FORCED
MIGRATION
review

Being young
and out of place

plus a range of articles on other subjects

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

REFUGEE STUDIES CENTRE

From the editors

"We cannot see our future," says a young Congolese refugee living in a camp in Malawi. Being displaced involves not just a change of physical location but a dislocation of many aspects of normal life, and young people – in this context we mean those between early teenage and late twenties – may be particularly susceptible to being physically and socially 'out of place' during this period of their lives. Families are divided, social relations are broken, education is disrupted, and access to social spaces and work opportunities can no longer be relied on at a time when young people face important changes.

But life goes on and, whether displaced into a camp or an unfamiliar urban environment or resettled to a new country, young people have to try to find ways to re-create what is lost or to find substitutes for it if they are to become fulfilled, responsible adults. The articles in the theme section of this issue of FMR examine the particular stresses of 'being young and out of place', explore young people's needs and coping strategies, and ask why relatively little attention is paid to the rights and needs of adolescents and young adults.

This issue also includes a number of articles about disparate aspects of forced migration: protracted displacement, refugee-run information services, 'tolerated stay', psychosocial resilience, resettlement of refugees in Argentina, mental health in Lebanese refugee camps, national IDP policies in Afghanistan and Nigeria – and why some issues make it onto the international agenda while others do not.

The full issue is online at:
www.fmreview.org/young-and-out-of-place

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We would like to thank Cécile Mazzacurati (UNFPA) and Jason Hart (University of Bath) for their invaluable assistance as special advisors on the feature theme of this issue.

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■ FMR 42, due out March/April 2013, will focus on '**Sexual orientation and gender identity and displacement**'.
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With our best wishes

Marion Couldrey and Maurice Herson
Editors, Forced Migration Review

This photo of the market in Dzaleka refugee camp, Malawi, was taken by Josepha Ntakirutimana, a refugee in Dzaleka camp. For more about young refugees in Dzaleka, see article on p5.

FORCED MIGRATION review

FMR 40: In this issue...

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UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

REFUGEE STUDIES CENTRE

Putting adolescents and youth at the centre

Sarah Maguire

If young people are to live productive fulfilling lives, the international community needs to pay far greater attention to their vulnerabilities, their potential and their rights.

Nearly 90% of the world's youth live in poorer countries. The well-recognised connection between poverty, violent conflict and forced migration means that adolescents and youth often constitute the majority of both displaced and host populations. In violent conflict, it is mostly adolescents and youths – female and male – who are conscripted into armed groups or targeted for sexual violence, who lose the guidance of adults and clear social boundaries during their formative years, and who are left to fend for themselves in alien settings.

At the same time, even the youngest of these young people take on adult responsibilities. This is nowhere more apparent than in situations of displacement. Young refugees and IDPs are carers and parents; they try to earn money to keep their families together; they agitate for political change and may join armed forces and groups. In any distribution line for humanitarian assistance, we will see countless adolescents and youth who are responsible for their families and communities.

Yet humanitarian programming, stabilisation initiatives and early recovery efforts have yet to pay systematic attention to the needs and rights of this cohort, or to acknowledge and embrace their potential. A girl who has a baby tends to be considered a 'young mother' rather than a child with a child. A girl or boy who has been a commander of an armed group is considered an 'ex-combatant' rather than a child victim of a human rights violation. These two examples become more complicated if the youths concerned are over 18 years of age. Although their needs and potential are very different from those of an older person, they tend to be defined by their experience, rather than their age or life-stage. Put bluntly, adolescents and youth can be stripped of their age-related identity once someone else has decided to exploit them.

Alternatively, programming – including that for displaced adolescents and youth – may group all children or all adults together and fail to acknowledge the specific needs and specific experiences of adolescents and youth. For instance, while adolescent boys can often be seen kicking a ball around in camps for displaced persons, adolescent or older girls who have their own children are unlikely to have time to attend a Child Friendly Space and are unlikely to attend the emergency educational provision set up for displaced children. At the same time, a displaced girl may be excluded from the reproductive health facilities in the urban area; unless the facilities are appropriate to her needs and recognise her situation, she simply will not attend.

What constitutes successful programming?

High-level meetings, panels, reports and statements have repeatedly called for the UN system, governments and civil society to grasp the need and the opportunity to 'engage with youth' and to 'address youth issues'. Successful programming for adolescents and youth is the result of deliberate, targeted, systematic and holistic programming design and implementation that aim to realise adolescents' and youths' rights, build national capacity and increase the accountability of governments or other duty-bearers to young people. In situations of displacement, it is even more imperative to adopt these principles of human rights-based programming and to adapt them to address the particular experiences and rights of adolescents and youth. Currently, programming tends to fall into the following categories:

Firstly, there are programmes that are designed specifically to target adolescents and youth such as girls' clubs or vocational training programmes for young ex-combatants. Secondly, programmes may address the issues which affect young people disproportionately such as medical programmes for fistula repair or programmes to combat human trafficking. Thirdly, programmes may strive to involve young people in mainstream programming, such as disaster risk reduction strategies. Finally, organisations may adopt a youth-centred approach to programming.

Youth-centred programming differs from 'business as usual' programming in that it adopts a 'youth lens'. It asks of all programming (including humanitarian): Is this good for adolescents and youth? Does it address the experience and rights of 10-24 year olds both in terms of their current situation (e.g. as heads of household, victims of sexual violence, parents and so on) and in terms of their age and life-stage? For instance, an elementary education programme in an IDP camp may be very effective for small children, yet exclude older girls and boys who want to learn. Youth-centred programming acknowledges this and creates an environment where the young people can receive the education that will equip them to deal with the adulthood they are about to enter. Schools where babies are welcome, where older children can sit comfortably, and where the curriculum reflects adolescents' and youths' experience are simple examples. Similarly, security in and around camps should be geared towards preventing human trafficking in the same way as it is geared towards preventing the influx of weapons.

Effective programming also recognises the differences between adolescents and youths. The experience of a 13-year-old girl differs in many ways from that of a 21-year-old young man. Although the principles underpinning their rights (non-discrimination, universality, etc.) are the same, their particular situations are likely to be significantly different.

Increasingly, international human rights legislation recognises the particular rights and needs of children although none pay specific attention to the rights of older children or youth per se. There is, currently, no legal framework that protects the rights of adolescents and youth. Although the Convention on the Rights of

the Child[1] is far from fully implemented, there has been significant progress with regard to children under 10 years old. Above 10 years old, however, and particularly above 12 years old, girls and boys receive less attention and fewer services. Governments and aid agencies alike tend to apply less urgency to addressing older children's rights and needs, particularly the specific issues to do with the adolescents' increasing age.

This is not to say that agencies fail to address issues of concern to adolescents and youth. Poverty, maternal mortality, forced migration, hunger and discrimination are but a few of the numerous issues that development agencies and national governments tackle on a daily basis. Some, such as UNFPA and UNHCR, are starting to rise to the challenge of systematically tackling these issues in a youth-centred manner. For displaced adolescents and youth, the challenge, in turn, is to ensure that agencies and governments use both a 'youth lens' and a 'displacement lens'.

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1. www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm

Unable to see the future: refugee youth in Malawi speak out

Lauren Healy

In a protracted refugee setting like Dzaleka, where multiple generations are born and raised, young refugees are struggling to hold on to hopes and dreams for a future that does not include the label of 'refugee'.

In Malawi, 45km north of the capital city of Lilongwe, lies the Dzaleka refugee camp, home to approximately 15,000 refugees and asylum seekers from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia and Ethiopia. As a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, Malawi is obliged to adhere to the Convention but, as was its right, made nine reservations. The reservations pertain to the provisions of wage-earning employment, public education, labour legislation, social security and freedom of movement for refugees within Malawi. These reservations pose complex challenges, especially for adolescents entering into adulthood who wish to seek higher education, gain employment, marry and begin families.

In Dzaleka, school-aged children are offered pre-school through secondary school education at no cost. However, if and when students graduate from secondary school, there is little opportunity for tertiary-level or higher adult education due to limited capacity and inadequate resources. To help close this gap, Jesuit Commons Higher Education at the Margins[1] began providing Internet-based distance learning in 2010, while the World University Service of Canada enables a selected number of qualified secondary-school graduates to resettle in Canada and attend university. But placements in these higher education programmes are extremely competitive and only a very small number of individuals meet the required standards.

Team-building activity for adolescents, Dzaleka refugee camp, Malawi

The majority of youth in Dzaleka have spent all their lives in Malawi, taught the same school curriculum as the local population, surrounded by a local culture and among a local people yet not free to integrate as local citizens: "We are just like Malawians but yet we are not Malawians." (Martha, an 18-year-old from DRC[2])

Without the inherent rights and freedoms of citizens, the younger generation of refugees is more and more despondent. When asked what he would do upon graduating from secondary school, Sal, a 20-year-old Burundian, said, "I want to become a doctor" – a feasible goal for Sal who receives perfect marks and is ranked number one amongst his fellow learners. But when asked "What do you want to do after graduating from secondary school if you are still living here in the refugee camp?", without hesitation Sal replied, "Here in Dzaleka it cannot happen. When you live in camp you change your behaviours, your expectations. It can't happen because I am a refugee."

Peter from DRC explained the effect that camp life has on him. Although agreeing that there were positive aspects to camp life because they were not living in fear of civil war or being recruited as soldiers, he said: "Life in camp is difficult because we cannot see our future. … You can look around and you are an old man walking with a stick, not having reached your goals."

What about finding a life partner and beginning a family together? Rashid, an 18-year-old Congolese man, replied, "In my country you become a man when you marry and have children of your own. Your family gives you a plot of land and you go about your business. Here, no, I am afraid to marry. Where will we go – what will we do?

I cannot marry." Others agreed that marriage was not an option for them – although an increasingly common trend amongst camp youth is early pregnancy, young parenthood and rising levels of school drop-outs.

A sentiment shared by the young adults in Dzaleka is that the current situation and the challenges they face entering into adulthood are largely out of their control: "Put everything in the hands of God, then maybe the future will be better." "It's a situation. You have to accept it." Whether or not adolescents use fate, religion or family support as tools for coping, there is generally a lack of a sense of agency to relationships, to employment and to educational prospects.

Services for displaced youth in refugee camp settings should work toward addressing the issue of hopelessness by giving youth the opportunity to express their wants and needs in an open forum. Services might do well to provide adolescent youth and young adults with a safe space to organise social, political and entrepreneurial groups, empowering and strengthening their self-worth, while at the same time improving quality of life during displacement. Creating more opportunities for higher education programmes will provide a realistic means for youth to fulfill their short- and long-term goals of becoming contributing adults.

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1. See Dankova & Giner, 'Technology in aid of learning for isolated refugees', FMR 38 www.fmreview.org/technology/dankova-giner.html
2. All names have been changed.

Not inheriting the past

Yara Romariz Maasri

In certain situations second-generation forced migrants may be expected and even encouraged to inherit 'the rage of their ancestors'.[1] My research into notions of identity and belonging in second-generation Lebanese who were brought up abroad after their parents were forced to flee the 1975-90 war in Lebanon suggests that the parents of my respondents either had no rage to transmit or deliberately chose not to transmit it.

Instead, they chose to teach their children generic notions of 'Lebaneseness' that did not reflect the sectarian divisions that were the cause of so much strife in Lebanon, preferring to promote peaceful coexistence and national, rather than sectarian, identity. The children internalised these notions, making them their own while at the same time connecting to the culture of the countries where they were brought up:

"I love being Lebanese. I love my country for its beauty, its traditions, freedom in life and expression. However, I love Qatar because I find security with a job and many friends around."

"I had no idea that there were many different sects [in Lebanon]. I did not know, for example, that there was a significant Shi'a

or Christian community there or that the Druze sect even existed. My parents simply taught us that we were Lebanese."

"Being out of Lebanon and growing up in the diaspora has made me half-Swedish, half-Lebanese, and I try to take the good things from each culture."

The only thing that detracts from these plural identities is a feeling some of the respondents have of not belonging anywhere, or rather of always belonging to the place where they are currently not:

"There is an expression that says: the one that has two homes is never at home. That is what I feel sometimes – I have two homes and still I can't feel 100% at home in either of them."

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1. Robben, A C G M, and Suárez-Orozco, M M, (eds) (2000) *Cultures under siege: collective violence and trauma*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p35.

Marrying on credit: the burden of bridewealth on refugee youth

Katarzyna Grabska

Young Sudanese refugees may benefit from greater freedom and opportunities in camps but the need for bridewealth payments when they return to their homelands can impose severe restrictions on their choices and integration prospects.

Having spent 15 years in Kakuma refugee camp in northern Kenya, Peter – by then in his late 20s – decided to return to Nyal, the village in southern Sudan[1] where he was born. While in Kakuma, Peter had met Angelina, also from South Sudan. When they decided to get married, Peter started bridewealth negotiations with her family members both in Kakuma and in South Sudan. When Peter returned to Nyal, however, he discovered that during the years of conflict his family had lost most of their cattle and the remaining few were being used for the marriage of Peter's elder brother:

"What will I do now? I am in big trouble with Angelina's family. In Kakuma, they agreed to give me Angelina on credit because I convinced them that I would give them the cows when I return to Sudan. I gave them some small money, as a down payment for the bridewealth, but now I am expected to pay the cows. Angelina is educated [she finished four years of schooling in Kakuma] so she is expensive. They asked for 60 cows but my family [in Sudan] does not have anything."

Peter's story reflects some of the challenges that war and displacement pose for young men and women in terms of prospects, negotiation and conclusion of marriages.

Life in Kakuma

The Nuer and the Dinka, the two largest ethnic groups in South Sudan, comprised the dominant populations in Kakuma at the time of my fieldwork in 2006-07. Predominantly agro-pastoralists, prior to displacement they relied on cattle herding, land cultivation and fishing and, to some extent, trade. The life of Nuer and Dinka men and women was closely associated with the care, protection and exchange of cattle, with cattle used in bridewealth payments.

The marriage process for Nuer women and men represents a rite of passage into adulthood, access to rights and a status within the household and community. Marriage is a lengthy process of negotiations and exchanges of bridewealth, becoming more secure with each transfer of payments and each ceremony.[2] It is a pivotal point in inter-generational relations as a mechanism of handing over resources from fathers to sons, building alliances between families and exchanging cattle for both productive and reproductive labour.

During displacement, significant changes took place in social relations, especially for young people. With educational services available and a particular focus on access to education for girls in the camp, life in Kakuma opened up opportunities for boys and girls, young women and men to (re)negotiate social and gender norms. In Kakuma, the issue of marriage dominated conversations. Due to poverty and gender imbalances in the camp, marriage was unattainable for most residents. The majority of marriages taking place were of 'lost boys' resettled to Western countries to girls who had stayed behind. For the young men who had stayed in the camp, marriage was only a distant possibility, for several reasons.

Firstly, the agro-pastoralist Nuer and Dinka were not allowed to keep cattle or cultivate land and instead had to rely predominantly on food aid and remittances sent by relatives from abroad and, for some, money earned from trading or working for NGOs. As a result of this and of economic changes more generally, the cattle-based bridewealth system was partially monetised. Although money was the dominant medium of payment in Kakuma, marriage could not be completed without some transfer of cattle, which usually took place between the remaining clan members in Sudan. Money, although important, has 'no blood' for the Nuer and Dinka and hence is not seen as guaranteeing the solidity of marriage. "Marriage with money is not a real marriage. When the 'lost boys' come back to Sudan, they will have to pay in cows again," commented one of the local chiefs in Western Upper Nile region.

Secondly, due to the scarcity of girls of marriageable age in the camp, the competition among suitors was fierce. In addition, with raised levels of education attained by girls in the camp, bridewealth was significantly increased; for the Western Nuer, for example, the usual 20-30 head of cattle might rise to some 60-75 depending on the level of education of the girl and her family's social standing. Young men in the camp were unable to compete with those who were resettled in Western countries who had greater financial resources. Cattle-less refugee young men – away from their family and kin-members – would use friends to represent them in bridewealth negotiations with the family of their girlfriends. These negotiations would then continue through radio connections and mobile phone calls with the bride and groom's family members in Sudan. Like Peter's, 'marriages on credit' with the promise of repayment after return to Sudan dominated Kakuma life.

Return: repaying the debts

For young refugee men returning to South Sudan, return involved moving from the multinational setting of Kakuma refugee camp – where most of them had spent their entire lives – to a village or town that was supposed to be home yet which they did not remember or know. Separated for years from their family and clan members, upon return to South Sudan they found themselves sharing a household with people whom they

barely remembered. Young returnee men who had led a more independent life in Kakuma, relatively free from any social obligations, found themselves with household responsibilities within their communities in South Sudan, often feeling overwhelmed by these expectations, exploited and misunderstood. Although family networks can act as a buffer against socio-economic uncertainty, they can also exercise pressure to conform to gender and generational household obligations.

One of their goals of returning to Sudan was to find family and kin members in order to repay their marriage bridewealth debts but the expectations of those who had stayed behind and those who were displaced often clashed when it came to the family's remaining limited resources. This scramble for bridewealth created rifts in the family and the community, with conflicts often being brought to local courts. Some young men complained that their families were "trying to cheat them" by having used their promised cattle to marry off other siblings or to finance investments.

There were also conflicts between siblings who were displaced and those who had stayed behind, with the latter arguing that due to their greater suffering during the wars, they had a greater right to the cattle. Returnee young men were often seen as less deserving. Diverse experiences during the wars shaped young men's identities differently, which in turn fuels conflict and hostility in post-war South Sudan.

Moreover, in Kakuma young people had often transgressed the rule of marrying within the same community. Upon return to South Sudan, some family members did not accept their choices and put pressure on the young men to divorce their Kakuma wives without any payment to the family.

The particular challenges that marriage involving bridewealth payments has for displaced and returnee communities tend to have been overlooked both in the literature and in reintegration programmes. Yet they affect both the willingness of refugees to return and their prospects of settling in on return. Bridewealth debts have severe consequences for young men wishing to establish themselves upon return, to build a new household, and to maintain relations with family members who had stayed behind or who were displaced elsewhere (for example to Khartoum). Young men are often not able to repay their debts – and some may have to abandon their wives or prospective wives. These women are consequently seen as 'used', often shamed and thus less worthy of a good (second) marriage. And those who are unmarried experience further stigmatisation. If the young men are able to secure cattle payments for their children (even if not for their wives), the children will stay with the fathers. Alternatively, children born out of the 'marriages on credit' may be taken over by the family of the wife. Either way, this leads to forced family separation. The high bride price has also affected other young men: those who had stayed behind. Frustrated with their inability to marry and thus to access full adulthood, some join cattle raids, enlist in militias or elope with young women. The recent increase in cattle raiding in some of the regions of South Sudan can partially be explained by this phenomenon.

UNHCR / G Beals

Francis and Elizabeth are married and live in Kakuma refugee camp. Formerly childhood friends, they met again in Kakuma when forced to flee conflict in South Sudan. During the three years that they dated, her family threatened him. He came from a poor family and had no cows or money to pay the 300-cow dowry her family demanded. They married secretly but violence against them by her family meant they had to seek UNHCR special protection. After South Sudan declared its independence in 2011, Francis and his wife had the opportunity to go home – but to do so would invariably lead to violence. "My parents will fight against her family. There will be destruction and people will die," Francis said. "I do not want that for any of us. I refuse." Now he teaches English and mathematics to children in the camp, and his family has applied for resettlement in a third county.

While it is often argued that displacement creates opportunities for greater autonomy for young people and their ability to negotiate their choices (including marriage partners), post-war return and the duty to complete marriage payments in this case often result in limiting their autonomy and freedoms. The findings above indicate a need for the government of South Sudan, the international community and the local communities to:

- work with local chiefs who are involved in solving marriage problems

- control raising bride price by working together with young women and men, their parents and community elders

- create education, job opportunities and income-generating opportunities for young men in South Sudan

- provide protection and income-generating services for young women as well as counselling for families experiencing separation.

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1. At the time being discussed the new state of South Sudan had not yet come into being but was still known as southern Sudan; hereafter in this article we refer to 'South Sudan'.

2. Hutchinson, S (1996) *Nuer dilemmas: coping with money, war and the State,* University of California Press: Berkeley.

Participation of adolescents in protection: dividends for all

Anna Skeels and Monika Sandvik-Nylund

In order to keep children and adolescents safe, and improve their chances of living fulfilling lives, we need to listen and respond to their views and opinions on matters that affect them.

Based on the information currently available, some 47% of UNHCR's global caseload is thought to be children and adolescents under the age of 18. In some refugee camp settings, in particular in East and Horn of Africa, children and adolescents constitute the majority. As this reality is not always reflected in 'the way things are done' in terms of protection, new means are being tried out for communicating with children and ensuring their meaningful participation in order to contribute to their protection.

The right to participate has been described as an 'instrumental' right within the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): i.e. the route to accessing all other rights, including protection. Whilst humanitarian organisations are delivering protection responses in displacement situations around the world, the extent to which these responses allow or include the participation of children and adolescents is unclear. However, adolescents view, experience and communicate about their protection concerns differently from adults. They often lack access to adult decision-making processes and face barriers to their participation. Alternative participatory methods are needed that target them specifically and that seek to address the power differential between adolescents and adults.

Participatory assessments are an important part of UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity policy – reflecting the idea that for protection interventions to cater to populations in all their diversity, we need to understand and seek the views of all, including children and adolescents. In a recent UNHCR consultation on child protection involving over 250 adolescents in four countries, more age-appropriate participatory methods were used as an alternative to the more traditional 'focus group discussion'.

Some issues arose again and again, including: a sense of loneliness and depression; the lack of and need for adult and/or peer support; frustration with the quality of or access to education; and the lack of learning, recreational space or opportunities – "just come and teach us **something**!" Association with 'bad company' or 'bad behaviour' and feeling unsafe were also major areas of concern. In the urban contexts in particular, discrimination, xenophobia, racism and isolation stood out as significant problems for adolescents in need of peer support.

Creative and interactive participatory processes seemed to create a positive and enabling environment which strengthened adolescents' ability to think about coping mechanisms and to see possibilities rather than just risks and problems. The adolescents were often able to come up with solutions to the problems they had raised. They gave suggestions of how they could protect each other (walk to school as a group to keep safe; teach newly arrived young refugees the local dialect); how the community could protect them (training for parents on positive treatment of young people; camp community meetings addressing the issues adolescents face); and what more UNHCR and its partners could do (English language and extra tutoring in evenings; tackle discrimination through awareness-raising for police and teachers).

Alongside protection concerns raised and solutions suggested, other dividends from using a more participatory approach with adolescents were clear. Firstly, what emerged in terms of protection information was different from what would have emerged using more traditional approaches. For certain adolescents some of their protection concerns cannot be expressed verbally – it takes different methods to bring them out. Adolescents may draw, annotate and display posters on loneliness and feelings of depression but may not wish to talk about these subjects. For responding agencies, laying out pages of different drawings, showing the same protection concerns again and again, can produce a greater impact than merely summarising what adolescents have said.

Futhermore groups of adolescents in all four countries independently expressed, in almost the exact same words, the importance of being able to 'explore their talents' and the barriers that young refugees face in this regard. This had not been anticipated in any way as a common theme for refugee adolescents.

Secondly, these more participatory techniques fostered greater opportunities for personal and social development of adolescents. They also seemed to contribute to their feelings of self-worth and control over their own lives, both critical for their psychosocial well-being. This is because deliberately creating a friendly, supportive and comfortable environment to put adolescents at their ease enables them to interact with their peers safely. Less formal, game-based methodologies can give adolescents a chance to 'play', and a gradual build-up of activities and the recognition of skills and achievement – for example through feedback or presentation of certificates – can increase adolescents' confidence and self-esteem.

Thirdly, the choice of methods reflected an awareness of the power imbalance between adolescents and adults and helped to build relationships between them. Keeping adult presence to a minimum (no parents, teachers or others 'in charge') and the absence of 'observers' help adolescents feel comfortable and more in control. Adolescents are able to ask questions, get responses and access information that is pertinent to them and

their lives in a setting that is supportive. Agency staff members are able to hear about the specific protection needs of adolescents and to build a rapport with them, increasing both staff motivation and their skills for working with adolescents in the longer term.

There is also an argument that a more participatory approach is inherently more ethical – it allows young people to speak for themselves rather than be spoken for and respects their rights. An ethical approach is also about ensuring, for example, appropriate and accessible information, informed consent, choice, respect and feedback as part of the participation process. It also encompasses the imperative to 'do no harm' – close management of and support for discussion on protection issues and an awareness of the increased risk of gathering vulnerable adolescents together – and the intention to work towards positive change.

Adolescent participation in protection can affect the way they are viewed by parents, staff and other community members. Recognising adolescents as having knowledge, skills and ideas to share counters stereotypes of this age group, who are often considered problematic or a challenge. Furthermore, parents and other adults commented on the change in mood and sense of achievement of adolescents on leaving the workshops.

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Listen and Learn: Participatory Assessment with Children and Adolescents can be found at www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4fffe4af2.html

The views and perspectives of children during these consultations fed into a new UNHCR Framework for the Protection of Children available at www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4fe875682.html

Young and separated from their families in eastern Congo

Gloria Lihemo

As well as suffering the obvious side-effects such as missing parental affection and guidance, unaccompanied displaced youth also suffer from being stigmatised by some members of the host communities.

About 62 youths aged between 7 and 22, all separated from their families, are currently living within a church community in Ango town in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.[1] Some live with foster families, others by themselves in tiny shelters they have constructed on land offered to them by the church. Most have had no contact with their parents since they fled. They live on piecemeal information on the whereabouts and status of their families which they receive from traders or through radio communication from a police post in Ango. "Mostly we only receive information when a family member is either sick or dead," says 18-year-old Patrick who has been living in a foster home in Ango for over a year.

In late 2011, there were an estimated 471,000 IDPs in Orientale Province in eastern DRC. Of these, some 321,000 were in Haut and Bas Uélé districts, having fled their homes in fear of atrocities – killings, mutilations and abductions – by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). They have sought refuge in places such as the town of Ango which is now home to an estimated 20,000 people, of whom 12,000 are IDPs or former IDPs. The vast majority have very limited access to potable water, food, seeds to cultivate, shelter and health care. Insecurity, remoteness and a very poor road network have left Ango's population marginalised from humanitarian assistance.

When the youths first arrived in Ango, some knew vaguely of relatives who live in the area; for others the only connection was a church community similar to one they knew back home. Through the church community and an NGO working there, the young people were placed within foster families, some of whom were already stretched to their limits and unable to feed their own families.

Given the protracted nature of the conflict, reunion with their families seems improbable. In the meantime, their lives hang in limbo, a continuous struggle for survival. They have developed coping mechanisms, grouping together with others in a similar situation and

In 2010, 19-year-old Anumbue Bipuna watched as the LRA killed her father and several other people in her village of Sukadi. Many people were abducted and the village was pillaged by the rebels. She managed to escape to the west with her three younger brothers and her three-year-old cousin. When they arrived in Ango, about 80km away, they discovered that their mother had fled north to the Central African Republic. They have not seen her since, although on a few occasions they have managed to contact her by radio.

As the eldest, Anumbue has been forced to take on the responsibility of running her family of five. She is not only the breadwinner but also has to instil discipline among the younger ones and supervise whatever work her brothers can do to bring in extra money, all the while taking care of her young cousin who now looks to her as her mother. To be able to wear all these hats, she has had to sacrifice her ambitions and drop out of school. "My only focus now is my siblings. I cannot think about my own education now – I have to put them first," she says. "I teach them to fend for themselves. They might find themselves alone one day and need to know how to survive."

tied to the religious community because of shared religious faith, and they seek mentors within the church community for guidance. The church leaders help settle disputes and intervene on their behalf when there are tensions among them or with the host community. The church leaders are not in a position, however, to maintain overall responsibility for them.

Aside from the strain of feeding extra mouths, foster families already have children of their own and have now taken on three or four more, usually adolescents, who need proper mentoring and guidance. Patrick says his adoptive mother treats him like her own son, and ensures he stays in school and that he conducts himself with decorum. Others are just left to learn how to behave from others around them.

Unaccompanied displaced youth in Ango town, DRC.

Disadvantaged
The responsibility of putting food on the table or paying for school rests squarely on the young people's shoulders. They may manage to get day labour jobs but they receive a lower wage for the same amount of work than members of the host communities, and there is great competition for the work. Some are forced to perform hard labour in exchange for accommodation and food, or are simply asked to leave by overburdened host families.

Displaced youths are forced to take on adult responsibilities to survive the new circumstances they find themselves in. Most employment opportunities available require hard labour like construction or cultivating fields which obviously favour the boys. Girls have fewer options for work, often ending up with tasks such as making palm oil or chopping wood to sell in the market and they do not earn as much money.

As a result some of the displaced girls are exposed to prostitution and manipulation both from among the IDP community and by members of the host community. Despite awareness campaigns on safe sex and the dangers of prostitution, they have adopted this lifestyle for lack of a viable alternative source of income, exacerbating further their risk of abuse, unwanted pregnancies and premature marriages.

Oscar Musi Sasa, president of the IDP committee in Ango, concurs that girls are often preyed on for sex. "I have seen girls who are as young as 12 years old already being solicited for sex. They are forced to give themselves to boys as it has become their means for survival," he says.

Land in the area is passed on from generation to generation, so the chances of host families passing on their land to 'foreign' children are slim. Ownership of land to cultivate provides a sense of identity as well as a means of livelihood. Some of the youths that have lived among the community for a long time have managed to be allocated some land to cultivate. Fear of LRA attacks, however, means that people are reluctant to travel far from town and so reduces the amount of cultivable land. IDPs often end up with less fertile

fields. In some instances, after some have managed to successfully cultivate crops, members of the host community have claimed ownership of the harvest.

Sidelined by humanitarian assistance
Although a few humanitarian organisations assist displaced people in Ango with, for example, free health care or assistance in paying school fees, the displaced youth are neither adults nor married and thus do not fit the criteria set for vulnerability of beneficiaries and do not qualify for distribution of food or seeds to plant.

Bas Uélé territory is an insecure zone and the major donors are emergency rather than development donors, while the interventions required by these dislocated children are developmental rather than emergency. While these youths benefit from certain levels of humanitarian assistance – including access to food distribution for those within foster families, access to health care, psychosocial assistance and education – longer-term solutions that can help curb the threat of sexual exploitation as well as offer them possibilities for a better future could have negative repercussions, such as more minors voluntarily separating from their guardians to benefit from such interventions.

Although their current living conditions seem difficult, they believe the situation is even worse in the refugee camps where their parents are in the Central African Republic. Torn between the prospect of being reunited with them or staying in Ango where they have a chance to find work and attend school, most prefer to stay. "Life might not be the best here but I am still in my own country. I cannot imagine living as a refugee in another country," says 23-year-old Jean-Pierre.

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1. This article is based on interviews with 23 displaced youths aged between 7 and 22 years who have been separated from their parents. The views expressed here are drawn from their comments as well as those of foster families, church leaders, the president of the IDP committee and some NGOs working with this community.

From rural Colombia to urban alienation

Alejandro Valencia Arias

The relationships between poverty, inequality and conflict exacerbate youth migration from rural areas.

The great majority of young people in the Department of Antioquia who are forcibly displaced migrate to its capital, Medellín, where the population is now over six times the size it was 50 years ago. This migration removes them from the social and cultural structures within which they grew up, destroying their security as young people are not emotionally prepared to deal with violent events charged with such tragedy and pain. These events, little by little, make them accustomed to living with conflict, where anyone could be the enemy and where they are constantly adrift, physically and morally, feeling insecure and fearful in their own homes, in their own land.

Over time this has devastating effects, leading to disillusionment and tearing of the social fabric, and causing young people to withdraw. That is why many young people appear to cling to the need to survive rather than looking to their future; their youth has been a period of transformation disrupted by violence that has not allowed them to exist, think and feel as 'normal' young people but has instead forced them to assume adult responsibilities with little or no preparation.

When displaced youth arrive in large urban centres such as Bogotá and Medellín, they are obliged to hide their fear of an unknown place ruled by different values and beliefs. They have to adapt to a new rhythm of life if they are to fit in with this territory, abruptly transforming their personal and family reference points in a new landscape where they know very little. This threatens their sense of identity and destroys their connection with their roots as they try to settle into a new lifestyle.

Often they fear to speak, remember, tell their stories. They prefer to make no comment but their thoughts are filled with recurrent memories of the events that have marked them for life. That is why growing up in the context of constant conflict represents such an enormous challenge for displaced youth. They must confront the same problems and uncertainties as any other adolescent but without sufficient opportunities for education or the acquisition of specific skills, and having experienced even fewer of the conditions necessary for a healthy life, either physical or mental.

This permanent state of confrontation leads to children and young people internalising violent modes of resolving differences and conflicts as natural, as the environment in which they have grown up has trivialised this type of behaviour, very often making silence and passivity the only way to survive. This situation worsens as time goes by but the lives of these young people do not change, generating a profound feeling of frustration and lack of conformity with their surroundings, as they realise they are not offered the conditions and opportunities they need in order to move ahead. On some occasions this can lead them to join neighbourhood gangs as a money-making option, segregating them further from society while venting their anger against it, once again initiating a cycle of violence in a possibly never-ending process.

While the city is seen as providing greater security against armed conflict, the reality is that these urban centres are associated with different forms of violence for displaced people, who are a relatively powerless minority group in such surroundings. In reality there is a change of scene but not of the conditions of violence that have forced them to leave their home areas.

They take to the streets in large numbers, looking tough in sunglasses and baseball caps. There is tension in the air as the other slum-dwellers watch from the second floor, unsure of what to expect. Then the music blasts and the camera starts rolling. Young Afro-Colombians in Buenaventura, Colombia – who have been displaced by clashes between armed groups in the surrounding areas – are organising against violence, and making a music video with help from UNHCR. Band member Ubaldino was displaced by violence in 2006: "People were threatened. If they didn't submit to the will of illegal armed groups, their end was written. It was better to escape and lose our crops, and start from scratch," he said. Another band member, Jason, says: "[We are] a group of young people who have been through hunger, violence, everything, but despite that we are here together because of the music. Music helps us to transmit messages to people…"

The search for a place to live adds to their burden. Most are obliged to swell the numbers of the poor living on the outskirts of large cities, in many cases having to live in shacks, tents or wooden huts; such a situation may entail a lack of basic public services such as water and electricity, and very few of these young people can access other equally important services such as health and education. Displaced young people are obliged to behave and live as adults, although they are not yet adults, sometimes losing their identity in the face of the social discrimination they meet when relocating to another territory and the uncertain nature of their future.

Confronting youth displacement

Any analysis of the issue of forced migration in the rural youth population must ask the question of where to target efforts, given that youth migration from the countryside to the cities is always associated with the degeneration of rural areas and is unlikely to be a positive opportunity for the cities that receive them. Incentives in all conflict zones

must aim to create an atmosphere that will encourage a true process of return and reinsertion, offering incentives and motivation to allow those young people facing difficulties in the cities who wish to return to their places of origin to do so. This can be achieved through the creation of work opportunities in the rural areas, the improvement of public services, the development of clear administrative processes for return and long-term commitment by municipal authorities there to their successful return.

It is obvious that return must not simply mean moving back to live in the home area but must instead be supported by effective strategies for the protection and reintegration of returnees. Return home will not alone guarantee the end of displacement; improved living conditions will be the factor that truly helps stabilise those young people who choose to return.

Finally, most policies place emphasis on the issue of preventing youth displacement from rural areas but there are already many young people who have moved to the cities. The real objective must be to provide options that will offer them life opportunities that genuinely motivate them to remain on their land and to recover from the armed conflict.

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Challenging some assumptions about 'refugee youth'

Christina Clark-Kazak

Young people who migrate without their parents develop peer networks and may not be inherently more vulnerable than those with inter-generational networks.

Many children and young people who live with peers have greater access to resources and decision-making power than many of those who live in families and households where an adult is present. The research presented in this article – carried out with Congolese refugees living in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, and in the rural refugee settlement of Kyaka II – challenges the assumption in refugee policy and programming that unaccompanied minors are inherently more vulnerable and disadvantaged than their accompanied peers. On the contrary, living without one's parents or guardians can offer opportunities and some young people consciously chose to migrate without their parents and/or to live with peers rather than with adults once they were in Kampala or Kyaka II.

In some cases, young people's decision to migrate without their parents was the result of individual or collective livelihood strategies to access particular services. For example, the headmaster of the secondary school in Kyaka II partially attributes the disproportionate enrolment of unaccompanied young people in the 2005 academic year to the fact that school fees there are lower than for other secondary schools in the area, acting as a pull factor to the settlement. For example, in 2005 no girls in the second year of secondary school were living with their parents. In Kampala, some young people, especially males, came alone, intending to work to help support themselves and their families in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Once alone in refugee contexts, young people may continue to live alone or with peers, even when they have the opportunity to join households headed by adults. For example, one young male who came to Kyaka II in order to attend the secondary school met a friend of his father's in the settlement and lived with him for a few months. However, despite the close relationship with this adult male, whom he calls 'uncle', he decided to move out with a group of other young males with whom he built a hut close to the school. His decision to live with peers was based not only on proximity to the school but also on the fact that he had fewer household chores and more access to resources as an 'equal' member of a peer network.

Although some young refugees thus do choose to move out of inter-generational networks which they view as disadvantageous or in some cases exploitative, it would be erroneous to portray this simply as a struggle between older and younger generations. Most young people were actively seeking and/or maintaining contact with their families and wanted to return to them, and even young people who choose peer networks over inter-generational networks continue to maintain ties to older generations.

Traditionally in DRC young people would not move out of inter-generational households until they married and were ready to start a family of their own. However, movement out of inter-generational networks is not necessarily a manifestation of conflict; migration and conflict have led to changes in social structures, and peer networks have become more socially acceptable.

Decision making among peers

Analysis of decision-making processes within peer networks revealed power dynamics relating to social age, education, language and gender. I observed one group of 10-30 young people (numbers fluctuated) aged 12 to 20, which I named the 'Karungi' group, over a 10-month period. Members developed a strong sense of solidarity based in some cases on kinship (siblings or cousins) and in all cases on shared ethnicity. The majority come from the town of Bunia and many had known each other, or of each other, while still in DRC. These kin and ethnic ties facilitated the formation of collective households as required by UNHCR for distribution of resources such as plastic sheeting and cooking utensils.

Within the cohesiveness of the group, there were internal power hierarchies. First, social age – the attributes ascribed in the society to different stages of life – is important. Although all Karungi group members consider themselves and each other as 'young people', they distinguish amongst each other using a variety of 'markers' of social age. For example, 15-year-old Dominic was physically smaller than the other males. He attended primary school, while most of the others were studying, or had studied, at secondary school. Dominic was considered to be socially younger than other males in the Karungi group and had less access to decision making about collective resources and division of labour. When other males were present, Dominic rarely spoke. Indeed, when asked about decision making in the household, he named Benjamin – the eldest male, who had also completed secondary school – as the person responsible. Similarly, Catherine, the eldest female in the group, described Dominic's domestic labour as "children's work".

Similarly, Joie had no formal education in DRC and was unable to attend primary school because she had insufficient English. Although related to Belle (her niece, although only one year younger), photos of their lives in DRC show a significant difference in income between Joie's family, which was poor and rural, and Belle's family, which had cattle and was able to send her to private school. In Kyaka II, Joie spent long days at home or in the field, while the rest of the Karungi females went to school. As a result, although the young women divided up domestic tasks amongst themselves, Joie often did more than the others.

Although Karungi members communicate amongst themselves in their native Hema, knowledge of English or French is important to access services in the settlement. This disadvantages those with low levels of education, who sometimes rely on other network members to speak on their behalf. For example, Joie wanted to send a written statement to UNHCR protection officers in Kampala but this was delayed because she had to rely on others to help her with translation.

In terms of gender, while both female and male members of the Karungi group engaged in decision making about collective livelihood strategies, the daily reality was complex. While the males undertook a variety of domestic tasks traditionally viewed as women's work, including cooking, collecting firewood and fetching water, gender roles still meant that the males were more visible in public spaces and they were much more vocal than the females in mixed groups.

Conclusion

Conflict and migration in DRC have resulted in changing social structures, including growing numbers of young people migrating without their parents and the social acceptance of peer networks. While these structures are too often portrayed simply as the products of tragedy and conflict, young people may consciously choose them as part of individual or collective life strategies.

Approaching unaccompanied young people as decision-makers in migration processes has important implications for policy and programming. First, those working with refugees should pay more attention to the generational division of labour within families, households and communities in order to better understand and predict the socio-economic reasons for young people's independent migration. Second, unaccompanied young people are not a homogeneous group. We need to take into account intra-generational power relations – including gender, social age, education and class – that affect young people's differential experiences of migration, including within peer groups. Finally, young people who migrate on their own are not inherently more vulnerable or disadvantaged than their counterparts living with families. In some cases, independent migrants have more access to decision making and resources and thus choose to remain in peer networks.

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In protracted limbo

A comparative study of the transitions to adulthood and life trajectories of former unaccompanied children in Europe

Young adults who previously entered Europe as independent migrant children face a range of possible outcomes. The majority are denied refugee status or humanitarian protection but are afforded time-limited welfare support and care under provisions of discretionary leave. Once they become adults, young people frequently end up in limbo – uncertain of whether or not they will be able to remain in the country of immigration/asylum and for how long. To date, there has been little exploration of the longer-term trajectories of those young people across Europe who make the transition to adulthood with under-determined political or citizenship status.

A new research project involving Oxford University's Dr Nando Sigona (Refugee Studies Centre), Dr Elaine Chase and Professor Robert Walker (Social Policy and Intervention) will explore the gaps in theory and knowledge surrounding these

dimensions of youth migration and identify the implications for contemporary national and international policy governing the treatment and support of young people subject to immigration control across the EU.

The project will examine: the well-being outcomes of former independent migrant children in Europe; young people's experiences of negotiating the various structures which govern their legal, social and economic statuses as well as their political and social identities; the types of service and support arrangements most likely to facilitate the best possible economic and quality of life outcomes; and methodological possibilities for monitoring the longer-term outcomes of former independent migrant children across Europe.

For more details see: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/research/experiences/in-protracted-limbo

What it means to be young and displaced

Tamara Velásquez

A young adult from rural Colombia assesses feelings of loss and isolation having being forced to flee to Costa Rica.

It all began when I was 25 years old. Up until that time, I had lived in Colombia in apparent peace but in 2008 something new and tragic occurred. My future in Colombia died when members of my family were murdered only two blocks from the police station in the town where I was born. This not only ended the lives of some people but also changed my life and that of the rest of my family forever.

Following the grief, the first and most striking consequence was that my family and I were forced into the decision to leave our home; the second, preparing for the journey; the third, travelling, arriving at our destination; and, finally, accepting that we were in an unknown place, where none of us had ever imagined being, as is the case for so many Colombians who arrive in Costa Rica. In this one step, we lost a large part of our economic resources and we remained adrift in a city, unprotected, in fear, hungry, grieving, sleepless and – as if this were not enough – without hope. Above all, we were left questioning our very identity – for what are we without our dreams, our families, our friends, our homeland, our culture and our integrity?

Integration or exclusion?

There was a close relationship between the young refugee men and women involved in activities with UNHCR in Costa Rica. We were all young people of between 17 and 30 years old from rural backgrounds who shared a similar culture and spoke the same language. We did not ask about each other's personal histories (in order to avoid inflicting pain) but we identified with each other and this helped motivate us to fight to improve our lot as refugees. By others, however, we were viewed and judged differently, because of the stereotyping of Colombians, and of rural Colombians in particular, and this made our integration all the more difficult and slow.

Undocumented, we had few options for work; asylum seekers in Costa Rica are unable to work until they have approved refugee status (which takes several months). This disadvantages them when it comes to participation in any of the cultural activities from which a specific sense of 'being young' can be constructed. As a young person from a rural background, everything is very alien. Urban young men and women are more closely linked to the social institutions (universities, collectives, sectors of the city associated with young people) that legitimate certain values and practices. This allows urban youth more access to those experiences classified as appropriate to 'youth' as they are already within a consumer group catered for within the commercial life of cities.

We, as rural forced migrants, lack the economic resources to access opportunities which may be more readily available to a young person from an urban background, and possibly with a higher economic status. It is assumed that rural young people are ignorant. Furthermore, young people in poorer parts of the city are usually blamed for any outbreaks of violence or criminality.

Stereotypes about Colombia – seen as a place of armed conflict, drug trafficking, impunity, corruption, social inequity and injustice – feed xenophobia and discrimination, divide nationals from foreigners, and promote fear of integration.

The combination of such difficulties means that most migrants live in neighbourhoods with tough economic profiles, leaving rural youth vulnerable to robbery, drugs and gang warfare, and also increasing the likelihood of their involvement in such activities themselves. Added to this is the lack of access to education for those without documentation, or for those barred from it by the cost of food and transport.

As the years go by, the feeling that you belong neither here nor there grows. Your accent and appearance are different; you lack a feeling of belonging and of direction as preferential support is given to nationals; you fail to adapt to the new society and do not feel part of it; it is difficult to make friends and to get on with life as you do not easily trust others; you remember what you have lived through and begin to question your own identity as you do not know exactly what you want. You sometimes prefer not to say where you come from, to avoid being judged again. We rural young people are made to feel invisible and our experiences are not considered to be the experiences ' of youth'.

> **What are we without our dreams, our families, our friends, our homeland, our culture and our integrity?**

By way of closure

Like me, many rural young people find that forced displacement is yet one more event in a series of exclusions, abandonments, failures of protection and processes of marginalisation by the Colombian government. All or any of these may have forced us to cross frontiers. In my case, thankfully, I was able to attend university, as my family and I found a religious organisation that supported us shortly after our arrival in Costa Rica until now as I write from Canada.

How many more Colombians will have to live through this, and for how long, and how much more must take place before the decision for change will be taken?

Tamara Velásquez taliv28@hotmail.com is an engineer who was formerly a refugee but now has permanent residency in Canada.

Being young and of mixed ethnicity in Rwanda

Giorgia Doná

The transition from childhood into adulthood is particularly complex for young people of mixed ethnic backgrounds who experience being 'out of place' twice: as young adults and as ethnically mixed. The challenges are clear in Rwanda.

Many young people of mixed ethnicity are growing up in the shadow of the war and genocide. They are confronted with many decisions, choices and challenges. Their mixed background has an effect on their social identities, emotions, friendships, love relations, and access to resources. They are 'out of place' in many ways: educationally, economically, socially and emotionally.

Yet, as they learn to navigate the complex post-genocide social landscape of Rwanda, their agency is visible in their choice of what to disclose and what to keep secret when they meet new people, join sports clubs, attend university or go for job interviews; in their choices of friends and partners; in deciding to leave their neighbourhoods, villages and country and go to places where their complex life history is less relevant; in finding strategies that minimise their suffering; and in focusing on what is valued in society like education and family.

Both inside Rwanda and abroad, community-level reconciliation initiatives offer these young people the opportunity to share their sufferings, to disclose their sense of isolation and to manage the stigma. For many, religion and faith are ways to make sense of the past and have hope in the future. Mental health initiatives also assist them to articulate their complex feelings and to work through them. In exile, shared commemorations for all those who died violently help them to give dignity to all their lost loved ones.

The 1994 genocide
Although there were many families of mixed ethnicity, these did not officially exist because ethnic registration was done at birth along patrilineal descent lines, meaning that children took on the ethnicity of their father. As violence escalated in the 1990s, members of families of mixed ethnicity were persecuted, attacked or forced to flee to avoid death. In general during ethnic clashes, families of mixed ethnicity are among the first victims of violence because they represent a threat to divisive ideologies.

Young boys and girls growing up in ethnically mixed families where the father was Hutu (and the mother Tutsi) were considered Hutu. Therefore they were not directly targeted for killing – but were forced to take sides and often to be involved in violence. Like other Hutu juveniles, the young men in these families were required to participate in roadblocks and patrols to identify, stop, arrest or kill Tutsi. If they resisted, they could be fined, forced to flee, or killed with the accusation of being accomplices of the enemy. At times, they were forced to witness violence being exercised upon their Tutsi cousins, relatives and even their own mother without being able to intervene. At other times, they risked their lives to protect their loved ones.

Rape is commonly used as a weapon of war to 'dilute' the ethnic purity of the victims' group, to humiliate its women and disgrace its men. Babies born out of war rapes become young adults of mixed ethnicity who are 'out of place' in many ways: they will grow up without a father, often unwelcomed by the maternal side of the family, and stigmatised by society.

During the 1994 genocide, individual and gang rapes took place and the children born from these forced sexual encounters are now teenagers of mixed ethnicity. These young people are angry and confused, struggling to make sense of their new personal and social identity, which carry stigma and shame. They are 'out of place' in post-genocide Rwanda where they find it difficult to reconcile their multiple identities: they are Hutu offspring yet they are raised by Tutsi mothers and they are children of genocide perpetrators who are raised by genocide victims. They who grew up thinking of themselves as 'genocide orphans' have to integrate the dissonant reality that they are also 'children of rape', a discovery that is likely to affect the ways in which they cope with love and future marriage prospects.

Being able to make sense of the tragedy is one of their greatest challenges, and as they grow up some young people have to provide for their imprisoned fathers while mourning the loss of their mother. On a daily basis, their life conditions are comparable to those of orphans. The elder siblings suddenly have to take on the role of heads of households with all the responsibilities and limitations that the new status entails.

Suppressing one's (mixed) identity
For refugees in general and for young refugees of mixed ethnicity in particular, identity politics and past experiences continue to matter in exile. Young Rwandan refugees of mixed ethnicity were additionally 'out of place' in camps, where they were pushed into emphasising one side of their ethnicity and minimising or hiding the other.

Some of those who fled violence with other survivors and reached refugee camps across the border in Burundi felt ostracised and threatened when survivors accused them of having been connected to the Hutus who had been manning the checkpoints to prevent them from fleeing.

Those who fled with the Hutu population towards the end of the genocide found that in refugee camps across the region, and especially those situated in eastern Zaire where the genocide leaders took refuge together with the civilian population, a strong pro-Hutu ideology continued to prevail. Here, young people of mixed ethnicity had to subscribe to the extremist Hutu version of violence, to value their Hutu identity at the expense of their Tutsi identity, and to downplay their connections

to – and to distance themselves from – the victorious Tutsi enemy back in Rwanda. This task was easier for young people growing up in mixed families headed by a Hutu because they could be regarded as Hutu but it was more difficult for young people (especially boys) who had fled with their Hutu mother and maternal relatives following the death of their Tutsi father.

Inside Rwanda, the reverse phenomenon occurred. As the government legally banned any explicit reference to ethnicity, the new social categories *rescapé* (Tutsi genocide survivor) and *génocidaire* (Hutu genocide perpetrator) gained prominence. Young people of mixed ethnicity who returned and those who remained behind found it advantageous to emphasise their Tutsi connections and to downplay their Hutu identity and relations. This task was easier for adolescents whose father was Tutsi who could self-identify as 'genocide survivors' and could therefore access survivors' funds or acquire the social status of 'genocide survivor' or 'genocide orphan'. It was more difficult for those whose father was Hutu because they were regarded as Hutus.

Rwandans in general are aware that young people of mixed ethnicity face many challenges and they often said that it was "very difficult" for these youngsters to belong because they are being "pushed away" by both sides of their extended family. Each side perceives them as members of the other side and is accordingly suspicious.

These perceptions also influence the ways in which inter-ethnic love relations develop and marriages take place. In Rwandan culture, families can influence dating patterns, they can approve or refuse to approve relationships and they can support or hinder marriage prospects. Since 1994, the number of mixed marriages has dramatically declined. Young people's choices are restricted when families of survivors or returnees discover that a member of the extended family is accused of genocide involvement, and it is said that young adults of mixed ethnicity tend to marry into the Hutu group where they are less ostracised. When mixed marriages take place, young families have to cope with their relatives' criticism or opposition.

Reconciliation, commemorating, mourning and justice

Through memorialisation, post-conflict societies remember their violent past, mourn their dead and strive towards social recovery. The post-1994 Rwandan government designated the month of April as the national month of remembrance of the genocide and of those who died in it.

Young people of mixed ethnicity find these memorial ceremonies difficult to cope with. They are encouraged to publicly mourn the deaths of their Tutsi families and relatives who died during the genocide, and this rekindles their suffering. At the same time, the deaths of their Hutu family members and relatives who perished on account of their 'moderate' political beliefs, or because they resisted involvement in violence or protected Tutsi, are marginalised in these public commemorations. Young adults of mixed ethnicity are likely to have suffered multiple losses on both sides of their family in different places and at different times. It is very difficult for them

15th anniversary genocide commemorations, Butare, 2009. Banner reads: You are the loss that shall never be replaced

to be able to mourn collectively all their loved ones who perished violently. One survivor who lost his Tutsi mother who was murdered and his Hutu father who was killed while trying to protect the Tutsi stated that during official commemorations "people think that I cry for them but I cry for myself".

As justice ran its course, reconciliation initiatives took place inside Rwanda as well as transnationally among the refugee diaspora. To promote reconciliation, the government called on the *génocidaires* to ask for forgiveness and asked the *rescapés* to bestow forgiveness. Young people of mixed ethnicity find it difficult to accept the fact that they belong to both the group expected to forgive and the one asking for forgiveness. In conversations on forgiveness, one young Rwandan said that it is difficult for him to understand the meaning of forgiveness: who forgives whom and for what? how can one distinguish between formal and sincere forgiveness? is there a choice not to forgive?

These young people are 'out of place' within national narratives of justice and reconciliation that do not necessarily contemplate the possibility of having multiple identities, divergent loyalties and complex life circumstances. Only in informal spaces, within families or among close friends, or occasionally during community-level reconciliation can young people of mixed ethnicity openly express their ambivalent emotions, have their complex life circumstances acknowledged and feel supported.

It is important that policymakers, civil society and humanitarian agencies working in post-conflict environments and refugee contexts recognise the specific challenges that young people of mixed ethnicity encounter, and acknowledge their agency. In this way, they can better support them to negotiate their multiple identities, manage ambivalent loyalties, develop friendships and love relationships, remember the past and fully engage in reconciliation processes for the future.

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Intangible pressures in Jammu and Kashmir

Ankur Datta

History, inheritance and uncertainty affect the experience of being male, young and displaced in Jammu and Kashmir.

Since 1989, the Indian-administered state of Jammu and Kashmir has been embroiled in a conflict between the Indian state and a nationalist movement that seeks the independence of Kashmir. Among the casualties of this conflict, it is estimated that 140,000 to 160,000 Kashmiri Pandits, the Hindu minority of Kashmir, were displaced from their homes at the beginning of the conflict. Since 1990 these people have been forced to relocate to Jammu in the southern part of the state and eventually to different parts of India. A significant minority live in camps which have become part of the urban landscape of Jammu city and environs in the past two decades.

The Pandits are provided assistance by the Indian state as Indian citizens, though the official term for displaced persons in the regions is 'migrant'. There has been relatively little consideration of issues pertaining to youth in the community. For an older cohort of male youth, difficulties in securing the means of providing for their families may impinge on their sense of self-worth, while teenage boys suffer from the pressure of demands placed upon them by families, peers, political institutions and their location.

The burden of aspirations

The Kashmiri Pandits have historically been associated with power in the region, having been prominent landowners in the past and employed in state bureaucracies in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods of South Asian history. The Kashmiri Pandits also share a long history of migration from Kashmir to different parts of India, contributing to an image of the Pandits as a community of influential élites associated with middle-class professions in and outside Kashmir. To be a Kashmiri Pandit is to be educated, well mannered and engaged in professions such as the bureaucracy, teaching and other middle-class occupations. Work involving physical labour is seen as undesirable by Pandits.

The image of having enjoyed a certain quality of life before displacement circulates among Kashmiri Pandit youth. There is a strong sense among male youth in particular that their elders had enjoyed some measure of a full life, owning property, enjoying the benefits of uninterrupted education and access to secure professions.

Displacement, however, has upset this life-plan. This applies especially to male youth in late adolescence and early adulthood who belong to families hit severely by displacement. Many are to be found in camps, unable to finish their schooling or, having completed school, unable to attend university and professional courses. As a result the gulf between their immediate circumstances and realities and their aspirations is considerable.

Sunil, who grew up in a camp in Jammu, had been apprenticed at a printing press following the completion of his schooling. He was proud of his work and yet aware of the way it might be seen by others:

"I didn't go to college. I am uneducated. But I got into 'technical work'. I had to learn how to do this work. But the guys of my age feel ashamed to do this work… They all feel ashamed to do physical work."

While some would see Sunil as someone who has taken charge of his life, he is angry that he can never achieve those ideals that he had aspired to as a Kashmiri Pandit.

Moral conflict

The problem of aspirations takes a gendered turn. Parents may criticise their children – particularly their sons – for not providing for the family either by working or completing their studies. In turn, men, especially in their twenties who were very young children when displaced, are critical of their fathers for deciding to re-locate to a city such as Jammu which lacks opportunities. In Jammu, there is an overwhelming sense of the camp as a negative space and a far cry from the homes they have left behind. Moreover, this image of the camp as a negative place also taints its inhabitants. Many local people, including state officials, speak of Pandits living in the camps as demanding, untrustworthy and prone to occasional misbehaviour. Teenage boys and young unemployed men are often subject to the greatest criticism. Groups of boys ambling through the camp or young men sitting by a corner are perceived as examples of bad behaviour, accused of idling away their time and harassing women. However, such behaviour can be seen in any settled community in any part of the world and reports are often exaggerations. In any case, some of the teenage boys would emphasise that there is very little for them to do.

These concerns risk being internalised by displaced youth who may begin to see themselves in negative terms. Many young men often speak of the ill effects of displacement by pointing to misbehaving children. Many older men emphasised that they were raised to be mild, observant of etiquette and to avoid any kind of conflict. However, for many younger Pandit men who have grown up and have come of age in exile, a different value begins to emerge. One youth insisted that, unlike their fathers, they will be more expressive in their anger. This perhaps can be seen on the political front where Pandit activists – who emphasise that they are loyal citizens and supporters of India, unlike Kashmiris in the valley who demand independence from India – criticise the Indian state for having betrayed them.

A sense of the past plays out in everyday life in other ways. For many Pandit youth, particularly those who constitute the poorer section of the community, problems of unemployment often make it difficult for young men to contemplate marriage and become householders who can support families to achieve a certain quality of

life. Some young Pandits are able to escape by going to university and may then seek employment in relatively well-paid sectors in the economy. But this may affect peer relations and friendships, resulting in a divide between Pandit youth who are able to secure a relatively better future and those who remain left behind. This is reflective of a larger discourse among displaced Pandits; while they insist that a sense of community exists, most people are left to fend for themselves and there is little help they can expect to give to or receive from others.

Young men who have lived in the camps and have married complain that they are affected by restricted space. The accommodation in the camps for displaced Kashmiri Pandits was the basic 'One-Room Tenement', a space 9 feet by 14 feet which is allotted to one family irrespective of the size of the family. These limitations of space impose significant pressures on values of domesticity and privacy and on conjugal relations. Not only have young men spoken of the impact of such pressures on their sense of physical and emotional well-being but also older men complain that the lack of privacy serves to 'corrupt' younger members of the household, which leads to further conflict between youth and their elders.

Between 2008 and 2011 the camps for Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu were gradually closed down and their populations have been accommodated in a single new residential colony on the outskirts of the city. Unlike the the old camps with their one-room tenements, the new colony consists of three-storey apartment buildings. The new colony is regarded as an improvement and it will be interesting to see the changes it has on youth dynamics. Nevertheless, existing pressures remain. Rohan, a young man, had moved temporarily to a large southern city; for a long time he had wanted to leave the confines of Jammu and realise his ambitions and hopes for a better life. When the state government of Jammu and Kashmir announced an employment package for displaced Kashmiri Pandits in the state sector, his family insisted that he return to Jammu and apply for a position which promises job security in a time of economic difficulty. Such pressures affect the ability of Pandit youth to remake their lives.

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New political subjects: children of displaced Kurds

Yesim Yaprak Yildiz

Since 1984, the ongoing conflict between the Turkish army and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) has caused the displacement of millions of Kurdish people in eastern and southeastern Turkey. In locations where forcibly displaced families live, the active participation of children in political demonstrations since 2006 has been at very high levels. Rather than seeking to understand the motives of these children, the usual perception has been that they have been manipulated by the PKK and that they are not aware of the consequences of their acts.

Displacement has had a significant impact, however, on both first- and second-generation children. Although the second generation has not experienced displacement themselves, they have lived through the social, economic and political consequences of displacement and have witnessed the trauma experienced by their families.

Protest in Turkey.

Most of the children have not been able to continue their education and have had to work in low-paid jobs and in the informal sector to support their families. In many cases, due to language barriers and parental illiteracy, children have had to bear new responsibilities within the family. Most importantly of all, the children of displaced families have grown up with stories of displacement and violence – and research shows that this generation suffers traumatic stress and depressive symptoms as do those who actually experienced displacement.

Having grown up in these conditions, the children embraced an adult role from an early age, acquiring a political awareness of the inequalities and discrimination they face as Kurds. Witnessing the experiences of their families, living under extremely difficult conditions and experiencing discrimination and humiliation themselves, these children have sought various ways to express their feelings. While some have become involved in ordinary crime or gangs, recently political activism has become the main way to express their feelings and cope with their secondary traumatisation.

Being left 'out of place', these children have increasingly become politicised and radicalised, reclaiming the spaces denied to their families. Rather than being silenced, reduced to passivity and denied their political agency, they need to be taken seriously and listened to.

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Choosing the street during crisis

Bridget Steffen with Zephania Owino

Children often choose the streets during crises and then remain trapped there.

Recent research[1] has revealed that a significant number of children joined the streets in Rift Valley Province in Kenya after the brutal violence that followed the 2007 elections in Kenya, many of whom still remain on the streets. In 2011 37% of all interviewed children connected to the streets were IDPs as a result of the post-election violence (64% in deeply scarred Naivasha).

These IDP children identified a number of factors that led them to join the streets: separation from their family caused by displacement; death or injury of family members; withdrawal of humanitarian aid; food insecurity due to loss of livelihoods or inability to rebuild livelihoods due to rushed resettlement programmes.

Still taken from a film shot by children connected to the street in Nakuru who wanted to document their life on the streets.

The single biggest reason that children join the streets is food insecurity (59%). This hidden emergency has been caused by displacement and loss of livelihoods after the violence, but also by drought, and the increasing cost of staple foods and fuel.

While exploitation and violence towards the children is frequent, not all children perceive their street existence as wholly negative. For some it is a liberating experience to socialise, be independent or help support their family. Many children choose the streets to earn money by selling scrap metal and other recyclables, doing odd jobs, begging or offering sex, and receive food directly from street feeding programmes or by scavenging.

Children organise themselves into strong sub-cultures that build group identities and provide protection in the streets. Most join 'bases' – a structured system of gangs which control specific territories in towns and have strong internal hierarchies and codes of behaviour. Girls are often less visible or exist on the streets' peripheries: in markets, working in bars and clubs at night as sex workers or exchanging sex for food during school lunch breaks.

The public can be brutal and intolerant towards children connected with the streets, seeing them first as criminals, not children. Such stigma makes it difficult for some children to imagine going home or ever re-joining mainstream society. Their greatest fear is being picked up by the police and municipal authorities, who conduct regular violent round-ups of children, and children's consequent 'voluntary' invisibility means that many do not access health care at all. Most drop out of school, and initiatives to re-integrate them are scarce. Children change as they grow up exposed to the streets and become progressively less able to reintegrate into formal schooling, with the challenge compounded where children are addicted to sniffing glue. Ironically, while they have shed the identity of a child, they are living in a state of extended limbo unable to 'grow up', to achieve the indicators of adulthood in Kenya – getting married, joining the workforce, and building a family and home.

Among our recommendations are the need to:

■ ensure proper planning of humanitarian responses recognising children's specific needs (prevention of separation, rapid reunification, etc)

■ conduct responsible withdrawal of aid

■ make existing services accessible, including: health; education and training; children's department services and birth/ID registration; police child protection units

■ develop programmes that tackle the root causes not the symptoms of the issue, including providing flexible, alternative education and training, and targeted livelihoods support to vulnerable families

■ provide protective spaces for children connected to the streets through drop-in centres and outreach programmes combined with play and emotional support

■ engage street 'base' structures and children directly

■ hold government departments legally accountable to child protection legislation and obligations.

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1. Conducted across five towns in Rift Valley Province in 2011, supported by UNICEF and carried out by Save the Children under the auspices of the National Protection Working Group on IDPs, during which 2,404 children connected to the streets were profiled.

Adolescent sexual and reproductive health in humanitarian settings

Brad Kerner, Seema Manohar, Cécile Mazzacurati and Mihoko Tanabe

Particular vulnerabilities for adolescents during times of crisis and emergency are exacerbated by lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services. Greater attention to adolescents' needs – and the use of innovative approaches to engage them – can help mitigate often life-threatening impacts.

Imagine a 12-year-old girl recently settled in a refugee camp with her family. She is the eldest daughter and has five siblings. She tries to help her mother every day with cooking, collecting water, taking care of her younger brothers and sisters. She has none of her friends there and feels like she has no one to play with or talk to. Sometimes, she feels like she wants to be alone, where no one is asking her to do anything. At first, she thought she could go to the field where the latrines are located. But there are many men around, soldiers too, and they say things to her, whistling, making gestures she knows are bad. She liked going to school and knows there is a school in the camp where she sees others her age going every day. However, she does not know how she can attend. She wants to have a friend or a teacher or an older sister to talk to and make her feel less vulnerable.

In the transition from childhood to adulthood, adolescents normally benefit from the influence of adult role models, social norms and structures, and community groups (peer, religious or cultural). When people are displaced, however, family and social structures are disrupted. Adolescents may be separated from their families or communities, while formal and informal educational programmes are discontinued, and community and social networks break down. Adolescents may be fearful, stressed, bored or idle. They may find themselves in risky situations that they are not prepared for dealing with and they may suddenly have to take on adult roles without preparation, positive adult role models or support networks.

Adolescents who live through crises may not be able to visualise a positive outlook for themselves, and may develop fatalistic views about the future. The loss of livelihood, security and protection provided by the family and community places adolescents at risk of poverty, violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse. In particular:

- **Displaced very young adolescents (10-14 years), especially girls,** are at risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. Because of their limited life experience, they may not recognise the sexual nature of abusive or exploitative actions in strange settings.

- **Pregnant adolescent girls**, particularly those under 16, are at increased risk of obstructed labour, a life-threatening obstetric emergency that can develop when the immature pelvis is too small to allow the passage of a baby through the birth canal. Delay in treatment can lead to obstetric fistula or uterine rupture, haemorrhage and death of the mother and child.

- **Adolescents separated from their families and adolescent heads of household** lack the livelihood security and protection afforded by the family structure, and are therefore more at risk from poverty and sexual exploitation and abuse. Separated adolescents and adolescent heads of household may be compelled to drop out of school, marry or sell sex in order to meet their needs for food, shelter – or protection.

- **Adolescent girls selling sex** are at risk of unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, STIs and HIV, and sexual exploitation and abuse.

- **Survivors of sexual and gender-based violence** are at risk of unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, STIs including HIV, as well as mental health and psychosocial problems and social stigmatisation. In post-earthquake Haiti, a significant proportion of survivors of sexual violence treated by the NGOs GHESKIO and Médecins du Monde were adolescent and prepubescent girls.

- **Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups**, both boys and girls, are often sexually active at a much earlier age and face increased risk of sexual violence and abuse, mental health and psychosocial problems, unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion, STIs and HIV infection.

Anna [not real name] was abducted, aged 19, by LRA fighters and given as a 'wife' to one of the commanders. She escaped two years later.

The disruption to families, education and health services during displacement may leave adolescents without access to sexual and reproductive health information and services during a period when they are at risk. Emergency obstetric care services, for example, are often compromised in crisis settings generally, increasing the risk of morbidity and mortality among adolescent mothers and their babies.

Ensuring access to family planning services can be a life-saving intervention in unstable, crisis environments. It can also promote a young woman's rights to health, education and independence. Likewise, training of youth peer educators to, raise HIV awareness, exhibit correct and consistent use of condoms and make condoms available helps protect adolescents from the transmission of STIs, including HIV, that are known to be rampant in this highly vulnerable age group. Similarly, adolescents will only have access to the life-saving provision of post-exposure prophylaxis – provided as part of clinical management of sexual assault survivors – if they are made aware of sexual violence as a violation and of their right to counselling and treatment.

Adolescent Toolkit

Recognising the unique needs of adolescents facing such situations, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Save the Children developed a tool to help humanitarian programme managers and healthcare providers meet the sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescents. The Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Toolkit for Humanitarian Settings[1] was conceived as a practical companion to the Inter-Agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings[2]. As well as including guidance on mapping out key interventions to be undertaken by various sectors or functions in different phases, the ASRH Toolkit includes:

- MISP tools – specific ways to include interventions focused on adolescents as part of the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Reproductive Health.

- Participation tools – guidance on directly engaging adolescents in humanitarian interventions, and on involving parents and communities on adolescent sexual and reproductive health issues.

- Assessment tools – questions focused on adolescent sexual and reproductive health, either for initial rapid assessments, for broader situational analysis or for comprehensive surveys.

- Facility-based tools – guidance for health workers in humanitarian settings in working with adolescents.

> Some civil society organisations have embarked on truly innovative work from which we as a community can learn.[3] For example:
>
> Straight Talk Foundation is a Ugandan NGO providing newspapers, radio shows and youth centres for teenagers, as well as radio shows for parents and newspapers for teachers, all focusing on HIV, sexuality and adolescence. www.straighttalkfoundation.org
>
> The Adolescent Reproductive Health Network on the Thai/Burma border runs a youth centre in Mae Sot, where young people gather for social activities and where they can also access reproductive health and family planning information, contraception and counselling services. www.arhburma.net

- Community-based distribution and peer education tools – concrete tips and actions to support community-based outreach.

Since early 2010, the ASRH Toolkit has been used to help strengthen adolescent-focused services and programmes in several humanitarian contexts, such as in post-earthquake Haiti, with refugees from Libya in 2011 and in the Dollo-Ado camps in Ethiopia.

But efforts to truly reach and engage adolescents in emergencies with comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services are still in their early days. While there are a few organisations that have committed to integrating a focus on adolescents into their sexual and reproductive health programming, in general intentional targeting of this age group is often an afterthought and the facilitation of meaningful adolescent participation has been challenging, despite empirical evidence of their very specific and damaging risks and vulnerabilities.

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For more information or to share your best practice, email *ASRHToolkit@savechildren.org*

1. Developed under the guidance of the International Rescue Committee, John Snow, Inc., Pathfinder, the RAISE Initiative at Columbia University, Save the Children, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and Women's Refugee Commission http://unfpa.org/public/home/publications/pid/4169

2. Inter-Agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings (see cover opposite) online at http://iawg.net/resources/field_manual.html

3. In 2011 UNFPA and Save the Children also launched a one-hour interactive e-learning course on adolescent sexual and reproductive health in humanitarian settings: www.iawg.net/resources/arhtoolkit.html

Inter-agency Field Manual on **Reproductive Health** in Humanitarian Settings

2010 Revision for Field Review

Young Costa Ricans and refugees working together for integration

Valentina Duque Echeverri

When given the opportunity, young people can work effectively together to promote local integration.

For the International Year of Youth (2010-2011) UNHCR in Costa Rica, together with other UN organisations, civil society and government bodies, set up a project called 'Links without borders: dialogue for the integration of young migrants, refugees and Costa Ricans'. 'Links without borders' aimed to identify and raise awareness of the challenges posed by integration, and to support initiatives led by young people to meet these challenges. More than 400 young people of 13 different nationalities took part in focus groups and a three-day national conference.

Unfortunately in Costa Rica young people – especially refugees and migrants – are associated with attitudes and behaviour reflecting rebellion, drug addiction and criminality. Through the 'Links without borders' project it became clear that young refugees are, first and foremost, young people with dreams and desires like anyone else of their age, who need friendships, a sense of belonging, opportunities for self-fulfilment, and fun. As young people, they are eager to discover the world and be independent, to be taken seriously as people who are not only the future of society but part of its present. The project participants who make up the 'Network of Young People Without Borders' have identified the following as major challenges to integration:

- discrimination and suspicion of nationalities labelled as 'other' (compounding the common perception of youth as problematic)

- unequal access to education, particularly higher and technical education, and a limited range of initiatives and programmes that encourage intercultural exchange within the educational environment

- difficulty in securing documentation which confirms their migration status and protects their rights; documentation is expensive and the systems for accessing it are slow and ineffective.

- limited access to health-care services, including mental, sexual and reproductive health services; and xenophobic attitudes among health-system officials

- difficulty in securing work; decent jobs are hard to come by for young people, and even more so for young refugees because of their difficulty in proving their qualifications – as well as the xenophobia of employers.

- difficulty in getting credit from banks – for example, to set up businesses – and unequal access to social programmes and credit or subsidy schemes for vulnerable individuals.

Only one year after it was founded, the Network of Young People Without Borders had undertaken a variety of sensitisation and integration activities such as:

- participation at university events and at festivals, with information stands, videos and workshops

- spreading messages about integration through radio and social media

- street theatre and performances for World Refugee Day

- participation in national happenings for young people, such as the first National Youth Conference

- awareness-raising for more than 200 officials dealing with migration

- active participation in national fora and networks, including being the first youth group in the National Network of Civil Organisations of Migration.

One young refugee woman said: "For a long time I was lost here. … [now] I have found friends, companions, support, solidarity, a huge range of people who are now part of my life…" Such can be the outcomes for young people who find a way to be heard, to be part of the solution, and who are able to channel their energies constructively.

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Members of the Network of Young People without Borders – La Red de Jovenes sin Fronteras – spread their message of tolerance in San José, Costa Rica, during World Refugee Day 2011.

Helping young refugees avoid exploitative living arrangements

Martin Anderson and Claire Beston

In an urban environment, the relationship between an unaccompanied young refugee and his or her host family is critical, often making the difference between a life of protection and one of exploitation.

Upon arrival in a country of first asylum, unaccompanied refugee youth, like most refugees, must immediately find a safe place to stay. For young refugees, the urgency to find shelter in an urban environment often means locating someone willing to host them. Many youth find hosts informally, sometimes just by walking the streets and stopping people to ask for assistance.

In Nairobi the most common arrangement for unaccompanied young refugees involves them working for a host family in exchange for shelter. The dependency of these young people on their hosts means they are likely to work long hours and to be unable to negotiate salaries and rest time. In Kenya, labour – including child labour – is regulated by the Employment Act of 2007. However, since the majority of work done by refugees is informal, it is largely unregulated and thus beyond the effective reach of any legal protection.

The nature of young refugees' work behind closed doors and outside any regulatory regime, their lack of legal protection in the country, and the lack of adult relatives to protect them or seek retribution for abuse makes unaccompanied young domestic workers highly vulnerable to labour exploitation, and even physical or sexual violence. During focus group discussions conducted by RefugePoint, 30% of youth reported that they had not registered with UNHCR, many because their 'employers' would not let them off work to do so.

The work most frequently takes the form of domestic labour in private homes and is done predominantly by young women and girls. In fact, refugee boys complain that it is difficult for them to find shelter because there are so few 'employment' opportunities for them, whereas refugee girls "can always find work as house girls".

According to our research, 80% of house girls and boys receive no money from their 'employers'. They work in return for shelter, typically sleeping on the floor of the kitchen and eating separately from the rest of the family, often eating only the family's leftovers. Some, like Kadir,[1] a 16-year-old boy from Ethiopia, work all day every day of the week in return for food only. "I wash the clothes, fetch water, cook and clean the bathroom. I work from morning till evening. They pay me only with food. If I don't work, I don't eat." At night he has to "look for somewhere to sleep" and he usually sleeps on the street.

Some young refugees do other work in return for shelter. Some male youth, and a smaller number of female youth, work in shops, restaurants, tailors, salons and barbershops; they clean, fetch water, run errands and do the dishes. Typically, the work is in exchange for permission to sleep in the place of business itself.

Many young refugee workers have experienced some form of physical violence from their 'employer'. One 16-year-old Somali girl was burned on the side of her face with a spoon that had been heated for that purpose. Young refugees working as house girls are frequently subjected to sexual harassment, assault, rape and attempted rape by the men and boys of the family they work for and live with. Zainab, a 15-year-old Somali, explains that "the boys of the family used to scare me when the mother was out of the house; they tried to rape me many times."

Often, house girls who have been raped by their 'employers' are then thrown out when found to be pregnant. One girl who became pregnant as a result of rape was then accused by her host of being a prostitute and evicted from her home. The church that had been supporting the girl also withdrew its support, on the basis that the girl was immoral for having had a child out of wedlock.

Opportunities for interaction – and support

Though agencies working in Nairobi agree that many host situations are far from suitable, their ability to take action is constrained by a severe lack of resources to assist refugees in urban areas; they are sometimes forced to accept, just as many young refugees do, that a negative host situation, even one involving exploitative labour, is better than no host at all.

For example, Omar, a 16-year-old unaccompanied Somali boy, had identified a host before he went to register with UNHCR in early 2010. Omar was taken in by a family with a tailoring shop who had found him begging outside the mosque. He works all day in the family's shop, every day of the week. In exchange he is allowed to sleep in the shop and is given the family's leftover food to eat. At night he stays in the shop while the family returns to their home. According to Omar, a number of agencies in Nairobi are aware of his living situation. However, none of the agencies has been able to offer him alternative shelter, leaving him to conclude that they believe he is better off with the family than without.

Young refugees like Omar are at their most vulnerable immediately after their arrival in an urban area, especially if they are alone. Finding shelter is so critical that many feel compelled to quickly accept whatever home they can find. Effective coordination is needed between UNHCR's various programme teams and agencies working in Nairobi's refugee communities in order to identify vulnerable young refugees as quickly as possible and fast-track them for appropriate solutions. Because many of the most vulnerable young refugees are not free or able to travel to UNHCR to register

themselves, it is critical that agencies working in the communities where refugees are living proactively seek to identify those at risk and refer them to UNHCR.

UNHCR and partner agencies should take advantage of the several opportunities they have to monitor a young refugee's situation, starting at the point of registration and typically proceeding through Refugee Status Determination interviews and several subsequent protection interventions. It is especially important that unaccompanied minors are identified as early as possible in the process so that Best Interests Determinations[2] can be conducted to identify the most appropriate interventions for them and help them access the services they need to survive. These early

interactions with newly arrived refugees should be seen as opportunities to identify individuals with particular vulnerabilities before those vulnerabilities are allowed to become chronic, permanently undermining refugees' chances for stabilising their lives.

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Mei Lian Tjia, Gabriel Gill-Austern, and Manal Stulgaitis also contributed to a longer report covering these and other challenges faced by young refugees in Nairobi. For a copy of the report, please contact Martin Anderson.

1. All names have been changed.
2. www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48480c342.html

Reintegration of young mothers

Miranda Worthen, Susan McKay, Angela Veale and Mike Wessells

Young mothers seeking reintegration after periods of time spent living with fighting forces and armed groups face exclusion and stigma rather than the support they and their children badly need.

In Liberia, Sierra Leone and northern Uganda, young women's lives were greatly disrupted by civil war. Part of this disruption was a fracturing in traditionally supportive relationships with family members, elders and peers. This article describes the findings of a three-year community-based participatory action research (PAR) study undertaken in 2006-09 with young women who are mothers in these three countries.[1] Two-thirds of the 658 participants were formerly associated with fighting forces or armed groups, while a third were identified by community members as highly vulnerable for a variety of reasons including being orphaned or disabled. The study also included over 1,200 children of these young mothers.

The purpose of the study – which took place in 20 communities ranging from remote villages to urban centres – was to learn what 'reintegration' meant to these young women. Girls and young women who were formerly associated with fighting forces or armed groups and who had become pregnant or had children during armed conflict have been excluded from the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes developed by the international community. This exclusion is for numerous reasons, including gender discrimination and a perception that girls and young women are not a threat to the durability of peace accords and can thus be ignored.

When formerly recruited young women and girls settle in communities after war, they experience significant psychosocial distress and social isolation, which create a barrier to their reintegration. Many, in particular those who became pregnant or had children during the conflict, feel invisible and disempowered. As pregnancies are often a result of rape or forced marriage with male combatants, these young mothers and their children face additional stigma.

Although programmes are beginning to be developed to work with young mothers, most reintegration or

skills training programmes – developed from adult-centric perspectives – have been unable to reach them and their children. The motivation for the PAR study was to learn from young mothers themselves what reintegration meant to them and how they could successfully achieve it for themselves and their children.

Developing relationships

After several months of community consultation and recruitment, the participating young mothers began meeting regularly in groups and researching the common challenges that they faced in their communities. They used a variety of methods to do this, including interviewing each other and their children about what their lives were like and how they felt different from other young mothers and children; talking with community leaders about how they observed the young mothers getting on and how life was different before the conflict; and role-playing about their experiences. The young mothers then discussed what they had discovered, set objectives for how they wanted their lives to change, and brainstormed ways and actions to achieve these improvements.

In most communities, the first actions were targeted at reducing stigma and marginalisation, and typically took the form of dramas or songs that the young mothers developed to teach their families and communities about their experiences, including their time with armed groups and what it was like to return. Through performing these dramas and songs, participants often won the support of formerly unsupportive community members and families. Subsequent actions were primarily livelihood support and education activities, such as learning how to care better for their children or about good hygiene and sanitation.

The backbone of the PAR project was the multiple relationships that participants developed with each other, with community members, with their families, and

with agency and project staff. Nearly all the participants had lost family during the conflicts. While most young mothers had returned to their original communities, 35% of Liberians, 44% of Sierra Leoneans and 21% of Ugandans reported not being from the community they were currently living in. Only a third were living with a parent or guardian, while 41% were living with boyfriends or husbands; 5% were living alone with their children and the remaining participants lived with extended family members or friends. The relationships between the young mothers and their parents were often fraught and many participants reported feeling that their parents did not care for them well or that their parents mistreated their children. Relationships with boyfriends and husbands were also a challenge with more than half of participants reporting that their boyfriends or husbands were unsupportive of their children. In some instances, male partners were unable to provide economically for their children or were abusing alcohol and unable to act responsibly. In other instances, male partners were not the fathers of the young mothers' children and claimed no responsibility for them.

"Now people are caring for us"

When the project began, many participants reported that they sat alone all day and had no friends and only limited livelihood options, such as collecting firewood or doing farmwork on other people's land. Marginalised and lonely, they were made to feel ashamed. Yet even the simple act of bringing the participants together in groups and encouraging them to share their stories with each other brought much hope as participants began to realise they were not alone in their suffering. "I thought that I was the only one that was hated."
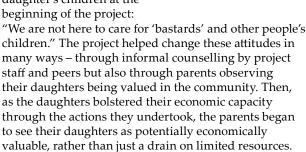
For some participants, the project created a shift in their awareness of themselves as worthy of love and support. One young woman put it this way: "We have never seen a project which cares for girl mothers... now we know that people are caring for us." The relationships between the participants grew over the three years of the project. "Our meetings have created a sense of oneness among each other and now we share our burdens. We are each other's sisters." As participants grew closer, they would often meet outside of regular meeting times. Reflecting on how the project developed, one young mother recalled, "Sometimes the … group would cook together, eat together, and it helped us be one, and even helped us solve problems."

Community members were selected to form Community Advisory Committees (CAC) to support and advise the participants. CAC members were role models and mentors to the participants, and also rallied support from other community members. For example, in one community in Liberia, CAC members persuaded village authorities to donate land to participants to cultivate, found day-care centres and schools that were willing to give scholarships to the children of participants, and organised a baking workshop when participants decided to open a bakery.

Relationships with family members also improved during the course of the project. By the end of the project, more than 86% of the participants reported that they and their children felt more liked or loved by their families.

In some cases this was because of informal family counselling; for others, the improved relationships with their families went hand-in-hand with their improved ability to contribute to the family. "Since I joined the group, my dish ration has improved. Before the food we received was small. Now I can contribute to household food, so it is different." Nearly three-quarters of participants reported that since the project began they had become able to contribute to their families by buying basic necessities.

One parent had described her difficulty in supporting her daughter and her daughter's children at the beginning of the project: "We are not here to care for 'bastards' and other people's children." The project helped change these attitudes in many ways – through informal counselling by project staff and peers but also through parents observing their daughters being valued in the community. Then, as the daughters bolstered their economic capacity through the actions they undertook, the parents began to see their daughters as potentially economically valuable, rather than just a drain on limited resources.

Whereas in many cases family relationships had previously been sources of pain for participants, as the participants gained a sense of self-worth through their activities, economic livelihood development, and new relationships with peers and community members, family relationships greatly improved. The changes that the participants were able to achieve in their lives and the lives of their children are likely to be supported by the new, more caring relationships that surround them in their communities.

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Susan McKay & Jeminie Shell

Cultural reflections of Afghan youth living in Canada

Al-Rahim Moosa

Of central importance to Afghan culture is respect for one's elders – for parents, grandparents and the eldest siblings in the family unit. Such respect is expressed physically in various ways, from holding indirect or lowered eye contact with an elder when speaking to them to offering an elder a place to sit. Interviews with Afghan refugee youth who moved to Vancouver, Canada, in their adolescent years suggest that all those interviewed were pleased to have maintained strong inter-generational relations but that many have also welcomed the influence of Western societal norms. One 23-year-old young man said that being able to hold eye contact with his elders allows him to assess their reactions to his words, an important aspect of communication; he also felt that being considered on a more equal footing with his eldest sibling allows for friendlier social relations between them.

All interviewees expressed regret that they had become "disconnected" from their parents because their education and work reduced the time spent with them, though some also said that this was due to their parents' lack of familiarity with Western society and consequent inability to provide educational or career guidance.

More discretion is being given to young people to choose their spouses – whether because traditional Afghan perceptions of marriage are actually changing or because they are merely adapting pragmatically to different circumstances, that is, the reduced probability of finding a suitable spouse of their own ethnic group in a foreign country. Certain other cultural standards concerning relationships remain steadfast, however; all youth reported that the notion of casual dating has yet to be considered acceptable.

Many of those interviewed mentioned a fundamental change in attitudes towards gender differences, resulting in greater female participation in religious and family affairs within the Afghan community. As one young woman in her mid-20s stated, "the other thing that changed by resettlement in Canada is the encouragement, respect [and] appreciation of [the] female by the male." However, some individual households still maintain gender-based role differentiation; the family of one woman in her mid-20s still holds fast to the tradition that only women perform household duties, which she has found troublesome to cope with given her full-time university schedule. Though she accepts that this is Afghan tradition, on a pragmatic level she hopes that this will change.

Many Afghan refugees were members of the Shi'a Imami Nizari Ismaili faith, generally referred to as Ismailis. Involvement in volunteer programmes run by local Ismaili institutions helps provide a sense of belonging and a means to facilitate interaction with local Ismaili youth from other backgrounds, while Ismaili social events provide Afghan youth with the opportunity to express their heritage in various ways, including song, dance and food. Most youth interviewed said that although Afghanistan will always be considered 'home', they have found a second home in Vancouver.

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Displaced girls' participation in local youth life

Niklas Stoerup Agerup

Daily life in the nine spontaneous IDP sites in and around the town of Dungu in Haut Uélé District in the Democratic Republic of Congo is characterised by peaceful co-existence and a mutual willingness to share the sometimes scarce resources. But although the IDPs and the host communities have related cultural practices and a shared language, the host community seems unwilling to allow the IDPs to integrate.

IDP girls explain that they naturally have contact with host-community contemporaries at school, in the market, at dances or football matches, when drawing water, and through manual labour performed for families in the host community. Nonetheless, a majority describe being dismissed because of their IDP status, which is aggravated by prejudices of the more urban host community against the mainly rural displaced population. Despite having lived in Dungu town for two to three years, none of the girls has friends in the host community. "I resent being a displaced girl because I am discriminated against by other girls, even though they are like me and of the same age as me." (16-year-old girl)

IDP girls consider the classroom as a neutral space where they are judged against the same standard as the host community students. But the need for IDP girls to engage in manual labour to pay school fees stigmatises them even in the school environment and most of them have at some time had to suspend their schooling for long periods because of displacement and subsequent impoverishment. Some of the IDP girls wish to make friends in the host community; others are discouraged by their experiences and prefer to stay amongst their friends in the IDP community. In addition, the IDP girls' parents often prohibit them from seeing host community boys and girls, fearing that the girls will learn bad manners, and even prostitution, from the 'city' youth.

Greater dialogue is needed from the outset between displaced and host community leaders to avoid stigmatisation and prejudice; this could be backed up by joint activities such as mixed IDP-host community sports teams, theatrical productions and concerts.

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Early experiences of young Sudanese resettled to Finland

Saija Niemi

It has been a challenge for many young Sudanese to navigate Finnish education, traditions and habits, and for their families to make the journey with them.

Young Sudanese, both Christians and Muslims, arrived in Finland under the government's quota system between 2001 and 2004, some with their family or other relatives and some on their own.

Though many young Sudanese had not in fact lived in Sudan, in the early stages of resettlement many considered themselves Sudanese and had a strong sense of Sudanese identity. Some young people had lived in Khartoum but many had lived outside Sudan – for example, in Egypt – for much of their life. Only a few had personal experience of living in South Sudan and being involved in the civil war but at least one had been a child slave in Sudan. Even for those southern Sudanese youth who had not experienced the civil war personally, the conflict was part of their life through the experiences of their parents, relatives and friends. Those who had lived in an IDP camp in Khartoum had seen or experienced poverty, malnutrition or mistreatment from officials.

In addition, traumatised and alienated adults had created a living environment where alcohol and mental problems were present in some young people's lives directly or indirectly. The conflict in Sudan, racism and difficult living circumstances in different countries had left scars and distrust in young people's minds. For those who had lived in Sudan, the positive images of Sudan included friends, relatives and their home environment.

Many Sudanese adults and some young people over 15 years of age who were being resettled had participated in a cultural orientation course provided by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) before coming to Finland. The course was not designed particularly for young Sudanese but did give the youth, parents and relatives of young people a chance to discuss issues related to young people in Finland. These issues included, for example, dating the opposite sex, young people living on their own and Finnish-Sudanese cultural differences in adult-child relationships.

Topics that amazed and worried young Sudanese before travelling to Finland were, among others, the cold weather, snow, and the sun not setting and not rising during some periods of the year. They had also wondered how they would manage at school when they could not speak any Finnish, and whether the Finns, who are known as quiet people, would evict them from their homes as, in their own words, Sudanese were so loud. And one girl explained that after arriving in a small country town surrounded by forest, she had not slept at all for the first two nights as she was afraid bears would break into the house.

At school in Finland

Even though many parents knew very little about Finland when they were offered resettlement, they had accepted the placement for the sake of a better future for their children. Many parents considered it a duty for Sudanese youth to contribute to Finnish society through achieving a good education and a job in Finland. Adults held doctors, lawyers and engineers in very high respect but their ambitions for their children to become equally highly educated proved in many cases unrealistic. Finland has one of the highest levels of education in the world and learning starts at a very early age. Many Sudanese children in Finland were doing well at kindergarten and primary school and some youth who had had a low level of education when they arrived in Finland were able to do well in a Finnish school. However, for many secondary school-age young persons who had not had schooling before or had studied for a few years only, higher education was proving inaccessible. And actually obtaining a place in school was problematic for those young people who had passed the age of compulsory education in Finland (the year a person becomes 17 years old) and yet who had studied for only a short period of time or had not studied at all.

Many Sudanese children and youth started school in Finland in preparatory classes which they attended for from half a year to a year, concentrating on Finnish language and basic school skills. Whenever possible, they were integrated into classes with Finnish children in subjects like physical education and art. Later, the aim was to integrate the immigrant child into a regular class in all subjects. There are also special classes held in some schools for children who cannot be integrated to preparatory or regular classes due to their lack of reading and writing skills.

In addition, lack of awareness about how to study and the importance of homework and hard work caused problems at school. And for many, learning things like dimensions, volumes and time were difficult in Finnish when they had not been taught them in their own language first. For Finnish children, doing a jigsaw puzzle is familiar from an early age, whereas doing a jigsaw puzzle can be impossible for a young person who has never done one in his/her childhood. There was evidence that some Sudanese youth suffered from diminishing self-esteem when they noticed that younger Finnish children were way ahead in skills and knowledge. Early on this then diminished their interest in education, caused withdrawal and created concentration problems in class for some of them.

Finnish kindergartens and schools were not familiar with working with young Sudanese, although there

was some experience of working with illiterate or poorly educated children from elsewhere. Most teachers, community workers and officials had no or very little knowledge of Sudan, the Sudanese way of life and about the experiences Sudanese refugees had due to fleeing Sudan.

Culture and fashion
Finnish young people are very aware of how they look. To be accepted, some Sudanese youth had started to follow fashion with their hip-hop trousers and shirts showing their midriff. This had not pleased families who liked their children to wear more traditional clothes.

The language of Finnish young people caused problems at school. Until Sudanese young people understood that swearing and name-calling were a common way of communicating among young Finns, there had been hurt feelings and conflicts with them. Sudanese youth also wondered why some Finns do not greet them out in the street, a custom they were used to in their own communities. Those Sudanese who had become friends with Finns spent their free time together, for example in church activities. Sudanese youth often described their Finnish friends as being nicer than their friends in previous displacement countries but very quiet.

Sometimes adults' traumatic experiences of conflict and displacement and their own difficulties in settling into Finnish society were reflected on young people who often understood the Finnish language and the rules of Finnish society faster than adults. Just like Finnish young people, some Sudanese youth may also have tricked parents over where they were going in the evenings; in the beginning parents did not know that libraries were not open at night so the library was a good excuse when a teenager wanted to spend the night at a party. Sudanese girls followed the traditional Sudanese rules of behaviour more than boys, and families restricted girls' movement more than that of boys. Generational and cultural differences presented themselves in some cases when a young person became 18 and wanted to move out of the family home even when the family was resisting.

Future prospects
It can be very difficult for immigrants to find employment in Finland. For young adults without practical skills, schooling or Finnish language skills, it was very rare to find any type of employment except for short-term internships. After compulsory education or at the stage where young adults had passed the age of compulsory education, in the first few years in Finland some Sudanese young people applied for vocational training. Some had passed the tests and received a training placement. Unfortunately not all young people were able to achieve placements, and thus in the first years there was a fairly high risk of social exclusion.

A few young persons wanted to become doctors, teachers and engineers just like their parents wished them to. There were some who recognised that their skills would not be enough to pursue an academic career and preferred to have a profession that did not require a lot of studying – but young people

were often surprised to learn that you needed some level of schooling or a certificate for any job at all. Before coming to Finland, some boys had thought they could do the same sort of job without schooling as in Egypt, for example changing car tyres.

Parents and families of young Sudanese were hoping that the younger generation would learn Finnish and eventually acquire Finnish nationality. Even after South Sudan became independent, many southern Sudanese parents found the idea of permanent return to South Sudan difficult, as there were no guarantees there of good schooling and health care for their family. However, families did hope that their young people would return to Sudan or South Sudan for visits so they would be able to learn about their roots, speak their native language and meet relatives. Some young people expressed an interest in returning to Egypt and Sudan even if just for a visit.

Although the future of young people was considered better in Finland and families wished their children to build their lives in Finland, families still hoped their children would take a Sudanese rather than a Finnish partner. Sudanese adults considered it important to pass on Sudanese traditions to the younger generation. As well as hoping that their young people would take care of them in their old age, parents also expected young Sudanese to support relatives in Sudan.

Even if adaptation to Finland had at times been difficult for Sudanese youth, the Finnish teachers and authorities often described young Sudanese as bringing a joy of life, a sense of humour and richness to their work and to Finnish society. The first few months and years in Finland were challenging for young Sudanese but also gave them an opportunity to change their future.

Recommendations
An element of the pre-resettlement cultural orientation course could be tailored to deal with specific issues affecting young people and children under 15 years of age, either by IOM or by the receiving country, and with the support of adult refugees.

In order to smooth the resettlement process of young refugees and to promote a better acceptance of refugees by local people, there should be carefully designed lectures or workshops for employees of all receiving municipalities/cities about forced migration, and specifically about the way of life and culture of the particular refugee group. This is important especially when refugees come from a previously unknown place and culture. When the resettlement community is small, the local people should be informed about, for example, cultural aspects and forced migration experiences of the refugee group coming to live there before their arrival.

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Young people and relations of power

Trupti Magecha, Shamser Sinha and Alex Sutton

Young forced migrants in London are challenging – and seeking to renegotiate – existing power relations.

For young people who come to the UK seeking asylum, their movement and access to security and opportunity are determined by the state, its legislation and institutional practice. Their attempts to carry on with life and to build a future are in defiance of an immigration framework designed to be punitive in order to discourage migration and placate sections of public opinion. For unaccompanied asylum seekers in particular there is a shortage of political bodies to represent them, leaving them to organise and engage with power structures themselves. The Brighter Futures youth group is a self-advocacy group of unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees united by a commitment to improve the quality of life for their peers by engaging with policymakers and challenging – and changing – policies directly affecting their lives.

Brighter Futures regularly invites collaborations with creative arts specialists. The opportunity for self-expression enables young people to communicate beyond their daily realities and reveal their experiences, ideas, fears or dreams. Putting thoughts and reflections in print, as with a recent creative writing project with English Pen, ensures that a narrative of asylum based on lived experience has a reach beyond the project, informing policy, raising awareness and broadening society's understanding of the 'other'. This is particularly important when policy and services are shaped by those who do not experience the consequences at the point of implementation. Within a safe group environment members are encouraged to debate fiercely. They listen to each other and try to suggest practical solutions to their problems, to think about how they can create small changes that may have profound effects, and how they can engage with policymakers and service providers whom they often find themselves powerless to challenge.

Understanding that past trauma continues to afflict individuals is critical. While undertaking participatory research, Brighter Futures visited other refugee youth groups to gather information on their experiences of social services. The use of the term 'interview', however, meant that some of the other young people were unwilling to take part, fearing a recreation of the Home Office interview – a distressing part of the asylum process where young people's stories of asylum are picked apart. Similarly, processes which unnecessarily ask young people to revisit past traumas and which place them in the limelight for no other reason than to gather sympathy for a political outcome determined by others can remove their political agency.

> **THERE IS A PLACE**
> **(excerpt by a member of Brighter Futures youth group)**
>
> *There is a place where you can start life*
> *where your first best friend*
> *makes you laugh for the*
> *first time…*
>
> *There is a bench where you*
> *make your first dream*
> *about your future.*

In building bridges with officials and others, power dynamics should be levelled and based on people's common humanity rather than being derived from the job title of the state actor or being based upon the immigration status of the young person. This can only happen through an approach which begins with the lived experience – giving legitimacy to participants' experiences of displacement. By creating opportunities that give expression and validity to

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April 2012, Sabine Larribeau receives a Brighter Futures Award in recognition of 'advocating for a young refugee's rights' while working with Just for Kids Law. The Brighter Futures youth group launched the Award in order to raise standards in social work practice. Social workers and key workers were nominated, shortlisted and presented with the awards by young refugees and asylum seekers. www.brighterfutureslondon.co.uk/BFA_AboutUs.html

their perspectives, young people are able to carve out a space from which to challenge the norms of their daily reality. They can reclaim their power as young people: full of anger at injustice, pride in their heritage and full of hope for their uncertain futures.

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Shamser Sinha, Lecturer in Sociology at University Campus Suffolk *S.Sinha@ucs.ac.uk* co-authored (with Les Back, Professor of Sociology at Goldsmiths College) the report *A door to the future? the consequences for young migrants of immigration and welfare policy* online at *http://tinyurl.com/eumargins-uk-national-policy* as part of an EU research study titled 'EU Margins: On the Margins of the European Community'.

Assisting unaccompanied youth to integrate

Nathalie Lummert

With the right assistance and support, unaccompanied refugee youth can adapt and thrive in a new country while maintaining their cultural identity.

For over 30 years, the United States has accepted unaccompanied children and youth referred by UNHCR for resettlement. However, unaccompanied refugee children can wait years in camps or urban settings before they are identified for resettlement, an average of three years in the case of children resettled to the US. With an average age of 15 at the time of arrival, refugee youth often struggle to integrate into their new cultural context while maintaining their cultural identity. Assisting their integration requires a comprehensive, often long-term, approach that involves families, communities and programme support services.

A sense of community

Since most of the unaccompanied youth arrive in the resettlement country during their adolescence, they are typically at a stage in their development where peer friendships and support are particularly significant. After experiencing the loss of their community of origin, opportunities to connect with people of their own culture are important. One way in which this connection can be achieved is through a carefully coordinated and screened mentor relationship with a supportive adult in their new community. A positive connection with at least one adult can be a key indicator of successful transition to adulthood. 'Cultural specialists' – people who immigrated years before and have successfully integrated – can also serve as bridges to the new culture while affirming the culture of origin. In addition, small-scale programmes with low staff-to-client ratios allow the young people to form strong professional and therapeutic relationships with adults.

Young people interact in their new communities and form new peer and adult relationships through assisted connections with their ethnic community of origin living in the US, such as through religious connections and cultural celebrations. At the same time, resettled youth become active participants in the new dominant culture and broader community through interactions at school, extracurricular activities and activities such as volunteering. Staff help schools prepare to receive youth coming from other countries whose education has been disrupted by conducting cultural awareness orientation for teachers and administrators in order to facilitate cross-cultural understanding and a more welcoming school environment. Orienting youth to what is often a different teaching style from the one used in their country of origin, where the educational system and educator relationships may have been more formal, can also help youth feel welcome. Through increased involvement in their communities through school activities in particular, refugee youth then become confident enough to share and teach others about their culture of origin.

A sense of family

The long-term foster family model (as opposed to temporary care arrangements) provides stability and promotes a sense of belonging, safety and permanency. Targeted outreach to existing ethnic communities in the US, to former international aid workers or to bi-cultural families for foster-parenting of refugee youth is crucial. Foster families are the first responders to assist with the healing process for refugee youth suffering from their loss of family and home.

Adjusting to formal foster care can be a challenge for those refugee youth who are accustomed to a high level of independence prior to being resettled. They may struggle to adapt to having new surrogate parents and to expectations such as having to let their foster parents know their whereabouts or obeying curfews. The refugee youth and foster parents navigate these adjustments together with the support of resettlement programme staff, especially if the foster parents are not of the same cultural background. Resettlement staff must have expertise themselves not only in youth development in general but also in cultural adjustment and refugee trauma.

Psychosocial support

Unaccompanied refugee youth tend to have higher levels of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms than other refugee youth. Research completed with young Sudanese indicates that resettled youth may seek medical care for physical symptoms which are often signs of psychological distress, indicating the importance of proactively addressing underlying psychological factors through culturally sensitive, trauma-focused mental health services. Increasing social interactions by developing community and a sense of home for unaccompanied refugee youth helps counteract the sense of isolation which can exacerbate PTSD symptoms. Group peer sessions with professional mental health staff which focus broadly on individual cognitive-based therapy approaches but adapted to the context of refugee youth's learning about living in a new society can sometimes be more successful than following a Western model of individual therapy.

Achieving independence

Unaccompanied refugee youth arrive with survival skills and are in many ways already able to function independently, having had to develop independent living skills by default due to being alone. It is, in fact, worth considering whether it is just those unaccompanied refugee youth who have the ability to somehow protect themselves in what can be hostile camp or urban refugee settings who have managed to navigate most successfully the systems of identification and referral for resettlement.

Nevertheless, they require specific knowledge and skills for independent living in a resettlement country. These include job skills and career/education counselling, budgeting and personal banking, the ability to navigate

public transportation systems, cooking and house-keeping, and personal safety.

Statistics are not kept in the US for outcomes for unaccompanied refugee youth exiting resettlement programmes but anecdotal information indicates the success of many children. Much of the practical experience of long-term integration programmes designed in the refugee resettlement framework can also be adapted to destination countries with unaccompanied youth seeking asylum. Long-term integration programmes originally designed for unaccompanied refugee children now serve international survivors of human trafficking, children seeking asylum and disaster victims too.

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Supporting the social integration of trafficked young people
Claire Cody

By definition, trafficking requires movement. In many cases this leads to the disconnection of an individual from family, friends and, in some instances, language and culture. Young people who have been trafficked often find themselves in unfamiliar cities where they are unlikely to have friends, family or other meaningful connections. Traffickers are well versed in the methods for maintaining control; young people may be regularly moved, which adds to their disorientation, and victims of trafficking are often kept isolated from others. Through violence and experience, these young people may learn not to trust their peers.

But for those who were formerly trafficked, having the opportunity to speak with others who have common and shared experiences, especially those from similar backgrounds or communities, may help them to realise they are not alone. Many leading organisations working with trafficked young people bring survivors together to meet, share their own stories and access support and advice. However, some young people may fear interactions with others from their home country, believing that their stories will be divulged to the host community or their family back home. In other cases a young person may know or believe that those in the community know the trafficker or have links to others involved in trafficking back home.

Young people need to be shown their future is not dictated by their past. Positive role-models, including individuals who have faced similar adversity and are now living happy, positive lives, are also critical. This may come from peers who are further along the recovery process but also from the increasing numbers of survivor-led organisations across the world – organisations such as Girls Educational and Mentoring Services (GEMS), Standing Against Global Exploitation (SAGE), Breaking Free and Courtney's House (all in the US), the Somaly Mam Foundation in Cambodia and Shakti Samhua in Nepal.

With the participation of young people, such organisations can support survivors to re-define their identity and re-gain a sense of belonging.

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The role of culture in mentoring
Bernadette Ludwig

Refugee and immigrant children actively try to embrace the American culture, often to escape taunts and feelings of not belonging. However, once they reach home, they are frequently reprimanded by their parents for being too American. Many newcomer families fear that their children will become part of the new society too quickly and forget or dismiss their cultural heritage. Not surprisingly, refugee and immigrant youth feel that nobody can really understand what they are going through as they navigate between different cultures while trying to define their own lives, identities and destinies.

The Go-Betweener Mentoring Program, run by Culture Connect, Inc., matches refugee and immigrant youth with mentors who are first- or second-generation refugees or immigrants from the same (or similar) cultural background, and who speak the same home language. These mentors have themselves faced many of the same obstacles that the young refugee and immigrant youth are encountering. Even more importantly, the adults are living examples to the younger generation that there are ways to successfully bridge two seemingly differing cultures. The Go-Betweener mentor also plays an important role in being able to communicate with the parents in their native language. This not only puts parents at ease but also offers an opportunity to help them become more at ease and better connected to resources in the larger community.

"I understand what it is like to have parents who do not speak English and do not feel comfortable with others who do not share their culture and language. As an adult I can now appreciate the social anxieties my parents faced living in a foreign country. Having been a child stuck between two cultures, I can understand the frustration and sadness of N, who is not allowed to do things that teenagers like her are allowed to do in the US. … I can counsel her and help her understand where her mother is coming from." (Latin American mentor)

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Mentoring for resettled youth

Lauren Markham

The resettlement experience often pits high expectations against harsh realities. The greatest pressure to 'succeed' in this new world is often shouldered by the younger generation but one-to-one mentoring by community volunteers can support them in a variety of ways.

What does success look like for newly resettled refugees? While exact expectations differ from country to country, self-sufficiency is the main goal, and the path to self-sufficiency must happen fast – often inordinately so. In the US, direct services provided by resettlement agencies generally last four to six months but can last as little as one month. Government aid runs out after eight months. This timeline for achieving self-sufficiency is short at best.

For school-aged youth, the primary channel for success is school. Indeed, parents often count the school system as one of the primary factors in their choice to resettle their families. Youth, with their greater facility for language acquisition and their daily immersion in the resettlement culture, are relied upon for the family's navigation of the new cultural landscape (translating at doctors' appointments, negotiating landlord disputes, translating at parent-teacher meetings and writing cheques for the monthly expenses, for example) and are the hope upon which the family's future success is pinned. It goes without saying that, though understandable, this is a significant set of pressures placed on youth.

Success in school does not come easily. Refugee youth arrive with a myriad of challenges including a history of interrupted or little formal education, limited literacy skills, past trauma, gaps in understanding about the school regulations and expectations in their new country, and parents with a limited capacity to help with school and homework. Students arrive far behind and, without the proper support structures, can fall further and further behind. Schools may not have systems specifically designed for students who have suffered trauma or proper structures to support newcomers, while teachers may not be trained to meet diverse learning needs.

School-aged refugee youth in the resettlement context have three main goals:

- **Social integration and inclusion:** Whether it is a sense of belonging in a maths class or the soccer team or as a member in a violent gang, it is the immediate sense of belonging, of mattering, that rules much decision making. If their energies are not properly channelled, newly arrived refugee youth can seek and find both belonging and achievement in activities, groups and

Refugee Transitions tutor, Zack, teaches map-reading skills to a student from Burma at the annual Refugee Transitions summer camp.

or places that jeopardise both their safety and their futures.

- **Language development:** Acquiring a new language is difficult, particularly for students who speak their native language at home and with their friends. Students need additional support – often one-to-one – and the incentive to practise outside the classroom.

- **Academic achievement:** Academic achievement is important not only for practical reasons but also for psychological health.

Supporting newcomer youth

The agency Refugee Transitions based in San Francisco, California, has a model for working with newcomer youth and adults that matches community volunteers – one-to-one or sometimes in pairs and small groups – with newly arrived refugee youth. Working with the student for a minimum of two to four hours per week for a period of at least nine months, the volunteer tutor/mentor goes to the student's home and/or school every week to practise English, help with homework and catching up on essential skills, work with parents on school engagement and, above all, make students feel successful and supported. Resettled families gain a trusted bridge to the outside world, someone with the key to the puzzle-like world they must now navigate, while students have gone on to improve their grades and their English, graduate from high school and pursue higher degrees and/or get jobs to support their families.

Using community volunteers offers a promising practice for supporting resettled youth but is not simple. Any such mentoring system requires not only the usual commitments to training, screening, matching etc but also a well-articulated and enforced mission of exchange and support (rather than a top-down model of 'helping') and a clearly agreed scope and length of commitment by the volunteer. Refugees have already undergone a great deal of transition and adding another transient figure is not useful.

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Unlocking protracted displacement

Roger Zetter and Katy Long

If protracted – and often forgotten – situations of displacement are to be 'unlocked', the international community must circumvent the rigidity of existing solutions and search for new and innovative strategies.

The concept of protracted displacement situations is built on assumptions of largely sedentary populations waiting for durable (ie permanent and sustainable) solutions, and a regulated and documented existence within defined and accepted boundaries (of state, of official status and of expected behaviour). Merely imposing the label 'protracted' implies that they are somehow exceptional, yet over two-thirds (7.1 million) of the world's 10.4 million refugees are to be found in protracted exile[1] and situations of protracted internal displacement persist in over 40 countries. So these are hardly exceptional situations; rather it is arguably now the norm with few situations of displacement satisfactorily resolved.

'Unlocking crises of protracted displacement for refugees and IDPs' is the title of a recent study conducted by the Refugee Studies Centre in collaboration with the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The study attempts to develop new thinking and different approaches to help unlock situations of protracted displacement by looking at two current cases (Somalia and Iraq) and one past case (Central America), and addressing four main issues:

■ the relationship with state fragility and patterns of governance and conflict

■ the perceptions and interests of the displaced people – and the host communities, transnational networks and the diaspora – in shaping the situations they are in

■ the more flexible use of the available durable solutions

■ innovative initiatives offering alternative ways of unlocking protracted displacement.

While every case has its own particular features, it is also clear that there are many problems common to many protracted displacements. Initial conclusions from the research highlight the inadequacy of the long-accepted three durable solutions. People are unwilling to return as long as high levels of insecurity and weak or non-existent governance persist; host countries resist local integration; and resettlement is an option only for a few because of the entrenched securitisation of entry controls in the West. And the displaced constitute a seemingly intractable challenge to the international community and to the states where they reside as they are immune to this set of 'durable solutions'.

Prolonged displacement is often accepted, albeit reluctantly, as a semi-permanent state of affairs while durable solutions imply seeking an 'end-state' solution. Yet this fits uneasily with the need for flexible, experimental and often politically risky modes of intervention to tackle the fluid and episodic nature of displacement. The coping and mobility strategies which the displaced population deploy under conditions of protracted displacement in order to survive are informal but these initiatives and strategies must be part of the solutions.

The research shows that *de facto* integration and settlement are an inevitable consequence of protracted displacement despite the official, legal or political tactics designed to prevent this. But it also shows that these people are neither static nor immobile and that displacement stimulates new patterns and processes of mobility. Refugees and IDPs who have lived in conditions of protracted displacement show a propensity to embark on strategies of irregular secondary migration, suggesting that they prefer – or are forced – to seek their own solutions. This is partly risk management and partly a trial-and-error search for other more favourable opportunities. Given the circumstances, such tactics are predominantly both temporary and undocumented, a pragmatic adaptation to explore the grey area between the two poles of displacement and durable solutions.

These findings suggest that for host states and the international community innovative and politically challenging policies and strategies are needed, requiring multi-dimensional

Somali refugees at Kenya's Dadaab refugee camp, which has existed for more than twenty years.

UNHCR/Luca Catalano Gonzaga

courses of action which include: more flexible legal regulation (regional citizenship or other forms of more secure residency than is normally made available to refugees, more flexible work permits, internal freedom of movement); new economic and livelihood development policies (sustained development programmes and projects for the displaced and local host populations); strategies which shift the focus from humanitarian to development assistance; innovative regional policies and tools (such as regional mobility agreements); revised refugee policies (increased resettlement opportunities in the West, temporary protection and asylum); and political empowerment and engagement (enhanced modalities for involving the displaced in peace building and reconstruction). This would constitute a radical liberalisation of the orthodox policy paradigm, which is not unreasonable given the obvious need to depart from the failed normal 'solutions'. The suggested strategy would build upon what displaced populations are demonstrably already doing and would thus be based upon their own interests, capacities and aspirations.

Within many protracted displacement situations there exist several waves of people displaced, reflecting the chronic inability of the states involved to function adequately, the outcome being a landscape of recurrent crises, with responses to acute crisis existing alongside protracted exile. Yet there is a danger that, in focusing on state fragilities and the 'permanent crises' of displacement that these provoke, other forms of protracted displacement may be missed, such as those caused by state repression rather than state failure. Understanding these different forms of displacement will help international actors to tailor appropriate policies.

Reshaping the 'solutions'

There is a difficult challenge for international actors seeking to provide for a displaced population who are often intent on not being labelled as 'refugees'. In all three case-studies, migration – including seasonal, permanent and circular migration at a transnational, regional and local level – is a crucial component of populations' responses to their protracted displacement. Migration (a better term may be mobility) can perhaps best be described as the deliberate and strategic employment of movement to maximise access to rights, goods and opportunities. Where the quality of asylum on offer is minimal and access to formal protection limited, the distinction between 'forced' and 'voluntary' secondary movement is unhelpful.

Linking protracted displacement to the declining quality of asylum protection available is also important because it underlines the fact that the quality of solutions often rests on the quality of asylum. The search for 'solutions' overshadows addressing declining standards of protection within asylum, although this research appears to show that there is an urgent need to focus on securing adequate protection during displacement and pending a long-term resolution.

Equally, recognition of the significance of mobility must be accompanied by a parallel acknowledgement that to date the international community has been extremely resistant to supporting displaced people migrating.

Building a framework for regularised, safe and voluntary migration and movement of the displaced after their initial flight is clearly integral to unlocking protracted displacement, without losing sight of the need to enhance the quality of asylum where displaced people actually are. In this way, unlocking protracted displacement is not associated with stopping movement but with facilitating the access of the displaced to rights. For IDPs, it is often even less clear where displacement ends and migration begins. The answer may lie in ensuring that IDPs are not forced to move but are free to move.

Resettlement is a highly politicised process, a political tool used by states to meet political aims. Refugee responses to resettlement opportunities are also highly political. Given the political realities shaping resettlement, how can resettlement policies be better tailored to match the needs of displaced populations and unlocking protracted crises? If resettlement is to function adequately as a means of securing protection for those unable to find this in the country of first asylum, there is clearly a simultaneous need for both more resettlement places and more opportunities for refugees to move as migrants. Developed states could contribute to the opportunities for migration available to the displaced by reforming their own immigration systems to allow refugees to move more easily as 'migrants' rather than through formal channels of refugee resettlement.

Even where *de jure* integration – that is, officially recognised integration – is impossible, it is clear that some measure of *de facto* integration is inevitable, as in the cases of Iraqis and Somalis. It would therefore be advisable for government actors to acknowledge this reality and formulate proactive policy responses in relation to it in order to better reflect the dynamics of interactions between the displaced and the host community.

Particularly for second- and third-generation refugees who are self-settled in the host community, *de facto* integration is already a given. Removing obstacles to labour market access and restrictions on movement would help to facilitate interaction – and through interaction would foster prospects for integration – between displaced and host communities. Encouraging *de facto* integration is a move away from categorising groups as 'displaced' or 'hosts' and instead focusing on community-level engagements. This is not merely a programme or policy strategy but indeed recognises the stimulus that displacement can give to development. In the Central American case-study for example, Mexico offers some key clues about which conditions help to foster integration; these indicators suggest that the best foundations for *de jure* integration is *de facto* integration building on existing cultural affinities and sensitively supported through community-based projects. Host states and the international community must accept that in protracted displacement situations some *de facto* integration will inevitably occur, even when encampment policies are used. Efforts should be focused not on trying to prevent the gradual development of such links but on ensuring that they are productive for communities as a whole and are not undermined by precarious legal status leaving the *de facto* integrated at risk of deportation. In particular, efforts should be

made to encourage recognition of second-generation refugees' obvious links to their host communities.

There is little doubt that a fixation – particularly by states – on permanent return as the only viable solution to displacement has contributed to the political impasse that has created many protracted displacement situations. What is needed above all is a reframing of repatriation as a much more sequential, piecemeal process that involves the gradual remaking of citizenship in a community of origin. Return also appears to be most effective when it can be combined with other strategies such as continued transnational relocation or regional dual residence/citizenship. For refugees themselves, such combined strategies also help to diffuse the risk involved in returning to a site of former persecution and violence. Return and reintegration processes must be addressed in a development context. For example, encouraging self-administration in refugee camps and opening up access to training and experience for the displaced would help to build foundations for sustainable Somali return and governance if and when security conditions allow. Encouraging IDPs and refugees to plan for return and set their own criteria for it can provide the displaced with considerable agency to shape the end of their protracted displacement.

Dealing with the contexts

The three case-studies clearly demonstrate the links between protracted displacement and endemic weaknesses in formal state-citizen relations. However, they also document the presence of other alternative citizenships. The emergence of federal and regional governance structures – for example in West Africa – may offer other, more functional forms of citizenship, unlocking protracted displacement by creating conditions for return. One important insight is to recognise that new citizenships – either below or above traditional or formal state-citizen structures – may unlock elements of protracted displacement situations.

The fundamental cause of protracted displacement is very often a crisis of citizenship or governance in a community or state of origin. It is therefore clear that protracted displacement must be framed by broader peace-building or state-building discourses, and that the eventual resolution of protracted displacement is generally contingent on the (re-) building of viable state governance structures.

While this research offers some general conclusions such as these, and provides some fleshing out of the obvious truth that there needs to be some re-thinking of

From the case-studies...

Central America

More than a decade has passed since the conclusion of formal efforts to resolve Central America's protracted displacement situation. During the 1980s and early 1990s, more than three million Guatemalans, Salvadorans and Nicaraguans were displaced internally and throughout Central and North America, many of them for more than ten years. The struggle to resolve their situation has often been hailed as a success, characterised by cooperation between actors and innovative practices.

A re-examination in the light particularly of the recent history of irregular migration in the region prompts a re-assessment. Among the issues that come out of the analysis are:

- the value of choice and flexibility in implementing durable solutions
- the potential of coordinated regional approaches linked to states' other interests
- the advantages for the displaced of local organising, international networking and Northern solidarity
- the difficulty of securing truly durable solutions in the absence of fundamental state reform.

Iraq

As instability persists, the situation of Iraqi IDPs and refugees in the Middle East manifests the evolving characteristics of protracted displacement. The migration of displaced Iraqis is often circular across a wide area as a result of a strategy of managing life risks by dispersal of family members along pre-existing social networks. Understanding and building up this 'transnationalism' and mobility could create safe and sustainable strategies to address the fact of long-term displacement. It is also important to make the analytical shift from the current focus on emergency assistance to fostering inclusive local assistance. The three classic durable solutions are largely unworkable for most of those in exile but inevitably some informal local integration is taking place, which calls out for regularisation.

Overall it seems important to reconceptualise 'solutions' as 'frameworks' and 'processes' and to move from searching for end-states to instead seeking progress and acceptable current conditions.

Somalia

Displacement in and from Somalia is not only protracted but also made up of successive waves, each with their own characteristics. IDPs manage to integrate themselves through clan ties to varying degrees, while international assistance tends to emphasise the separateness of IDPs. Somaliland and Puntland are ripe for policy approaches dealing with displacement within the context of development interventions, and relocations may offer IDPs opportunities for more secure settlement.

Resettlement is at puny levels but looms large in the imagination of refugees, influencing their behaviour. Return for refugees seems very unlikely but there should be scope for constructive participation of refugees in Somali politics. The situation of refugees in Kenya is increasingly securitised and local integration – though ongoing informally – is officially blocked. Support through wider development efforts looks like the best way forward for them.

The displaced cannot themselves resolve their crises of citizenship and access to rights; this remains the pressing responsibility of Somali political actors and the international community.

what is meant by 'solutions' to protracted displacement, the particularities of each situation are also important features in unlocking particular situations. This implies that:

- the re-thinking should include some loosening up of narrow or fixed thinking about what constitutes a solution

- the paths to achieving any such solutions should be more various and multifarious

- the realities of the actual activities and movements of displaced people while they are 'in protracted displacement' can be usefully built upon in unlocking their protracted displacement.
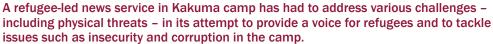
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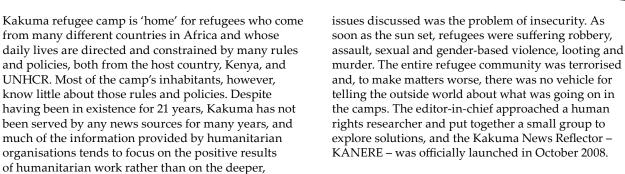
1. Defined by UNHCR as a refugee situation where more than 25,000 refugees have been in exile for more than five years and by definition displacements for which there are no solutions in sight. UNHCR *Global Trends 2011: A Year of Crises*. Geneva: UNHCR, 2012 www.unhcr.org/4fd6f87f9.html

KANERE: a refugee-run free press in Kenya

Editorial Staff of the Kakuma News Reflector

A refugee-led news service in Kakuma camp has had to address various challenges – including physical threats – in its attempt to provide a voice for refugees and to tackle issues such as insecurity and corruption in the camp.

Kakuma refugee camp is 'home' for refugees who come from many different countries in Africa and whose daily lives are directed and constrained by many rules and policies, both from the host country, Kenya, and UNHCR. Most of the camp's inhabitants, however, know little about those rules and policies. Despite having been in existence for 21 years, Kakuma has not been served by any news sources for many years, and much of the information provided by humanitarian organisations tends to focus on the positive results of humanitarian work rather than on the deeper, ongoing problems beyond practical assistance.
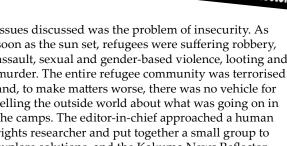
To address this need for information, we – a group of refugees – decided in late 2008 to establish a reliable source of news for Kakuma refugees, humanitarian NGOs operating in the camps, people living in the area, and the local and regional government. Among our goals were:

- to represent refugee voices in the camp and provide an avenue through which refugees at Kakuma can interact with and speak directly to the outside world

- to fill the gaps in the information provided by NGOs and the camp's governing bodies

- to expose abuses of power, violations of human rights and exploitation connected with the distribution of food aid, and the negative impact of certain UNHCR policies in Kakuma.

Before becoming a refugee, the current editor-in-chief had studied journalism in Ethiopia. A year after arriving in Kakuma in 2005, he started a journalism club in Unity Primary School. Later, the club expanded to include teachers at the school, who had begun meeting to discuss news from the camps. One of the most critical issues discussed was the problem of insecurity. As soon as the sun set, refugees were suffering robbery, assault, sexual and gender-based violence, looting and murder. The entire refugee community was terrorised and, to make matters worse, there was no vehicle for telling the outside world about what was going on in the camps. The editor-in-chief approached a human rights researcher and put together a small group to explore solutions, and the Kakuma News Reflector – KANERE – was officially launched in October 2008.

A positive impact

To date, the editorial team has produced eleven publications online, plus print copies of the first four editions which were circulated in the greater Kakuma camps and nearby Kakuma town. KANERE has made a significant impact on life in Kakuma:

Security: Following KANERE's reporting on security incidents, more police have been deployed to patrol the camp day and night, and several police posts have been established inside the camp.

Information sharing: There is greater awareness of camp issues with refugee leaders working in collaboration with KANERE. In addition, getting information out to the wider world helps the international community to understand refugee life in Kakuma and to advocate for refugee rights.

Access to UNHCR: KANERE reported on inadequate addressing of complaints, requests and questions; now, with the establishment of field posts in all sections of the camp, refugees are able to speak directly with UNHCR officials.

Camp lighting: In response to reports of rape and shootings, some solar lamps have been installed to make some areas more secure.

Human rights: Since KANERE started reporting violations of human rights, corruption and refugee mistreatment in aid distribution, the situation has improved somewhat.

KANERE has faced various challenges. One continuing challenge is that of securing funding for the project – to pay staff, to buy equipment and to cover any other expenses. KANERE currently operates with only one donated laptop and one video camera, and inconsistency of funding means that production of the newsletter can easily be delayed for months.

A significant additional challenge has been opposition to KANERE. After KANERE's inaugural issue, which appeared online on 22 December 2008, UNHCR officials raised objections, including that the KANERE team had started the newsblog without consulting them and that the reports posted online could jeopardise job security for staff employed by UNHCR. Soon after that, other NGOs operating in Kakuma camp and local government officials expressed their opposition in inter-agency meetings. The hostility peaked in early 2009 when the refugee reporters received serious threats to

their personal security, largely from fellow refugees concerned about KANERE's outspoken criticism of the operations of humanitarian organisations in the camp – which they claimed might jeopardise resettlement opportunities. Two KANERE journalists were physically attacked, the chief editor's home was destroyed, and KANERE equipment and documents were damaged. Through the internet, however, KANERE linked up with human rights groups, lawyers, refugee legal experts and academics locally and internationally, who were able to help mediate the situation in consultation with UNHCR and other camp governing authorities. The security of the journalists, while by no means stable, has improved significantly since then.

The staff of KANERE hope to be able to continue operating a refugee-run free press for Kakuma camp and for the surrounding locality which is poorly served by existing media outlets. As part of their goal to break down divisions between refugees in camp and locals in town, KANERE also involves non-refugee reporters.

Despite the challenges that KANERE has faced, it strongly encourages refugees in other camps to start up their own free presses to provide a mechanism for refugees to give feedback on the policies which affect them, a mechanism which is often sorely lacking. It is not clear, for example, by what other means refugees can hold humanitarian organisations accountable for their actions and how they can reliably report local abuses of power to authorities who can actually address them. Whether based in camps or urban centres, refugees should find ways to express their unfiltered voices, even if what they have to say is critical of humanitarian modes of business.

The Editorial Staff of KANERE can be contacted at kakuma.news@gmail.com KANERE welcomes donations – whether material or financial – and advice to help ensure continuity of publication. www.kanere.org

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'Tolerated stay': what protection does it give?

Inês Máximo Pestana

Persons invoking the same grounds for protection may benefit from different rights, depending on the status which is granted to him/her and in which EU country.

'Tolerated stay' is only one among over 60 different protection statuses granted on 15 different grounds among European Union (EU) countries. It is often granted to persons whose removal is impossible either for practical reasons (such as lack of documents or the country of origin's refusal to accept the person) or because their removal would be tantamount to *refoulement* (and therefore in contravention of the Refugee Convention).[1] Fifteen EU Member States[2] grant tolerated stay status, with differing definitions and regulated by different legal instruments.

The grounds on which Member States grant tolerated stay are often the same as those for other complementary forms of protection, such as the 'subsidiary protection' status that is now standardised – 'harmonised' –

throughout the EU. (Applicants who do not qualify for refugee status but who cannot return to their country of origin due to a real risk of suffering serious harm have the right to 'subsidiary protection'.) However, tolerated stay most often comes with a different, usually reduced, 'package of rights', thus lowering the standards of protection. And whether the principle of *non-refoulement* is viewed merely as a negative obligation not to remove someone or also as a positive obligation deriving from recognition of the fundamental rights of the individual is relevant to the degree to which tolerated stay statuses comply with that principle.

Example rights attached to tolerated stay
In Poland, a permit for tolerated stay is granted either in respect of human rights enshrined in international

instruments or where practical obstacles make removal impossible. The scope of the grounds for granting the permit are the same as applied for subsidiary protection but the scope of the permit for tolerated stay seems to be even wider, including explicit reference to the right of fair trial and other rights contained in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). However, the set of rights attached to tolerated stay is different from those linked with subsidiary protection; although access to the labour market and health care are guaranteed for both, the same is not the case for social assistance rights (limited to basic shelter, meals and essential clothing), pension and family reunion rights (not available for tolerated stay permit holders). If they wish to obtain a permit to settle, tolerated stay permit holders must have proof of ten years of uninterrupted residence in Poland, and a further five years if they wish to apply for citizenship; the tolerated stay permit does not, in principle, entail the right to a Polish travel document.

In Hungary, tolerated stay is granted when removal would be considered *refoulement*, on grounds which overlap with those for subsidiary protection and even with the grounds for refugee status (based on a well-founded fear of persecution). However, here again there are differences in the rights attached. Education is the only right which is granted equally for all these statuses. Tolerated stay status holders need an additional permit to work and they receive free access only to basic health care, such as emergency services and vaccination; they do not benefit from preferential conditions for family reunion; they can only apply for naturalisation after 11 years of uninterrupted stay and upon obtaining a permanent residence permit; tolerated persons are also not entitled to a Hungarian travel document.

In the UK, 'discretionary leave to stay' may be granted to protect persons excluded from the definition of refugee status and is most often granted for reasons relating to the ECHR, namely prohibition of torture, respect for private and family life, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Here too there are differences regarding the rights attached to each status. Discretionary leave is usually granted for three years (as against five years for subsidiary protection) and while rights to education and health care are fully granted on equal terms, access to the labour market and social benefits are curtailed for discretionary leave holders who are also not eligible for family reunion unless they are granted Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR). This may be obtained after a longer period (six years rather than five) and is also necessary for naturalisation.

Figures for implementation levels and trends for tolerated stay differ from country to country too. In Poland, when the permit for tolerated stay was introduced in 2004, 840 permits were issued that year; that number increased continually, reaching a peak of 2,910 in 2007; from 2008 onwards, when subsidiary protection status was introduced, the trend reversed. The number of tolerated stay permits issued started to decrease until in 2009 only 82 permits were issued – a remarkable drop, apparently caused by an increase in grants of subsidiary protection. Hungary experienced a similar downward trend until 2009 when the trend reversed; tolerated stay

has again become the dominant form of complementary protection there. Given the lower degree of protection offered by tolerated stay, this is a heavily debated issue at the national level in Hungary with questions raised about the reasons and/or interests behind the favoured use of the tolerated stay status. In the UK, a stable trend characterises state practice of granting discretionary leave, with the limited data available indicating the extent to which discretionary leave is favoured (8-11% as a proportion of all applications) as against humanitarian (subsidiary) protection status (1% or less).

Although far from exhaustive, this comparative analysis both highlights the differences in different Member States' application of tolerated stay status and identifies common aspects in its application: firstly, that tolerated stay shares 'grounds for protection' with other forms of complementary protection, in particular subsidiary protection; and, secondly, that it confers a lower degree of protection than other forms.

It is important to highlight that the consequences of differentiating between tolerated and subsidiary statuses go far beyond a mere academic or legal exercise. Tolerated stay statuses may entail unfavourable conditions for individual holders of that status, often causing difficulties when seeking employment, travelling abroad, reuniting with family or obtaining permanent residence or nationality. The results can be social exclusion, extreme poverty, homelessness and a push to migrate by irregular means.

Concluding questions
Is tolerated stay an historical relic or a necessary safety net? The historical importance of tolerated stay as a protection mechanism before the introduction of subsidiary protection is undeniable. However, can it still be useful nowadays as a third layer back-up protection? Is tolerated stay a genuine effort to comply with the principle of *non-refoulement* – or merely window-dressing?

Why this lowering of protection standards? Financial motivation could explain why States continue to use (or may be interested in creating) 'poor' protection statuses rather than 'richer' forms of protection which involve higher costs. Another potential explanation specifically in the EU context is the so-called 'asylum fatigue' which appears in recent years to have undermined the willingness to provide protection.

Finally, is tolerated stay being misused and abused – ultimately raising concerns about the integrity of our asylum systems and our respect for international protection principles?

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1. See the European Migration Network Report 'The different national practices concerning granting of non-EU harmonised protection statuses' http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/Downloads/prepareShowFiles.do?directoryID=122

2. Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

Afghanistan consults on an IDP policy

Nina Schrepfer and Dan Tyler

A recent commitment announced by the Government of Afghanistan to develop a national policy on internal displacement is timely. If carried out well in the lead-up to transition, it will help the government to better protect and meet the needs of internally displaced communities across the country.

Internal displacement is such a widespread and longstanding phenomenon in Afghanistan that according to the ICRC over 76% of the Afghan population has experienced displacement. As of the end of June 2012, the number of IDPs reported in Afghanistan was estimated at over 400,000 individuals — a conservative figure that does not capture all those displaced by natural disasters, IDPs scattered in urban areas and IDPs who cannot be assessed for security reasons or because of lack of access; actual numbers are recognised to be significantly higher. The IDP population in Afghanistan is also known to be growing significantly, reflecting the ongoing rise in insecurity across large swathes of the country. As Afghanistan enters the final stages of planning for the transition due to be complete by 2014, with an accompanying withdrawal of international military forces, uncertainty over political, social and economic impacts of the transition is likely to trigger further internal displacement, particularly if security conditions do not improve in the short term.

As new research by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and its Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) confirms,[1] IDPs constitute one of the most vulnerable groups in Afghan society, with many slipping out of the response net of the Afghan government and the international community owing to the multitude of complex barriers preventing response and the achievement of durable solutions. This was illustrated most starkly during the 2011/12 winter crisis, in which the deaths of at least a hundred infants and children in Kabul's informal IDP settlements provoked widespread media attention. These highly visible urban IDP families, living on the doorstep of the international aid community, received aid and attention too late and prompted national and international actors alike to evaluate urgently how to achieve improved protection for Afghanistan's IDPs and ensure that they receive better assistance.

To date, the government's response has been limited by its opposition to local integration or settlement elsewhere and by its reluctance to recognise some groups of IDPs, particularly those living in urban settings. In adopting policies which deny IDPs access to assistance in their place of refuge, there has been a collective failure to protect their rights as set out in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.[2] At the same time, most analysts agree that the decentralised nature of the Afghan state makes it difficult for the government to assist IDPs in rural or remote areas of the

As winter sets in, IDPs huddle around a small fire at a camp in the Dera Ismail Khan district, Afghanistan.

country, let alone facilitate durable solutions for them. Coupled with ongoing challenges in profiling IDPs across Afghanistan owing to a security environment in which many government and humanitarian actors have limited access, the national and international response to internal displacement falls well below the standards embodied in the Guiding Principles, leaving thousands of the most destitute unassisted and unprotected.

National IDP instruments

As part of the government's commitment to develop a national policy on internal displacement, the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) has initiated a policy process with the objective of achieving a national instrument that ensures protection of and assistance to IDPs throughout all stages of displacement and in all parts of Afghanistan. Importantly, the Ministry has stated its intention to draft a comprehensive policy that acknowledges and reflects the primary role and responsibility of the Government of Afghanistan to prevent displacement, to assist and protect all IDPs during displacement and to help find appropriate durable solutions. Underpinning these commitments are accompanying objectives to ensure the Ministry acquires the requisite institutional capacity to oversee improved IDP coordination and response mechanisms at the national and provincial level.

As experience shows, national policies on internal displacement can act as useful tools for governments to safeguard the rights of IDPs. They can ensure that better planning helps both to prevent further displacement and to respond to those already displaced. In Colombia for example, before IDP-specific legislation was first adopted in 1997 the Government of Colombia responded to forced displacement in an ad hoc and ineffective manner. Overall, the problem was given an extremely low priority and accorded little visibility within the Colombian public sphere. Despite some failings in the implementation of Colombia's law No. 387 of 1997, it was a milestone as it brought the necessary attention to the problem of internal displacement in Colombia, acknowledged the specific assistance and protection needs of IDPs, introduced a stable framework for protection by acknowledging the importance of a rights-based approach to the displacement response and established a national institutional set-up charged with the responsibility to assist and protect IDPs.

National instruments are also important tools for governments seeking to facilitate cooperation across government and externally with other national and international actors. In Afghanistan, where the international humanitarian and development actors frequently struggle to align efforts in supporting IDPs, the existence of a national instrument on internal displacement offers the MoRR an important means to promote effective cooperation with these actors and to support coordination among them. Perhaps most importantly for Afghanistan, a national instrument provides an opportunity for the government to help ensure the IDP response is tailor-made to the particularities of the displacement context in Afghanistan, and therefore for a more rational and effective allocation and use of resources.

National ownership and consultation

That the Government of Afghanistan has strongly indicated its desire to develop an IDP policy and requested international support to achieve this goal is a welcome step. Yet, as so often in Afghanistan, the gap between policy and practice usually hinges upon the process by which the policy is arrived at. A two-day national consultative workshop (14-15 July 2012) hosted by the MoRR in the capital, Kabul, on the development of a national IDP policy was a promising indicator of the government's commitment towards a nationally owned policy process. It was also a recognition of ensuring a consultative process through which the content of the Afghan IDP policy is determined, particularly one that puts the displaced people at the core of the process and listens to their voices. The UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Dr Chaloka Beyani, also underlined in his statement at the workshop the imperative of strong national ownership and meaningful consultations.

NRC Afghanistan

National IDP policy development workshop.

National governments wishing to address internal displacement through a policy framework face significant obstacles both in developing and implementing such policies. Inevitably, the dynamics and impacts of displacement vary widely across the country, between urban and rural settings and within provinces. Without pursuing meaningful and inclusive consultation of all actors at the provincial and district level, it will not be possible to determine the scope of the envisaged instrument nor the core issues such an instrument will be required to address; these may differ considerably in different areas. In Afghanistan, these will be difficult consultations to carry out owing to the disparate views of national authorities with regard to defining IDPs, the blurred lines between migration and displacement, the high volume of returning refugees unable to settle in their places of origin, the scarcity of viable land and the challenges of land allocation procedures, and the reduced options for durable solutions at a time of still ongoing insecurity.

These issues resonated strongly for many of the participants at the July 2012 workshop in Kabul, where

the principle of national responsibility and ownership was frequently highlighted as a prerequisite for the development, drafting and implementation of any future IDP policy. It was recognised that consensus on these issues will be an important benchmark for the MoRR to measure its progress against in developing the policy. In order to achieve this consensus, transparent consultation will have to extend beyond just national, provincial and municipal authorities to include IDP and host communities themselves, as well as national civil society and international humanitarian and development actors, including donors.

To arrive at a policy that is considered to be relevant and has strong buy-in from all stakeholders, its elaboration will also have to be nationally led. It is clear from previous experience that too strong an international footprint in policy development will lead quickly to a deterioration of national ownership and result in a policy that will struggle for effective implementation. National ownership of the IDP policy must be sustained throughout the process. In order to strengthen national ownership it needs to be ensured that all relevant Ministries and the Government of Afghanistan itself buy into the process.

Critical steps

As the MoRR takes forward this national IDP policy process there are a number of critical steps which will determine both the quality of the national instrument that comes out of it and also its longer-term viability during its implementation.

A genuinely consultative process: The development of the IDP policy should be nationally led and driven by the consultations with a broad variety of stakeholders. To be inclusive and transparent, the process must be premised on wide consultations at the national, provincial and municipality levels. Without such broad-based consultations the policy will lack legitimacy, relevance and accountability. At the July 2012 stakeholder workshop on the process, the momentum for such a consultative process was created. In order to maintain this momentum, a leaflet on the process and the government's commitment to an inclusive and transparent process could be produced and disseminated widely to increase interest in Afghanistan in the IDP policy process.

Establishing capacities: The MoRR will lead the IDP policy process. In order to broaden national ownership of the policy process and to hold meaningful consultations, the Ministry needs to be given the requisite capacity. It also needs to be supported by national and international stakeholders through the establishment of light institutions, such as a secretariat, an inter-ministerial consultative committee or a well-composed advisory committee.

Safeguarding the government's primary responsibility: While other national and international actors might offer technical facilitation in support of the MoRR, such support must not tend to take away from the government its primary responsibility to develop this IDP policy, as law- and policymaking are inherently sovereign tasks.

NRC Afghanistan

National IDP policy development workshop.

Consultation needs, plans and mechanisms: For reasons of transparency and accountability, the lead Ministry should establish plans and mechanisms indicating the consultation needs and an approximate timeline. In particular, such consultative mechanisms should provide adequately for feedback for provincial and municipality-level actors. These must include, in addition to authorities at the different levels, national civil society, international humanitarian and development organisations and actors, including donors, relevant private sector entities and, last but not least, displacement-affected and displaced communities.

IDP voices: IDPs must be placed at the heart of the process with views of other displacement-affected communities – in particular host communities – also considered. This should ensure that the policy reflects the various realities of displacement in provinces across Afghanistan.

Building a knowledge base: An IDP policy should reflect the realities and thus relies on the availability of knowledge. A proper assessment of gaps in knowledge is critical so that targeted research can be commissioned. The government should also consider a new profiling of the displacement situation in Afghanistan to reveal important information on the numbers and the locations of IDPs, on the different causes of displacement in Afghanistan, patterns of displacement, on protection concerns and humanitarian needs as well as prospects for durable solutions. Experience from other policymaking processes show that a profiling can be critical in informing the policy process.

Building on existing activities: The absence of an IDP policy in Afghanistan does not mean that there are no existing efforts to assist and protect IDPs across the country. In developing an IDP policy, it will be critical to build upon a mapping of relevant stakeholders and their activities.

Dealing with anti-government groups: Afghanistan's realities also call for a pragmatic approach in establishing a formal consultation line with anti-government entities which control territory where IDPs have fled to or settled. A national policy that leaves out these IDPs would send out the wrong signal regarding

the government's primary responsibility to assist and protect all IDPs across Afghanistan. In any case, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement also call for observance by such groups.[3]

Safeguarding humanitarian access and space: Particular attention must be paid to the issues of humanitarian access for actors seeking to meet the emergency needs of IDPs living in areas where the government is not able to respond and of the preservation of humanitarian space.

All these steps will help the Government of Afghanistan to better protect and meet the needs of internally displaced communities across Afghanistan.

National policies internationally

With an IDP policy, Afghanistan would join the ranks of some 20-30 other states that have or are developing national instruments on IDPs. For example, Central African Republic and Nigeria are currently also developing their national IDP instruments, and Kenya's IDP bill and policy are actually ready for adoption and implementation. A positive policy experience in Afghanistan may also create interest in other displacement-affected states in the region.

The trend for more and more countries to embark on processes to develop their national IDP policy or law is encouraging. In support of national authorities, the Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre together with the Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement has developed a guide for practitioners on national law and policymaking that is currently being piloted in Afghanistan. This guide complements the 2008 Manual for Law and Policymakers[4] and explains in practical steps consultative processes leading to national laws and policies. Once reviewed, this practitioner's guide will serve other governments in developing their national laws and policies on internal displacement. As the former Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the human rights of IDPs, Walter Kälin, pointed out: "Law matters. It is not the solution but it matters. Ordinary national legislation makes a lot of sense in normal circumstances, but not in times of humanitarian crisis involving internal displacement."

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1. NRC/IDMC/JIPS/Samuel Hall Consulting, IDP Protection Study, publication forthcoming September 2012.
2. www.idpguidingprinciples.org
3. Principle 2 (1).
4. www.brookings.edu/about/projects/idp/resources/manuals

Resources

Developing national instruments on internal displacement:
A guide for practitioners
Pilot version – February 2012 (Norwegian Refugee Council/Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre)

Protecting Internally Displaced Persons:
A manual for law and policymakers
October 2008 (Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement). Online at www.brookings.edu/about/projects/idp/resources/manuals

NRC/IDMC's *Developing national instruments on internal displacement: A guide for practitioners* is currently being piloted in Afghanistan (and will eventually be available online at www.internal-displacement.org/publications).

This Guide provides advice to national authorities and other actors on how to develop a national instrument on internal displacement, plus guidance through the different stages and steps of the process. It takes into account regional particularities and differences in the legal framework where applicable and assists in overcoming typical difficulties in domesticating regional and international standards. The Guide complements the 2008 *Manual for law and policymakers*. While the Manual focuses on the substance of national instruments on internal displacement and is addressed to those who actually draft national instruments, the Guide assists national authorities and other actors in the process of developing a national instrument addressing internal displacement in their country. As such, a combined use of both instruments will help implement the international obligations of governments towards IDPs.

The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement identify the rights and guarantees relevant to the protection of the internally displaced in all phases of displacement. They provide protection against arbitrary displacement, offer a basis for protection and assistance during displacement, and set forth guarantees for safe return, resettlement and reintegration. Although they do not constitute a binding instrument, the Principles reflect and are consistent with international law. The Guiding Principles have been translated into over 50 languages –
see www.brookings.edu/about/projects/idp/gp-page
The Pashtu version is at
www.brookings.edu/~/media/Projects/idp/GP_Pashtu.PDF

Key IDP documents can be found at
www.internal-displacement.org/publications and at
www.brookings.edu/about/projects/idp/resources

Forced Migration Review includes articles about internal displacement in every issue and has produced several issues (in English, French, Spanish and Arabic) focusing specifically on internal displacement, including:

Ten Years of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
www.fmreview.org/GuidingPrinciples10

When does internal displacement end?
www.fmreview.org/when-does-internal-displacement-end

Nigeria needs to take responsibility for its IDPs

Bagoni Alhaji Bukar

There remain legal and policy challenges in assisting and protecting internally displaced persons in Nigeria.

There has been an alarming rise in the number of IDPs in Nigeria for reasons including ethnic, religious and political conflicts, violations of human rights, and mostly human-made and occasional natural disasters such as floods. Nigeria at present, however, has no legislation that deals explicitly with IDPs and no organisation equipped to handle IDP registration and other related matters.

In order to address this gap and ameliorate the plight of IDPs, in 2003 the Federal Government of Nigeria set up a committee to draft a National Policy on IDPs to assist in registration and issuance of identity cards, prevention or reduction in instances of internal displacement, and allocation of responsibilities to agencies and organs of government, non-governmental and civil society organisations. The committee's work culminated in a National Policy on Internally Displaced Persons which was prepared and presented to government in 2011 but it is yet to be officially adopted. The draft Policy is based on the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (the 'Kampala Convention') of 2009.

Legislative and institutional framework

In the absence of a legal framework or institution, provision of assistance, protection, reintegration and resettlement for IDPS is mostly undertaken by agencies of government on an ad hoc and reactive basis. The draft National Policy aims to guide the different branches of government, donors and humanitarian agencies in preventing displacement and in providing protection and assistance to those displaced. It also allocates responsibilities to the appropriate government bodies for different aspects of the short-, medium- and long-term response to internal displacement, with the existing National Commission for Refugees (NCFR) as the governmental focal point with responsibility for coordinating the activities of all agencies, including international humanitarian agencies. Furthermore, it empowers the National Emergency Management Agency, the Human Rights Commission and the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution to partner with the NCFR to support the activities of the states and local governments in implementing the Policy within their respective spheres of activities when it is officially launched.

The Policy starts by re-affirming the fundamental rights of all citizens under the 1999 Constitution but also acknowledges the particular vulnerabilities of women and children, according them special guarantees. It then includes measures to protect against being displaced and sets out standards pertaining to the delivery of humanitarian assistance by national and international humanitarian agencies. To this end, the Policy envisages the application of various laws and institutions to the protection of IDPs under what it terms a 'humanitarian framework of cooperation' of all relevant ministries, states, local governments, departments and

agencies as well as international organisations and charitable institutions. The Policy also identifies some circumstances under which a person ceases to be an IDP.

It goes on to outline in general terms national and international legal principles applicable to IDPs. These principles are reflections of fundamental rights of individuals as guaranteed under the Constitution and under international instruments, including freedom from discrimination, freedom of movement, freedom of association, and the rights to dignity and family life.

While the Policy guarantees the protection of the above mentioned rights, it at the same time prohibits acts that are capable of causing internal displacement such as ethnic cleansing or large-scale development projects not justified by public interest. It outlines strategies for the prevention and management of conflicts including the involvement of communities and ethnic groups in the economic, political and social activities of the government, and promotes dialogue, consultation, inter-ethnic marriages, religious harmony through inter-faith relations, education and a fair and equitable distribution of economic resources among the people and communities. Where, however, displacement becomes inevitable, then all the rights of citizens equally accrue to IDPs.

The NCFR is enjoined to create a conducive atmosphere for the return, resettlement or reintegration of IDPs. In planning for return, resettlement or reintegration, the Commission is equally enjoined to ensure participation of the IDPs through their chosen representatives.

The Constitution declares that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government; accordingly, government at all levels and its agencies are the first referral point in the implementation machinery of the Policy. However, the Federal Government has delegated most of its responsibilities to the NCFR. This now has ultimate responsibility for rehabilitation, resettlement and reintegration of all IDPs as well as for the prevention of conflicts or disasters leading to displacement along with specific other agencies

Following a year-long survey, Nigeria's National Emergency Management Agency reported in late 2011 that there were some 370,000 IDPs in the country, including some 74,000 in camps. Previous estimates by government and other agencies only included people who had sought shelter at temporary IDP camps, and did not reflect the many who had taken refuge with family and friends. In the absence of mechanisms to monitor IDPs' ongoing situations, it has been impossible to determine how many may have recovered and achieved a durable solution.

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, December 2011
http://tinyurl.com/Nigeria-IDPs2011

which have responsibility for emergency management, protecting human rights or designing and implementing programmes to prevent the breakdown of peace and to prevent conflict that would lead to displacement.

One of the major problems is the fact the Policy has no legal status and is therefore incapable of enforcement either by the government or the delegated actors. In addition, there is no body or organisation responsible for monitoring implementation by the NCFR, which is anyway under-funded. Recognising the scale of the funding difficulties, the government has proposed the establishment of a Humanitarian Trust Fund to attract funding from individuals, corporate bodies, international agencies and others for activities in aid of IDPs. Similar funding bodies should be established for

other government agencies that complement the work of the NCFR. However, even if there were adequate funding, there is the problem of lack of accountability by those entrusted with public office and funds.

Currently there are monumental challenges relating to prevention of displacement, assistance, return and relocation of IDPs. The National Policy has come at a time when the country actually requires a strong legal and institutional framework – rather than a mere policy – and effective implementing institutions.

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Mental health in Palestinian camps in Lebanon

Fabio Forgione

Health agencies in refugee camps face the dual challenge of, firstly, convincing both camp populations and the international community that mental health disorders deserve treatment as much as any other illness – and, secondly, building enough trust to encourage people to seek that treatment.

For residents of the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon their prospects for the future are bleak; employment is hard to come by and most suffer difficult living conditions and a precarious socio-economic situation. In such an environment, depression affects almost one-third of patients seen by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), while others are affected by anxiety (22%), psychosis (14%), bipolar disorders (10%) and personality disorders.

Within the Palestinian refugee community, mental illness is stigmatised, the term itself equated with 'being crazy'. This is fundamentally due to lack of awareness about what mental illnesses are and how they can be treated. Mental health disorders are rarely talked about and it is very uncommon to ask for help relating to mental health issues. People suffering from severe mental illness are often discriminated against and isolated by the communities in which they live, including by their families.

The situation is made worse by the fact that mental health services are not generally available in refugee camps. Mental health services are not perceived as a basic health need like reproductive or child health services might be and this, in itself, reinforces the fear and stigma surrounding mental health. It is only recently

that the World Health Organisation, among others, has attached greater importance to it and is working to improve access at primary care level around the world.

Overcoming challenges

Mental health providers are generally viewed with some suspicion in this community, especially when care is delivered by people from outside the community. As the science of psychology is not widely understood and psychiatry is associated with the giving of strong medications, this leads to real concerns about 'medicating the community' through these services. The methods used to treat mental illness are not well understood and therefore to some extent are feared – which may cause mistrust of the provider. When MSF started its mental health programme in the refugee camps in Lebanon, concerns were expressed that Palestinians should not be branded as a people with high mental illness levels in a country where being Palestinian was already difficult enough. Our challenge was to educate the population about mental illness and provide access to quality services that would make a difference and would be trusted.

Religion and religious leaders play an essential role in health-seeking behaviour in the Lebanese camps

MSF/Dina Debbas

Outreach visit, Burj-el-Barajneh refugee camp, Beirut, Lebanon

as many people seek help from their sheikh as a first resort. Without adequate awareness themselves, these leaders are unlikely to advise their congregations to seek help from people with whom they are unfamiliar and receive treatment which they may be wary of.

Providing sensitive services to Palestinians with non-Palestinian professionals of different faiths (as is necessary in Lebanon in the absence of Palestinian clinicians due to work restrictions posed by the Lebanese government) is difficult. The first challenge is how to build sufficient trust so that people even consider accessing the service at all. Probably the single most important element for the success in the uptake of services was to have Palestinians within the Community Awareness Team to bridge the cultural gap, advising MSF and offering the community itself reassurance regarding the services offered. The Community Awareness Team has played a crucial role in considering – and answering – questions such as: how do the people perceive mental health? how do they deal with a mental health disorder? where do people go when they feel psychologically distressed? who decides when and how a mentally ill individual has to seek treatment?

The complex psychological effects of being deprived of a homeland or sense of belonging have been well documented but can a Palestinian really believe that a non-Palestinian can understand how this feels or how this relates to the challenges of everyday life? What may be construed as condescending or patronising advice or information when delivered by someone from outside the community is interpreted very differently when presented by someone with whom one closely identifies. While the Community Awareness Team was responsible for educating and promoting the services in the community, the management team was responsible for meeting political and religious leaders to build trust and cooperation.

Feedback from the community on how to further improve access to services was divided. On one hand, many Palestinians said they could not leave the camp and would therefore need to have services within the camp. On the other hand, there was a strong lobby from the community to have services opened outside the camp to provide some sense of confidentiality away from other camp residents.

In order to make sure that the services were accessible to all, two access points were started in the camp and one established on the immediate outskirts of the camp. With one access point at the UNRWA health centre and a second at the Palestinian Red Crescent Society hospital, patients were able to access services under cover of seeking other health services, if necessary. From the beginning of 2009 until mid-2012, 2,158 patients sought consultations with MSF's psychologists and psychiatrists; the majority seeking help (60%) were women aged between 25 and 40.

Men generally represent the most difficult target to reach. In the specific context of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon this seems to be related to the fact that men tend to consider the unsolved Palestinian cause as the root cause of all their problems, and are less willing to seek medical help that cannot address that root cause. Unexpectedly those men who do seek help have proved to be keener to see a female psychologist. This is linked to the local culture and to men's unwillingness to show 'weaknesses' and 'vulnerability' before other men. The camp's male population appears to be the most fragile group in Palestinian society as culturally they do not have the 'right' to show their weakness and their suffering yet they bear the responsibility – very often unmet due to the severe restrictions faced in Lebanon by Palestinians – of being the sole financial provider in the family.

The majority of the consultations are carried out on an individual basis by the psychologists. However, group therapies have proved highly beneficial with regard to patients who presented with similar complaints (sense of alienation from the society, exposure to domestic violence, etc) as the cause of their psychological distress. Additionally, for beneficiaries presenting with familial problems, attempts are made by the psychotherapist to bring the whole family together in the sessions; this has proved to be successful in several cases as it has reactivated lost ties and triggered dialogue.

One question that we are often asked when we advocate for mental health care to be incorporated into primary care services in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon is: "Is it worth it when you cannot improve the social and economic conditions that cause or exacerbate mental illness?" This question raises one of the main barriers to care, a real lack of understanding of the importance of mental illness. Patients with respiratory problems are treated despite returning to live in damp and squalid conditions; diarrhoea is treated while water sources remain contaminated' and treatment for mental illness must be considered as important as for these other medical conditions.

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Symptoms of disorder

"Living conditions here are very difficult. Houses are overcrowded and built close together; zinc roofs cause temperatures to rise in the summer and drop sharply in the winter; the infrastructure is nearly non-existent; and there is very little privacy in people's personal lives, which makes everyone seem short-tempered. Sometimes, when someone says hello, you want to start a fight with them.

I was introduced to MSF randomly one day, while at the UNRWA clinic. They were distributing brochures that described the symptoms related to mental health disorders. The brochure said: if you have one of these symptoms, you should consult a therapist. When I read it, I laughed to myself because I realised I had them all. After speaking to the community health worker, she advised me to visit the MSF centre and gave me an appointment, so I went. I was deeply shocked and worried at the seriousness of my illness. If I had continued in this condition, without MSF's help, I might well have gone on to kill myself and my daughters." [Hakim]

Psychosocial resilience among resettled Bhutanese refugees in the US

Liana Chase

Addressing high rates of suicide among resettled Bhutanese refugees calls for culturally appropriate, community-based approaches to mental health care.

In the late 1980s the government of Bhutan passed a series of restrictive laws that led to the expulsion of roughly one sixth of the nation's population (mostly, Nepali-speaking minorities). Close to 100,000 Bhutanese refugees fled to eastern Nepal, where many have remained in refugee camps for the past two decades. In 2007, several nations began to resettle Bhutanese refugees and today more than half of the population lives in developed countries. The transition from the bounded life of the camps to economic independence in a new culture has proved psychosocially complex. Over the past four years, a rising rate of suicide among Bhutanese refugees in the US – as well as those remaining in the camps – has caused international alarm.[1]

One community of approximately 600 Bhutanese refugees living in Burlington, Vermont, in the US may serve as a case-study of resilience in the post-resettlement context. Members of this community supplement professional services with community groups that promote psychosocial well-being. Initial exploration revealed low utilisation of professional Western mental health services by Bhutanese refugees due to linguistic, economic and cultural barriers. Significantly, there is often stigma associated with accessing professional mental health care in this population to the extent that the sufferer and his or her family fear social exclusion.

Fortunately, several community initiatives help to fill the mental health-care gap. Although seldom explicitly linked with a 'psychosocial' agenda, many community groups such as the women's knitting circle 'Chautari', the New Farms for New Americans community farming project or the Vermont Bhutanese Association incorporate popular knowledge and beliefs related to resilience.

Among Bhutanese refugees, it is widely believed that remaining engaged, both physically and mentally, is critical to preventing states of mental distress, as is sharing feelings of distress through conversation. Most interviewees only felt comfortable sharing their 'burden' with one or two trusted friends or relatives; in light of the separation caused by resettlement, forums for meeting new friends are more vital than ever to promoting emotional expression and social support. In addition, preservation of cultural identity is closely related to wellness, especially among elderly refugees. Taking part in familiar activities such as knitting and farming promotes feelings of self-worth and identity by drawing on existing skill sets from Bhutan or Nepal. Finally, individual well-being is contingent upon a strong sense of community and one's standing within it; this value, inherent to the interdependent agricultural lifestyles of Bhutanese villages, has been reaffirmed through years of communal living in the refugee camps. Such community groups ease the

IOM/Kari Collins 2009

Bhutanese refugee being resettled having her photo taken at the overseas processing office in Damak, IOM Nepal.

shock of relocating to a more individualistic society by upholding this sense of security and cohesion.

Notably, the language surrounding these community initiatives reflects Bhutanese refugee concepts of psychological vulnerability without attaching harmful labels associated with stigma and disease. Participants may be described as refugees who "remain idle", "stay in the home all day", "think too much" (especially about the past) or experience *dukha* (sadness), *manaasik bhoj* (mental burden) or *tanab* (tension) in the *man* (heart-mind). By addressing these unhealthy states before they become a more stigmatised disorder of the *dimaag* (brain-mind), the preventative community-care model embodies culturally appropriate intervention. In addition, this approach dovetails with Bhutanese refugees' claims to having a 'culture of helping', wherein the suffering of individuals is addressed at the level of family or community.

Such community group activities demonstrably support ethno-psychological mechanisms for fostering psychosocial wellness in the post-resettlement context. While the importance of professional mental health services should not be underrated, community initiatives can supplement these services by helping to prevent the development or worsening of mental disorder, thereby contributing to efforts to prevent suicides.

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1. See International Organization for Migration 2011 report on suicide at: http://tinyurl.com/Bhutanese-suicide-IOM

Argentina: resettling refugees within the context of an open migration policy

Paulo Cavaleri

Argentina's human rights-based migration policy has helped regularise regional migrant flows and has also benefitted refugees with special protection needs. Far from jeopardizing the local economy or undermining social cohesion, migrants and resettled refugees have been instrumental in Argentina's swift economic recovery in recent years.

Argentina has a long tradition of immigration. Relatively high local wages, general economic prosperity, sound public education and a liberal legal framework encouraged European immigration, particularly between 1870 and 1914 and – though less significantly – in 1919-39 and 1945-60. By the time of the 1914 national census, one third of the population had been born in Europe, yet, despite some tensions, the experience of integration was largely a successful one.

As European immigration stopped almost completely around 1960, regional migrants became increasingly significant. In the 1990s Argentina experienced numerous regional migrant flows, attracted by job opportunities and the favourable dollar-peso exchange rate. Paradoxically the national legal framework[1] and accompanying migration policies had become increasingly restrictive. Even if deportations were rare, the impossibility of regularising their residency left thousands of Paraguayans, Bolivians and Peruvians in a legal limbo, and abuses were frequently reported.[2] On the other hand, several studies undertaken around 2000 clearly showed that regional migrants were making a useful contribution to Argentine society. Not only were they rejuvenating an otherwise ageing local population – and bringing cultural diversity at the same time – but their presence was proving essential in economic sectors such as construction, domestic work and the textile industry.

By the end of the decade – somewhat predictably – Argentina had evolved into a two-tier society in which a growing underclass had few or no rights, whether of labour, education or access to health. Moreover, legislation at that time encouraged the denunciation of irregular migrants and even some powerful national trade unions would go out of their way to overtly point at regional migrants as 'stealing jobs'. Regional migrants were becoming easy scapegoats for an increasingly complex economic situation.

The Argentine crisis came to a head in the national economic downturn of 2002 which witnessed a 300% devaluation of the national currency with devastating social consequences. Unemployment rose to 20%; under-employment rose to 17%; 42% of the population were living below the poverty line; and those in extreme poverty reached 27%. Although there was no evidence to support the accusation, at the height of the crisis regional migrants were held responsible for soaring crime rates and unemployment.

After a series of xenophobic attacks against regional migrants, a first step in the right direction was taken in 2002 with the Regional Agreement for Nationals of Member States of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR, i.e. Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay) and associated states (Bolivia and Chile); the Agreement

permitted nationals of any of the six countries to reside in the territories of the others and granted them access to any economic activity on an equal basis with nationals. In 2004, Argentina unilaterally decided to suspend the deportation of migrants in an irregular situation who were nationals of bordering countries. The real turning point, however, only came with the sanction of a new migration law early that year, Law N° 25.871/04, which recognised a human right to migrate, and followed basically the main principles set by the 1990 Convention on migrant workers[3]; facilitated migratory regularisation; provided for equal treatment under the law for foreigners as for nationals; guaranteed the right to family reunification; and guaranteed access to health, education and social assistance for foreigners irrespective of their migratory status.

Additionally, a vast regularisation programme was launched – called 'Patria Grande' – which in its first phase (in 2005) granted residency to some 13,000 migrants who were not citizens of countries belonging to MERCOSUR, and between 2006 and 2010 facilitated the regularisation of a further 650,000 migrants from MERCOSUR.[4]

Unlike the new migration law that provided a general policy framework, Patria Grande was aimed essentially at migrant workers from MERCOSUR countries (full members and associate members) residing irregularly in Argentina before June 2006, who at that time represented 90% of migrants in the country. Patria Grande guaranteed their right to stay in, leave and re-enter Argentina, guaranteed their right to study and obtain work permits, and provided a first step to permanent residency.

Further tools linked to the new national migration law and regularisation programme included: a National Institute against Discrimination, Xenophobia and Racism, a Tripartite Commission on Gender and Labour Equality, and a National Education Law (N°26.206) guaranteeing access for undocumented migrants to primary and secondary school and university.

Since 2004 unemployment has fallen to 7.3% and under-employment to a similar level. Poverty fell from 54% to 23.4% and extreme poverty from 27.7% to 8.2%. The number of foreigners with criminal convictions has stayed at around 28% but of these 28%, 70% currently are for drug-trafficking and connected crimes involving mainly foreigners in transit, not residents. 59% of Argentines agree nowadays that migrants should enjoy the same human rights as nationals, whether in health, education or access to justice.[5]

Resettling refugees in Argentina

It is against this historical context that in 2003 Argentina initiated a process to sign and implement all international

human rights treaties. This was intended to be part of a major shift in Argentina's domestic and foreign policy. Argentina then decided to build up its refugee system and related institutions as a part of its new human rights-based approach that had already tackled the situation of migrants. Remembering the thousands of its own citizens who had fled the country in the 1970s and the generosity of the international community towards its refugees, Argentina passed legislation to raise its protection standards and in 2005 joined other Latin American countries in their common effort to resettle refugees.

On 9 June 2005, Argentina signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNHCR which specified particular criteria for refugees to be resettled in Argentina:

- survivors of violence or torture needing physical and legal protection

- women at risk

- those lacking prospects of local integration in countries of first asylum

- preferably those with urban profiles

- those with job skills

- families or women with children with strong integration potential.

From the outset the 'Solidarity Resettlement Programme' in Argentina was meant to be a contribution to the Mexico Plan of Action,[6] ensuring physical security and free access to health services and education for resettled refugees. It also reflected the growing number of regional refugees with urgent protection needs and the recognition of resettlement as a significant durable solution.

A National Refugee Council (CONARE[7]) was set up under the leadership of the Ministry of the Interior and involving the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice and Social Development. To facilitate the successful integration of resettled refugees, Rosario, Mendoza and the City of Buenos Aires were designated as Provinces and Cities 'of Solidarity'. The province of San Luis joined the group in 2009. Between 2005 and 2011 some 230 refugees were successfully resettled in Argentina, mostly Colombian refugees from Ecuador and Panama.

An assessment of the Resettlement Programme would include several achievements, most notably that all resettled children attend primary or secondary school, and the guaranteed access to health services for all. Social integration has been overwhelmingly positive, with only two people deciding to return so far. In the area of employment, some refugees have had their academic credentials validated while others have received new training and are now fully integrated and self-reliant.

Challenges remain, however, and housing is probably the greatest. Although the implementing agency HIAS[8] has been actively providing housing alternatives for resettled refugees since the inception of the programme they still lack access to national housing programmes. Other challenges stem from the fact that the personal profiles provided by UNHCR in the first country of asylum do not always match the criteria set by Argentine authorities;

additionally, some of the candidates for resettlement have already been rejected by other selection missions but no information or reasons are provided. To date, the programme has maintained a very low profile, which makes it more difficult to engage the private sector. Funding for the initial stages of resettlement is still a challenge.

Conclusion

Since 2002 Argentina has adopted an open rights-based migration policy so that Argentina has become the main destination country for South American migrants. Among them, Colombians stand out with some 54,020 now living in Argentina. Information from Argentine migration authorities confirms that a substantial proportion of them have special protection needs but that they preferred to enter the country as regular residents rather than as refugees.

According to Colombian consular authorities, Colombians in Argentina enjoy a high degree of social acceptance and integration – and are attracted also by other pull factors: a relatively well-off, open and equal society, a high human development index, low unemployment and the lowest homicide rate in Latin America.

Alongside the open access policy, Argentina is an emerging resettlement country, seeking to resettle particularly regional refugees with special protection needs. Argentina's request that candidates for resettlement meet certain criteria is in order to ensure high levels of local integration; in this respect local authorities are simply being realistic, rather than selective or whimsical.

As UNHCR has repeatedly highlighted, mobility is a potential tool of protection.[9] From this perspective resettlement is one tool to help persons with protection needs; an open migration policy focusing on human rights and regional realities has proved to be another, and a largely successful one. Rather than opting for a restrictive migration policy based on border securitisation and ethnic concerns coupled with a more numerically generous resettlement programme, Argentina has chosen to adopt a different strategy: an open and human-rights based migration policy, preserving the resettlement tool for a smaller caseload of persons with specific protection needs.

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1. Regulated by National Law 22.439 of 1981

2. For more details see an interview with Martín Arias Duval, current National Director for Migrations, Revista Densidades Nro 6, Buenos Aires, May 2011 at www.mediafire.com/?fr2nfx5x755fuan

3. The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families

4. This figure includes the regularisation of MERCOSUR migrants by Patria Grande proper and by the 'MERCOSUR nationality criterion'. More statistics with a breakdown by nationality and gender available at www.migraciones.gov.ar/accesible/?estadisticas

5. Source: Infobarómetro survey, May 2010

6. www.acnur.org/t3/fileadmin/scripts/doc.php?file=biblioteca/pdf/3453 See also www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR24/FMR2438.pdf

7. www.migraciones.gov.ar/conare/index.html

8. Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society www.hias.org/

9. See Katy Long and Jeff Crisp 'Migration, mobility and solutions: an evolving perspective', FMR issue 35 www.fmreview.org/disability/FMR35/56-57.pdf

Statelessness and issue (non-)emergence

Lindsey Kingston

The issue of statelessness highlights an important question: why do some issues make it onto the international agenda while others do not?

How do some issues 'emerge' – that is, take that step in the process of mobilisation when a preexisting grievance is transformed from a 'problem' into an 'issue'? This happens when advocates name a problem as a human rights violation and when major human rights NGOs begin referencing the issue in advocacy materials, perhaps leading to the creation of campaigns and/or coalitions aimed at solving the social problem. Furthermore, issue adoption occurs when an issue is championed by at least one major player in the network, often signified by a shift in resources. Understanding this step is crucial because no effective advocacy is possible unless an issue is defined as such and accepted as such by a critical mass of activists.

Unexplained cases of issue non-emergence, or partial emergence, prompt us to look more deeply at this process. Statelessness serves as an example of a social problem that has not yet fully emerged onto the international human rights agenda, yet reasons for its limited success are unclear. While the average person has a general idea of what it means to be a refugee, and perhaps even an 'internally displaced person', the concept of statelessness is generally not widely known or understood. Yet the issue has features – including its ties to international legal instruments and existing human rights norms, as well as the existence of observable harms to vulnerable populations – that make statelessness, according to some, an excellent candidate for issue emergence.

Indeed, statelessness has enjoyed partial emergence during the past few years after a long period of inattention. UNHCR recently prioritised statelessness as a budgetary pillar, and a landmark 2011 ministerial meeting in Geneva reinforced and expanded state commitments to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. International organisations and NGOs (particularly Refugees International and the Open Society Justice Initiative) increasingly reference statelessness as an important human rights issue, and connect it to concerns such as forced displacement and climate change. Unfortunately, statelessness has not yet garnered widespread public attention or become 'mainstream' enough to warrant campaign adoption by a major human rights NGO. In many cases, statelessness is dismissed as a domestic matter.

Using data collected from interviews with 21 decision-makers in major human rights and humanitarian NGOs in the US, I would argue that statelessness has failed to fully emerge as an issue as a result of three main weaknesses. Firstly, statelessness suffers from the legalistic and complex nature of the issue itself. The 'story' of statelessness is difficult to construct, due to a lack of compelling images specifically tied to lack of nationality, as well as a lack of an easily understood narrative of why statelessness happens and how it can be eliminated. Secondly, statelessness flounders at the stage of issue definition because it lacks credible solutions at the global level. Thirdly, the political will for solving this problem is often missing because statelessness is fundamentally tied to the delicate issue of state sovereignty.

Although statelessness faces these clear obstacles to successful emergence, it also possesses potential for future mobilisation efforts. Statelessness must be made understandable to the general public. Most approaches are largely aimed at elite sectors of the population (such as policymakers, academics and activists already engaged with nationality issues) rather than the general public. For emergence to happen, this issue needs to reach everyday people in more accessible forms – perhaps through films and mainstream media reporting, for a start. Indeed, the only exposure most people have had to statelessness comes from the 2004 movie 'The Terminal' in which a traveller is trapped in New York's JFK airport and temporarily rendered *de facto* stateless following a coup back home.

In addition, those wishing to mobilise or organise around the issue also need to overcome statelessness' lack of global solutions by building on existing legal frameworks (namely, the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions) in order to draw up and implement a decisive plan of action for eliminating statelessness. This is ambitious but not impossible; unlike some other issues – such as internal displacement – mandates for statelessness already exist within the international community and represent important starting points. Conducting research and sharing information, for instance, may provide valuable tools for enforcing legislation at all levels of government. Attempts to craft global solutions must be balanced, however, with an understanding that statelessness occurs for a variety of reasons around the world, and therefore a 'one size fits all' plan of action will be overly simplistic. Instead, the international framework provided by the UN conventions must be complemented by local research, problem solving and advocacy. Finally, to combat lack of political will, mobilisers must focus on raising public awareness (as discussed above), encouraging grassroots organising among stateless populations, and seeking out leadership within governments and international organisations.

For activists attempting to propel the problem of statelessness into the global spotlight, understanding the above could mean the difference between success and failure.

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FMR issue 32 (April 2009) included a major feature on statelessness. Online in English, French, Spanish and Arabic at www.fmreview.org/statelessness

Workshop: South-South Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Displacement

Saturday 6 October 2012 : Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford

This workshop will provide a space for critical reflection upon the various histories, modes of operation and implications of diverse 'alternative' models of humanitarian action. Such critical analysis is particularly important given increasing governmental and UN interest in Southern-led humanitarianism for a variety of financial and political reasons. For more details see www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/events/south-south-humanitarianism The workshop is convened by Dr Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh who is leading a new research project at the RSC focusing on the same subject: http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/research/governance/south-south-humanitarianism

Annual Harrell-Bond Lecture 2012

Wednesday 7 November 2012, 5pm :
Oxford University Museum of Natural History, Oxford

This year's Harrell-Bond Lecture will be given by Professor Mariano-Florentino Cuéllar, Co-Director of the Stanford Center for International Security and Cooperation, Professor of Political Science and Senior Fellow of the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. Details at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/events/harrell-bond-lecture-2012

30th Anniversary Conference: Understanding Global Refugee Policy

6-7 December 2012 : St Anne's College, Oxford

On the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Refugee Studies Centre, this two-day conference will bring together academics, policymakers, practitioners, advocates and displaced people to reflect upon the processes through which global public policy on refugees, internally displaced persons, statelessness, human trafficking and other areas of forced migration is made. More details at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/events/thirtieth-anniversary-conference For conference enquiries please email rsc-conference@qeh.ox.ac.uk

New research project: Humanitarian Innovation Project

Launched in July 2012, the Humanitarian Innovation Project will explore the emerging and under-researched way in which product and process innovation can be and is being harnessed to transform the nature of refugee protection. In particular, it will examine the actual and potential ways in which innovation, technology and the private sector can transform the nature of refugee protection, with a particular focus on protracted refugee situations where refugees have often been dependent on humanitarian assistance for a number of years. Working directly with refugees, the project will seek to identify ways in which innovation, technology and the private sector can be better matched with refugees' own skills, creativity, and aspirations. This new research project is headed by Dr Alexander Betts and is funded by Stephanie and Hunter Hunt through the Communities Foundation of Texas. The project has a cooperation agreement with UNHCR's new initiative 'UNHCR Innovation'. For details see www.humanitarianinnovation.com

New publication: Guidelines for Assessing the Impacts and Costs of Forced Displacement

Forced displacement and its humanitarian consequences often create short- and long-term developmental impacts affecting human and social capital, economic growth, poverty reduction efforts, and environmental sustainability and societal fragility. Published in July 2012, these Guidelines aim to support the practical assessment of the impacts and costs of forced displacement by:

■ providing analytical tools that can enhance the design and impact of policies and programmes responding to the needs of forcibly displaced people and other affected populations

■ enabling policymakers to better link development responses to forced displacement with the more conventional humanitarian and emergency interventions

■ providing indicators to monitor and evaluate the impacts of forced displacement, and the outcomes of policy and programme interventions, using baseline and time-series data.

The Guidelines are the outcome of a project undertaken for the World Bank, led by the Refugee Studies Centre, involving Professor Roger Zetter and Dr Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (plus Dr Carlos Vargas-Silva and Dr Isabel Ruiz from the University of Oxford) in collaboration with Norway's Peace Research Institute, Oslo and FAFO (The Institute for Applied Social Science, Oslo). The Guidelines plus other resources are online at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/research/drivers/costs-and-impacts-of-forced-migration

Safe spaces for adolescent girls in Haiti

Haiti Adolescent Girls Network

In the wake of the 2010 earthquake, adolescent girls in Haiti became increasingly responsible for caring for their younger siblings and for earning an income. Over two years later, girls living in IDP camps and other relocation sites, particularly those without parents, remain vulnerable to violence, and offering sex for food and/or for shelter is not uncommon.

Responding to reports that there was neglible programming for adolescent girls, a number of national NGOs, international organisations and their Haitian affiliates, and local women's groups created the Haiti Adolescent Girls Network (HAGN). Network members aim to maintain safe spaces in which girls regularly meet, find peer mentoring and build skills. This network is designed for collaborative learning and is open to any organisation committed to creating one or more girls-only safe places where, for example, 20-30 girls can meet weekly.

At the Network's outset, many participating organisations had pre-existing youth programmes but all had mixed groups – girls with boys or with women. Girls-only groups have a powerful protective effect; they help ignite friendships, connect young girls with peer mentors, foster a sense of belonging and solidarity, and give girls a place to turn to in times of trouble. These same spaces are also practical platforms through which to deliver critical new skills. For example, several Network members collaborated to develop an open-source, age-graded financial literacy programme in Creole, with the input of the young girls themselves.

The peer mentors are the programme's driving force. In many settings around the world, peer education often defaults to young people who are better-off; HAGN espouses a different model, which is to engage and foster a cadre of peer mentors aged 18-24 who are from the same communities as the younger programme participants. Peer mentors are not volunteers and must be paid; this reinforces the message that their contribution is valuable and merits the status of a job.

The number of organisations implementing girls-only safe spaces continues to grow. If this approach succeeds, it will help achieve the often-mentioned ambition to 'build back better' in the wake of an emergency.

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Nadia Todres