with or support the work of criminal organisations in their communities. This fear is rooted not only in the danger that the armed groups represent but also in a feeling that IDPs have been abandoned by the government and the police. In the words of Susanna, a social worker leading a development project with IDPs outside of Medellín:

"Many are afraid... They feel like ... the best thing that they can do is keep quiet. But there are others to whom this seems like the easiest life, especially

given the abandonment by the State... they don't have anyone to protect them, they don't have anyone to hear them, or if someone hears them, they will be denounced [to the criminal groups]."

The perception of having been abandoned by the State is compounded by the fact that the local neighbourhood assemblies often push people to comply with extortion requests by the criminal groups, even sometimes directly collecting for them.

But fear and poverty are not the only factors. To a certain degree, criminal groups maintain order in many of these marginalised communities, functioning – in the absence of police and government representatives – as local government and meting out punishment for violations of community norms. Susanna explains:

"People have grown accustomed to [the criminal group's] presence there and have legitimated it in a certain way, because, when something happens to them, they go and seek out [the group members], so that they can solve things, so they can play the role of the judges."

Because local mafia and criminal groups fill the governance void, cooperation with them can be seen by IDPs as more legitimate than an outsider might appreciate.

Finally, IDPs may choose to collaborate with or even join an opposing criminal group as a reaction against the violence they suffered at the hands of a different armed group. In this way, they feel a greater sense of security and are able to extract a sort of vengeance. Angélica Pinilla Mususú elaborates:

"If the paramilitaries expelled me, I become an enemy of the paramilitaries and close to the guerrillas. [Or] if the guerrillas were the ones who expelled me, and I am a displaced person and a victim, I end up being part of the paramilitary groups, in pursuit of a justice that the State has not been able to give, in pursuit of a reparation that the State has not been able to provide."

Implications for development work

All of this underscores the reality that agencies focusing on the economic development of IDPs in Colombia need to adopt an alliance mentality, coordinating their efforts with complementary organisations. As

economic motivations are only a small part of why IDPs end up working with criminal entities, efforts to direct IDPs away from criminal groups need to take account of other factors; this is likely to be beyond the scope of a typical economic development organisation and therefore will require cooperation with government agencies, non-governmental organisations and faith-based organisations.

Since some of the factors discussed relate to the absence of the State and the weakness of local community leadership, attention to economic development should also go hand-in-hand with a more robust governmental and police presence in the communities, along with initiatives to help raise the communities' civic and political self-awareness. Similarly, insofar as some factors relate to ethical and psychological issues, they can be best addressed in cooperation with local religious communities and faith-based organisations, as well as with NGOs that provide psychological care.

While such cooperation would undoubtedly be complex, an appreciation of the non-economic factors that stimulate cooperation with criminal groups and impede legitimate economic development is vital when working to foster the economic recovery of IDPs.

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3. All names have been changed.

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5. This project was made possible through a grant from the Templeton World Charity Foundation, Inc. The opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Templeton World Charity Foundation, Inc or the author's institution.

Syrian economies: a temporary boom?

Ahmad Al Ajlan

Some displaced people and their host communities have benefited economically from the consequences of conflict in Syria's Raqqa province. Others need support – and the type of support needed will change as circumstances change.

When civil war erupted in 2011, Raqqa in northeastern Syria was not directly engaged in the conflict, and thus many Syrians from other provinces – such as Deir Az Zor, Homs and Hama – fled to Raqqa. They mainly settled in Raqqa city, where the pre-war population of some 220,000 nearly doubled in 2012 with the influx of internally displaced people (IDPs). This created huge pressures on Raqqa's fragile infrastructure but also created job opportunities for many people. When Raqqa was captured by the so-called Islamic State group – ISIS – in 2014, the city enjoyed a boom in commercial activity for a short time, because of two main factors: firstly, Raqqa became the capital of a very large area of Syria and Iraq controlled by ISIS and, secondly, ISIS did not enforce a specific price for goods, nor did they enforce payment of taxes (except *zakat*¹).

But the city's commercial boom was of short duration. Because of increasing air raids, many civilians were forced to leave the city. Some moved to Lebanon or Turkey but many travelled to nearby towns and villages to stay with relatives. Towns like Al-Mansoura, Al-Rashid, Al-Qahtaniyah and Al-Jurnia took on the economic roles that Raqqa city had previously played. Towns' populations expanded, bazaars proliferated, small shops enjoyed increased sales, and new shops were built. Some families gained a new source of income by renting rooms to displaced people.

People took advantage not only of the new economic opportunities created by the presence of those who had been displaced but also of the lack of strong authority in the area. For decades, people had had to ask permission from the central government in Damascus even to build a small shop on their own land, and getting that permission had been neither easy nor cheap. People, particularly those in rural areas of Raqqa, took advantage of the removal of these obstacles to build homes and shops.

As well as winners, there were of course losers. Many people had their sources of income cut off by the war, people such as those who conducted trade between the rural areas and the city and those who were dependent on renting land and property, while thousands had to flee Raqqa with little more than the clothes they were wearing. Little assistance gets through. Displaced families in Al-Jurnia, as in other towns in Raqqa, have received a small amount of financial support only twice in one year. As a result, children in these families have been forced to sell vegetables and bread in the street. Women who have lost their husbands are particularly affected, since this also usually means the loss of the household's breadwinner, and many widows have been obliged to remarry.

Since the withdrawal of ISIS from Raqqa in late 2017, the short-lived boom is over and the circumstances have changed once again for everyone. The biggest mistake that the international community has made concerning the humanitarian situation in Raqqa now is that the aid provided usually consists of food and a small amount of money. This kind of aid is rapidly consumed. Support should rather concentrate on rebuilding the infrastructure: roads, irrigation systems, hospitals and schools (and, eventually, clearing the landmines planted in Raqqa city by ISIS). Then people will be better able to produce what they need and once more establish livelihoods, rather than be dependent on external assistance.

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1. *Zakat* is a form of alms-giving treated in Islam as a religious obligation or tax.

Obstacles to refugees' self-reliance in Germany

Elizabeth Ekren

The majority of Germany's refugees and asylum seekers rely on government welfare and face serious obstacles to self-reliance. Integration policies must eliminate these obstacles to promote mutual long-term benefits for refugees and their new communities.

Since the height of the so-called refugee crisis in 2015, Germany has accepted around 830,000 asylum applications.¹ Given the country's ageing population, falling birth rate and decreasing availability of skilled workers, fully utilising refugees' capacities in the labour market has the potential to result in wide-scale socio-economic benefits.

Research suggests that it may take 10–15 years before refugees produce a positive effect on national budgets, but they also have the potential to help strengthen fiscal sustainability in the long term, providing they are well integrated.² Unfortunately, current trends indicate a slow start to such integration in Germany, with little more than 100,000 refugees in full- or part-time employment and the vast majority reliant on government welfare benefits. In 2016, costs to provide these benefits (in the form of housing, health care, food, basic daily provisions, language training and spending money) were higher than planned, reaching over €20 billion. If the current trajectory does not change, costs will continue to grow exponentially, and long-term welfare dependency in refugee communities could also drive long-lasting cycles of poverty and social discontent.³

Self-reliance and its benefits

In accepting the highest number of asylum applications of any European Union (EU) country, Germany has embraced a position of humanitarian leadership within the bloc. It is important, however, that Germany does not fall into the trap of viewing refugees as a homogenous collective of victims who have no capacity (or desire) for self-help. In reality, refugees have diverse educational backgrounds, professional experiences, technical skills, social networks and creativity to draw upon in building new lives. When policies encourage refugees

to capitalise on these diverse capabilities, refugees have far greater potential to become autonomous and self-reliant, driving their own positive socio-economic outcomes.⁴

The reality is that large numbers of refugees will remain in the long term. Germany must therefore focus on policies that promote refugees' lasting self-reliance. Despite some attempts at this, refugees' access to work opportunities and potential self-reliance is still precarious, impeded by institutional structures, practical constraints and the extreme uncertainty that still characterises their daily lives.

Practical barriers to work

In July 2016, Germany's Integration Act improved labour market access criteria – in theory at least – for both asylum seekers and those whose applications have been accepted. The law shortened work prohibition periods, reduced the extent of citizen priority checks for job applications and guaranteed a right to stay for the duration of a job training programme. Despite the reforms, finding a job and independently meeting material needs remain fraught with legal and practical complications.

Receiving acceptance of an asylum application can take upwards of six months, and the accompanying employment restrictions and benefits vary according to the type of status awarded. For those still awaiting decisions, their country of origin and the likelihood of their application being successful determine their access to government language courses, employment programmes and job offers. Some localities, due to their high unemployment rates or their concentrations of specific technical jobs, can still require citizen priority checks when refugees apply for jobs, meaning that the employer will first check whether a

suitably qualified German or EU candidate is available. The local authorities who conduct these checks have a high degree of autonomy and little obligation to justify the decisions they make. State and municipal residency requirements for refugees prohibit them from moving away from areas in which it is difficult to find employment unless they can find jobs in advance of moving that meet legally defined minimum salary requirements.

Even lower-skilled jobs tend to require a working knowledge of German and, given the varying waiting times for access to a government language course and the time it takes to complete (12–24 months), immediate access to even the most basic jobs is limited. Furthermore, the official government-provided language integration course does not provide the specialised language training required for higher-skilled jobs. With little disposable income, engaging in private study to overcome these barriers is often financially impossible for refugees.

The rigid structure of the German education and employment training systems adds additional complexity for refugees with foreign qualifications. As a part of employment readiness procedures, job centres and local guilds assess whether or not refugees' credentials meet German standards, for both technical and non-technical jobs. Even when refugees' skills are evident, there is little possibility of avoiding these long bureaucratic review processes or taking simple practical skills tests to enter directly into work; where alternatives do exist, they are offered at the discretion of local government authorities and businesses. Given the difficulties around qualification recognition, entering the job market through formal apprenticeships and employer-run training courses is often one of the only viable routes to access many professions. However, job centres are under no obligation to find ways for refugees to fill perceived skills gaps so they can practise or retrain in their previous professions. Even surpassing such hurdles to find and complete such an apprenticeship or training programme does not guarantee any follow-on employment or the legal right to remain in Germany.

Due to housing shortages and difficulties finding private rentals, refugees tend to live in shelters for far longer than policies stipulate they should. Crowded living conditions can cause constant noise and residential conflict that hamper daily routines and disrupt bathing, studying, eating and sleeping on a schedule that is compatible with working hours. Shelters in smaller cities are often poorly connected to public transport, creating difficulties commuting to jobs in metropolitan areas. Further discouraging the search for work is the fact that once they report income, refugees become responsible for paying their own accommodation costs in shelters, which are frequently unaffordable.

Unreliable resources, unpredictable needs

While their asylum applications are being assessed, refugees living in shelters receive a nominal monthly allowance (€81–145, depending on age). Shelters may also provide additional in-kind benefits such as catered food, hygiene items or clothing. After 15 months, or once their asylum applications are approved, refugees receive a slightly higher monthly amount (€237–409). With most or all of their material resources having been depleted in flight, until they can earn income refugees have little else to draw upon, making moving beyond subsistence difficult.

Already complex benefits schemes change rapidly at both federal and local levels, resulting in implementation delays, inconsistent payments and incorrect disbursements. Frequent, forced (and often unannounced) moves to new shelters often mean that either refugees must find or purchase new household items or furniture when they are not provided, or have to abandon what they have already accumulated but cannot take with them due to differing shelter rules or the inability to afford moving services.

Without other reliable means of connectivity, refugees must use large portions of their allowances to pay for phones and data (vital for contacting family, friends and services). They must also pay for other expenses related to their asylum claims, including translators and legal advisors.

A shift towards reciprocity

Germany must commit to a more consolidated vision of how it sees the place of refugees in its future society. Are refugees merely temporary guests whose basic needs should be attended to only until they can be sent elsewhere? Or are they a new population of permanent residents who are expected to integrate – to put down roots, build independent lives and give back?

Presuming the goal is the latter, policies should find more productive ways to harness refugees' vast socio-economic potential. At a minimum, the laws and processes regarding asylum applications, shelter transfers, residency status renewals, case appeals and deportations should be further streamlined, shortened and simplified. This would reduce the protracted uncertainty that decreases refugees' motivation to overcome obstacles to employment, financial security and independent living. Policies should furthermore continue to expand legal rights to work while striving to eliminate existing barriers – including greater flexibility in job equivalency reviews and

skills testing, easier entry into lower-skilled or in-demand jobs and more opportunities for on-the-job learning of both skills and language. Most critically, policies must stem from the premise that refugees have the capability and desire to become self-reliant; the role of institutional structures should be to empower them to achieve this.

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This article is based on ongoing dissertation research and fieldwork in four refugee shelters in Cologne.

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3. Sources for the figures cited in this paragraph and throughout are available (in German) from the author.
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The new world of work and the need for digital empowerment

Miguel Peromingo and Willem Pieterse

References are often made to forced migrants' digital literacy, including their use of smartphones to organise journeys and communicate once at their destinations. Other digital skills, however, including those relating to the workplace, are of greater relevance to supporting their integration.

The digital divide broadly speaking refers to gaps created in society based on access to and use of technology.¹ It is typically described as a twofold concept: a divide based on access to technology and a divide based on skills and usage. In most developed economies, the divide based on access is diminishing as a result of general growth in internet access. In the European Union, for example, household access to the internet is around 85%. However, scholars argue that the skills and usage divide is much more pertinent than the access gap.

Digital skills are broken down into five types: operational (being able to operate a computer), mobile (being able to use a mobile device), information navigation (being able to find and interpret relevant information), social (sharing information and curating friendships) and creative (creating online content).²

Although traditionally the use of technology is associated with operational skills, successful participation in society depends much more on information



UNHCR/Algon Dragej

A Congolese refugee, now an IT trainer, teaching at the Women's Centre for urban refugees, Nouakchott, Mauritania.

navigation skills, social skills and creative skills. For example, being able to find the most appropriate financial services increasingly depends on one's ability to formulate the proper queries and filter and sort through online information. Those arriving in destination countries, who might bring well-developed operational skills, and devices, may well lack the more crucial digital skills for societal inclusion.

Generally, digital skills are increasingly correlated with people's level of education (instead of, for example, with age and gender), suggesting that the digital divide will persist. In practice this means that substantial sections of the population lack the skills to successfully use the internet, despite having access to it. Forced migrants who enter the country with low socio-economic status – and therefore a low level of digital skills – can therefore end up in a vicious circle of poor digital skills and exclusion.

With the workplace evolving quickly, having digital skills becomes ever more integral to every industry. Furthermore, as the workplace is evolving, so are requirements for workers to stay up-to-date with relevant technological developments. As education is also increasingly technology-driven, workers are increasingly required to use technologies in order to update themselves. Users also require increasingly developed digital skills in order to benefit from many digital service offerings and services tie-ins

from private parties – relating for example to housing, communication services and legal services. Such digital skills required by citizens in order to participate in such societies are also required by forced migrants.

Refugees are by definition greater risk-takers and more mobile than residents, which can make them more adaptable to these labour market changes. However, those arriving in the country of destination need to be able to make their skills visible, get them recognised and avoid ending up in a digital version of the less-skilled-low-pay equilibrium that affects many developed and emerging economies alike.

Beyond pushing buttons

It may well be that the provision of humanitarian assistance to forced migrants and the regulation of the protection system will continue to be digitalised. In addition to such digital assistance, however, forced migrants need digital empowerment. Digital tools can improve forced migrants' lives, while changing labour markets are creating opportunities for motivated and skilled individuals to embed themselves in their new societies. Digital skills, however, go beyond pushing buttons and knowing how to operate a mobile device; in particular, the crucial skills required to find, understand and utilise online information are often neglected. Lower-skilled forced migrants, or those whose long journeys have had a negative impact on their access to further education, are in danger of falling by the wayside. Inclusion programmes for migrants should therefore consider focusing on digital skills training at all levels.

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Investing in refugees: building human capital

Lili Mottaghi

Investing in refugees' well-being is a global public good, and the international community should work to reduce malnutrition and increase access to education for refugees in order to help build human capital and achieve better economic outcomes for all.

The protracted nature of forced displacement worldwide has brought to the fore not only refugees' humanitarian needs but also the development challenges they face. These daunting challenges emerge in four critical and interlinked areas.¹ Refugees – in particular, refugee children – face tremendous hardship in meeting their basic nutritional, educational, health and livelihoods needs. Recent studies by the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, have found acute malnutrition in many refugee camps in Kenya, Sudan, Sierra Leone and Chad where refugees have been displaced for protracted periods of time. Another study indicates that while acute malnutrition is relatively low in the assessed Syrian refugee populations in Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon, the prevalence of anaemia suggests a serious public health problem among women and children.² The economic costs of malnutrition are very high, with poor nutrition prolonging the cycle of poverty and impeding growth in two main ways.

Firstly, poor physical health leads to low productivity and high rates of disease. Women, the elderly and children under five, in particular, are at higher risk of respiratory and communicable diseases due to overcrowded shelters, lack of nutritious food, safe drinking water and poor hygiene. They can also suffer from mental stress after displacement, which affects their general well-being. Secondly, there is evidence that malnutrition contributes to a longer-term development problem, especially in education. Studies have shown that malnutrition causes stunting and wasting in children and is linked to a wide range of cognitive deficiencies. Poor cognitive development leads to missed years of schooling in childhood and lost years of employment in adulthood.

Development challenges worsen for refugee children entering the education

system of the host country where the official language taught at school differs from their home language. Many students who excelled in their home countries cannot follow the course materials in host countries due to language barriers. The challenging environment of learning can impede their academic success and increase frustration. These negative experiences and the trauma they have already experienced damage children's cognitive functioning, affecting their educational performance throughout adolescence and into adulthood. Evidence shows that low levels of education reduce productivity and income, which makes breaking the cycle of poverty more challenging. Cognitive damage to children from receiving no or low-quality education in crisis-affected settings not only has an impact on their well-being but also cuts their future earnings.

Sustainable job opportunities are not readily accessible to refugees residing outside their home country. Consequently, refugees are less likely to be employed, and the longer refugees are unemployed, the more their chances of finding a job diminish as they lose skills and find themselves dependent on State support. Many of these refugees work in the informal sector due to their lower education levels and lack of work permits. Refugees tend to accept lower wages than unskilled host/local workers, and lower incomes not only mean poorer nutrition but also weaken an individual's resilience to further shocks. Lack of decent jobs and low earnings contribute to increased child labour and child marriage as families become more indebted and struggle to access livelihood options. In other words, they are caught in a vicious circle.

Poor educational learning outcomes and poor health translate into massive social costs not only for the host country but also

for the global community. The cost of lack of access to quality education,³ lack of decent jobs, malnutrition and uncertainty about the future is high. The resulting loss in human capital formation in terms of the knowledge and skills that are crucial for enhancing labour productivity has consequences for economic growth, regional economic development and the long-term processes of peace, stability and reconstruction.

Investing in refugees is a global public good and goes beyond the responsibility of the hosting country. Therefore, collective action is required to address these challenges. Investing in health and education for refugees, especially women and children, will benefit not only the host country and other nearby countries but also those further afield. It will also help prepare refugees for return, laying the foundation for economic development and inclusive growth in their homeland.

The international community and policymakers need to do more to provide an opportunity for refugees to thrive and grow. Increasing access to health care, nutrition and safe water and facilitating the participation of refugees in the labour market

(by investing in skills through strengthening childhood and adult education and vocational training) are equally important. The economics literature has found strong links between education and human capital, and between human capital and long-term growth and productivity. These links should encourage the international community and policymakers to extend quality education and job skills training to registered and unregistered children and adult refugees, regardless of gender or nationality.

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www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5111203/
3. The February 2019 issue of FMR will include a major feature on Education. Call for articles at:
www.fmreview.org/education-displacement



Girls at Paysannat L school in Mahama refugee camp, eastern Rwanda. Eighty per cent of the students are Burundian refugees and 20 per cent come from the Rwandan host community.

Towards greater visibility and recruitment of skilled refugees

Leah Nichles and Sayre Nyce

Showcasing refugees' skills connects refugees to global work opportunities, and also shifts the narrative from one of refugees being burdens to host countries to one in which refugees are recognised as skilled workers for whom countries should be competing.

Refugees face multiple barriers to gaining access to employment. In addition to the frequent lack of access to the right to work in host countries and the lack of accessible, legal and safe economic migration pathways, there are added barriers of lack of visibility of refugees' skills and difficulty in verifying qualifications. Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) is conducting a pilot in Jordan and Lebanon to determine how labour mobility pathways to protection that address these obstacles might be opened up.

Employers need detailed information about work histories and skill sets in order to make informed recruitment decisions. The first step, therefore, to opening up international work opportunities to refugees is to map and demonstrate the depth and breadth of what refugees have to offer. TBB has created an accessible electronic platform – the Talent Catalog, the first of its kind – in which refugees in countries of asylum can document their qualifications, skills and experience to share with international employers who are seeking to fill skills gaps. In order to encourage refugees to register with and create a profile in the Talent Catalog, TBB conducted information sessions with refugees across Lebanon and Jordan to explain labour mobility pathways to protection. Since July 2016, more than 10,000 refugees in Jordan and Lebanon have registered and created profiles in the Talent Catalog. Those registered represent some 180 occupations; more than one third have a tertiary qualification; and more than one third speak a language other than Arabic.¹

Another element of the equation is to find employers willing to recruit skilled refugees to fill skills gaps. TBB identifies potential employers and makes

the economic and humanitarian case for hiring refugees. To date, five companies have offered jobs in Australia and Canada to 11 candidates currently in Lebanon and Jordan, while 60 other candidates are in various stages of recruitment processes with 20 other Australian and Canadian employers. Meanwhile, other employers in South America, Europe, the Caribbean and North Africa are either already exploring the Talent Catalog or have committed to do so when vacancies arise.

TBB works closely with both refugees and employers to clarify with employers the particular skills and qualifications they are looking for, identify qualified candidates from the Talent Catalog for hard-to-fill roles, and facilitate remote recruitment processes. As part of this, TBB assists refugees to showcase their skills and expertise by, for example, helping them prepare or update CVs, providing guidance on recording video introductions to employers, providing access to interview skills training and facilitating access to language classes in anticipation of formal language skills assessment. Employers may conduct their own tests – effectively an informal qualifications recognition process – to ensure that candidates meet their standards, although such processes may be insufficient to meet visa requirements for certain regulated professions. The opportunities TBB offers are also seen by refugees as being of longer-term benefit to them. One candidate in Lebanon said, "You will gain a lot of benefits even if you cannot get the job. Your confidence will increase, your skills will improve and you will be ready for any challenge in the world of work."

Draft 2 of the Global Compact on Refugees proposes the collection of population and

June 2018

www.fmreview.org/economies

socio-economic data – including on labour markets, investment and skills – which would, among other benefits, help foster inclusive economic growth for both host communities and refugees. The Talent Catalog is one example of capturing data on and demonstrating the range and depth of refugee skills – skills which could meet employers' needs and contribute to economic growth anywhere in the world.

Engaging States

Governments have a critical role in creating economic opportunities for skilled refugees and in recognising qualifications but, to date, economic migration pathways have not been designed with the circumstances of refugees in mind. Those fleeing conflict zones may not have access to evidence of their qualifications or legal identification documents, and may not be able to provide traditional work histories, references and evidence of annual earnings. Recognising this, the Government of Canada is funding a pilot project in Kenya to identify barriers to refugees' access to its skilled migration schemes. In both Canada and Australia, while working with increasing numbers of employers to recruit skilled refugees, TBB continues to consult with and

carry out advocacy work targeting both governments on how existing skilled visa systems may take account of skilled refugees' unique circumstances. It is also in similar discussions with three other States.

Talent Beyond Boundaries is helping to advance an effective framework – one that may be replicated by others – for refugees to rebuild lives of self-reliance with protection and dignity, while contributing to the global economy.

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1. See Talent Beyond Boundaries (Sept 2017) *Mapping Refugee Skills and Employability: Data and Analysis from the Talent Catalog*
<http://bit.ly/TBB-Sept2017>

"Attracting and retaining global talent is critical to Canada's digital future. Refugees should absolutely be a part of that talent pipeline."

(Sandra Saric, Vice President of Talent Innovation, Information and Communications Technology Council, Canada)

Validating highly educated refugees' qualifications

Katarina Mozetič

Qualification certificates play a central role in the labour market integration of highly educated refugees but validating them presents considerable challenges. Sweden and Norway have introduced some positive developments to address such difficulties.

Whether doctors, teachers, engineers or IT specialists, the highly educated refugees I interviewed in Norway, Sweden and Germany between 2016 and 2017 aspired to continue working within their occupational fields. In order to do so they need to validate their foreign qualifications but the validation process for certain occupations is extremely lengthy, preventing some highly educated refugees from re-entering their professions for years.

Qualifications recognition and validation processes differ substantially between

different occupational groups, with the principal division between occupations regulated by law (for instance, medical doctors and teachers) and non-regulated ones (such as IT engineers). For individuals in non-regulated occupations, the qualifications validation process is often simple and short. For those in legally regulated occupations the experience is very different. In order to be able to continue working as, for instance, medical doctors and teachers, foreign professionals have to obtain national licences, usually needing to provide proof of destination-

country language skills, pass an exam, attend supplementary courses and (often) undergo a period of practical training.

All of the medical doctors and teachers who participated in my research project who embarked upon these licensing processes in Norway, Sweden and Germany described numerous difficulties. Some felt that the required knowledge tests and supplementary training ignored their existing knowledge and experience, and some medical specialists were sceptical that the destination country licence would equal the professional level they had achieved in their home country. Most of the research participants criticised the long duration of the licensing processes.

In Sweden, for instance, foreign teachers require an estimated five to eight years to obtain a Swedish teaching licence. In order to enable migrants to gain faster access to the labour market, the Swedish Public Employment Service, commissioned by the Swedish government and in cooperation with industry partners, established fast-track programmes.¹

Designed for occupations that experience labour shortages, the first programmes were initiated in 2015 and programmes currently exist for migrant chefs, social workers and those in regulated occupations such as teachers. The programme participants undergo a qualifications validation process, occupation-specific Swedish language courses, internships and supplementary theoretical courses. Participants take part in these activities simultaneously, thereby reducing the time it takes to get the national licence. Moreover, the programmes provide participants with an institutional framework that sketches out the steps they need to take in order to reach their goal and offers them guidance along the way.

One such fast-track programme is a 26-week programme aimed at foreign teachers in Malmö, Sweden. This consists of courses in pedagogy and about the Swedish school system that are taught in both Swedish and Arabic (since it is anticipated that most participants are Arabic-speaking), an internship at one of the local schools and a Swedish language course that is tailored for

teachers. Practical work experience enables the individual to enhance their Swedish language skills and establish the professional contacts necessary for future job seeking. Moreover, the decision about whether an individual must undergo a programme of supplementary training for foreign teachers in order to obtain their teaching licence – a decision taken by the Swedish National Agency for Education upon a request to validate their qualifications – can be re-evaluated depending on how that individual performs in the fast-track programme.

Physical possession of certificates

In order to be able to validate their qualifications, highly educated refugees have to be in physical possession of their qualification certificates. Many respondents recounted, however, how they had lost part or all of their certificates in the rubble of their bombed homes or on their journeys. Obtaining new certificates from the educational institutions where they studied was often a nearly insurmountable obstacle – state institutions were often reluctant, unwilling or even legally constrained from issuing educational certificates to individuals abroad.

In order to address this problem, and to meet the requirements of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) developed a Recognition Procedure for Persons without Verifiable Documentation (also known as the UVD-procedure).² The UVD-procedure is oriented towards individuals with foreign higher education for whom the general recognition procedure is not appropriate, due to either missing, insufficient or unverifiable educational and/or identity documentation. Thereby, it is directed mainly at refugees and persons in a refugee-like situation. The UVD-procedure includes input by one or two NOKUT employees with knowledge about the educational system in the applicant's country of origin and two external experts with subject-specific expertise. An applicant's educational background is verified through a

questionnaire, an interview and both oral and written assignments relating to the applicant's field of expertise. Although Norway is the only European country with the UVD-procedure, a couple of others, including Sweden, employ similar procedures.

Due to increasing numbers of refugees, the time-consuming and resource-intensive nature of the UVD-procedure, and the fact that an ever expanding group of refugees does not fulfil the requirements for evaluation according to the UVD-procedure, NOKUT has, along with the United Kingdom National Academic Recognition Information Centre, developed a new type of faster, cheaper evaluation procedure for those without verifiable documentation. The new Qualifications Assessment for Refugees³ combines an evaluation of

available documentation and a structured interview carried out by an experienced NOKUT case officer with the applicant.

The attempts outlined here are examples of positive developments aimed at addressing the difficulties of qualification recognition. It remains to be seen how these programmes will continue to evolve and how they can be implemented elsewhere.

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www.sv.uio.no/iss/english/people/aca/katarmo/index.html

1. <http://bit.ly/SwedishGovt-fasttrack>
2. <http://bit.ly/NOKUT-UVD-procedure>
3. <http://bit.ly/NOKUT-QualPassport-2016>

Refugee livelihoods: new actors, new models

Ziad Ayoubi and Regina Saavedra

The international community is increasingly emphasising the need to bridge the humanitarian–development gap. But what does this mean on the ground in terms of refugees' livelihoods and economic inclusion?

In addition to shelter, water, food and education, refugees (just like everyone else) need productive employment. Generating an income to meet one's basic needs and provide for one's family is essential for human dignity, and is a human right under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Furthermore, there is growing evidence that refugees can contribute to economic development in host countries if given the chance to participate. Refugees' human capital (skills and experience) can bring new products and services to the local market, while financial capital such as remittances and international aid can stimulate economies. However, in most countries refugees still lack the right to work.

From a host country's perspective, **governments** should recognise, firstly, that a legal framework which allows the economic inclusion of refugees can generate benefits for host countries and, secondly, that it is

preferable for work rights to be granted as early as possible in order not to prevent or delay the potential contribution of refugees to economies. Restrictive work rights encourage informal economic activities and deprive host countries of an economically active population who could otherwise pay taxes and consume, produce and sell goods and services. It is neither desirable nor logical to postpone work rights until refugees become legally integrated (for example, through naturalisation), which can take a long time; people will still work but will be excluded from formal, decent employment opportunities. Good practice (in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Germany, among others) shows that supporting early labour market insertion – for example, through skills certification, apprenticeships and job matching schemes – allows refugees to become contributing members of host communities. This is

naturally more easily accomplished in countries where local economies can absorb a labour influx and where resources and infrastructure exist to efficiently link refugees to appropriate opportunities.

However, 84% of the world's refugees are hosted by developing countries, many of which suffer high rates of poverty and unemployment. In such contexts, policy development and programme design promoting refugees' livelihoods must speak to the concerns of host countries. This is where **development actors** can help. One significant example is the World Bank's Global Concessional Financing Facility which provides concessional loans to middle-income countries hosting refugees in order to expand labour opportunities and improve local infrastructure, benefiting host and refugee populations. Meanwhile, the International Labour Organization's 'Guiding principles on the access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market'¹ speak to the need for proper governance frameworks as well as the importance of the private sector in generating decent, productive employment.

Economic inclusion is of course impossible without the engagement of employers, investors, service providers and other

private sector actors. However, identifying opportunities that can achieve real impact for refugees and host communities can be a painful and lengthy process, particularly when discussions between humanitarian and private sectors are conducted only at the global level, far from local reality.

Improving ways of working

The humanitarian community is increasingly aware of the need to change its usual ways of working. The UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, has made many strategic changes recently such as in cash-based interventions and biometric identification, in developing multi-year, multi-partner strategies, and in livelihoods programming. Traditionally, many livelihoods interventions focused on skills development and subsidies, and were implemented without real analysis of refugee needs and capacities. They lacked the potential to generate real, sustainable impact for refugees, let alone for host communities. UNHCR, along with many of its partners and other humanitarian organisations, is now moving towards more targeted, market-based and results-oriented programming.

The most important aspect of this is the emphasis on understanding market dynamics



UNHCR/Mark Healey

Two Eritrean refugees involved in IKEA Switzerland's six-month internship programme. On completing, refugees can apply for a permanent position. By September 2017, 13 of the 36 interns who had completed the internship programme had been employed by IKEA.

when programming for livelihoods. In order to support this, UNHCR has issued Minimum Criteria for Livelihoods Programming² and (in partnership with the International Labour Organization, ILO) guidance on the need to identify and prioritise specific sectors, and then to analyse the opportunities for refugee inclusion within the ‘value chains’ of each sector³ based on potential for growth, relevance to refugee capacities and feasibility of intervention. The sector selection takes into account economic trends but also the political, legal and socio-cultural context, including rules, regulations and norms; available supporting services; and the profile of the refugee and host communities. This analysis allows practitioners to identify opportunities and interventions that might increase refugee participation without exacerbating tensions between refugees and the host community. Some examples of such sectors include food services in Egypt, maize, cassava and groundnuts in Zambia, and food and beverage in Costa Rica. In Egypt, joint ILO–UNHCR analysis found that entrepreneurial training and start-up grants could help Syrian refugees to capitalise on the popularity of Syrian cuisine, and programmes were designed accordingly.

At the global level, UNHCR and other organisations are linking refugee artisans to global markets through the MADE51 (Market Access, Design and Empowerment) initiative⁴ which aims to build the technical capacity of local, ethical social enterprises to manage unique collections produced by refugees and to support them in branding and marketing products internationally.

The overall aim of this way of working is to work within existing market dynamics to promote sustainable economic inclusion for refugees. In doing so, UNHCR and humanitarian agencies need to avoid becoming market players. Historically, this has been challenging. There are many examples of humanitarian-implemented livelihoods trainings where refugees produced goods that were later sold directly to the humanitarian agencies; the moment the humanitarian agency runs out of funding, the activity ceases and

there is no genuine economic participation of refugees nor long-term benefit for the host community. The role of humanitarian agencies is facilitation: ensuring access of refugees and vulnerable host community members to market opportunities, without agencies becoming direct producers, vendors or consumers. Agencies can, however, add value by developing models that prove that refugees have the potential to contribute positively to the local economy; these models should later be handed over to be led by development partners, private sector actors and/or governments.

The Graduation Approach

An example of such a model is the Graduation Approach, which UNHCR and partners have piloted in various contexts since 2013, including in Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Egypt. Graduation is an approach to lifting households out of poverty through providing – within certain time limits – short-term humanitarian assistance, livelihoods training, employment or self-employment support and a strong coaching component. Coaches identify a household’s protection and other needs and link participants to existing national and local services. A mid-term evaluation of the graduation pilot in Santo Domingo, Ecuador, shows that the approach is promising. After less than one year of implementation (and during a year of financial crisis and a natural disaster in Ecuador), 57% of households had a regular source of income (compared with 49% prior to the start of the programme); the average monthly household income increased from US\$269 to \$282; 34.6% of households earned an income above the national poverty line (28.3% previously); and 78% of households were able to eat three meals a day (60.4% previously).

The Graduation Approach is increasingly being used by governments and development actors in a variety of non-refugee contexts as a social protection tool, and these actors are now beginning to engage with UNHCR and humanitarian agencies about incorporating displaced populations into their plans. USAID is investing in a \$37 million graduation

pilot in Uganda that will target both host communities and refugees; in Ecuador, the Ministry of Social and Economic Inclusion is interested in collaborating on the Graduation Approach in order to expand its own social protection programme; and returnees and IDPs in Afghanistan and Pakistan are included in Graduation Approach programmes run by microfinance institutions.

Financial inclusion

Access to financial services is another area where major innovation has been required, as traditional approaches to microfinance initiatives by humanitarian agencies have in many cases proved unsustainable. Rather than managing revolving funds directly, UNHCR and partners are beginning to take a facilitative approach to ensure access to financial services for refugees. UNHCR is working with the Swedish Development Agency to establish a credit guarantee facility for financial service agencies providing loans to refugees and host populations. The guarantee scheme will help finance three to four financially viable and socially oriented financial service providers, and is meant to encourage lending to refugees and to build evidence that microfinance for this segment of the population can be viable. The UN Capital

Development Fund has also committed to supporting refugees' access to financial services in several countries in Africa by providing financial and technical support to service providers who provide refugee access.

What's next?

More models need to be tested and more development funding should be invested; some models will work better than others, and some interventions that work for some populations may not work for others. Failures should be expected as the international community learns how to meet the needs of this vulnerable population while also achieving positive results for host communities. Continuous monitoring – and, therefore, investment in evaluation – will be needed in order to identify lessons and enable good practices to be replicated.

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2. www.unhcr.org/54fd6cb9.pdf
3. www.unhcr.org/594b7d7f7.pdf

The macro-economic impacts of Syrian refugee aid

Tobias Schillings

A new study on the effects of humanitarian assistance in response to the Syria crisis finds significant positive impacts for regional economic growth and job creation.

With currently 5.6 million registered Syrian refugees being hosted by neighbouring countries and over six million internally displaced within Syria, creating economic opportunities has become a central component of the resilience approach in response to the crisis. Acknowledging the destructive impact of the conflict on livelihoods and economic resources, the international community committed to creating 1.1 million jobs for refugees and host communities by the end of 2018. This ambitious goal, announced at the London

Conference for Supporting Syria and the Region in February 2016, is complemented by commitments from the affected national governments neighbouring Syria (to open up their labour markets and improve their regulatory environment), the international community (to strengthen job creation through access to concessional financing and external markets) and the private sector (to foster economic growth by providing new investments).

The core response of the international community is the Regional Refugee and



UNHCR/Scott Nelson

Syrian refugees sell soaps and detergents in their shop in Alexandria, Egypt. UNHCR supported this and other job creation projects in Egypt.

Resilience Plan (3RP)¹ which is based on plans developed under the leadership of the relevant national authorities – namely, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. The 3RP combines humanitarian and development elements, spans eight different sectors, including livelihoods, and is supported by a total annual funding appeal of US\$5.6 billion for 2018. A recent study of the macro-economic impacts of the 3RP (undertaken in cooperation with the UN Development Programme's Sub-Regional Response Facility for the Syria Crisis)² demonstrates its noticeable contribution to economic growth and job creation in the region – a contribution that has mostly been overlooked in public discourse yet offers a powerful narrative for policymakers in fostering social cohesion among host communities.

The qualitative evidence

In many host communities, the economic impact of Syrian refugees and humanitarian

assistance has been the subject of significant debate. The Syrian crisis has clearly had an overall negative impact on many neighbouring countries' economies by affecting trade flows, GDP and growth, and could threaten regional stability. However, as over 90% of refugees live outside camps, they have become important customers for local goods and services, paid for with savings, labour income, remittances and humanitarian assistance. Local businesses also benefit from humanitarian assistance programmes as they get contracted as suppliers for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and humanitarian agencies. Furthermore, the arrival of Syrian refugees' private capital and expertise has accelerated business growth in countries such as Egypt, Jordan and Turkey.³ Syrian businesses have become an important engine for refugee job creation and represent a premier example of the 'growing the pie' approach in host communities.

The quantitative evidence

To further support these qualitative statements, the new study uses an economic framework to estimate fiscal stimulus and employment effects of the 3RP. As a first step, we estimate the potential GDP impact based on 'fiscal multipliers'. Public investments generate higher economic effects than their initial value, as the economy benefits from spillover effects. For example, building a refugee camp creates income not only for the construction company but also for the suppliers of materials and labour. This income is then spent on other goods and services which in turn create additional economic effects. Fiscal multipliers capture these spillover effects. In a 2015 study of Lebanon, UNDP and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) found that each dollar spent of their US\$800 million refugee aid package generated an additional 0.6 dollars of revenue, making the multiplier 1.6.⁴

The second step of the analysis is to quantify the potential for job creation. By using historic data (including data that captures recent national developments) to quantify the relationship between changes in unemployment and output at the macro-economic level for each country, it is possible to translate the national GDP impact into expected job creation.⁵

It is important to note that the study's final estimate is a projection for the general job creation potential in each country. It does not distinguish between refugees and host nationals, nor does it claim the kinds of jobs that are created. This micro-level impact will depend on 3RP programme implementation, targeting and national economic policies. Especially with regard to refugees, labour market barriers must be taken into account. Refugees experience much stronger economic, legal and social restrictions to employment than do citizens of host countries. As long as these barriers exist, refugees will not be able to benefit fully from the estimated expansion of economic opportunities. It is therefore up to the international community and host governments to target their programmes and policies in such a way as to promote inclusive growth.

The study's results indicate the potentially significant impact of the 3RP programming on host countries. With a total spending over 2017 and 2018 of about \$9 billion, the response plan creates a much larger fiscal stimulus. The short-term effects account for a projected GDP impact of about \$17–25 billion, while the associated job creation impact adds up to an estimated 75,000–110,000 jobs.⁶

The relative effect for each country depends mostly on the size of its economy and the amount of funding received, with Lebanon and Jordan being the largest recipients. With a relatively small market, these countries are expected to experience a much stronger momentum in economic growth due to the large inflow of humanitarian assistance. However, even large economies such as Turkey and Egypt are expected to contribute between 12,000 and 23,000 jobs to the London target. Emphasising the positive economic impacts of refugee aid, this research advocates a fully funded 3RP. Although the job target seems unlikely to be achieved by the resilience response alone, the 3RP represents a significant contribution to expanding economic opportunities for refugees and supports long-term growth by fostering resilience in host communities.

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Quality of work for Syrian refugees in Jordan

Maha Kattaa and Meredith Byrne

Work permits have been at the centre of the policy debate on the hosting of Syrian refugees in Jordan. This approach needs also to involve ensuring decent working conditions for all.

The issuing of over 100,000 work permits to Syrian refugees in Jordan as of May 2018 – following a joint commitment by the Government of Jordan and the international community – is in itself an important achievement. However, work permits can also be a deceptive indicator because they measure the legalisation and formalisation of employment but not necessarily actual job creation nor the quality of work. Evidence from a 2017 International Labour Organization (ILO) rapid impact assessment¹ suggests that obtaining a work permit is only the first step towards formalising Syrian workers. Policies must also improve working conditions.

Social protection and decent work

With few exceptions, employers in Jordan are required to enrol their employees in social security, irrespective of nationality, and must do so for new employees soon after their work permits are issued. In the agriculture sector, however, Syrian workers are permitted to obtain work permits through cooperatives. This de-links them from a sponsor and thereby also bypasses the requirement for employers to register Syrians in the social security system. Similarly, in the construction sector, Syrians may obtain a work permit through the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions (GFJTU). Under the GFJTU scheme, workers are not required to register with the national social security system but must instead obtain an insurance policy, costing approximately 45 Jordanian dinar (US\$65) annually.

The implications of protecting a large number of Syrian workers through work injury insurance schemes are not yet clear, although insurance schemes do not provide minimum social protection coverage as defined by ILO's Social Security Convention No. 102.² Furthermore, while social security

systems deduct contributions from workers' wages to contribute to national social security funds, insurance schemes do not operate in the same way. Protecting Syrian workers through social security is important not only for securing equality of treatment but also for extending social protection coverage to unemployed and retired Jordanians – because unregistered workers increase the supply of unprotected labour, while decreasing the share of workers making contributions to social security funds.

Only 20% of interviewed Syrian workers who had work permits reported being covered by social security; 13% did not know whether they were covered, nor what benefits social security provided. Many Jordanian employers interviewed during the rapid impact assessment did not believe that they were required to register Syrian workers in social security, even in sectors where they were in fact required to do so.

Since the adoption of non-employer and non-profession specific work permits, the responsibility of insuring against injury at work has shifted to the permit holders. Early focus group discussions held with Syrian construction workers who had obtained employment via ILO Employment Service Centres across Jordan indicate a generally positive reaction to having insurance (and that they do not consider the cost prohibitive) but that there is a lack of awareness of the provisions and benefits of insurance. It is also unclear whether Syrian workers who are young and in good health will want to invest in insurance policies as they may not perceive the risk of illness, injury or death as being relevant to them.

Labour inspection

Our research suggests that labour inspectors appear to prioritise verifying that all foreign workers, including Syrian workers, have the

required permits but pay less attention to decent work conditions. Of those interviewed Syrian workers who had permits, only 8% reported that their working conditions, as well as work permits, were checked during labour inspections. It would seem therefore that not all indicators of decent work have improved with formalisation. Overall, Syrians with work permits do report an increased likelihood of having written work contracts; however, hourly wages, safety provisions and relations with employers are not necessarily any better. Our evidence suggests that Syrians with permits are actually working in excess of the standard 40-hour work week, although none reported receiving overtime compensation. Focus group discussions, however, showed a more complex picture. Some Syrian workers wanted to work more hours so that they could increase their income, even though they knew they might not be compensated for the additional work. Despite having been briefed on occupational safety and health (OSH) procedures, others preferred not to wear protective gear, finding that it got in the way of their work. Employers reported that fines for non-compliance were not substantial or evenly applied, that OSH provisions were not usually checked during inspections, and that there was a general lack of consistency in the enforcement of labour laws.

Finding the right balance

By facilitating the employment of Syrian workers, the Government of Jordan has taken proactive steps to turn the arrival of Syrian refugees into a development opportunity. Government policies must continue to promote decent work conditions which should include mechanisms that gradually bring workers into national social

protection systems. In some sectors, clear information on the benefits of social security coverage or employment insurance, as well as workers' entitlements, may be of use. Clear communication is also needed around the social security system as a whole and its reliance on workers' contributions. Labour inspection could also play a more prominent role in promoting decent work if inspectors were better equipped to provide relevant recommendations to employers and workers to help them comply with regulations and standards, rather than only playing an enforcement role. Reasonable and well-regulated penalties can, when necessary, play a part in encouraging compliance.

A comprehensive review of work permits' accordance with applicable international labour standards³ could be of use for workers, employers and government representatives. More work needs to be done to identify the challenges Syrians face in obtaining work permits but of equal importance is to support the Jordanian government to find the right balance of incentives and sanctions that serve the interests of employers, Jordanian citizens and Syrian workers alike.

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1. International Labour Organization (2017) *Work permits and employment of Syrian refugees in Jordan: toward formalising the work of Syrian refugees* <http://bit.ly/ILO-permits-Syria-Jordan-2017>

This assessment was based on questionnaires completed by 450 Syrian workers (half of whom had work permits and half of whom did not) in the service, agriculture and construction sectors, and on two focus groups.

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The gig economy in complex refugee situations

Abigail Hunt, Emma Samman, Dina Mansour-Ille and Henrieke Max

Research with Syrian women refugees in Jordan suggests that, despite significant challenges, the gig economy has some potential to help refugees participate in host communities and to bolster their economic participation.

As elsewhere in the world, the gig economy – in which companies develop mobile platforms which bring together workers and the purchasers of their services – is fast taking root in Jordan. These platforms enable businesses to order timed and monetised tasks from an available worker, with a fee or commission commonly charged to the worker or client by the platform. Workers take on particular ‘gigs’ without any guarantee of further work and are typically classified as self-employed or independent contractors by gig economy companies. The operating model of gig economy platforms can be divided into ‘crowd work’ and ‘on-demand’ work. Crowd work refers to tasks which are commissioned and carried out via the internet using suitably skilled ‘crowd workers’ located anywhere in the world. On-demand tasks are carried out locally, assuming close physical proximity of service purchaser and provider.

A 2017 study commissioned by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and carried out by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) explored the potential of the gig economy to provide economic opportunities to Syrian women refugees currently living in Jordan.¹ Although the sector is still in its infancy, international companies (such as Uber and Careem) and home-grown companies (such as Bilforon and Mrayti) have already established operations in the country. To understand the implications for humanitarian practitioners of this fast-developing form of paid work in complex refugee situations, we examined the potential and challenges of including the gig economy in livelihoods programming.²

Challenges

The gig economy remains indisputably small. Worldwide, it involves a very modest share of the active workforce, the most

generous recent estimate being 1.5%.³ Our research in Jordan suggests that gig work may involve a few hundred Syrian refugee women at most. On this basis alone, it could be argued that engagement with gig work is not a good use of scarce development and humanitarian resources.

The gig economy does not – as it currently stands – offer decent work as defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO). Therefore, a wider focus on improving access to livelihoods in sectors which offer opportunities for a more stable income, coupled with better working conditions, may be more appropriate.

Furthermore, structural constraints – both practical and political – to accessing gig work present a barrier to entry for marginalised communities. For example, for many refugees in Jordan, internet connectivity is limited or non-existent. Women face further constraints to digital connectivity, sometimes requiring permission to use the internet or due to access restrictions imposed by limited digital literacy.

The legal implications of involvement in gig work may also be of concern to practitioners. It remains unclear whether non-Jordanian gig economy workers are entitled to work permits. Expanding gig work may therefore appear to be supporting workers to access informal work, bearing potential risks for both practitioners and workers themselves. Crowd-work platforms complicate matters further because of their transnational character: workers can be based in one country and undertake tasks for clients based in a second, via platforms located in a third – leaving it unclear which is the legally responsible jurisdiction.

Finally, gig workers in general confront many challenging working conditions, including a lack of social protection and

bargaining power. Refugee gig workers in particular face yet greater difficulties, such as heightened apprehensions around the submission of private information online that might put them at risk.

Opportunities

Notwithstanding the challenges, the gig economy does present some opportunities for livelihoods programming. Early engagement with the expanding gig economy offers an opportunity to understand its positive and negative implications (for gig workers and the labour market more broadly), and to address them proactively while there is time to shape these technologies and their impacts.

Although the gig economy may, in some ways, be little different from other forms of casual, informal work available to refugees, gig workers appear to value some features of platform apps – such as their independent log of hours worked, which alleviates the risk of wage theft and facilitates prompt payment on task completion.⁴ The gig economy also makes it possible for refugees to undertake crowd work, which is not tied to a particular location. This could present new economic opportunities for suitably skilled and equipped workers, although it introduces challenges around the governance and the precariousness of such work.

The gig economy also has potential to help overcome the barriers that restrict the mobility – and therefore participation – of Syrian women refugees in the labour force. Some focus group members reported how home-based gig work could open up opportunities for women's livelihoods. Moreover, on-demand work could expand possibilities for engagement in sectors in which these women may already be skilled, such as catering or tailoring.

Avenues for gig economy livelihoods programming

We believe there is a case for livelihoods programming in Jordan to include opportunities in the gig economy, if integrated alongside robust protection measures and other employment options. Potential avenues for such livelihoods support include:

Engaging in dialogue with government:

Given the lack of clarity around the applicability and enforcement of existing labour regulation in relation to the gig economy, practitioners need to engage with the legal implications and potential risks of supporting gig work. One approach could be to engage in dialogue with the Jordanian government to clarify what engagement the government is willing to permit. At

the same time, it would be valuable to undertake a range of advocacy activities, including calling for government-led social dialogue around opportunities and conditions in the gig economy and policies to promote digital inclusion and permit freedom of association.

Supporting refugee engagement in navigating gig work:

Practitioners should monitor the policy environment relating to refugee engagement in gig work. They should provide timely, ongoing information



Syrian refugees and Jordanian citizens take part in crowd work, outsourced from Western Union. Why have we pixelated their faces? See www.fmreview.org/photo-policy

to refugees seeking or involved in gig work about the relevant regulations and the associated opportunities and risks, as well as specific support such as digital literacy training and legal advice. Considering the challenges that gig work poses, this support should include building transferable skills that would enable refugees to seek alternative economic opportunities if they wish.

Encouraging responsible company engagement: Practitioners may be well-placed to encourage companies to pay serious attention to workers' concerns, including around privacy. In addition, practitioners might initiate connections with those crowd-work companies which operate on a more ethical and inclusive model in order to explore their interest in working with vulnerable communities, such as Syrian women refugees. Central to this should be ensuring that companies consider the specific needs of these groups (for example, for robust digital literacy training) and that the work offered is decent and desirable.

Facilitating refugee association: Even in contexts in which refugee association is prohibited, refugees are usually permitted to come together for training led by non-governmental organisations. This could provide a very good opportunity to link with (registered) women's groups to train and support women, and to enable them to advance collective action in different areas of their lives, including by developing economies of scale in small businesses.⁵ Practitioners could also facilitate links between refugees engaging in gig work and labour unions. This would raise unions' awareness of the experiences of workers as the gig economy emerges, so that they can amplify gig workers' voices and advocate on their behalf.

Exploring cooperative models: In a recent precedent, the Jordanian government has permitted agricultural cooperatives to apply for Syrian refugee work permits, acting as the 'employer' and handling their paperwork. These cooperatives have also supported the Ministry of Labour by providing information

to refugees on the work permit process and their rights and entitlement under labour laws. Developing platform cooperative models with existing women-inclusive cooperatives in Jordan and technology company leaders could provide an opportunity to harness digital technology to expand workers' access to paid work and markets, while mitigating some of the challenges posed to workers by gig economy models.

Finally, we recommend that practitioners support the collection of evidence about gig worker experiences in order to inform programming (to support women's economic empowerment) and advocacy (to raise awareness about worker experiences and needs). Taken together, these steps could help increase the individual capacity of workers to engage within the gig economy and – critically – improve the conditions of work itself.

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The power of markets: lessons from Uganda

Alison Hemberger, Sasha Muench and Chelsea Purvis

Market-based approaches in northern Uganda demonstrate the benefits of supporting local markets instead of distributing in-kind aid.

Markets help crisis-affected populations access goods, services and economic opportunities that are critical to meeting their basic needs and supporting their livelihoods. Nevertheless, many aid organisations continue to provide in-kind assistance in areas where markets are functional. This may help in the short term but it sidesteps, and often undermines, markets' short- and long-term roles in coping and recovery. This is particularly relevant in protracted refugee crises.

Northern Uganda is one such context, where nearly one million refugees who have fled South Sudan's conflict currently live. Refugee settlements have developed in this area previously, and the most recently arrived refugees are expected to remain in the West Nile region for many years. Recognising this, the Government of Uganda and the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, have called for aid actors to promote sustainable livelihoods for the refugees.

The vast majority of host communities in West Nile have historically been reliant on subsistence agriculture and, as a result, the supporting markets necessary to produce and expand commercial agriculture (such as supplies of seed and fertiliser, technical advice and sales channels) have remained underdeveloped. Yet spending and investment by South Sudanese refugees is helping to fuel new growth in this underdeveloped economy. Refugee investment is also likely to continue as refugees begin to establish themselves in the settlements. There is thus real potential for continued economic growth in ways that provide longer-term livelihoods opportunities for both refugees and host communities.

However, while aid organisations and donors have made commitments to transition to an increasingly cash-based response, nearly all households in West Nile's Bidi Bidi and Palorinya settlements still receive

in-kind food assistance (such as cereals, beans and cooking oil). Households sell the excess to buy goods they need more in local marketplaces, undermining the market's ability to provide food to local populations and reducing farmers' incentive to grow crops for sale. One trader in Yumbe (the nearest town to Bidi Bidi settlement) notes that, prior to the refugee response, 10 large traders used to bring in cereals to the local market. Since aid distributions have started only one of them remains, while the others have shifted to other types of businesses.

By providing seeds and tools, aid organisations also undercut the availability of agriculture inputs in local markets. To date very few input sellers exist in the West Nile settlements; agro-dealers in nearby towns say that free distribution of in-kind inputs prevents them from expanding their sales in the refugee settlements.

Promoting market-driven activities

Cash programming fuels spending and investment in West Nile without undercutting critical markets but more cash transfers alone cannot be a long-term strategy for refugee support. Aid organisations need to support market-driven activities that help households earn an income in the longer term. Mercy Corps, Palladium and DanChurchAid are working together in West Nile to strengthen agricultural markets and improve refugees' participation in them.¹

Their ReHope project² comprises several components. The first involves partnering with agro-dealers to help them access improved seeds and expand their sales networks into settlements, and providing marketing support to agro-dealers for the first growing season; rather than handing out free agricultural inputs to farmers directly, the project funded a coupon-based promotion for purchase of agro-dealers' inputs. The second

component involves working directly with refugee populations to provide advice on production and to support land sharing with host communities. Finally, the project works to attract output buyers and strengthen their networks, with the goal of helping refugees to increase incomes from the crops they harvest.

Donors and implementing partners can draw several lessons from the early, encouraging results of the ReHope project, including the need to:

- reduce in-kind food distributions in favour of cash transfers where possible, scaling up cash transfers gradually, accompanied by transparent investments in market analysis and learning
- reduce in-kind distribution of agriculture inputs in favour of gradually reduced subsidies
- move to joint funding across humanitarian and development portfolios and increase project timeframes, in order to enable aid organisations to more effectively strengthen market opportunities for refugees facing multi-year displacement
- encourage investments that strengthen the capacity of local market actors on whom refugees and host communities rely for their livelihoods
- capture learning about market systems for current and future refugee responses in West Nile and provide feedback on the successes and challenges of market-driven approaches and the inter-related impacts on refugees and host communities.

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2. Funded by the UK government.

Livelihoods programming and its influence on secondary migration

Richard Mallett, Jessica Hagen-Zanker, Clare Cummings and Nassim Majidi

Improving access to work, as well as livelihoods programming itself, is required if the lives and livelihoods of Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia are to improve.

In search of greater freedoms and opportunities, thousands of Eritreans have fled their country in recent years – many directly across the border to Ethiopia. One estimate by the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, in 2016 put the number of registered Eritrean refugees residing in Ethiopia at nearly 800,000. But for many the journey does not stop there. Secondary migration of Eritreans from Ethiopia is considerable, with some evidence suggesting that as much as two thirds of the Eritrean population in Ethiopia moved onwards in 2015.¹

Humanitarian organisations have long been delivering livelihoods programming

in Ethiopia's refugee camps, providing capital to help participants establish micro-enterprises or equipping them with vocational skills in a particular sector, such as tailoring or computing, and/or basic educational skills such as numeracy. Although such interventions attempt to achieve humanitarian and developmental outcomes (by generating improvements in participants' well-being), they are also increasingly justified in the name of migration control – and more specifically the prevention of onward movement. Through 63 interviews with Eritreans across three different sites

in Ethiopia we examined the extent to which these measures actually influence the way people plan for their futures.²

The logics and limits of livelihoods programming

Livelihoods programming is an example of a policy measure designed to steer migration decision making at the individual level. Part of the objective of livelihoods programming is to prevent movement before it occurs, based on the assumption that by providing greater economic opportunity and security to people living in 'sending' countries, it is possible to create a viable alternative to (primarily irregular) migration. It is hoped that the option of migration is then seen as relatively less attractive.

With the caveat that our research looked only at a sample of certain types of programming (mainly lending initiatives and vocational training), our evidence suggests that while such interventions are capable of helping people to meet basic needs, there appears to be little meaningful effect on more transformative change in people's livelihoods or migration plans.

A number of respondents in Adi Harush camp in the north of the country described how they had received financial support from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which they used to start up their own micro-enterprises such as small shops within the camp or buying and raising livestock. Many welcomed this support: one man, for example, was now running a successful horse and carriage transport service, having received an initial loan; a single mother told us that her NGO-funded chicken farm was doing well.

However, many interviewees also discussed the limitations of these programmes. Although one woman had used her loan to establish a small shop within the camp, her main problem was one of marketplace saturation, which made it hard to make a profit and expand. The point here is that although camps form their own economies, it is evident that the markets within them are often limited, creating little opportunity to accumulate reasonable profits.

We observed a similar pattern for skills and vocational training: while respondents often expressed gratitude for, and satisfaction with, the experience, they reported little significant or long-term impact. Our research points to refugees being unable to put newly acquired skills to use in their wider environment, primarily as a result of existing legislation. One man described how he had planned to get a driving licence and start working as a taxi driver, before hearing from the Administration for Refugees and Returnee Affairs and from fellow Eritreans that he – as a refugee barred from engaging in the formal economy – would not be allowed to do this. For others, the range of training programmes currently available are simply not relevant to their interests and aspirations, which deters take-up altogether.

Ultimately, these forms of livelihoods support are addressing the symptoms rather than the underlying structures of poverty and economic marginalisation facing Eritrean refugees – which are likely to be driving the desire among so many for secondary migration. In particular, these underlying factors include refugees' lack of rights to formal, better paid and higher skilled employment. One woman told us: "In the Netherlands you can get a job with better wages. My husband tells me that it is also much better to access the basic infrastructure services in the Netherlands than in Ethiopia. [...] I know it is possible to travel to the Netherlands." Another man illustrated what might prevent him making a similar onward move: "If I am not working, I will run out of patience and I may attempt the dangerous move to Europe but I hope I can get a job and will not need to risk this." Without meaningful improvements in refugees' access to decent work – work that is reliable, adequately paid, and makes use of their skills – the support provided by livelihoods programming simply cannot be expected to reduce secondary migration in any significant sense.

Improving livelihoods programming

To better align livelihoods interventions with both the intended beneficiaries' needs and

the dynamics of the local context, efforts should be made to (re)evaluate the local relevance of the training that is offered and to expand the types of work in which refugees can participate. Further to this, more could be done to provide ongoing mentoring and supervision for those refugees who have received loans and training, to help them maximise their potential gains. At the same time, however, NGO programme staff told us that administering effective long-term programming is difficult precisely because of the nature of the implementing environment. In a context of high secondary migration, interventions are intentionally designed to be quick and simple, purely to encourage enrolment; this limits innovation space and encourages inflexibility, thus placing obvious constraints on those responsible for design and implementation.

Putting questions of programming to one side, refugees' ability to build successful, dignified lives will largely hinge on their capacity to access decent work. This is fundamental, underpinning both the challenge of survival in Ethiopia, as well as the resolve (formed by many) to move on. Although there are no guarantees that livelihood security automatically follows from moving into the formal labour market (particularly in urban contexts of generalised high unemployment), our findings suggest that people may become more inclined to remain as a result of improved access to better forms of work.

Government steps

Recent policy developments suggest that Ethiopia is shifting its stance on the right to work. In September 2016, the government announced nine pledges to improve the rights of, and services available to, refugees in the country. These pledges have now been developed into a national 'roadmap' with six thematic priorities; one of these is work and livelihoods, which will include work permits for refugees, an increase in livelihoods programming and the creation of industrial parks. These parks are a key element of the Ethiopian Jobs Compact which was officially rolled out in December

2017 – a US\$500 million agreement between the Ethiopian government and external donors to create 100,000 new jobs (roughly one-third of which will be allocated to refugees).³ Such initiatives, already implemented in some major refugee-hosting countries such as Jordan, are designed to improve access to work for both refugees and members of the host community.

Based on our research, this seems a positive step in the right direction. However, much of the success of both the roadmap and the compact will ultimately depend on the detail of their design and implementation. To that end, we offer five suggestions to policymakers:

First, information about any initiative must be transparent, clear and accessible in order for refugees to make informed decisions about their options. Not only should potential participants be made fully aware of eligibility criteria but they should also be provided with information about what to expect regarding the terms, nature and returns of the work on offer.

Second, some refugees may reject jobs in industrial parks because the jobs either do not align with their backgrounds and interests or for reasons of location: recent analysis of work provided in special economic zones in Jordan, for example, shows that low take-up among Syrian refugees is often related to factory location, with people reluctant to take on long journeys or be separated from family.⁴ Take-up will also be influenced by the way in which these jobs are perceived by those at whom they are targeted: are they seen to offer 'decent' work, or is the activity considered demeaning or exploitative?

Third, the politics of job allocation must be anticipated and taken into account. Urban unemployment in Ethiopia remains high across all groups in society, and economic growth has slowed in recent years. In a context where significant numbers of Ethiopians are also affected by poverty and vulnerability, the way in which allocation procedures are framed, conveyed and implemented is likely to affect the nature of social relations between 'host' and 'refugee' communities.

Fourth, refugee policies should be consistent with the realities of local labour markets. With widespread informal employment in Ethiopia, attempts to formalise refugee employment might be challenging. The feasibility and future sustainability of industrial parks thus need to be carefully considered in light of the country's broader economic environment.

Finally, rather than focusing exclusively on quotas and number of work permits issued, pledges and related monitoring mechanisms should consider the extent to which policies and interventions – such as the Jobs Compact – are actually improving the lives and livelihoods of refugees and hosts.

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The shortcomings of employment as a durable solution

Nora Bardelli

The refugee assistance regime that prevails today seems to insist that the best, or only, solution to protracted refugee situations is firmly rooted in improving access to employment. This approach, however, inevitably favours some and excludes others, while also ignoring the deeper political and social issues at stake.

Labour and capital investment are increasingly seen as the solution to protracted refugee situations. Aid agencies expect forced migrants to be good entrepreneurs and to become self-reliant by finding jobs and/or starting businesses. This puts the responsibility of 'succeeding' firmly on the refugees' shoulders. While this is not an official durable solution (yet), local integration (which is) is increasingly understood to mean being able to participate in economic activity.

I am not questioning the desires and aspirations of refugees to become self-sufficient, nor the need to support refugees to access job opportunities, but I am concerned by the deeper implications of this change in attitude. The "need for individuals to help

themselves rather than relying on the State"¹ is promoted by two principal tendencies in contemporary humanitarianism: first, by the increasing emphasis that the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and other agencies put on economic livelihoods programmes and economic self-reliance and, second, by the growth of public-private partnerships in refugee assistance programmes.

This imposes on refugees the responsibility to create their own durable solution through employment. Within this framework, the official durable solutions – which are all based on the idea of re-creating someone's link with the State and the possibility of citizenship – become out-dated. The solution to displacement is now re-defined in developmental

terms and made into an economic issue rather than a political and social one.

This approach to refugee assistance and protection also ends up homogenising people and excluding those who cannot fulfil the 'entry requirements'. Of course, cash-based interventions and support to enter the job market (although most jobs in the informal market are not classified as employment by international agencies) seem more dignifying ways of providing aid than delivering purely material assistance in that they give refugees a choice, but this only helps some of the many. A wide variety of reasons – whether linked to personal situations and experiences or structural unemployment – can prevent a person from working.

Depoliticising refugee protection

The shift of responsibility in 'succeeding' in one's refugeehood is already perceptible in Burkina Faso, where I have conducted ethnographic research with Malian urban refugees in Bobo-Dioulasso.

Aminata, a Malian refugee of around 80 years of age, who had physical disabilities and was in frail health, shared her house with her granddaughter. Aminata was categorised as a vulnerable refugee by UNHCR, as was her granddaughter, being a minor living with an old and ill grandmother. They received food and cash assistance nearly every month for three and half years but in January 2016 the assistance stopped. UNHCR and WFP Burkina Faso, who provided this assistance, cited lack of funding and the fact that assistance does not need to be provided for urban refugees but can be provided if there is sufficient funding and willingness. When the decision to stop the assistance was taken, agency representatives promised that it would still be provided to those refugees categorised as vulnerable. Despite this promise, Aminata and her granddaughter did not receive any further support. At her age and with her caring responsibilities, how was she supposed to take advantage of "all the opportunities refugees have in cities" (a widely held view, repeated to me by various humanitarian actors when discussing the help that never came)? It is generally thought that urban

refugees, even those qualified as vulnerable, are surrounded by job opportunities – especially in a place like Burkina Faso where Malians have the right to work – or that they have someone in their close network who will have a job and thus be able to support them.

Many studies exist that discuss why an idea of development as economic growth, in all its forms, cannot work, particularly in the long term, serving rather to favour some and exclude and marginalise others.² The 'refugee problem' has become a matter of access to the job market rather than a political question about inequalities, exclusion, conflict, exploitation, asymmetrical power relations, and so on. The human, social and political issues are replaced by market solutions. This depoliticised vision constructs refugees' hardships as being due to a lack of access to jobs and does not in any way address how and why people have become refugees in the first place.

For well over two decades, forced migration and refugee studies have questioned the 'refugee' category and how those thus labelled are represented and portrayed, in order to highlight the impact on refugees' lives of labels, representations and language – and the practices and policies that derive from such discourses. Today, there is a tendency for many researchers to focus on showing how refugees have economic agency, or on providing data on how to support them in their economic livelihoods. What seems to be seen as less important now – and yet what is surely still vital – is what this means in terms of protection and what impact such neoliberal discourses and practices have on refugees' lives.

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Refugee-led social protection: reconceiving refugee assistance

Evan Easton-Calabria and Kate Pincock

The help and assistance that refugees offer each other is central to the lives of many displaced people. Recognising this allows support for displaced people to be reconceived in more sustaining and empowering ways.

‘Social protection’ commonly refers to programmes and policies that aim to reduce the poverty, vulnerability and risks that populations can face. These were traditionally state-led initiatives. The term, however, has also recently become common in international development where international actors strive to alleviate poverty both in collaboration with and in the absence of States.

Social protection for refugees also includes refugee communities’ own efforts to support themselves. Our research in Uganda and Kenya¹ reveals the ways in which refugees are working to support, protect, advocate for and transform the prospects of their communities. This assistance, which we term ‘refugee-led social protection’, includes activities to address vulnerability, such as providing food, shelter, education and health care, but also involves advocacy and the resulting transformation of local and international structures, such as laws and humanitarian systems, which may hinder rather than enable refugees’ access to such provisions.

Refugee-led social protection

Humanitarian actors usually assume social protection in both Kenya and Uganda to fall entirely under the remit of government initiatives, social enterprises and civil society actors. This assumption is deeply problematic and driven by a now debunked perception of refugees as passive recipients of assistance. Despite the increasing emphasis in refugee research and policy making on recognition and affirmation of refugee agency, refugee-led social protection remains inadequately explored by academics, policymakers and practitioners.

Refugees in urban areas are not provided with basic necessities such as food and shelter

and instead must find ways to become self-reliant. However, competition within local economies, discrimination, a lack of access to work permits and limited or non-existent recognition of foreign qualifications can make the pursuit of an individualised form of ‘self-reliance’ extremely challenging. Formal and informal groups and organisations, led by refugees, offer ways for fellow refugees to draw upon and contribute to networks of assistance beyond the limited means of UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency) and its partners. Our research in Kenya and Uganda has found that these support systems may be organised along tribal, ethnic or national lines of solidarity, as shown by organisations such as the Community of Banyamulenge in Nairobi and the Somali Community Association in Kampala, or can be religious in origin, with mosques and churches across both cities holding collections for refugee families.

In addition to less structured religious and cultural support are formal and informal community-based organisations established by refugees. These organisations take a variety of forms, and some are interlinked with the informal religious and cultural support networks described above. In Nairobi, refugee-led social businesses such as L’Afrikana train both refugees and locals in arts and tailoring, and reinvest profits from sales of their products into projects to support vulnerable children from both local and refugee communities with school fees. URISE in Kampala similarly provides training for young people, including in graphic design, t-shirt printing, music, videography and computer literacy, with the aim of equipping them with the skills to support themselves and build a better

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future. Other groups such as RefugeeCare in Nairobi focus on distributing food and clothing to refugees in need. Others still, like Kobciye in Nairobi and Hope for Refugees in Action in Kampala, operate savings and loan cooperatives and business training programmes to enable members to start their own income-generating schemes.

Groups such as Tawakal and Save World Trust in Nairobi provide counselling and trauma services to refugees, for whom overcoming trauma and coping with mental health issues is a huge challenge. Other work focuses on political activism; displaced South Sudanese activists work across Kampala and Nairobi to coordinate peace-building activities back in their home country, and the Federation of Congolese Abroad seeks to change the image of the country and advocate for an end to war. These activities constitute social protection beyond the individual scale, as improving the security of countries of origin enables refugees to repatriate, and peacebuilding and advocacy efforts often focus on the building or rebuilding of national social services.

Even within camps and settlements (where formal assistance is more readily available and more easily accessible), refugees also find their own ways of supporting themselves and their communities. One community organisation in Nakivale settlement draws on the professional skills of a doctor and a lawyer, both refugees, and treats lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) individuals in their own homes at night to help them avoid stigmatisation at the camp

clinic. As homosexuality is illegal in Uganda and the camp clinic is staffed by Ugandans, LGBTI people risk discrimination and even persecution if they are identified; this community organisation therefore fills an important gap in assistance to a marginalised refugee group. Wakati Foundation trains otherwise inactive young men in construction to assist with building homes for vulnerable families who would otherwise have to sleep under plastic sheets. And informal Somali women's groups welcome new arrivals and offer food, shelter and kindness to those who arrive when UNHCR's offices are closed.

Many refugees told us that official providers of assistance are usually their last port of call when they need help. Both in Kenya and Uganda, agencies' huge caseloads deter refugees from seeking officially provided services; refugees also have concerns about corruption. The impersonality and lack of real investment in refugee futures that respondents associated with these services were also described as major factors influencing their preference for smaller, local groups. There refugees receive help from people they know, which often fosters a relationship that goes beyond that of benefactor and recipient.

Improving support for refugee-led social protection

Some refugee-led social protection efforts are backed by funding from international actors; since 2009, for example, UNHCR has used its Social Protection Fund to offer small grants to projects that refugees conceive and



These young Burundian refugees in Kashojwa village, Uganda, belong to the Talented Orphan Refugees' Association. "We learn English, we make baskets and hats, we sing together, we play sports together, we're a family now. We sell what we make and share the money with everyone. In Kirundi, there is a proverb that says 'If we work together, we can improve all our lives.'"

implement themselves – so-called refugee self-help projects. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working with refugee communities have often been criticised for having a simplistic understanding of these communities that is divorced from wider historical, regional and national contexts. By better understanding the contexts within which refugee-led social protection takes place, the conditions under which external actors can most effectively support or partner with refugees themselves become clearer.

A major challenge reported by many of the groups described here is their lack of access to partnerships with more powerful actors, whose funding and training can offer the groups opportunities to grow, increase impact and become more sustainable. Forming partnerships rather than inviting refugees to participate as implementers or mobilisers for pre-defined programmes means refugee-led social protection actors can retain those characteristics that make them better positioned to reach poor communities.

As well as understanding when and where partnership is likely to be empowering, it is important to note that establishing a transformative social protection agenda – that is, one that not only goes beyond protecting people against the risks associated with being poor but also addresses the structural causes of poverty – requires cohesive action. This need for solidarity can be seen through the building of consortia of refugee-led organisations. Together they can work for common causes and, in principle, networks can be a way to share expertise and knowledge and ‘raise up’ less established organisations. Strengthening networks can make refugee-led organisations more visible and formalised, and can create avenues for advocacy. However, while such efforts to promote solidarity in Kampala and Nairobi are underway, strategic cohesion is difficult in part because of distrust. UNHCR’s implementing and operational partners are suspected by refugees of co-opting the ideas of refugee-led organisations, which can do little to stop it. This makes refugee-led organisations less inclined to reach out to national and international

organisations from which they in theory might receive funding or other assistance. In addition to contributing to the silos in which refugee-led organisations often work, this distrust precludes opportunities for awareness-raising about the existence of this important type of social protection.

There is also a risk that international organisations see refugee-led social protection activities as a means of economising by shifting work onto other organisations (even those that are under-resourced), with the resulting risk that the quality of assistance declines. International organisations and local partners must remain aware of the inequalities between different forms of organisational assistance and take steps to ensure that refugees’ vital work is properly supported and valued.

Our research challenges the idea that refugee-led organisations are fringe actors; rather, they are central to the lives of many displaced people. The role of refugees in providing not only community-based safety nets but also genuine opportunities for change in the positioning of refugee communities as assistance actors cannot be understated. However, the effectiveness of refugee-led social protection is only assured if it continues to be driven by refugees themselves, given that they are best placed to understand these needs. Those looking to partner with refugee-led organisations must preserve and value refugees’ proximity to those they seek to help, or else risk losing what makes them such important actors within the international humanitarian system in the first place.

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<http://bit.ly/RSC-TheGlobalGoverned>

1. ‘The Global Governed? Refugees as Providers of Social Protection and Assistance’ is a two-year ESRC-AHRC funded project which aims to document and understand the activities of over 60 refugee-led initiatives across urban areas (Nairobi and Kampala), settlements (Nakivale) and camps (Kakuma).

Refugee paralegals

Musenga Tshimankinda Christian

Refugees in Kenya face multiple barriers to accessing their rights. The work of paralegals who are themselves refugees and who support and facilitate refugees' access to justice offers a vital service that many NGOs, whose scope and budgets are limited, insufficiently provide.

Refugees in Kenya face multiple challenges. In addition to the long process of recognition or rejection of refugee status, these challenges include lack of access to documentation and services – including refugee registration processes, business and work permits, student pass, bank accounts, social security numbers, travel documentation and mobile communication. Refugees also experience difficulties relating to police harassment, a general lack of knowledge of refugee issues, negative and discriminatory attitudes from local populations and barriers to foreign qualifications recognition.

In order to address this, some refugees in Nairobi have been trained by the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Kituo Cha Sheria, supported by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the UN Migration Agency (IOM), as paralegals to support fellow refugees. A paralegal is someone who has either a basic legal training or more extensive practical legal experience, who provides legal assistance to facilitate access to rights and justice. Their work is generally supervised by a lawyer, law office or any legal institution.

Refugee paralegals sensitise refugee groups and public authorities on refugee rights through forums, workshops, training and conferences and also contribute to the capacity building programme of authorities to appropriately handle refugee cases, including how they conduct, stop, arrest and detain forced migrants and on how refugee documents should be issued and verified. They also contribute to awareness-raising activities for government representatives to improve their knowledge of refugee issues.

Refugee paralegals also work to empower the refugee community by providing guidance on their rights and obligations, including how to react when stopped, arrested or detained and how to approach

authorities on matters of documentation. They provide refugees and asylum seekers with information regarding their asylum application and their refugee status, offering advice on their cases, making referrals and following up on cases. They advocate for the release of arrested refugees, asylum seekers and other forced migrants at police stations, prisons and places of detention, and accompany refugees on visits to organisations and institutions to seek assistance on various social issues (for example, to police stations in order to report crimes).

As a lawyer, I have a legal background and therefore have an obligation to help my community, so I became a refugee paralegal. Refugee paralegals are able to undertake work that large international NGOs have difficulty with or do not undertake due to their budget limitations and the scope of their work. For example, I am able to intervene in refugee cases (especially arrest and harassment cases) at any time of the day or night, including on weekends and holidays; large organisations only intervene during their hours and days of work. We also advise, refer and follow up on cases, giving feedback to refugees, which means they do not have to pay the costs of transportation to these NGOs, whose offices are all far from where refugees live. Importantly, refugee paralegals are based where refugees live. We deal with refugees on a daily basis as the majority of us are also refugees and live as part of the refugee community. In the community where I live and work we have established a forum where refugees can share their own ideas on legal and livelihoods issues.

In the course of my work as a refugee paralegal I have assisted many refugees. One Congolese refugee, who was conducting business without a business permit, was arrested for being in Nairobi unlawfully.

He had previously been refused a business permit by the local authorities because they felt he lacked adequate identification. I advocated for his release by proving that his registration papers (from both the government and UNHCR) were issued to him in Nairobi, thereby giving him the right to live there. Following his release I also assisted him to obtain a business permit so that he could continue to do business lawfully in Nairobi.

I also helped a Somali refugee who was living in Dadaab refugee camp by advocating on her behalf with the Refugee Affairs Secretariat (RAS) in Nairobi when she was dealing with logistically complex demands for paperwork during the process of preparing to join her mother, who had been resettled in the United States. My intervention on her behalf, which included accompanying her to the RAS office, helped to avoid a delay in the process.

There are still important steps that need to be taken to make life legally secure for

refugees in Nairobi. Refugee paralegals are currently lobbying the Government of Kenya to apply all the provisions of the Refugee Act 2006 to ensure refugees receive full protection in Kenya. We must also advocate for the government to facilitate local integration, opening doors to make refugees feel welcomed and safe, since many cannot return to their countries and their chances of resettlement are low. One way of doing this would be by establishing a permanent awareness-raising programme for police and other public administration officers in order to build their capacity to handle refugee cases. Both refugees and government authorities must know refugees' rights and have the power and knowledge to advocate for them. Refugee paralegals in Nairobi are working to make sure this happens.

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Kobciye: empowering Somali refugees in Nairobi

Afrah Hassan

Established by a resettled Somali refugee and now under the leadership of his children, Kobciye resource centre works to empower Somali refugees in Eastleigh, Nairobi.

In the early 1990s my father was one of millions of refugees fleeing the civil conflict engulfing Somalia. Relative to many others he was lucky – he was educated and able to secure scholarship opportunities in the United States, where he was resettled. From there he worked to bring over his still young family and to eventually settle in Toronto, Canada. Escaping a violent conflict and settling into a new community sparked my father's passion to help his native community. It began in 1993, when he helped the new wave of Somali refugees who were arriving in Toronto having escaped war, and it continues today with Kobciye, a community resource centre in the Eastleigh neighbourhood of Nairobi, Kenya, which he established. In the intervening years, and in spite of the challenges of keeping the organisation going, Kobciye has continued to grow. Its success is built on its

engagement with the community and ability to gain legitimacy and trust within Eastleigh.

Kobciye, which means 'empowerment' in Somali, is a resource centre that assists vulnerable individuals (including undocumented refugees) within the Eastleigh community, and provides skills trainings such as basic computer literacy, sewing and tailoring and other programmes. Kobciye aims to equip individuals with relevant skills that will build their capacities and lead to further opportunities. The organisation identifies the needs of the community through broad consultations with community stakeholders; this includes organising sustained engagement events and working with established community partners.

After my father's death in 2012, my sister and I returned to Nairobi to try to carry on his legacy. Having settled in Canada as

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refugees when very young, we had grown up in a completely different country, culture and community and we were initially taken aback by the sheer demand and impact that Kobciye was generating in Eastleigh. Although we were always aware of the challenges facing Somali refugees, particularly those in Kenya, truly understanding the circumstances of urban refugees was a profound learning process. Learning how to effectively create programming that accounts for and responds to the needs of the diverse local refugee population was a large part of this learning process. Eastleigh is a dynamic community of individuals of varying backgrounds, all tightly packed within a dense urban area. Adapting to the needs of the community and personally building trust and legitimacy while building on the legacy of our father was all part of learning on the job.

Integrating ourselves into the community and acquainting ourselves with the issues that individuals care about has helped Kobciye to continue to develop. Our own experiences as part of a family of first-generation immigrants gave us a unique insight into how we can cultivate new programming and community engagement. Some of the transitional challenges that refugees face in Canada are comparable to those faced by refugees in Eastleigh, whether that be accessing resources or navigating the legal frameworks that govern their existence. Drawing these parallels between our experiences and those of refugees in Eastleigh has helped us focus both our programmes and how we position ourselves within the overall community.

Appropriate programming

Alongside being a renowned regional business hub, Eastleigh is also the destination of thousands of refugees who are looking for a long-term home or to relocate to other (particularly Western) countries. Many individuals have set up

thriving businesses and integrated fairly well within the local community; others struggle, particularly outside the infrastructure of a formal refugee camp. Understanding these factors has helped us create a framework where we understand vulnerabilities and respond by targeting individuals who will benefit most from our programmes.

With formal education rates lower in Eastleigh than in neighbouring communities, we focus on equipping our members with tangible and applicable skills, including in computer literacy, sewing and tailoring and basic financial literacy. For example, our computer literacy programme aims to give students a basic knowledge of computer functions, on which they can build with further training. We also provide a sewing and tailoring programme that complements Eastleigh's thriving textiles business, and which can be a transition point for potential employment opportunities within the local community. Over the course of the last eight years of reliable and consistent programming, Kobciye has provided vocational skills training to hundreds of Somalis.

There has long been a negative perception of the Somali refugee population in Eastleigh,¹ and in 2014 tension peaked with the police crackdown known as Usalama Watch. This presented a significant challenge to our organisation. We responded by moving from empowerment and skills training to advocacy and awareness raising in order



Weekly seminar, run by Kobciye.

Afrat Hassan

to create a dialogue to combat some of the negative perceptions and stereotypes created by the police and security offensive. We held forums where discussions were held with local authorities and political offices, arranged rallies condemning police brutality and promoting cohesion, and organised cultural exhibitions that highlighted the contributions of each community within our immediate region. We also produced literature that aimed to counter some of the negative narratives that have surrounded the urban refugee population, particularly Somalis. Although today the tension has largely receded, there remains social stigma around the urban refugee population that

is still being contested and negotiated within the Eastleigh community.

Kobciye's impact in the community has continued to grow, with my father's vision serving as a roadmap for our progress and evolution. I am immensely proud and fortunate to be able to lead this organisation, helping the community from which I came and enjoying the continued support of the community which Kobciye serves.

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1. See Carrier N (2017) 'What Can We Learn From the "Little Mogadishu" Migrant Hub?' *Refugees Deeply* <http://bit.ly/Carrier-RefDeeply-Eastleigh>

Syrian refugee-led organisations in Berlin

Jennifer Wood, Evan Easton-Calabria and Yahya Alaous

Many of the approximately 50,000 Syrian refugees living in Berlin continue to depend largely on State assistance; some refugees have also created and found additional support in active, vibrant community initiatives.

Refugees in Germany receive considerable State support. Those whose asylum applications are accepted are assigned to a local city or town, gain temporary residency and begin the integration process. Although new arrivals in 2015 were initially housed in school gyms and other emergency shelters, there are now longer-term refugee hostels and continuing efforts to help refugees find apartments of their own.

Once residency has been established or looks likely, refugees attend an integration course to learn the language and culture, and have their first meeting at a job centre to learn about employment prospects. Unemployed refugees receive a monthly sum to cover living costs. Refugees receive support from the municipality with local orientation, logistics such as transportation and medical resources, and access to organisations and clubs. However, finding a job without recognised qualifications or German language skills is difficult; so too is finding decent housing – already an acute problem in Berlin for low-income earners, even before taking into consideration the needs of refugee families.

Despite the wide-ranging support provided by State agencies, gaps in services exist and, in many cases, unmet needs are addressed by grassroots initiatives found across the country. Hundreds of projects, networks and organisations exist, almost all of which have formed since 2015.

Initially, grassroots support by Syrians in Berlin mainly took the form of helping refugees to access emergency assistance and navigate Germany's asylum and registration bureaucracy. In the early days of high numbers of refugee arrivals, for instance, groups of Syrian refugees – often recent arrivals themselves – positioned themselves at main train stations in Germany, equipping newcomers with maps, directions and advice about registering and finding shelter.

However, in the last three years there has been a shift from providing logistical and day-to-day assistance to offering cultural, community and creative support that meets refugees' psychological, emotional and personal needs. In many cases, these refugee-led efforts are now registered German organisations. Over 75 Syrian assistance

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organisations exist in Germany,¹ and our research² identified 10 in Berlin alone.

The Salaam Culture and Sport Club (Salaamkulturklub) is one such example. The club was founded by four Syrians – an academic, judge, journalist and interpreter – who recognised that Syrian refugees desperately needed translation and other logistical support in order to register as refugees, apply for jobs and learn about Germany's complex administrative and educational systems. The club also offered free overnight accommodation at the height of refugee arrivals in 2015 so that people could join the long queue at the nearby registration office the following morning.

Over the last few years, Salaam's assistance activities have both formalised and broadened. Advice is provided in the form of weekly presentations on different themes, such as how to search for and apply for a job, or how to register children in school. There is also a monthly presentation highlighting 'success stories' by refugees who have accomplished something in Berlin, be it securing employment or achieving a higher German language level. The club also now offers a café to promote intercultural exchange and a range of other support, including language practice, sport and leisure activities (including for refugees with disabilities) and intercultural and creative projects.

Differing aims

One of the most established Syrian cultural organisations in Berlin is Mada,³ housed in the cultural community centre Ulme 35 in a quiet part of former West Berlin. The cultural centre provides office and event space and the opportunity for collaborations with German artists and activists. Mada was founded by Safi, a Syrian refugee, and focuses on dialogue, art, culture and community by offering a cultural programme of lectures, theatre, films, readings and art exhibitions. There are events almost every day, including German language training and events for children and families, and many activities are intended for both Syrian and non-Syrian participants.

The idea behind establishing Mada arose in reaction to other Syrian cultural groups

in Berlin which were more conservative, as Safi felt that Syrian culture as he understood it was not being adequately represented or experienced through them. This reveals a division that is more widely evident among Syrian refugee-led organisations in Berlin: some aim to reinforce conservative forms of Syrian culture, religion and law while others aim to use Syrian culture to promote Syrian integration and the social cohesion of Syrians and Germans.

Another significant refugee-led cultural initiative is Berlin's first Arabic library: Baynetna, meaning 'between us'.⁴ Staffed by a team of committed volunteers, the library offers Arabic books to local readers, and promotes learning for Germans and 'Westerners' about Arabic culture and literature. Maher, a publisher and refugee from Syria, and Baynetna's co-founder, first had the idea to create a library in 2016, prompted by the lack of Arabic books in Berlin. He started the project in rooms at a German refugee housing facility which was used for learning and community gathering, and slowly gathered donated books. The project also hosts regular literary events – often featuring both Syrian and German performers – and strives to use these as opportunities for intercultural exchange and learning. In this way, it is "not just a library but a literary salon", according to Dana, another co-founder.

In February 2018, Berlin's public library offered Baynetna shared space to house the library, which is now open to the public four days per week. However, books, shelves and furniture need to be packed and unpacked weekly because the main library still uses the space on the other days – a regular reminder that this home, too, may be temporary. Maher, like many refugees seeking to create meaning in their new lives, comes to the library every day because it reminds him of his former publishing work in Syria. For him, books are a powerful tool for facilitating the integration of Syrians into Germany.

The success of refugee-led organisations and initiatives in Berlin in addressing the different needs of refugees stems in part from their flexible and adaptable structure. Many organisations have over time adjusted their

activities based on the skills of volunteers and the changing needs and interests of participants. While Berlin was once thought of as a place of temporary refuge, it has now become the beginning of a new life and identity for many. Yet the majority of Syrian refugee-led organisations in Berlin do not yet consider themselves sustainable, as they are run largely by volunteers and are dependent on donations and other ad hoc sources of funding. While this reveals a need for reliable funding that will allow them to continue their work in the long term, in many ways such constraints are inevitable. These refugee-led organisations are still new, and the story of Syrians in Berlin is still only at the beginning.

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1. www.citizensforsyria.org

2. This research was generously funded by a two-year grant from the Toyota Foundation.

3. <http://bit.ly/Ulme35>

4. www.baynetna.de

Refugee-led education in Indonesia

Thomas Brown

Refugee-led education initiatives in West Java, Indonesia, show how refugee communities can work with supporters to overcome service gaps faced in host countries, demonstrating a community-led approach to refugee assistance that is empowering and sustainable.

Indonesia allows asylum seekers and refugees to live in the country until they can be resettled through the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, but does not offer any legal pathways for them to naturalise, and also prohibits them from working during their stay. Consequently some 14,000 asylum seekers and refugees live for years in a state of limbo in Indonesia while awaiting resettlement, with a lack of formal rights and limited access to services like education. Faced with the prospect of children missing years of schooling at a critical stage of their development, groups of Afghan Hazara refugees living in the Indonesian province of West Java have independently initiated a number of education centres to serve their community.

There are more initiatives like this in refugee communities across the globe than we realise. Providing capacity building and guidance to refugee-led initiatives to address challenges themselves, rather than simply doing it for them, is an approach which serves to empower refugees by making

use of their skills and experiences, while also delivering badly needed services in a responsive and cost-effective way. After all, it is refugees who know best the needs of their community and in most cases have the skills and experience required to serve them.

Cisarua, a small mountain town in West Java, just a few hours drive from Jakarta, has in recent years become the home of some 2,500 asylum seekers and refugees, mostly ethnic Hazaras from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. Unlike other refugees in Indonesia, who are often supported by international or local assistance groups, refugees in this area live independently in the community, largely relying on savings or remittances.

The movement of refugee-led education initiatives in Indonesia started in this small township with the Cisarua Refugee Learning Centre (CRLC), established in August 2014 by four Hazara men with media and business backgrounds. The project quickly attracted the attention of outside supporters from Australia, who founded Cisarua Learning Limited (CLL), a non-profit group that

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supports the centre. Following the success of the CRLC, two further refugee-led education hubs were opened in 2015 by different groups of Hazara refugees – the Refugee Learning Nest (RLN) and the Refugee Learning Centre (RLC). There are now five such education centres operating in the area, which are independent but all follow the same basic model established by CRLC.

Between them, the five learning centres serve approximately 300 children aged 5–16, as well as providing English education for adult refugees. Each centre is run by refugee volunteers, who fulfil administration, management and teaching roles. Modest fees charged to parents are supplemented by donations from benefactor groups or private individuals, usually from abroad or from expatriate communities living in Indonesia. Some of the centres have also formed strong relationships with international schools and civil society groups in Indonesia. Members of the community are often called upon to support the schools by lending their skills, whether in cleaning, maintenance or construction, and community members are heavily involved in decision making within the schools through regular meetings.

The curriculum has a distinct focus on English since refugees are hopeful they will be eventually resettled in an English-speaking country or one where it is a common lingua franca. Having a strong command of English will not only enable faster integration with a new host community but is also perceived to strengthen their chances of being accepted for resettlement. The use of English is also important for inclusivity; while most of the children, like their teachers, are ethnic Hazaras, there are also a number of students from Iraq, Myanmar and Sudan.

In addition to providing vital education for children, these centres also support a range of additional activities that benefit the wider refugee community. Depending on

the skills that refugee volunteers can offer, the centres support English classes for adults, sports programmes, community-based health workshops, vocational skills-sharing programmes, and arts and handicraft classes for women refugees.

One of the most popular activities in the learning centres is football, which is hugely popular with both students and teachers. Each centre has a coach who runs training sessions and matches, which are open to women and girls as well as men and boys. These activities act as community gatherings for both participants and spectators, and the benefit of such activities on the mental well-being of those involved should not be underestimated.

Besides the learning centres, there are a number of other notable refugee-led initiatives operating in the Cisarua area. The Refugee Women Support Group Indonesia is run by a young Hazara woman, and focuses on textiles and jewellery making. The group also conducts workshops on health (including reproductive health) and hygiene, sexual and gender-based violence, and family planning. The group sells their textile products in stalls in Jakarta and Australia through a Melbourne-based non-profit organisation.

Through such refugee-led initiatives volunteers are able to put their skills to use and make an impact on their community,



A young refugee volunteer teaches her students in the Refugee Learning Centre in Cisarua, Indonesia.

while gaining experience that may prove useful in securing employment once resettled. The learning centres also serve as community hubs, acting as much-needed places for socialisation and community activities. They give structure and hope to refugees' lives, offering social and mental health benefits to those living in uncertain and difficult circumstances.

Following these examples in Cisarua, in late 2017 a number of similar education centres emerged in Jakarta, a major urban hub for refugees living in the community in Indonesia.

Supporting grassroots initiatives

The extent of external support provided to each of the refugee education centres varies, with some receiving ad hoc financial support from private donors, and others having more structured support that extends to mentoring, guidance and capacity development.

As well as providing financing through fundraising efforts, the CLL benefactor group supports CRLC by connecting the centre's teachers with trainers and mentors via video link and field visits, and has provided them with cameras and media training, allowing them to document their activities and maintain an active social media presence. Leaders in the CRLC have also been highly effective at engaging local and international (in particular, Australian) media, and have a high profile in expatriate circles in Indonesia, Australia and elsewhere.

Same Skies, the Swiss-Australian non-governmental organisation (NGO) that supports RLN and RLC, provided start-up financing for the centres but now concentrates its efforts on building the capacity of refugee volunteers to develop the projects so they become largely self-sufficient. Same Skies volunteers conduct capacity-building workshops for school staff, on topics including teacher training, child protection, financial management, conflict resolution and first aid. This has helped the two schools improve their overall educational and managerial capacity, leading to the provision of better services, while also building the skills and confidence of the volunteers.

Same Skies also provides remote 'coaching' through regular video-link meetings to identify needs in the centres and provide appropriate guidance and support to the volunteer team. Providing guidance remotely is both cost-effective and a strategic choice – it avoids creating a permanent physical presence in the community and the dependency that can follow. Like CRLC, refugee volunteers at RLN and RLC make effective use of digital communications to engage with other refugees as well as foreign audiences. Same Skies has supported this by providing capacity development and guidance on digital marketing and fundraising strategies in order to enhance the centres' independent sustainability. As a result, RLC and RLN have been able to build an extensive international following and leverage it to attract donations through online crowd-funding campaigns.

Multilateral institutions such as UNHCR are also getting behind refugee-led models of assistance. UNHCR Malaysia's Social Protection Fund initiative supports a range of small-scale self-help projects which are developed and implemented by refugee groups. The fund has supported 320 projects, including income-generation projects, skills-training programmes and community service initiatives like community centres, sports and recreation halls, and day-care and shelters services.

Refugees who are involved in community initiatives like these demonstrate significant agency in their ability to come together to overcome obstacles they face, challenging the perception that they are helpless or in need of outside assistance. The refugee-led education initiatives of West Java, and the manner in which non-profit benefactor groups support them, show just how effective a model of refugee assistance this can be – one that empowers and builds resilience by utilising and developing the human capital that exists within the refugee community.

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Lessons from LGBTIQ refugee-led community-based organisations

Hester K V Moore

The work of community-based organisations led by and in support of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) refugees in Nairobi, Kenya, provides important insights into how humanitarian agencies can form effective partnerships that help to ensure access to services for all.

Refugee-led community-based organisations (CBOs) have emerged across countries of asylum to address various issues affecting refugee populations. In Nairobi, organisations led by and working on behalf of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) refugees are proving to be resourceful and promising providers of community-based protection. Their contributions complement the broader work of humanitarian agencies and, at a time of financial uncertainty for UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency), they are also avenues of alternative, private sector-funded assistance for refugee communities. By emphasising overall community development, these CBOs combine economic activities with pertinent legal, psychosocial and medical issues, thereby promoting the overall well-being of refugee communities and ensuring a holistic response to the question of self-reliance.

Humanitarian agencies can encourage and support CBOs' development through external advocacy, building their capacity by developing and guiding their organisational strategies and the strengthening of financial accountability mechanisms, and cultivating networks and connections with potential partner organisations (including other refugee-led CBOs). At the same time, agencies should remain conscious of the need to encourage a broad network of CBOs that takes account of the diversity of refugee communities. Failure to pay attention to divisions that already exist between different communities could result in agencies reinforcing negative power structures, and pushing already marginalised voices further away. The nature and extent of any agency's partnership with a refugee-led

CBO must also be clearly defined. Will it, for example, involve the CBO becoming an implementing partner, or will it mean working together to achieve mutual strategic goals? Precedence, transparency and sustainability – all key to establishing and maintaining healthy relationships – must all be taken into sufficient consideration.

LGBTIQ refugee-led CBOs in Nairobi run multiple diverse programmes to address the specific needs of LGBTIQ people. These programmes include:

Community health: One CBO has harnessed the pre-existing medical skills and training of community members to provide refugee-led health training to groups of LGBTIQ clients, whose access to health services can be limited because of discrimination. Refugee community health workers subsequently lead targeted outreach to sections of the wider refugee community on various issues such as sexual health awareness (for persons at risk of or engaging in survival sex work); information about communicable diseases (for those living in communal housing); and prenatal and maternal health care (for lesbian, bisexual and queer – LBQ – women). Leaders of these programmes also identify appropriate health-care partners and establish and strengthen referral systems.

Psychosocial support: One CBO in Nairobi runs a monthly group counselling session for refugees who are living with HIV. The CBO has created partnerships with national counsellors who have experience of working with LGBTIQ individuals. These counsellors both facilitate sessions and train members of the CBO in order to promote

programme sustainability. Another CBO seeks to mitigate the negative effects of social isolation among LGBTIQ refugees and encourage community development through a coaching programme that cultivates their sporting and artistic skills.

Legal protection: Given that physical security is an important issue for all LGBTIQ refugees, one CBO has partnered with a local community-based paralegal organisation that offers legal assistance to refugees in the form of accompaniment to police stations, paralegal training and emergency shelter and relocation.

Livelihoods initiatives: Empowering LGBTIQ refugees with livelihoods skills is a crucial part of a holistic protection strategy. Several CBOs are running livelihoods courses for LGBTIQ refugees, including in barbering, electronics and phone repairs, tailoring, bead and craft making and poultry farming.

Crucially, these initiatives draw upon LGBTIQ refugees' pre-existing skills and talents, sending a potent message to refugees that they are able to engage with agencies on their own terms, and take ownership of their issues. One refugee spoke of the effect:

"If you build the capacity of the community to engage in these projects, they won't worry [as much] because they are receiving services from places other than humanitarian agencies."

Humanitarian agencies: supporting LGBTIQ refugee-led CBOs

One leader of a refugee-led LGBTIQ organisation suggested how agencies can better support these organisations:

"The first step is acknowledging we are here. Why doesn't UNHCR act as a bridge between all CBOs – not only sexual orientation and gender identity [SOGI] groups but non-SOGI groups also? We expect more from agencies, in terms of support for our projects. Right now, what we want from UNHCR is not money but guidance. What we need is networks."

The leader went on to suggest that UNHCR needs to formulate a long-term support strategy which should facilitate avenues between refugee communities and third parties – such as donor organisations – who support LGBTIQ initiatives. UNHCR's eventual role would be one of capacity building and overall mentorship of emerging CBOs.

In response to a survey about outstanding needs, three refugee-led LGBTIQ CBOs in Nairobi noted the need to develop longer-term strategies, including succession plans to ensure continuity of leadership. They also stated a need to develop overarching financial frameworks to guide programmes, business initiatives and projects, as well as to develop financial management procedures. Other needs were identified, including for: the development of monitoring and evaluation procedures for projects (procedures that are consistent with standards applied by other professional organisations); connecting and sharing best practices with other CBOs and humanitarian agencies; and guidance on reporting and grant writing.

Including refugee-led CBOs in professional networks is key for the development of these internal capacities. By drawing on and learning from the experiences of other established organisations, refugee-led CBOs can grow, be supported and potentially emerge as partners in the provision of services to refugee communities. UNHCR should balance the positive outcomes of this development with the need to preserve refugees' autonomy over their own initiatives. It should also consider carefully the question of financial support – particularly the potentially divisive effects of supporting some CBOs over others. The selection process for such financial support must be accessible and transparent, and take into account refugee communities' particular vulnerabilities. CBO leaders also require non-financial support, such as training and mentorship, to develop their potential.

Some LGBTIQ refugees believe that CBOs could also act as a bridge between their own marginalised communities and the wider refugee community: "Why don't we interact

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with other groups? I don't want to stay [working with my own CBO], all about sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). We need to be refugees as a whole community." In developing professional networks, the CBO leaders liaise with a broad group of non-LGBTIQ refugees, including other CBO leaders. As well as potentially providing avenues for employment of LGBTIQ refugees, there is scope for such professional networks to become forums for social dialogue, and potent tools for advancing LGBTIQ rights.

Networks and diversity

In Nairobi, many LGBTIQ CBO leadership structures are dominated by men who have sex with men (MSM). LBQ women refugees have expressed concern at not being represented in these organisations or in forums where decision making that affects their communities takes place: "If you're not masculine, you can't talk. Even in meetings, the boys dominate. We need to empower the lesbians."

As CBO structures grow in influence, space for members of marginalised communities to assert themselves in decision making can decrease. Further, as CBOs increasingly become interlocutors between UNHCR and other refugees, risks arise that include the monopolisation of leadership structures, missed identification of vulnerable cases, mistrust between community members, and questions surrounding the presence and extent of agencies' support. Refugee communities can become polarised – and politicised – by power dynamics inherent in the relations between humanitarian agencies, private sector partners and CBOs, particularly where financial support is involved. To counter this, agencies (including private sector actors) must remain aware of the potentially divisive effects of their engagement with CBOs, and seek to promote diverse refugee leadership structures, as well as remain sensitive of the intricate social dynamics of refugee communities. It must be acknowledged that MSM are proportionately greater in number than other communities (including LBQ, trans* and intersex), are empowered by a

strong network of organisations working with MSM, and are generally more vocal than members from other communities.

These issues also raise more probing questions surrounding how far humanitarian agencies are willing to extend partnerships with refugee-led CBOs. The social effects of the funding of community-based initiatives by humanitarian agencies have not yet been comprehensively researched. These effects could be felt in relationships, power dynamics and risks of gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation linked to the unequal distribution of financial capital among refugee communities. Agencies should consider carefully the effects of providing financial and other support to CBOs and in particular the potential effects upon already marginalised individuals and groups. How will that support affect relationships between refugees, and between refugees and service providers? And is that support likely to increase the overall self-reliance of a community, or will it instead promote unrepresentative leadership structures, hindering the empowerment of marginalised groups?

The growth of CBOs and the increasing roles they are playing in refugee protection make greater interaction between key actors – which include the CBOs themselves – necessary. Agencies must assess how best to harness the positive efforts of CBOs, while avoiding potentially negative effects of partnership. Private sector partners and donors must remain aware of their influence, strive to understand issues and facilitate access to funding for marginalised groups. The opportunity to work more closely with refugees carries a duty of care to ensure that support does not polarise vulnerable communities, nor promote some issues over others that are equally as important.

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1. 'Trans*/trans asterisk' is a term used to denote all transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming identities.

2. This article is based on 'Disaggregating LGBTIQ protection concerns: experiences of displaced communities in Nairobi', written for RefugePoint by the same author.

Humans and animals in refugee camps

Benjamin Thomas White

More research is needed, across disciplines, to better understand the important and varied roles that animals play in the lives of people in refugee camps.

Animals play an important role in human experiences of forced displacement and this is particularly visible in settings of encampment. Camps are often shaped by the need to accommodate animals as well as humans: 'goat barns' and animal markets are a distinctive architectural feature of Sahrawi camps in Algeria, for example.¹ Domesticated animals can play a range of economic and cultural roles in the life of a camp, as camels do in Dadaab, Kenya.² Displaced people's interactions with wild animals can create dangers for both – for example, the semi-formal settlements of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh have literally put refugees in the path of elephants.³ Animals may figure in representations of camps, as when journalists mention rats as a shorthand for squalid conditions, and refugees themselves may say they are being treated 'like animals'. Research in this area remains limited, however. In the *Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies* there are only a few passing references to animals, while in *Forced Migration Review* only one short article has specifically focused on the human–animal relationship.⁴ Practitioner literature highlights the importance of animals to refugees' well-being but focuses mostly on livestock.⁵

This special FMR feature has two aims. First, to highlight for practitioners and policymakers the variety and importance of human–animal interactions in camps, drawing on the experiences of an international team of contributors. Second, to spur further research on the topic, and suggest some of the directions it might take. The feature emerges from a series of meetings, funded by the Wellcome Trust,⁶ between practitioners from organisations including UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency), Vets Without Borders, Art Refuge and researchers from disciplines including architecture, history and geography, as well as the

veterinary and medical sciences. A second strand of meetings, with a refugee reference group, is taking place in collaboration with the Scottish Refugee Council.

The project has grown out of my own research on a historical case study: a camp at Baquba, near Baghdad, where occupying British forces at the end of the First World War accommodated nearly 50,000 refugees from Anatolia.⁷ The refugees were accompanied by thousands of animals: large (horses, mules, cattle), smaller (sheep and goats) and tiny (lice). The camp's medical regime for humans started, as they arrived, with the elimination of lice; like the veterinary regime for animals, it also involved close observation, with isolation and treatment of the sick. The animals that arrived with the refugees affected the siting and shape of the camp. British attempts to promote economic activity among the refugees were built around animals, from commercial dairy production with the refugees' own flocks to hiring out teams of human and animal labour – numbering as many as 2,500 men and 1,000 oxen – for waged work outside the camp. Competition over grazing became a key source of friction between refugees and the host population. British plans to close the camp, meanwhile, involved assembling and caring for still more pack and draught animals, both for transporting its human inhabitants and for resettling them more durably elsewhere.

Many of these issues recur in more contemporary cases, as the pieces here show. But they are only a starting point. For a fuller understanding of the roles animals play in the lives of people in refugee camps, research is needed at different scales (from micro to macro) and across many different themes. Veterinary and medical approaches are an obvious place to begin as human health and animal health are intertwined, for example through zoonotic disease (disease which can

be transmitted from animals to humans). But those connections are not simply biomedical. The art therapy work done in camps in Calais and Nepal by a clinical psychotherapist in our network illustrates how much animals matter in the psychological and emotional health of humans. Precisely **how** they matter will vary: in some places people believe that 'a home without a dog is just a house', while in others a dog in the home would be not just unwelcome but an outrage. The cultural significance of different animals will influence the psychological impact they have – and it will also affect, and be affected by, their role in refugees' social and economic lives. This in turn will inform the ways in which refugees organise (or reorganise) spaces around the needs of their animals, from their own shelters or nearby enclosures to the camp itself and its surrounding landscape. And camps, even urban ones, are always dynamically situated within larger natural environments. As the article by Derek Robertson shows, the environmental factors that contribute to human and animal migration, and shape the experience of migration, are closely connected. This piece, by an artist who has also taken part in scientific studies of migration, indicates the range of different disciplines that can

contribute to our understanding of the subject. We would welcome responses to this initial stage of our own project from practitioners and researchers in any of the many and diverse fields which are of relevance.

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The role of livestock in refugee–host community relations

Charles Hoots

In South Sudan, tensions arose when refugees arrived with their livestock, disrupting the existing relationships between the local population and nomadic peoples. Understanding the relations between all three groups of people and their livestock was key to finding solutions.

The Republic of South Sudan became the world's newest country in July 2011, separating from Sudan after decades of civil war. However, the status of border regions in Sudan's Blue Nile and South Kordofan states was not fully clarified in the peace agreement that opened the way for South Sudan's independence, and both regions saw hostilities rekindled in September

2011. Aerial bombardment and ground offensives drove nearly 125,000 people, along with tens of thousands of cattle, sheep and goats, from Blue Nile state to seek refuge across the border in South Sudan.

Living in four camps in Maban County in Upper Nile state, the refugees' relations with the heavily outnumbered local community have sometimes been difficult,



UNHCR / O. Pouilly

Gendrassa refugee camp, South Sudan.

with livestock playing an important role in the conflicts. Through efforts involving State and local government and both refugee and local communities, however, United Nations (UN) agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were able to forge agreements between the various groups to reduce tensions.

The people and their animals

The Maban people – the host community in this area – number approximately 45,000.¹ They live in small groups of mud and thatch homesteads, with each group connected loosely to a number of others, forming what are often referred to as villages. Nearly all Maban families keep some livestock, typically one to four cattle, up to six pigs, up to eight sheep and goats, and up to ten chickens, while about two thirds of Maban households own at least one cow. All these animals are free to graze and scavenge during the day. Although livestock and their products are consumed only minimally by the Maban people, their animals play other important roles. They can be sold for cash or bartered in an emergency, and are an important component in the payment by the groom's family to the family of his prospective wife. Livestock, in addition to cash, may also be given as compensation in the event of injury, murder or accidental death of a community member. The Maban people also grow a variety of crops on small plots

which are located half a kilometre or more from their dwellings in order to prevent damage by the livestock living in and around the villages.

By mid-2012, refugees from Sudan's Blue Nile state were estimated to have brought around 100,000 cattle and 150,000 sheep and goats to Maban County, although by the

end of that year up to half of the refugee livestock is thought to have perished, stressed from the long trek and unused to the wetter conditions of Maban. While the refugees in Maban County come from numerous linguistic groups from Sudan's Blue Nile state, the largest single group – and the only people to bring large numbers of livestock with them – is the Ingessana. At home, the Ingessana depend on their animals for use in agriculture and transport, for milk and for meat on special occasions, and as a source of cash in emergencies, a means of securing a wife, compensation for damages, injury or death inflicted on third parties, and a symbol of social prestige.

The Mbororo nomads – a subset of Sudan's Fulfulde-speaking population – follow an entirely nomadic lifestyle, moving between Blue Nile state, South Sudan and neighbouring Ethiopia in search of grazing. The Mbororo arrive in Maban County with their cattle, sheep and goats at the onset of the dry season in November, returning north in May as their cattle do not tolerate the heavy rains that begin then. The Mbororo use their livestock in similar ways to those of the Maban and Ingessana people but depend almost exclusively on their livestock for survival. With the uncertain political situation following South Sudan's independence in 2011, perhaps only a few hundred Mbororo entered South Sudan between November and

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December 2013, many fewer than normal, but their cattle still far outnumbered those of the local Maban and were comparable in number to those owned by the refugees.

In March 2014, Vétérinaires sans Frontières (VSF) Germany estimated livestock numbers owned by local Maban people at 20,000 cattle, 40,000 sheep and goats and 20,000 pigs; by Blue Nile refugees at 50,000 cattle and 80,000 sheep and goats; and by Mbororo nomads at 50,000 cattle and 50,000 sheep and goats.

Sources of solidarity

The indigenous peoples of Blue Nile state in Sudan and Maban County in South Sudan, although linguistically and culturally diverse, have a cultural affinity, and the solidarity between these communities has been reinforced by their mutual suffering during the long Sudanese civil war. The general attitude of the Maban people towards the Mbororo nomads is best described as 'cautious'. The Mbororo keep to themselves, often speak no other local languages and move about freely, exciting admiration but also rumours about their lifestyles.²

The Mbororo are an important source of milk for the Maban population, however, whose own cattle produce little or none during the dry months. The Mbororo sell the milk in local markets and use the cash to purchase those few necessities their animals cannot provide, as well as additional cattle. The nomads also pay local government and communities for grazing rights in the areas they traverse.³

Sources of conflict

Maban host community and the Mbororo: Grazing arrangements between the Mbororo and local Maban communities are well regulated by long-standing arrangements. The animals of the highly mobile nomads are robust but, like all animals, are capable of spreading infectious diseases between the communities through which they pass. However, the local Maban population recognises that the Mbororo generally are more proactive in the care of their livestock – notably by keeping them up to date on vaccinations – than are the local

Maban and the refugee communities, and the local people are therefore relatively unconcerned about the risk of disease.⁴ More ominous for the Mbororo are the political implications of South Sudan's independence. South Sudanese officials have occasionally spoken of forbidding the crossing of Mbororo from Sudan into South Sudan, questioning their political loyalty and citing them as a security risk. Up to at least late 2014, however, the grazing rights paid by the Mbororo in South Sudan were considered too important to lose and so their movement continued relatively unhindered.

Maban host community and the refugees:

Despite the general empathy felt by the Maban population towards the Blue Nile refugees, the latter's large human and animal populations inevitably created tensions. The most serious and immediate problem proved to be the damage caused by the refugees' livestock to the crops of the Maban communities. The subsistence nature of farming in the area meant that the loss of these crops posed a serious risk of food shortages. The degradation of common livestock grazing areas and water sources in Maban was another source of discontent, which increased in step with the number of refugee animals. The lopping of branches from trees to use as feed and the cutting down of trees for fuel further aggravated the problem. Theft of local livestock also increased and the refugees were invariably blamed for it.

My own project, funded by VSF Canada and implemented by VSF Germany, focused on refugees' livestock in acknowledgement of the fact that the loss of these animals to disease would make it impossible for the refugees to resume their way of life once the war was over.⁵ However, resentment by the local population, much of it legitimate, motivated us – and most other agencies – to include the much smaller local population as beneficiaries alongside the refugees. This was done in various ways, for example by establishing village-level boreholes, medical clinics and animal vaccination and treatment programmes. VSF also purchased and slaughtered sheep and goats to decrease the

population pressure from these and then distributed the meat, focusing on the most vulnerable among the local population.

Nevertheless, tensions flared and local communities began imposing hefty fines on refugees whose animals damaged crops.⁶ As many as 20 human deaths were attributed to fighting related to crop damage. As a result, by mid-2013 by mutual agreement the refugees moved their herds to a few sparsely populated grazing areas located as far as 60km from the refugee camps. The system worked well overall. The animals were giving very little, if any, milk so the refugee families did not miss this, and having the animals away from the camps, in an area designated for them by agreement with the local Maban communities, significantly reduced tensions. Conflict resolution protocols were put in place in these areas. In the village of New Guffa, for example, when crops were damaged, a fine was imposed on the animal owner. Specific times were set aside for local animals and then refugee animals to water at the few watering points. The positive outcomes suggest that negotiating such an arrangement in other refugee/livestock situations should be given higher priority in the early stages of a crisis.

Refugees and the Mbororo: Relations between the refugees and the Mbororo nomads are characterised by mistrust. Khartoum's use of local militia to quell rebellions in various parts of Sudan has led the refugees to suspect Mbororo irregular military units of fighting in Blue Nile state. To avoid problems, in 2013 the South Sudanese authorities instructed the Mbororo to pass well west of the refugee camps when moving into South Sudan. The Mbororo thus maintained their access, while the government and local communities still benefited from payments for grazing rights and trade with the nomads but occasions for conflict with the refugees were minimised.

Conclusion

Unfortunately, such relations are highly vulnerable to shifts in the political and military environment. When civil war

broke out in South Sudan in December 2013, renewed rivalries and uncertainties soon drew refugees and host communities in Maban County into unlooked-for conflict. Food aid to the camps was suspended for weeks at a time, triggering increased theft of food and animals by refugees, subsequent retaliation by locals, and the deaths of several livestock herders. Soldiers fighting in Blue Nile state returned to the refugee camps to protect their families, while local communities formed a militia to protect theirs.

Refugee interactions with host communities are complex, and adding livestock to the equation makes them doubly so. While tensions and conflict are inevitable, and finding a new equilibrium under very difficult conditions is fraught with challenge, well-considered arrangements and compromises can be found to mitigate them. The rapidity with which solutions were found and effectively implemented in South Sudan in 2013–14 offers hope that this could be achieved again in Maban County, and could also be possible in similar situations elsewhere. Knowledge of the cultures involved, including an informed awareness of the relationship between the people and their animals, will always be key to understanding the potential for conflict and the appropriateness of possible solutions.

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1. According to South Sudan's 2008 census.
2. For example, the Mbororo are widely reputed to be skilled sorcerers.
3. This reportedly totalled the equivalent of US\$5,000 across Maban County in the 2012–13 dry season.
4. The nomads purchase vaccines mostly in Sudan and vaccinate their own animals; being so dependent on their cattle, this is a good insurance policy for them. Local Maban populations in normal times are cut off from supplies for half of the year and have little to no refrigeration capacity to store vaccines; as a result, they are not in the habit of vaccinating.
5. The author worked in Maban County from June 2013 until May 2014; the programme ended in August 2014. For more information about the Maban refugee situation, see author's blog at <http://bit.ly/animalspeoplepathogens02082016>
6. Fines amounted to the equivalent of over US\$1,000 per offence around Yusif Batil camp.

Working equids in refugee camps

Patrick J Pollock

Refugee camps offer good opportunities for cooperation between humanitarian and animal welfare organisations for the benefit of displaced people and their working animals.

It is estimated that there are over 100 million working equids – horses, donkeys and mules – in parts of the world that are underserved by veterinary care: 55 million horses (84% of the world population), 41 million donkeys (98%) and 13 million mules (96%). These working horses, donkeys and mules provide transport and agricultural energy and in many cases are the sole means of generating income for their owners, many of whom live in poverty. It is estimated that a remarkable 50% of the world's population is reliant on animal power as its main source of energy for agriculture and transport. There are many groups, non-governmental organisations and individuals working to improve the health and welfare of working equids across the globe. This work includes the provision of veterinary care and training for local veterinary surgeons and equid owners. However, to date little is known about the numbers of working equids associated with displaced people and in refugee camps. The 'Humans and animals in refugee camps' project is seeking, among other things, to determine the numbers of working equids travelling with displaced people and to quantify the needs of these animals and the challenges they face.

While healthy, well-managed equids are assets, many owners are too poor to access information about animal care and often live far from any form of veterinary care. This may be particularly the case where people have been displaced, whether to refugee camps, informal settlements or other locations, where their access to veterinary care may be poor or non-existent.

In 2003, approximately 14,000 donkeys carried families displaced by war and natural disaster into the Abu Shouk refugee camp in Darfur, Sudan. Eighteen months later, only around 2,300 were reported to have survived. The Society for the Protection of Animals

Abroad (SPANNA) estimated that 84% had died through lack of access to feed. To date few, if any, specific guidelines or protocols have been published to better manage situations such as that reported in Sudan.

In resource-limited settings, animals take second place to humans, which is perhaps how it ought to be. But at Abu Shouk, as veterinarian Tess Sprayson noted, "For want of better collaboration between humanitarian aid and animal welfare agencies, the donkeys died an unnecessary and miserable death, while their owners lost what, in many cases, was their sole means of transport or of earning a living"¹ – a critical lifeline to a future outside the camp. In Darfur, SPANNA intervened to provide fodder and basic veterinary care, and the remaining animals in the Abu Shouk camp survived. However, very little data exist on the numbers of working equids used either to travel to or from refugee camps anywhere in the world. Furthermore, little is known about the fate of working equids after their owners have reached a camp.

Since it is recognised that once refugees lose their livestock they are less likely to return home,² it is time to undertake work to determine the scale of animal displacement in order to understand the fate of these animals and to develop frameworks for responding to the presence of working equids. Humanitarian and animal welfare organisations are well suited to working together; they have similar needs, often use similar equipment and have a common interest in 'one health'³ (the collaborative effort of multiple disciplines – working locally, nationally and globally – to attain optimal health for people, animals and the environment). To date there are very few examples of this;^{4,5} however, refugee camps represent a great opportunity for veterinary and animal welfare agencies

to make a difference for the long-term benefit of displaced people and their animals. Co-operation might extend to the development, integration and evaluation of screening tools, shared diagnostic methods, medicines, vaccines, surveillance systems and policies for the prevention, management and control of zoonotic diseases.

With an unprecedented number of displaced people in the world today, it seems logical to assume that the number of affected animals has also increased. The Field Information and Coordination Support Section of the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, tracks the number of people forced to flee each year and since equids are readily identifiable, recording their presence and number should be relatively simple. The development of simple screening tools that would allow non-veterinary personnel to flag the presence of equids and other animals in need of

veterinary intervention has the potential to offer considerable welfare benefits for this forgotten population of animals, and for the people that rely so heavily upon them.

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Sheltering animals in refugee camps

Lara Alshawawreh

Animals play an important role in many people's lives in displacement. Camp planners and managers need to take animals' needs into greater account in order for displaced people to continue to benefit from this interaction.

One of the key challenges in emergency response is planning long-term support. Animals in refugee camps, however, suffer not only from a lack of long-term support but in most cases are also neglected during the initial response. The welfare of humans is of course the priority – but animals contribute to that welfare.

In most emergencies, refugees will bring their animals with them to the camps or will start buying and trading animals soon after settling into their new shelters.¹ In the initial stages of emergencies, refugees may have to rely heavily on support organisations but in time people start searching for ways of making a living. Animals provide a significant contribution to human livelihoods, whether for pastoralists, those who sell animals or animal products or provide feed and other services, people who use animals for transportation, security and

cultural activities, or simply families who are dependent on animals for food or income. Animals are even used as a way of storing financial capital in the absence of access to banks. Cooperation between refugees, the host community, the host government and support organisations is very important to provide the care that animals need. A number of aspects relating to the camp or settlement need to be considered to ensure its appropriateness for sheltering animals – aspects such as access to water points and grazing land, and the veterinary support that is essential for both their health and human health.

Key considerations

Refugees understand the importance of animals in establishing their new life in camps. Examples of refugees sacrificing the materials they are given for their

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own shelters to build animal shelters – to provide protection from extreme weather, predators and theft – include refugees in Kenya's Dadaab camp, Afghan returnees in 2009, and Bangladeshis displaced in 2009 by Cyclone Aila.

Land rights are a frequent concern. Refugees and internally displaced people no longer have control over the land they and their animals occupy. Pre-planning, good management and establishing avenues for good cooperation with all stakeholders are important elements in securing practical solutions.

Another aspect to consider is refugees' cultural norms regarding their interaction with their animals. Some prefer to keep their animals inside their household plots, while others do not; some communities have specific rules and taboos in dealing with certain animal species. This information is crucial for creating successful settlements, taking into consideration owners' preferences regarding the location of their animals.

It is also important to consider the gender, age and health status of those family members who are responsible for taking care of the animals. If these family members are individuals usually considered more 'vulnerable', then the animal shelters should be close to the human shelters for the sake of secure and easy access. This should be balanced against the potential risks to human health of the close proximity of animals to human shelters – risks such as transmission of disease from animal to human.

Climate conditions affect the design decisions for sheltering the animals. In hot climates, good ventilation and shade are essential, while well-sealed structures should be used in areas with cold climates. The safety of the animals is also affected by their structures' location; lockable shelter doors may be necessary in areas where animal safety is a concern.

One of the few examples of livestock shelters provided by an external organisation comes from the Pakistan emergency response following the 2005 earthquake. The surviving livestock were put in communal shelters after being vaccinated to prevent spread of disease.



Donkey shelter built by Za'atari camp residents.

and a new programme was established to introduce 'cob' – a mixture of clay, sand and straw – as an earthquake-resistant construction technique for livestock shelters.

Za'atari camp in Jordan provides a recent example of how refugees bring different species of animal into their living space. For many residents, caged birds bought at the camp's market provide a sense of home, as many of the residents used to keep birds back in Syria. Chickens are kept for food and income, and perhaps companionship. Donkeys and horses are used for transporting people and goods. Residents have built animal shelters adjacent or close to their own shelters using corrugated sheets and/or canvas – two of the few available and affordable materials.

Za'atari camp, whose structure and layout have altered over time as the camp has grown, allows residents to have animals and to build shelters for them. In purpose-built Azraq camp, the next largest camp for Syrian refugees in Jordan, residents are not allowed to build additional constructions; there, birds are the only animals allowed in the camp, since they do not require additional spaces within shelters.

Recommendations

The Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) project has published standards and guidelines for designing, implementing and evaluating livestock interventions.² Unfortunately, these are not used widely in emergencies, whether from lack of awareness of their existence, shortage of funding and/or time, or a combination of factors. There needs to be

a more concerted effort to introduce the guidelines and standards to organisations, aid workers and stakeholders, at the same time consulting the end users on how to enhance the practical application of LEGS.

The best way to provide appropriate aid to humans and animals after disasters is to consult the people themselves – they are the users of the space and the owners of the animals. They know the materials needed to build appropriate shelters for their own animals, as well as the preferred design, and many will already have the necessary construction skills.

Constructing appropriate animal shelters will reduce the possibility of health problems within settlements. The level of pre-planning that can be done for animals'

shelter requirements in displacement will depend on the nature of the emergency and cooperation with the host community. However, raising owners' awareness of all issues relating to their animals' health and shelter needs will help displaced people in refugee camps to co-exist with their animals in safety while continuing to benefit from interacting with them.

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1. The author's research focuses primarily on human shelters but evidence about the need for animal shelters has tended to emerge alongside the human needs.

2. www.livestock-emergency.net

Understanding risk in human–animal interactions

Sara Owczarczak-Garstecka

There needs to be better understanding not only of the importance of animals in the lives of displaced people but also of the potential risks incurred by human–animal interactions and how best to mitigate these risks.

Animals in refugee camps can improve people's health and well-being. They are a source of food and a commodity which can be sold or exchanged or kept as an investment. Animals can also be a source of psychological comfort,¹ can potentially help refugees to preserve cultural identity and can serve as a marker of normal life. For example, Syrian refugees in camps in Jordan are prepared to spend a substantial part of their monthly income on a singing bird because such a bird – in Syrian culture – is what turns a house into a home. However, close proximity of animals and humans can be a source of risk, and understanding of the risks posed by animals within refugee camps is generally poor.

A public health model published in 1991 by Dahlgren and Whitehead offers one approach to mapping the potential sources of hazards associated with animals in refugee camps.² The model shows how health inequities are shaped by a combination of cultural, political, environmental and social factors as well as by individuals'

attributes. These factors influence both the risks to an individual who is in contact with animals and also how they experience an illness and their ability to access the resources needed for recovery.

Political/organisational environment:

At the widest level in this scenario is the international and national political climate – the wars and fighting that dictate the global movement of people and their animals (including who is displaced and where the camps are built) – and the policies of the organisations that run and support camps. All these aspects will have an impact on human and animal health, and the effectiveness of the management of human–animal interactions will depend on which agencies are on the ground and the degree of expertise that they have in this area. For example, vaccination alone may not suffice in entirely preventing outbreaks of diseases within herds (as the success of a vaccination programme depends also on aspects such as

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the coverage and timing of the vaccination programme) but it can reduce risk.

Physical environment: The environment through which people travel and the setting of the camp itself can contribute to the burden of risk. For instance, Afghan refugee camps established in early 1990 on the western boarder of Pakistan were situated on marginal waterlogged terrain, which encourages malaria. As Afghanistan had run a successful malaria control programme prior to the Soviet-Afghan war, the refugees arriving in Pakistan had no immunity to the disease. Families who arrived with animals, and camps with more livestock, experienced greater prevalence of malaria as the livestock provided mosquitos with an easy source of blood, which boosted the mosquito population.³ More broadly speaking, animals that flee with their owners may be exposed to new diseases to which they have no immunity or may themselves carry diseases to which local animal populations are susceptible.

The built environment can also have an impact on the level of risk in human–animal interactions. The presence of animals is seldom factored into the design of refugee camps. In Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan, for example, people developed their own ways of keeping poultry, often by transforming human accommodation. Lack of suitable, designated spaces for animals may result in poor sanitation, increasing the risk of diseases to the animal population and transmission of certain diseases to people.

Social environment: Social factors shape a person's exposure to risk. For example, culture, tradition and religion influence how animals are killed and by whom, and how their meat is prepared and consumed. This in turn could alter the risk of a range of infectious diseases and the risk of physical injury linked to handling animals.

Attitudes and beliefs about practices around animals, such as perception of efficacy of vaccinations, are also influenced by the immediate community and family, and could shape how likely a person is to engage in behaviours which could reduce

risk. In addition, a person may need to rely on their social networks (for finance, information, contacts and so on) in order to access resources – such as veterinary care – which could help to reduce risk. Individuals living in a camp with an extended family may therefore be able to access help more readily than someone who is isolated or who only arrived recently. Social support could also reduce the impact of the loss of an animal and improve recovery from an injury or illness caused by animals.

Individual attributes: Stress linked with evacuation and the camp environment is likely to compromise the immunity of animals and people. Under prolonged periods of stress, humans and animals may be more susceptible to certain diseases carried by cattle (like brucellosis or tuberculosis) which in normal circumstances may not pose the same risk. The profile of risk is dependent on the range of animals kept in the camp; where dogs and livestock are kept in close proximity to each other and to humans, for example, certain types of tapeworm may become a risk for humans. Presence of cows adds to the risk of injury due to crushing or being kicked, and dogs may bite. An individual animal's temperament, species/breed and habituation to handling will also contribute to the risk that this animal poses. Meanwhile, a person's gender, age, personality, health and so on are likely to modify their risk. For instance, in many cultures, women and girls are more likely to be responsible for small ruminants (such as sheep and goats) and poultry whereas men tend to care for livestock.

The model outlined above could be used to systematically map risks (and benefits) of human–animal interactions in the context of forced migration and to determine how these risks could be mitigated, whether at the level of decision making about location of camps, at the camp design, construction and management level, or at the individual level. Although there are existing policies on how to assess such risk, Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS) provides comprehensive guidelines, checklists and

'decision trees' related to protecting livestock during different stages of an emergency response.⁴ The UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, has also developed a handbook on livestock keeping and animal husbandry which covers similar areas, again focusing primarily on livestock and poultry.⁵ UNHCR's Camp Planning Standards do not offer explicit guidelines for provision of space for animals but suggest that planned sites should a) avoid areas where the environment may increase the risk of animal-borne diseases like malaria and b) provide space for small-scale cultivation.⁶

Surveillance of animals that live in and near refugee camps is the first step in risk management. Counting and health assessments for animals could include local veterinarian professionals, international veterinary non-governmental organisations and local animal-keeping communities trained in disease detection. While assessing risk in keeping livestock is crucial, the models need to include identifying risks in interactions with other animals that live in camps as well (such as dogs, cats or birds which may live nearby). More broadly, the involvement of veterinary

professionals in planning, setting up and running refugee settlements could help with assessing basic needs and coordinating local responses, which may include education and the provision of food, water, shelter and basic medical care for the animals.

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Animal and human health in the Sahrawi refugee camps

Giorgia Angeloni and Jennifer Carr

Health challenges in the Sahrawi refugee camps in the Algerian desert are faced by both human and animal populations, and therefore responses must benefit both.

The Sahrawi refugee camps are situated close to the Algerian settlement of Tindouf and have grown from camps to de facto cities since mass displacement of the Sahrawis in 1975. Following conflict in the former Spanish Western Sahara, thousands of people crossed the border into Algeria, settling in refugee camps. Forty years later, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) estimates the camp population at approximately 173,600 refugees.¹

Each case of mass forced displacement has a unique set of circumstances and

resulting health challenges. However, from the perspective of the international humanitarian community, at the time of crisis the humanitarian concerns are namely that – human concerns. The needs of people in acute distress shape the form of the response; food, water, shelter, protection, sanitation and medical care are provided – for humans. The presence of animals is not ignored; indeed it is often noted in official reports and needs assessments conducted by humanitarian agencies. A League of Red Cross Societies mission in June 1977, for

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example, reported an increase in the numbers of animals in the Sahrawi camps over the previous year – an increase that enabled the occasional addition of meat to diets.

Alice Wilson's research suggests that most Sahrawi refugees in exile were familiar (from childhood or more recent experience) with life in a nomadic encampment, with sedentarisation being a fairly new process in the mid-1970s and early 1980s.² However, during the initial mass displacement, few animals were transported by the refugees and by the 2000s opportunities for mobile pastoralist practices remained constrained, not least by the inhospitable environment.

Life in a refugee camp in the middle of the desert deprives the population of the hope of food self-sufficiency, leaving them largely dependent on international aid. In fact, non-supported survival in the desert is guaranteed only by nomadic practices and any enforced sedentarism of the refugee camp disrupts and constrains these practices. However, it also provides opportunities for the creation of new responses led by the refugees themselves.

The role of animals in human nutrition

Recent studies of the Sahrawi population have suggested that the chronic emergency status in the camps, reflected in a food basket based mainly on calories than on a diversification of diet, is struggling to counter widespread nutritional problems. The camps were intended to be temporary by the refugees and international agencies alike, so mechanisms to produce higher quality food systems were not established. One of the main problems present in the camps

today is the increasing prevalence of anaemia in women of childbearing age. UNHCR is leading interventions to reduce numbers of children with severe acute malnutrition, and the World Food Programme (WFP) is working to improve prevention and treatment of anaemia, and to reduce stunting and moderate acute malnutrition among children under five years of age and pregnant and nursing women. With anaemia rates in the camps as high as 39% among children and 45% among women of reproductive age, these are pressing challenges, not helped by

insecure funding which can lead to diminished rations and inadequate supplies of interventions such as High Energy Biscuits.³ Furthermore, the results of UNHCR's March 2018 assessment, which found there to be a population of over 170,000 – far higher than the 90,000 given in official statistics – also suggests that

the population has been long underserved.

Despite the Sahrawis' overall dependence on food aid, their livestock has for centuries enabled their survival in the Western Sahara and continues to be a hallmark of their cultural identity. Animal breeding by refugees increases the availability of animal proteins and can help address the nutritional problems of the camps. About 80,000 goats and sheep and 80,000 camels are present in the camps. Goats and sheep are fed almost exclusively with domestic organic waste, while camels spend part of their life in pasturelands close to the refugee camps. A lack of suitable pasture means there are limited opportunities to raise large numbers of camels for sale, so the importance of livestock (camels, but also goats and sheep) in refugee camps lies



A veterinary clinical visit, Sahrawi refugee camp.

predominantly in its potential contribution to increase opportunities for self-sufficiency.

Attempts to establish projects for improved animal feeding to support livestock production (which is currently insufficient) and livestock-derived diets in the camps should require little or low technology, and refugees can take the skills they learn with them if they leave the camps. The creation of plantations of the tree *Moringa oleifera* is one such project. More high-tech projects such as hydroponics may provide a provisional increase in food production but they require higher levels of investment and non-sustainable energy sources from outside the camps. These systems are not easily transportable, are susceptible to deterioration and need maintenance which is difficult in the local context since the systems are not part of local culture.

The Sahrawi refugees are renowned for their resilience, religious tolerance and organisational skills, and the refugee population is far from passive. Several refugee-initiated projects take place. The above-mentioned *Moringa oleifera* plantations in the Hammada desert is one example, supported by several non-governmental organisations (NGOs) including Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (VSF) Italy and Africa '70. This leguminous source, able to grow in extremely dry conditions, has wide-ranging benefits for both human and animal nutrition, being very rich in proteins, vitamin C, iron and other macro and micronutrients, and offers a sustainable solution for diet diversification and enrichment.

The presence of a large number of animals needs a local veterinary system to ensure the best possible animal and human health. Since 1996, a Veterinary Directorate, now composed of 24 Saharawi operators in the camps, has been supervising slaughter procedures, surveying the dominant zoonoses,⁴ giving clinical assistance to smallholders, raising awareness of good animal management practices and working on the prevention of infectious diseases. Resources may be limited but the desire among NGOs and refugees alike to stretch capacities and maximise resources is strong. Brucellosis, tuberculosis, Rift Valley fever, echinococcosis, rabies and

toxoplasmosis are some of the major zoonoses, which must be addressed in a collaborative effort by veterinarians and medical NGOs providing health care. Alongside the veterinary infrastructure, a hospital and dispensary infrastructure with six health centres supports the human population of the refugee camps. Disease associated with animals is not limited to livestock; pets can also be a source of infection, although these animals are mainly free-roaming cats and dogs rather than fully domesticated animals. Recent studies conducted with Sahrawi people and cats have shown high incidences of antibodies specific to the parasite that causes toxoplasmosis, in both people and cats.

Approaches such as *Moringa* production benefit both human and animal populations and offer a holistic response to exceptional circumstances such as those of the Sahrawi refugee camps. A review of the food basket needs to take livestock challenges into consideration, and the camp health systems need to accommodate both human and animal health, in order to maximise limited resources and stimulate effective collaboration between different NGOs, as well as between the NGOs and refugees themselves. The Sahrawi refugee camps are an exceptional case, and the roles of humans and animals within refugee camps as a broader topic merits further research.

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A field study of migration and adversity

Derek Robertson

The migratory journeys of birds can reflect the same complexity of issues that trigger and affect human displacement.

I am privileged to spend my days in wild and beautiful places painting birds. I am fascinated by them: by their abstract shapes, their song, their behaviour, their migrations. I have sketched them and helped in scientific studies of their migratory journeys from the Arctic right down into Africa. In 2015 I watched reports from beaches on Mediterranean islands as desperate people came ashore, and I recognised these islands as the same places where I had watched and sketched migratory birds. Here now were people seeking refuge in order to survive, taking the same lines of flight as the birds that I had drawn.

Subsequently, over the course of a year, I travelled through the UK and Europe, through the Mediterranean to the Middle East. On my travels I spoke to refugees, to locals and to volunteers and I sketched what I saw: the people, the places and the birds. One of the interests that ecologists have in birds is that they are important environmental indicators. If the populations or migration of the birds change, this points to changes in the environment that could be of grave concern. The issues are complex but academic studies draw a link between climate change, conflict and large movements of refugees – all of which in turn cause further social and environmental stress. In these complex systems, ecologists look to the birds to indicate what might be happening to our world. How we address the intertwined issues of climate change and displacement will define who we are and what societies we will live in for generations to come.

During my travels, I taught art classes in refugee schools in Jordan [see image overleaf], organised art activities for families at refugee-welcoming events in the UK and held art engagement events for unaccompanied children in ‘the Jungle’ camp in Calais. Each had a different character and focus. In Jordan,

I tried to show the possibilities for personal development and identity, especially for women and girls in a very patriarchal society; in the UK, I wanted to help provide a sense of engagement and welcome where paintings on a wall could indicate a sense of ‘home’ and belonging; and in Calais I held events that helped engage very distrustful youngsters in conversation with the charity volunteers to see what clothes, help or services they needed.

There is a degree to which birdwatchers (and bird artists) are always birdwatching so when I sat down to draw in and around the camps, I looked out for birds – and drew them. It was poignant to see migrating birds flying over the fences that constrained their human, migratory counterparts but in their crossing of seas and borders, there were other comparisons, including the ensnarement of unfortunate individuals and the predation by birds of prey of smaller, exhausted birds. Both birds and people often travelled according to geography: the shortest crossing, skirting the edge of mountains, travelling through cover or from established provisioning points. Both found that a tended and man-made landscape offered little room for them and when I was sitting in unofficial camps pitched on waste ground, park edges or marginal ground between roads, I found people and birds brought together in scrubby edgelands where they could shelter and from which try to move onwards.

In a world where we are challenged by topics that can be hard to think about, people often close their minds. Art can bring together ideas in a way that makes people look at the ordinary afresh. And it can appeal directly to people’s emotions, helping to provoke an appreciation of a shared humanity and of the shared challenges that we need to address.

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Derek Robertson

What Colour Are The Wheatears?

Wildlife artist Derek Robertson visited and interviewed Syrian, Palestinian and Iraqi refugee families who had settled in Jordan. He held a series of art classes for Syrian schoolchildren at a refugee school where he talked about his artwork and the links between artwork, environment, animals and the people who live and work in the landscape. "The children called out the names of the colours for me in Arabic – which are scribbled into the sketches. Later that day, we drove through the desert and I sketched migratory and resident species of wheatears."

The population of Jordan has doubled in recent years and over-extraction of water has led to oasis towns reverting to desert. The effect has been measured immediately in a dramatic change in breeding bird populations and the consequences on migrating birds which now have to try to cross larger areas of arid ground.

See Derek Robertson's article about the links between birds' migratory journeys and refugee journeys on page 83 of this issue (as part of a mini-feature on humans and animals in refugee camps).

Enhancing dissemination and impact: opportunities to collaborate with FMR

In addition to the main feature on Economies, this issue of FMR includes two 'mini-features'. In both cases we have worked with researchers to support and enhance the dissemination of research findings relating to a specific project. We have had fruitful similar collaborations with UN, government and NGO partners.

If your organisation is applying (or is part of a consortium applying) for funding on a theme that you think is relevant to FMR's readership, please consider including FMR in your proposal narrative and budget. There are various options for doing so – whether through mini-features like the ones in this issue or indeed through a full feature theme of FMR.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this. Please contact the Editors at fmr@qeh.ox.ac.uk.



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