

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

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From the editors

The numbers of displaced people in Syria make this the largest IDP crisis in the world, with possibly also the largest number of people who are 'trapped'. In addition, the number of refugees from Syria continues to increase – Syrian refugees themselves, Iraqi and Palestine refugees, and others.

Nigel Fisher, former UN Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria crisis, says in his introductory article: "Let us ... not forget that displacement is the manifestation of the ugly fact of impunity that rides rampant in Syria. If ever an armed conflict were characterised by the absence of proportionality and distinction, Syria's civil war must be so characterised."

The official status, physical conditions and social reception of the refugees have not been uniform either across geography or across time so far and will no doubt continue to shift. With no obvious sign that the crisis inside Syria will die down in a manner or time that is predictable, the international community has an opportunity to set up, starting from now, an effective response to what will clearly become protracted displacement. While the conditions in neighbouring countries and responses further afield will continue to evolve, a pattern of needs, lacks and problems has already emerged. The authors of articles in this issue offer observations that could be of value in increasing the level of protection for the displaced and in shaping assistance to both the displaced and the countries and communities that are 'hosting' them.

We are very grateful to Kathrine Starup of the Danish Refugee Council and to Dawn Chatty of the Refugee Studies Centre for their assistance and input as special advisors on this issue.

The full issue and all the individual articles are online in html, pdf and audio formats at www.fmreview.org/syria. It will be available in print and online in English, Arabic, French and Spanish. An expanded contents listing for the issue is available at www.fmreview.org/syria/FMR47listing.pdf.

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With our best wishes

Marion Couldrey and Maurice Herson
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