Syrians in displacement

With 2018 marking the 7th anniversary of the conflict which has displaced millions of Syrians, we explore new insights and continuing challenges.

plus articles on: Myanmar, the Gambia, the Pacific, Italy, Hong Kong and the Global Compact on Refugees.

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The digest complements the full-length magazine. Both the digest and the magazine of FMR issue 57 are available online and in print in English, Arabic, French and Spanish.
Syrians in displacement

Four years ago we published an issue on ‘The Syria crisis, displacement and protection’. In the Foreword to the issue, the former UN Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis, Nigel Fisher, observed that “While the crisis may be prolonged, refugees and IDPs need support now for their protection, their recovery, and both their immediate and their long-term prospects.” As we mark the seventh anniversary of the Syrian conflict, Syrians are still displaced and still need that support.

Authors present new insights and reflect on continuing challenges, covering topics which include: local and refugee-led initiatives; identification and understanding of displaced people’s vulnerabilities and capabilities; stereotyping on the basis of gender, age or disability; child marriage; the contribution of education to social cohesion; legal identity; preparation for return and the challenges around restitution and property rights; and the potential of economic and development approaches.

This issue also includes six ‘general’ articles on other aspects of forced migration.

The full issue is available at www.fmreview.org/syria2018.

Foreword: Syria in 2018 – in search of solutions
Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Husse of Jordan
We must support displaced Syrians to regain the chance to live fulfilling, dignified lives – to return home in peace, or to build a new life elsewhere that allows them and their neighbours to flourish together.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/alhussein

Protecting the dignity of displaced Syrians
Kholoud Mansour (Lund University)
What does dignity mean to Syrian refugees and practitioners? And what can humanitarian organisations do – or abstain from doing – to help Syrians preserve and protect their dignity?
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/mansour

One camp, three refugee groups: challenges for local NGOs
Olfat Mahmoud and Rebecca Roberts (Palestinian Women’s Humanitarian Organization/Consultant)
Local non-governmental organisations in Lebanon’s Bourj al-Barajneh camp face challenges in responding to the complex needs of three different refugee groups.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/mahmoud-roberts

Refugee-led humanitarianism in Lebanon’s Shatila Camp
Hind Sharif (European Parliament)
Refugee-led humanitarian initiatives by ‘established’ Palestinian refugees in response to the arrival of ‘new’ displaced Syrians to Shatila camp raise key questions about the limitations of the humanitarian system and representations of refugees as passive victims.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/sharif

The role of municipalities in ensuring stability
Josep Zapater (UNHCR)
Responses to crises in Lebanon’s Bekaa’a region in 2017 show that refugee-hosting municipalities can be a pillar of peaceful coexistence and must be supported.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/zapater
Competing security and humanitarian imperatives in the Berm
Charles Simpson (Tufts University)
Approximately 60,000 Syrians are trapped in ‘the Berm’, a desolate area on the Syria-Jordan border. When security concerns are prioritised over humanitarian needs, and aid agencies turn to militant groups to deliver aid, the consequences can be deplorable.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/simpson-c

Categorising Syrians in Lebanon as ‘vulnerable’
Maja Janmyr and Lama Mourad (University of Oslo / University of Toronto)
Vulnerability assessments are used by humanitarian actors to identify those at greater risk of harm but their use in the response to displaced Syrians in Lebanon is problematic.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/janmyr-mourad

Rethinking the lessons from Za’atari refugee camp
Melissa N Gatter (University of Cambridge)
Humanitarian efforts to build a model refugee camp when constructing Azraq camp in Jordan – drawing on what was supposed to have been learned in Za’atari camp – missed crucial aspects of Za’atari’s governance.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/gatter

The neglected health needs of older Syrian refugees in Jordan
Sigrid Lupieri (University of Cambridge)
Older refugees are often a neglected population, particularly when it comes to health. In Jordan, the specific health needs of older Syrian refugees tend to be overlooked, due in part to a lack of data, institutional biases and the nature of the humanitarian response.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/lupieri

The importance of social capital in protracted displacement
Ana Uzelac, Jos Meester, Markus Goransson and Willem van den Berg (Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael / Stockholm School of Economics)
By understanding the role that social capital plays in the lives of Syrian refugees in Lebanon – how it is created, sustained, converted and what happens when it breaks down – we hope to generate discussion about ways to further tailor assessments, targeting and programming in this and other situations of protracted displacement.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/uzelac-meester-goransson-vandenberg

From vulnerability to resilience: improving humanitarian response
Emma Pearce and Boram Lee (Women’s Refugee Commission)
Lessons from responses to the Syrian displacement crisis can inform broader discussions on how to build responses that better address vulnerability, support resilience and include displaced women, children and young people, in all their diversity.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/pearce-lee

Syrian refugees: thinking beyond gender stereotypes
Michelle Lokot (SOAS University of London)
The dominant gender narratives among NGOs responding to Syrian refugees, and their subsequent interventions, are based on sometimes simplistic understandings of the ‘traditional’ Syrian household and power dynamics.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/lokot

New to QR codes? Download any QR code reader app (QR = Quick Response) and scan the square code next to an article – it will take you straight to the article online.
How migration to Europe affects those left behind
Megan Passey (Independent consultant)
Families are frequently separated as a result of migration and displacement from the Middle East to Europe, yet humanitarian aid is often difficult to access and insufficient to meet the needs of those left behind.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/passey

Peace education and psychosocial support for social cohesion
Ruth Simpson (International Alert)
Evidence from psychosocial support-based peace education work with young displaced Syrians shows that addressing trauma is critical in overcoming psychological barriers to social cohesion.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/simpson-r

Private sector engagement in refugee education
Zeena Zakharia and Francine Menashy (University of Massachusetts Boston)
The involvement of the private sector in providing education for Syrian refugees has much to commend it but greater consideration needs to be paid to the ethical and practical concerns that may arise.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/zakharia-menashy

Caring for male and LGBTI sexual violence survivors: learning from local organisations
Sarah Chynoweth (Women’s Refugee Commission)
Local organisations responding to the Syrian humanitarian crisis are at the forefront of providing care for both male and LGBTI survivors of sexual violence in the region.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/chynoweth

Child marriage in Jordan: breaking the cycle
Georgia Swan (ICMC Jordan)
In seeking to combat the growing phenomenon of child marriage among Syrian refugees, it is vital to engage the whole range of actors involved, and to recognise that girls and boys have the capacity to address this issue in their own communities.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/swan

Expanding economic opportunities in protracted displacement
Miki Takahashi, Michael Moroz, Jonathan Peters, Jason Pronyk and Richard Barltrop (UNDP / UN Volunteers / consultant)
Welcome progress has been made towards realising commitments made by international donors and host country governments to expand economic opportunities for Syrian refugees and host communities in neighbouring countries. However targets and commitments also bring new challenges, and evidence must underpin new policies.

Learning from the Jordan Compact
Katharina Lenner and Lewis Turner (University of Bath / SOAS University of London)
Analysis of the implementation of the Jordan Compact offers three key lessons: governmental approval is important but not sufficient, the incorporation of critical voices is crucial, and meeting numeric targets is not the same as achieving underlying goals.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/lenner-turner
Designing refugee compacts: lessons from Jordan
Cindy Huang, Nazanin Ash, Katelyn Gough and Lauren Post (Center for Global Development / International Rescue Committee)
Analysis of progress to date under the Jordan Compact highlights a number of shortcomings that need to be addressed if the model is to be used effectively elsewhere.

Turkey: between hospitality and hostility
Margarite Helena Zoeteweij-Turhan (National Centre of Competence in Research for migration and mobility studies / University of Fribourg)
Recent political developments and changes in Turkey’s asylum law have had a significantly injurious impact on the safety and legal certainty of refugees in Turkey.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/zoeteweijturhan

Refugee youth, unemployment and extremism: countering the myth
Drew Mikhael and Julie Norman (Queen’s University Belfast)
Refugee youth unemployment has been linked to increased risk of extremism and/or exploitation. Research indicates, however, that unemployment is just one of many factors triggering frustration among young refugees.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/mikhael-norman

Establishing legal identity for displaced Syrians
Martin Clutterbuck, Laura Cunial, Paola Barsanti and Tina Gewis (Norwegian Refugee Council)
Seven years of conflict have had a serious detrimental effect on many Syrians’ ability to prove their legal identity.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/clutterbuck-cunial-barsanti-gewis

This Syrian refugee now works for a Jordanian farmer, having obtained (with help from his employer) a work permit from the government.
We would like to thank Lina Abirafeh (Lebanese American University) and Rebecca Carter and Karin Eriksen (Regional Development and Protection Programme for the Middle East) for their assistance as advisors on this feature theme.

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General articles

A vision for restitution in Myanmar
José Arraiza and Scott Leckie (Norwegian Refugee Council Myanmar / Displacement Solutions)
People displaced in Myanmar during decades of civil conflict, as well as more recently displaced persons, need accessible legal pathways and assistance to regain access to and ownership of their land and properties. Myanmar needs a clear vision on restitution to end its civil wars and displacement.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/arraiza-leckie

The Gambia: a haven for refugees?
Franzisca Zanker (Arnold Bergstraesser Institute)
Although not usually thought of as a haven of refugee protection, the Gambia has a fairly sizeable refugee population and some sophisticated legal frameworks and protection mechanisms. However, the political context of its refugee protection should not be underestimated.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/zanker

Enhancing the protection of women and girls through the Global Compact on Refugees
Eileen Pittaway and Linda Bartolomei (University of New South Wales)
The consultative process involved in drafting of the Global Compact on Refugees presents an ideal opportunity to ensure that gender equality is integral to this new international policy framework.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/pittaway-bartolomei

Italy’s ‘Zampa’ law: increasing protection for unaccompanied children
Joseph Lelliott (University of Queensland)
Italy has enacted comprehensive legislation to protect the rights of unaccompanied children arriving in Italy. While flaws remain in Italy’s treatment of these particularly vulnerable migrants, the country’s protection-focused approach sets an example to other countries.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/lelliott

Voluntary immobility: indigenous voices in the Pacific
Carol Farbotko (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation)
In recent years, the international community has been paying increasing attention to the movement and planned relocation of people affected by climate change. In the Pacific region, however, many indigenous people are saying they intend to remain on their ancestral lands.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/farbotko

The role of civil society in Hong Kong
Roy Njuabe (The Vine Community Services Limited)
Local organisations can significantly assist with service provision, integration and advocacy.
www.fmreview.org/syria2018/njuabe

To access all FMR podcasts (arranged by issue), go to https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series and search for ‘forced migration review’.
Forthcoming feature themes

- FMR 58: Economies, work and displacement (June 2018)
- FMR 59: Twentieth anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (October 2018)
- FMR 60: Education (February 2019)

Details at www.fmreview.org/forthcoming.

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We welcome offers of articles on any aspect of contemporary forced migration. Please read our guidelines for authors at www.fmreview.org/writing-fmr and then email the Editors at fmr@qeh.ox.ac.uk with your proposal.

Front cover image

Some families fleeing Syria brought with them their prized homing pigeons. “I look at them and I remember home,” says one refugee at Mar el Koh informal settlement, in Lebanon, where it is common to see homing pigeons flying overhead.

UNHCR/Ivor Prickett.

The June issue of FMR will include a mini-feature on the relationship of humans and animals in refugee camps.

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

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