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 **digest**
Issue 53

Local communities: first and last providers of protection

*plus a selection of articles on
other aspects of forced migration*



Forced Migration Review digest helps you gain easy online access to all FMR articles. The digest complements the full-length magazine. Both the digest and the magazine of FMR issue 53 are available online and in print in English, Arabic, French and Spanish.



www.fmreview.org/community-protection



Local communities: first and last providers of protection

It is often people's immediate community that provides the first, last and perhaps best tactical response for many people affected by or under threat of displacement. However one defines protection or community, external actors will struggle to provide appropriate support unless they understand this reality. Unless they develop a greater awareness of the role of community-based protection strategies, they may fail to actively incorporate the 'agency' of the community into policy and programming; at worst, they risk undermining local communities' capacity to avoid or survive violence and displacement.

This issue's feature theme, 'Local communities: first and last providers of protection', looks at the capacity of communities to organise themselves before, during and after displacement in ways that help protect the community. Refugee and IDP authors from Rwanda, Sudan and Yemen share their insights, while other authors reflect on the subject in general or look at specific community-led protection strategies in countries such as Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Dominican Republic, India, Nigeria and Uganda.

As usual, this issue of FMR also includes – in addition to the feature theme articles – a varied selection of articles of interest on other forced migration topics.



Why this cover image: In Caqueta, Colombia, a community leader took the initiative to help her community find a safe, dignified and healthy place to live after they were displaced by guerrillas. In contrast to most of the images and metaphors that spring to mind when we look for an illustration of 'protection' – a sheltering roof, maybe, or a helping hand – to us this picture reflects a displaced community striving to rekindle the vestiges of normality. It speaks also of resourcefulness and creativity, and of a place that someone can flourish in, a place where there is belonging and safety: the coming together of community and protection. "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow", as the film star Audrey Hepburn once said.



Understanding and supporting community-led protection

Nils Carstensen (Local to Global Protection / DanChurchAid)

Supporting locally led protection strategies can significantly improve the impact of protection interventions. External actors first need to acknowledge the capacity of people at risk as independent actors themselves.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/carstensen



Challenging the established order: the need to 'localise' protection

Simon Russell (Global Protection Cluster)

The growing criticism of protection actors for neglecting indigenous coping strategies and capacities should prompt a radical, creative re-think of attitudes and approaches.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/russell

New to QR codes? Download any QR code reader app (QR = Quick Response) and scan the square code next to an article – it will take you straight to the article online.



Women-led self-protection in Sudan

Nagwa Musa Konda, Leila Karim Tima Kodi and Nils Carstensen (Nuba Relief, Rehabilitation and Development Organisation / Nuba Mountains Women's Association / Local to Global Protection and DanChurchAid)

In parts of Sudan, local NGOs and women's groups have taken the lead in their own protection, and their considerable achievements have helped change the status of women in their communities.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/konda-kodi-carstensen



"This group is essential to our survival": urban refugees and community-based protection

Jennifer S Rosenberg (Women's Refugee Commission)

Nearly 60% of all refugees now live in cities, a trend that will continue as camps increasingly become an option of last resort. Already, this urban shift is catalysing monumental changes across the sector, including in how humanitarians think about, and embark upon, community-based protection.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/rosenberg



Refugees as a first stop for protection in Kampala

Eugenie Mukandayisenga (Jesuit Refugee Service)

As Rwandan refugees in Kampala, I and others like me are uniquely placed to help newly arrived refugees find their feet in the city. The work is demanding but vital.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/mukandayisenga



Combatting dependency and promoting child protection in Rwanda

Saeed Rahman, Simran Chaudhri, Lindsay Stark and Mark Canavera (Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health)

Continuing dependence on aid that waxes and wanes with time and that comes largely from external sources can lead to feelings of powerlessness. It can furthermore undermine family- and community-based initiatives to protect children.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/rahman-chaudhri-stark-canavera



Local action to protect communities in Nigeria

Margee Ensign (American University of Nigeria)

Collaborative, creative initiatives in Nigeria helped protect local communities from much of the impact of Boko Haram violence. When international agencies arrived, however, they ignored these efforts.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/ensign



Refugees hosting refugees

Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (University College London)

Acknowledging the widespread reality of 'overlapping' displacement provides an entry point to recognising and engaging with the agency of refugees and their diverse hosts in providing support and welcome to displaced people.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/fiddianqasmiyeh

All FMR articles are also online in audio format in English for you to download or listen to online at www.fmreview.org/community-protection or on the Oxford University podcasts page at bit.ly/2bbWxeY.





Northern Uganda: protection in displacement, protection on return

Denise Dunovant (independent)

In the absence of international or state assistance and protection, community members in northern Uganda stepped in to fill this vacuum both during displacement and throughout the laborious return process following the conflict's end.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/dunovant



Rethinking support for communities' self-protection strategies: a case study from Uganda

Jessica A Lenz (InterAction)

Local communities will continue to find ways to address the risks that confront them with or without humanitarian support but the international community may be able to enhance these solutions.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/lenz



Rebuilding lives in Colombia

Emese Kantor (UNHCR Colombia)

A grassroots women's organisation in Colombia is working to protect women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence, and to support the healing of survivors.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/kantor



Nils Carstensen/L2GP/DanChurchAid

Women at market in South Kordofan, with foxhole behind them.



Community-based protection: the ICRC approach

Angela Cotroneo and Marta Pawlak (ICRC)

The ICRC tries to ensure that its activities on behalf of IDPs and those at risk of displacement support, rather than undermine, communities' and individuals' self-protection mechanisms and coping strategies.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/cotroneo-pawlak



Networks and 'the right to the city' in Medellín, Colombia

Jonathan Alejandro Murcia and James Gilberto Granada Vahos (University of Antioquia)

Collective action by displaced people in Medellín has been both diverse and strategic.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/murcia-granada



Effective community-based protection programming: lessons from the Democratic Republic of Congo

Richard Nunn (Oxfam)

Oxfam's work with local communities in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has prompted the organisation to develop guidance for themselves and for others working in similar situations.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/nunn



Community Liaison Assistants: a bridge between peacekeepers and local populations

Janosch Kullenberg (Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences)

Community Liaison Assistants may be UN peacekeeping's most effective instrument for community engagement, with the potential to play a critical role in the protection of civilians. However, their effectiveness is curtailed by the lack of a comprehensive vision, hesitant military responses and cumbersome administrative structures.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/kullenberg



Refugee community development in New Delhi

Linda Bartolomei, Mari Hamidi, Nima Mohamed Mohamud and Kristy Ward (UNSW Australia)

Recognising that process is as important as outcomes, a community development approach can be effective in supporting local communities as providers of first resort. A project run by the Somali and Afghan refugee communities in India shows how this can work.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/bartolomei-hamidi-mohamud-ward



Community policing in Kakuma camp, Kenya

Hanno Brankamp (University of Oxford)

Community policing has become a popular way of promoting local ownership of security in refugee camps in Kenya and more widely, but it can also fall victim to its ambivalent position at the intersection of refugee communities and state policing.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/brankamp



The role of community centres in offering protection: UNHCR and Al Ghaith Association in Yemen

Nicolas Martin-Achard (UNHCR) and Al Ghaith Association

Community centres play an important role in offering protection for displaced communities, particularly for members of those communities who have specific needs. Somali refugees in Yemen formed the Al Ghaith Association and are now running their own community centres to support fellow refugees. In this article, UNHCR and Al Ghaith discuss their approaches.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/martinachard-alghaith



The role of cultural norms and local power structures in Yemen

Mohammed Al-Sabahi and Fausto Aarya De Santis (Oxfam Yemen)

Community power structures and attitudes in Yemen are key factors in how IDPs can gain protection and assistance.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/alsabahi-desantis



The role of community in refugee journeys to Europe

Richard Mallett and Jessica Hagen-Zanker (Overseas Development Institute)

For Eritreans and Syrians coming to Europe, community networks both encourage the initial decision to go and provide elements of support along the way.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/mallett-hagenzanker



Integrating protection into disaster risk preparedness in the Dominican Republic

Andrea Verdeja (Oxfam Dominican Republic)

Addressing protection as a key element of community-based disaster risk reduction and preparedness efforts is essential to safeguarding human rights in disaster and emergency settings.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/verdeja



Filling the funding gap for community protection

Khalid Koser and Amy Cunningham (Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund)

An initiative to help local communities build resilience against violent extremism may offer useful lessons in how to help local communities access funding to support their self-protection efforts.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/koser-cunningham



Preparing for self-preservation

Casey Barrs (Center for Civilians in Harm's Way / The Cuny Center)

All too often, violence proves to be beyond influence, forcing international aid agencies to pull back and leave local civilians to face the danger alone. External actors need a far deeper understanding of local communities' experience of and strategies for self-protection, and a far greater commitment to support those communities.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/barrs



References and resources

Additional resources relating to communities and self-protection.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/resources

We would like to thank Rachel Hastie (Oxfam) and James Thomson (Act for Peace, a member of the global ACT Alliance) for their assistance as advisors on the feature theme of this issue. **We are also grateful to** DanChurchAid, the Global Protection Cluster, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and UNHCR for their financial support of this issue.

General articles



Rethinking gender in the international refugee regime

Megan Denise Smith (INTERSOS)

Currently the instruments of refugee status determination make asylum claims depend on images of women that are characterised by victimisation and motherhood.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/smith



Colombia: the peace process and solutions for forced migrants

Jeisson Oswaldo Martínez Leguizamo (University of Murcia)

If, as seems likely, Colombia reaches a peace agreement to end its long internal conflict, the settlement may create the political and legal conditions to solve the phenomenon of forced migration of its citizens.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/martinez



Statelessness and the refugee crisis in Europe

Katalin Berényi (Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN in Geneva)

The European Union needs to issue a Directive on common standards for statelessness determination procedures with a view to mitigating the particular impacts of statelessness in the context of the continuing refugee crisis in Europe.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/berenyi



Refugee women as entrepreneurs in Australia

John van Kooy (Brotherhood of St Laurence)

The 'Stepping Stones to Small Business' programme in Australia is appreciated by participants but has shown that 'entrepreneurship' is a problematic concept in the context of women from refugee backgrounds.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/vankooy



Power, politics and privilege: public health at the Thai-Burma border

Nikhil A Patel, Amos B Lichtman, Mohit M Nair and Parveen K Parmar (Harvard Medical School / University of California / Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health / University of Southern California)

Participants in a field-research methods course on refugee health at the Thai-Burma border learned that beyond the biological vectors and disease processes that contribute to human suffering, power, politics and privilege play central roles in negatively affecting refugee health.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/patel-lichtman-nair-parmar



Humanitarian visas: building on Brazil's experience

Liliana Lyra Jubilut, Camila Sombra Muiños de Andrade and André de Lima Madureira (Universidade Católica de Santos / Universidade de São Paulo / London School of Economics)

Brazil's humanitarian visas are an important tool in complementary protection, offering legal pathways for forced migrants to reach a safer country. However they have shortcomings that need to be addressed in order for the practice to serve as a model for an enhanced instrument of protection for humanitarian migrants elsewhere.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/jubilut-andrade-madureira



Engaging with innovation among refugees and IDPs

Danielle Robinson (The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University)

Traditional humanitarian actors should develop mechanisms to support innovation by displaced people. Two cases of technological innovation developed by Syrian refugees illustrate the point.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/robinson



South African midwives caring for immigrant and refugee women

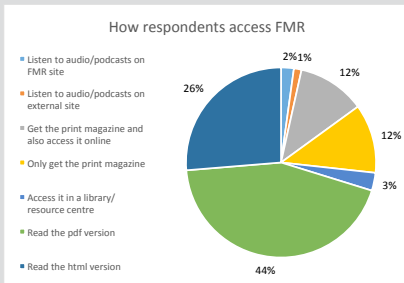
Mamokgadi Gloria Victoria Koneshe (Ann Latsky Nursing College, Johannesburg)

Over recent years South Africa has accepted many refugees and asylum seekers, among whom are women requiring maternity services. Because the values and cultural practices of immigrant pregnant women sometimes differ from those of the midwife, their rights to good treatment may be violated.

www.fmreview.org/community-protection/koneshe

FMR Reader Survey 2016

Thanks to all those who responded to our recent Reader Survey. We will be reviewing all suggestions received, such as website improvements, video introductions to FMR topics, and new themes to cover, but the overall message seems to be that we are doing approximately the right things.



Quite a few respondents suggested things that we already do: podcasts, email alerts, Twitter and Facebook, and html versions of articles online. Visit www.fmreview.org to access all these. Our proposal to produce occasional 'thematic listings' received general approval, and three are now available at www.fmreview.org/thematic-listings.

FMR's capacity to implement some of the more radical suggestions (see full survey results for details) is limited. What would we have to stop doing to enable us to do those new things? Implementing some of the suggestions would require more funding, and we welcome suggestions of potential funding partnerships. But it is very helpful to know where readers think FMR might go.

For full details see www.fmreview.org/readersurvey2016.

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.

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