Monthly Update of JDC's Forced Displacement Literature Review

August 2021

Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement

WORLD BANK GROUP   UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

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Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2020

UNHCR, 2021

This report **presents data compiled by UNHCR on forced displacement in 2020 due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order**.

Key findings:

- **By the end of 2020, the number of people forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing public order reached a record high of 82.4 million**, including 48 million IDPs, 26.4 million refugees (20.7 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate and 5.7 million Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate), 4.1 million asylum-seekers, and 3.9 million Venezuelans displaced abroad. As a result, more than one percent of the world's population—or 1 in 95 people—is now forcibly displaced.

- **11.2 million people were newly displaced (or newly registered) in 2020**, including 9.8 million IDPs, 305,500 refugees and 1.1 million asylum-seekers. While the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on cross-border displacement is not yet clear, UNHCR data shows fewer arrivals of refugees and asylum-seekers in most regions—about 1.5 million fewer people than would have been expected in non-COVID circumstances.

- **Asylum-seekers submitted 1.1 million new individual applications in 2020**. The United States was the largest recipient of new individual applications (250,800), followed by Germany, Spain, France and Peru.

- **With pandemic-related border closures and travel restrictions, only a limited number of refugees and IDPs were able to avail themselves of voluntary return and resettlement opportunities.** 3.4 million displaced people returned to their areas or countries of origin during 2020, including 3.2 million IDPs and 251,000 refugees. Only 34,400 refugees were admitted for resettlement during the year (with and without UNHCR assistance).

- **More than two thirds (68 percent) of all refugees and Venezuelans displaced abroad came from just five countries**: Syria (6.7 million); Venezuela (4.0 million); Afghanistan (2.6 million); South Sudan (2.2 million); and Myanmar (1.1 million).

- **73 percent of refugees and Venezuelans displaced abroad lived in countries neighboring their countries of origin**. **Developing countries hosted 86 percent of refugees under UNHCR's mandate and Venezuelans displaced abroad, while Least Developed Countries hosted 27 percent of the total**. Countries hosting the largest numbers of refugees under UNHCR's mandate were: Turkey (3.7 million), Colombia (1.7 million), Pakistan (1.4 million), Uganda (1.4 million), and Germany (almost 1.2 million). The countries hosting the largest proportions of refugees under UNHCR's mandate and displaced Venezuelans abroad relative to their national populations were Aruba (1 in 6), Lebanon (1 in 8), Curacao (1 in 10), Jordan (1 in 15), and Turkey (1 in 23).

- **New UNHCR estimates show that almost one million children were born into a refugee life between 2018 and 2020**. UNHCR estimates that between 2018 and 2020, an average of between 290,000 and 340,000 children were born into a refugee life per year. **Children account for 30 percent of the world's population, but 42 percent of all forcibly displaced people**.

- **At the end of 2020, 76 percent of refugees were in protracted refugee situations** (i.e., 25,000 or more refugees from the same nationality have been in exile for five consecutive years or more in a given host country). In 2020, the situations of Burundian and South Sudanese refugees in DRC became protracted. Two protracted situations—Ukrainians in the Russian Federation and Iraqis in Iran—no longer meet the statistical definition for protracted displacement since numbers of refugees in each situation have fallen below the 25,000 refugee threshold.

- **Approximately 47 percent of all refugees and asylum-seekers are estimated to be women and girls**. Based on 22 out of 34 UNHCR operations where demographic data was available at the end of 2020, **women constituted on average 52 percent of all IDPs.**

This year's report **includes a new chapter on the impact of COVID-19**, highlighting the following effects of the pandemic on forcibly displaced people:

- The closure of borders and restrictions on movement are making it harder for people fleeing war and persecution to reach safety. Restrictions on movement also led to the suspension of resettlement and voluntary repatriation programs.

- In some cases, COVID-19 may have been a factor in triggering new movement of people.

- Forcibly displaced people have been among the hardest hit population groups, facing increased food and economic insecurity as well as impediments to accessing health and protection services.

- Forcibly displaced women and girls have been particularly affected in many countries, with the available data pointing to more incidents of gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual exploitation.

- The World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center (JDC), UNHCR and the World Bank are collecting household data covering forcibly displaced populations in eight countries through high-frequency monitoring surveys using mobile phones. This data provides insights into the range of socioeconomic challenges faced by forcibly displaced people and host communities during the COVID-19 pandemic, including: decreases in labor and non-labor income; increases in food insecurity; reductions in access to education; and challenges in accessing health care.

Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID) 2021

IDMC, 2021

https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2021/

The 2021 Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID) **presents global figures for internal displacement in 2020**.

The report includes the following key statistics on internal displacement due to conflict and violence:

- **An estimated 48 million people in 59 countries and territories were internally displaced as a result of conflict and violence at the end of 2020, the highest figure ever recorded**. Five countries—Syria (6.6 million), DRC (5.3 million), Colombia (4.9 million), Yemen (3.6 million), and Afghanistan (3.5 million)—account for about half of the global total.

- **9.8 million new displacements due to conflict and violence were recorded in 2020**. Persistent conflict continued to force people to flee in DRC, Syria and Afghanistan, while escalating violence and the expansion of extremist groups in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Burkina Faso and CAR fueled fast growing displacement crises. Most new displacements in 2020 took place in DRC (2.2 million), Syria (1.8 million) and Ethiopia (1.7 million). The number of new displacements fell in several countries in 2020 including in Iraq, Libya and Sudan due to ceasefire agreements and peace building initiatives.

- **The convergence of conflict and disasters led to many people being displaced more than once, increasing and prolonging their vulnerability**. For example, many of those who fled flooding in Yemen had already been forcibly displaced at least once by conflict. And in Somalia, drought has precipitated movements of people from rural to urban areas where they are at greater risk of eviction and attacks by armed groups.

- **The economic cost of internal displacement (due to protracted conflicts) was estimated at nearly US$20.5 billion in 2020**. This figure includes the cost of providing IDPs with housing, education, health and security, and accounts for their loss of income for one year of displacement.

- **There were an estimated 23.3 million IDPs under the age of 18 (due to both conflict and disasters) at the end of 2020**. The figure includes 7.2 million children under age five and 12.8 million of primary and early secondary school age.

- **Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) recorded the largest number of new displacements due to conflict (6.8 million)**. Conflict and displacement continued in the Sahel, particularly in Burkina Faso, where 515,000 new displacements were recorded in 2020. New conflict displacements also reached unprecedented levels in Mozambique's northern province of Cabo Delgado, where 584,000 new displacements were recorded in 2020. **An estimated 21.8 million people in SSA were internally displaced due to conflict and violence at the end of 2020**, the highest figure ever recorded for the region.

- **2.1 million new displacements were recorded in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) during 2020**. Protracted conflicts in Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Libya led to an increase in displacement in the MENA region during 2020. Ceasefire agreements led to a decrease in violence, particularly in Iraq, Libya and Syria in the second half of the year.

In aggregate, **around 11.8 million people were internally displaced as a result of conflict and violence across the MENA region at the end of 2020**.

This year's report includes **a special feature on the impacts of COVID-19 on internal displacement**. The main impacts of COVID-19 on IDPs include:

- Increased financial difficulties due to lockdowns and the economic downturn precipitated by the pandemic.

- Increased barriers to education for displaced children due to school closures. Displaced children are also less likely to have access to distance learning modalities than the general population.

- Heightened food insecurity due to the economic recession and changes in the availability and price of commodities.

- Obstacles for IDPs to get vaccinated against COVID-19, due to their limited access to health facilities and legal documents. Additionally, underlying health conditions, overcrowding and poor hygiene and sanitation in areas where IDPs live tend to increase their vulnerability to infection and serious illness.

- Travel constraints, the disruption of supply chains and measures to limit the spread of the virus have created impediments for humanitarian organizations that support IDPs. Lockdowns, curfews and movement restrictions have also impeded access to IDPs in addition to existing security and logistical obstacles.

- Public health measures have hindered primary data collection on IDPs, making it more difficult to track their movements and assess their needs.

- While the pandemic has increased the need for humanitarian funding, the economic downturn has put pressure on donor governments to prioritize domestic needs.

Part 2 of the report focuses on **internal displacement in a changing climate**. While largely focused on disaster-induced displacement, the authors note that "many of today's crises are shaped by a complex mix of climate and environmental change, disaster risk, conflict, fragility and displacement."

The Impact of Living Arrangements (In-Camp versus Out-of-Camp) on the Quality of Life: Case Study of Syrian Refugees in Jordan

Chinedu Temple Obi

World Bank Policy Research Working Paper Series, No. 9533 (2021)

https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/35106

Jordan hosts about 1.36 million Syrians, including both registered and unregistered refugees, representing around 15 percent of Jordan's total population. Approximately 90 percent of Syrians in Jordan are living outside camp settings in urban, peri-urban, and rural areas, and around 10 percent are living in one of two refugee camps—Zaatari and Al Azraq.

This paper **investigates whether the living arrangements of Syrian refugees in Jordan—camp settings versus out-of-camp settings—affects their quality of life**. Quality of life is measured using a multidimensional quality of life indicator capturing two dimensions of quality of life: (1) 'life satisfaction', a subjective measure of wellbeing from 0 to 10; and (2) 'material living conditions', incorporating various indicators of household income, poverty, savings, assets, satisfaction with services, and housing conditions.

The analysis is based on data from the 2015 Syrian Refugee and Host Community Survey, which gathered data on living conditions of samples of out-of-camp and in-camp refugees, as well as a sample of a host population. The data covers 2,399 Syrian refugee households, including both registered and unregistered refugees. About 50 percent of the surveyed households lived outside of camps. Among surveyed camp residents, 832 households lived in the Zaatari refugee camp, and 359 lived in the Azraq refugee camp.

Data are analyzed using econometric methods such as difference-in-differences and propensity score matching, to address the possibility of selection bias, i.e. that refugees who choose to live out of camps differ in characteristics from those who choose to remain in camps (for example, refugees who choose to live outside of camps may have better social networks, may be in a better financial position, or are pursuing employment opportunities). The methodology separately identifies the effects on female-headed and male-headed households, and evaluates effects separately for the two refugee camps.

Main results:

- **Moving from a camp to out-of-camp setting can significantly improve refugees' overall life satisfaction**.

- **The increase in life satisfaction of out-of-camp refugees does not appear to come at the expense of life satisfaction of the native population**. The host population's life satisfaction trend remained relatively unchanged through 2010 and 2015—the period in which Jordan experienced a major influx of refugees from Syria—compared to the refugee groups, although the host population perceives that the future could be worse.

- **Camp-based refugees are significantly more likely to have lower income per capita than out-of-camp refugees.** After controlling for pre-crisis characteristics, refugee households living in camps earn on average 14.77 Jordanian Dinars (approximately, US$ 20) per household member per month less than refugees living out-of-camps.

- **Refugees in camps are 36 percent more likely to live below the national abject poverty line, and consequently find it difficult to meet daily basic needs**. About 62 percent of households living in camps are at risk of living in abject poverty compared to 28 percent for those living outside of camps.

- **Camp-based refugee households have lower savings and own fewer assets compared to out-of-camp refugees**. Camp-based refugees are less likely to say they are able to lend up to JD150 to friends. On average, refugee households living out of camps possess seven of 17 assessed assets—double the number of camp households.

- **Camp-based refugees are 37 percent more likely to live in overcrowded shelters and are less satisfied with water, electricity, and sewerage access**. On average, refugees living outside of camps have one living space per adult equivalent compared to less than one (0.7) living space per adult equivalent for refugees in camps. Besides having more living space, households living outside of camps are more likely to be satisfied with their access to services such as sewerage, electricity, water, and garbage disposal.

- **Quality of life indicators differ by gender of the head of household**. Female-headed households tend to be more vulnerable than male-headed households, regardless if they live in or out of camps—they earn less, are more likely to be at risk of deprivation in basic needs, and own fewer household assets. Conversely, female-headed households, both in and out of camps, are less likely to live in overcrowded accommodation (possibly because of the absence of the household head). Female-headed households are less likely than male-headed households to report increased life satisfaction if they move out of camps, even though moving out-of-camp tends to decrease female-headed household poverty more than for male-headed households.

- **Refugees in the Zaatari camp, located close to Amman, and which has hosted refugees for a longer time, generally enjoy higher quality of life compared to refugees in the Azraq camp, situated far away from any city**. While there seems to be no difference in income and poverty indicators between refugees living in the Zaatari and Azraq camps before and after controlling for differences with respect to the situation before the Syrian crisis, nevertheless refugees living in the Azraq camp have lower quality of life indicators. Refugees in the Azraq camp tend to have less living space, have on average half the number of households assets as refugees in Zaatari, and are less satisfied with electricity, sewerage, and water services. This may reflect the closer proximity of the Zaatari camp to the nearest city in Jordan, and the earlier arrival of the camp residents—both factors that would increase opportunities for integration.

The author concludes that, while refugees' overall quality of life is low, nevertheless **refugees living outside of camps enjoy relatively higher quality of life than those living in camps**. Another key finding is that, despite being deprived in terms of several outcome indicators compared to male-headed households, female-headed households can significantly reduce their poverty level when they move out of camps. The research also suggests that **refugees living in camps closer to a major city have better quality of life than those who live in camps further away**.

Refugee livelihoods: a comparative analysis of Nairobi and Kakuma Camp in Kenya

Naohiko Omata

This paper **compares the livelihoods of refugees living in a camp setting (Kakuma Camp) and an urban setting (Nairobi) in Kenya, and contrasts these with the economic activities of host communities in each location**. At the time the research was undertaken, in 2016, Kenya hosted approximately 490,000 refugees. Kakuma Camp, located in Turkana County, hosted 200,000 refugees, the majority from South Sudan and Somalia, and smaller numbers from DRC, Ethiopia and Burundi. Nairobi is home to approximately 15 percent of Kenya's refugee population, hosting more than 65,000 refugees, the majority from Somalia (more than 30,000) and DRC (around 18,000).

The analysis is based on qualitative research conducted in Kakuma Camp and Nairobi between 2016 and 2017, including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and non-participant observations. In addition to 74 refugee respondents, 32 non-refugee stakeholders were interviewed, including government officials, UNHCR staff, members of partner agencies, and individuals from host communities.

Findings in Kakuma camp:

- **Farming is limited due to the arid climate and poor soil quality, however refugees engage in a range of commercial activities.** Enterprises in the camp offer a range of goods and services, including banking, carpentry, clothing, electrical equipment, groceries, and medicines, as well as bars, internet cafes, restaurants, and salons. Businesses operate informally, however since around 2014, the county government in Turkana has required refugees to register their informal enterprises and pay a fee for a business license.

- **An important source of livelihoods in the camp is work for UNHCR and its implementing partners**. Refugees are engaged on a voluntary basis and are paid 'incentives', which are significantly lower than the wage received by Kenyans for equivalent work.

- Refugees in Kakuma are prohibited from keeping livestock and from cutting down trees for charcoal production. **These restrictions have generated economic opportunities for impoverished host communities** who have established a monopoly on livestock, firewood, and charcoal markets buoyed by the presence of refugees.

- Refugees frequently cite restrictions on freedom of movement as a major impediment to establishing livelihoods; refugees are not permitted to sell their products and services outside of the camp. Nevertheless, **there is frequent trade between the camp and nearby Kakuma town, to which refugees can walk freely**. Some refugee business owners purchase merchandise from Kenyan counterparts in other commercial centers (usually through Kenyan brokers), and there is a commercial bus service between Kakuma and Nairobi. Some refugee households (in particular Somali refugees) send family members outside the camp to seek economic opportunities.

- Refugees in Kakuma regularly experience harassment (for bribes) by police, even inside the camp, in contrast to the way that host communities are treated by police.

- Government of Kenya's announcement in May 2016 of the closure of the Dadaab and Kakuma Camps, justified by deteriorating security and environmental issues, has affected refugees' economic planning. Although authorities later exempted Kakuma from the plan, refugees are still feeling the psychological impact of the announcement.

Findings in Nairobi:

- Although official policy requires refugees to live in camps, enforcement at the local or community level in Nairobi has been relaxed. While work permits are difficult to acquire, **many refugees are able to obtain business licenses** from the City Council of Nairobi and start their own enterprises.

- With precarious legal status, refugees in Nairobi confront increased risk of harassment and extortion by the police, compared to the host population. Somali refugees in particular have been targeted by the police.

- **Limited access to the justice system is one of the major differences between refugees and Kenyans.**

- Nairobi features the presence of a large Somali-Kenyan population. Taking advantage of ethnic and religious bonds, many Somali refugees have found income-generating opportunities in Eastleigh (the neighborhood where the Somali-Kenyan population is concentrated). Popular activities include selling clothing and cooked meals, and other casual jobs, including working as porters, shopkeepers, and waiters. Some Somali refugees have started business ventures jointly with Kenyans, which has enabled them to avoid bureaucratic hurdles imposed on refugees while decreasing vulnerability to police harassment.

- In contrast to the high concentration of Somali refugees in the Eastleigh neighborhood, refugees from DRC are scattered throughout the city. Congolese refugees speak Swahili and can 'blend in' more easily. Perceptions of them are generally positive and cordial, and Congolese refugees find casual labor among their Kenyan neighbors. As Congolese refugees tend to accept lower payment compared to nationals, Kenyan business owners often prefer to hire them for casual labor tasks.

- Refugees are largely forced to eke out a living in the informal economy and, in the case of Congolese refugees, frequently to accept payment at lower than ordinary rates.

The findings from Kakuma and Nairobi together provide the following insights:

- **Refugees pursue livelihoods in a complex regulatory context, involving multiple institutional actors**. The national government enforces restrictions on refugees' right to work and to move freely within Kakuma. UNHCR provides some economic opportunities for refugees in Kakuma, but for 'incentives' lower than wages provided to Kenyans for similar work. Turkana host populations impose local restrictions on refugees' economic activities by prohibiting them from selling charcoal, firewood, and meat. In Nairobi, local host communities are accommodating refugees and the City Council of Nairobi offers registration of the business activities of refugees.

- **Refugee status affects livelihoods differently depending on whether a refugee seeks employment or self-employment**. The national government rarely grants work permits to refugees, however the county government in Turkana is attempting to 'formalize' refugee businesses to derive tax revenue, and a number of refugee businesses are officially registered with the City Council of Nairobi. Self-employment of refugees presents financial incentives, through the collection of registration fees, and possibly also by creating employment opportunities for Kenyans.

- **Refugees are vulnerable to unofficial forms of discrimination and harassment**. Police corruption is a feature of the Kenyan economy, however refugees, especially those from Somalia, are more susceptible to police abuse due to their precarious legal status and limited access to justice in Nairobi. In both camp and urban settings, bribes and 'fees' charged by the local authorities also generate additional transaction costs for refugees' livelihoods.

- **Depending on their nationality, refugees pursue different livelihood strategies and have different relations with host communities.** The contrasting patterns of settlement between Somali and Congolese refugees in Nairobi highlight different kinds of networks established with Kenyan hosts and how these contacts serve as 'mediating factors' in their pursuit of livelihoods. The existing Somali-Kenyan community in Eastleigh provides Somali refugees with ethnic protection and access to a 'safe space' to run commercial activities. Congolese refugees cannot rely on ethnic community networks to the same extent, but their competency in the Swahili language enables them to develop connections with ethnically unrelated Kenyan nationals and explore casual employment opportunities.

- **While the nature of the support of aid organizations tends to be the provision of technical assistance, aid organizations need to take into account the economic obstacles associated with being a refugee**.

- **Being a refugee entails persistent forms of uncertainty and unpredictability, which are more observable in the camp context**. For example, the closure announcement by the Government of Kenya demonstrated to camp residents the precariousness of their life in exile, and left many questioning whether they should invest in their camp businesses.

The author concludes that, while some Kenyans face challenges similar to those facing refugees, refugees also face unique political, legal, and policy-related challenges that affect their livelihood prospects. Additionally, there is a need to focus a political economy lens on refugee livelihoods, demonstrating how they are constrained, mediated, or enabled by a range of variables and numerous formal and informal actors according to their agendas and motives.

The Labour Market Effects of a Refugee Wave. A Replication Study of Peri and Yasenov (Journal of Human Resources, 2019)

Michael Christl

There has been much academic debate about the effects of the Mariel Boatlift—the exodus of 125,000 refugees from Cuba to Miami, Florida in April 1980—on the wages of local workers. **The Mariel Boatlift increased the labor force in Miami by about 8 percent, and increased the low-skilled labor force in Miami by 18 percent. Peri and Yasenov (2019), employing a synthetic control method, found no significant effect on wages and employment of non-Cuban high school dropouts.**

This paper replicates the main results of Peri and Yasenov (2019) using the synthetic control method with additional robustness checks. The synthetic control method estimates the effect of the Mariel Boatlift by comparing the evolution of wages for local workers in Miami compared to the evolution of wages for a 'synthetic' control group. The synthetic control group is a weighted average of cities that did not experience inflows of migrants, constructed in such a way as to approximate the labor market in Miami prior to the inflow of Cuban refugees. Since there is an ongoing discussion about the sample of local workers used for the analysis, the author also replicates the results for a smaller group of local workers, specifically non-Hispanic males between 25 and 59 years old. The analysis is based on the same data used by Peri and Yasenov (2019).

Main findings:

- **The results of Peri and Yasenov (2019) are very robust when additional or different control variables are used to construct the control group.** Adding age and the share of males as controls does not change the statistical inference of the results.

- There could be negative wage effects for non-Hispanic males ages between 25 and 59 years compared to the synthetic control group, but these effects vanish after some years and are not very pronounced.

The author concludes that the results are robust for the sample chosen by Peri and Yasenov (2019). However, **the results suggest that there could be a negative effect on wages for males between 25 and 59, who were most likely to be affected by the supply shock**. Finally, the results suggest substantial differences between wage developments of females and males. The author makes the caveat that the dataset for the analysis is quite small.

Development after Displacement: Evaluating the Utility of OpenStreetMap Data for Monitoring Sustainable Development Goal Progress in Refugee Settlements

Jamon Van den Hoek, Hannah K. Friedrich, Anna Ballasiotes, Laura E. R. Peters and David Wrathall

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are most commonly monitored using data collected through national censuses and surveys. However, refugees are consistently excluded from these data collection instruments as well as global settlement and population datasets. Consequently, only 26 of 47 refugee-hosting countries identified refugees in their national SDG progress reports in mid-2020.

OpenStreetMap (OSM) is a potentially well-suited, though underexplored, source of data for assessing SDG progress in refugee settlements. OpenStreetMap (openstreetmap.org) is a georeferenced, crowdsourced product based on data collected in the field and through interpretation of remotely sensed aerial or satellite imagery.

This paper **examines the utility of OSM data for monitoring SDG progress in UNHCR-managed refugee settlements in Uganda**. Approximately 92 percent of refugees in Uganda live in 30 UNHCR-managed settlements.

The authors collected all available OSM data within 28 refugee settlements and 26 non-refugee settlements in Uganda. The data represents physical features associated with dwellings, schools, clinics, latrines, etc., with metadata on feature creation date, date of most recent edit (version), and descriptive tags. The authors created a novel SDG-OSM data model linking 149 OSM to 11 SDGs. Based on these SDG-OSM pairings, the authors: (1) quantified the spatial distribution of SDG-relevant OSM data across and within settlements; (2) measured the chronology of creation and subsequent versions of SDG data, and (3) compared the spatial and temporal coverage of SDG data between refugee and non-refugee settlements.

Main findings:

- **There is broad spatial and thematic representation of SDGs in OSM data from refugee settlements in Uganda**. 11 different SDGs were represented across 92 percent of OSM data in refugee settlements. Information on six SDGs were found in more than half of refugee settlements, with a particular abundance of OSM data on SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). However, there were no data on six SDGs.

- **The distribution of SDG-relevant OSM data varied across refugee settlements**. OSM data on SDG 6 dominates across settlements, except for Elema and Nakivale, which have as much or more data on SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and Rwamwanja, which has more data on SDG 4 (Quality Education). The greatest concentration—73 percent of all SDG data in refugee settlements—was found in Bidi Bidi, which is the largest refugee settlement in Uganda with nearly twice the population of other refugee settlements.

- **Data are generally out of date or were never updated**. 81 percent of SDG data were never edited; the remaining 19 percent were edited at least once since their creation. Concentrated periods of SDG data collection years after settlement establishment makes it difficult to monitor long-term SDG progress.

- **Non-refugee settlements had a smaller count of OSM features than settlements, and a smaller portion of OSM data in non-refugee settlements was relevant for SDG monitoring**. 78 percent of OSM features within 26 non-refugee settlements were relevant for SDG monitoring. This count is less than one-tenth of the 21,950 SDG-relevant features in nearby refugee settlements.

The authors notes several limitations for the use of OSM data for measuring progress on SDGs, including: (a) OSM features tend to be physical infrastructure that can be mapped and counted, and these features are not always an appropriate measure of progress on SDGs, particularly those SDGs that relate to the quality of development outcomes; (b) the absence or existence of OSM data reflects the extent of data creation efforts not necessarily the existence of relevant features; (c) OSM data provides a snapshot at a particular point in time rather than charting progress over time; (d) OSM data creation tends to be driven by the goals of humanitarian agencies, and there is less data on SDGs that are less relevant for urgent humanitarian priorities; (e) humanitarian-driven data creation in refugee settlements suggests apparent SDG progress in refugee settlements relative to non-refugee settlements, which may not be the case.

Despite these limitations, the authors conclude that the widespread availability of OSM data make it a promising source of information on SDGs in refugee settlements, as well as in peri-urban informal settlements and internally displaced person (IDP) camps.

'Over-researched' and 'Under-researched' refugee groups: Exploring the phenomena, causes and consequences

Naohiko Omata

Not all refugee groups receive equal attention from researchers. Among certain groups of refugees who have been the subject of numerous research studies, there is increasingly 'research fatigue', while there are other groups of refugees who feel they are under-studied, and their voices not heard. **This article discusses the phenomena of 'over-researched' and 'under-researched' refugee populations, the possible causes of these phenomena, and the consequences for research ethics and accountability in humanitarian contexts**. The analysis is based on specific case studies of over- and under-researched refugee populations in East Africa.

Key points:

- **There is growing frustration, fatigue, and mistrust towards researchers amongst refugees within both over-studied and under-studied groups.**

- Many over-studied groups (e.g. refugees in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa) are increasingly uninterested in or even mistrustful of researchers, due to the absence of concrete benefits from interactions with researchers as well as the lack of any follow-up after research has taken place. Additionally, there is a fair amount of redundancy in the research, with the same questions asked repeatedly by different researchers.

- Other groups considered themselves 'under-researched' or even neglected. For example, refugees amongst less represented nationalities (e.g. Burundian and Congolese refugees in Addis Ababa) may be particularly vulnerable but may be excluded from research studies because they are not from the main Eritrean and Somali refugee groups. The author also highlights the example of refugees with disabilities and elderly refugees in Kampala, Uganda, who have limited livelihood options.

- One of the underlying causes for the existence of under- and over-studied refugee groups is the imperative within academic research to prioritize topics with higher policy relevance. For example, Eritrean refugees in Addis Ababa are typically seen as onward migrants to the global North via Mediterranean migration routes, while Kakuma camp has been promoted by international development agencies as an exemplar of private sector-led development in refugee contexts.

- Another key factor of importance to policymakers is the size of a refugee population; the significance of a particular refugee group on the political and economic agenda of the global North is often considered directly in proportion to its size. Additionally, policymakers tend to prefer quantifiable data and analysis with the capability for broad generalization of findings, and it is difficult to achieve statistically significant findings with smaller-sized refugee populations.

- In academic institutions there is an imperative to pursue policy-driven studies, a trend that is linked to both funding and academic recognition (publication and citations).

- Policy-driven studies can run greater risks of unethical research practices as they inherently suffer from a lack of accountability to research populations. Research participants (e.g. in Kakuma and Addis) report that they rarely received information about the outcomes of research they were involved in, let alone reports or other outputs. Refugees also expressed fatigue and despair about the absence of tangible benefits from research despite many years of contributions and participation.

- By pursuing 'policy-driven' subjects as primary research agendas, academics make certain groups of displaced people more visible than others, and risk silencing the voices and lived experiences of those who are not included. Consequently, the role of research ends up reinforcing and revalidating the existing frameworks of aid regimes that decide which groups of refugees should be assisted with priority.

The author proposes several actions to mitigate existing disparity in research studies as well as to address some of the related ethical and accountability issues, as follows:

- **Adhere to the basic principles of ethical research**. Ethics in forced displacement is neither simply following rules nor confined to notions of 'do no harm' but should be extended to actively promoting the interests and wellbeing of vulnerable research participants.

- **Establish a system for participants to hold researchers more accountable**. Participants should know what to expect from the research, they need to have a way to complain when these expectations are not met (at a minimum they should be provided with contact details for researchers), and there needs to be some mechanism for redress or sanction.

- **Manage expectations about research outcomes with interviewees and participants**.

- **Expand the extent of studies beyond current policy focuses or demands for statistical significance**. Exploratory qualitative research can be a useful first step as a fact-finding mission to look into the challenges faced by these neglected groups.

- **For some under-researched groups, the need for 'advocacy' or 'activist' research should be revisited**, especially if unaddressed vulnerabilities are identified through exploratory studies.

- **More active engagement between researchers, policy-makers and aid actors**. Knowledge-exchange activities between academic and practitioners are recommended, e.g. development of joint research projects could be proposed to explore topics which fall outside the imminent scope of policy.

Reflections and Directions for Research in Refugee Studies

Alice Bloch

Refugee studies emerged as an area of scholarship in the 1980s. This review piece **discusses developments in the field of refugee studies and identifies areas for future research**.

Main points:

- **Attempts to theorize refugee migration are relatively recent**, compared to general migration literature that dates back to the late 19th century.

- **Early literature focused on the specificity of the refugee experience**, for example Kunz's 'kinetic model' (1973,1981) theorized the relationship between the reasons for flight, circumstances of refugee flight (acute or anticipatory), the likelihood of return, and settlement decisions.

- **Subsequent scholarship grappled with the idea of refugee agency, and less clear delineation between voluntary and forced migration**. For example, Richmond (1993) theorized that most refugee movements are driven by a complex mix of political, economic, environmental and social factors, which interact with structural constraints or facilitators to migration. Van Hear (1998) introduced the idea of mixed motives for migration, theorizing that almost all migration involves some compulsion and some choice. And Van Hear, Bakewell, and Long (2018) move beyond the traditional push-pull model of migration, by proposing a typology of migration drivers: predisposing drivers include the context and structural factors that might lead to migration; proximate drivers reflect the conditions in both countries and regions of origin and destination; precipitating drivers lead to migration or the decision not to migrate; and mediating factors reflect the conditions that facilitate or constrain migration such as economic resources, social networks and migration regimes.

- **Refugee studies rarely engage with historical contexts,** partly because each refugee-producing situation is regarded as unique and so the lessons learned from the past are rarely applied or reflected upon. Banerjee and Samaddar (2019) argue that what is required is a critical post-colonial approach that integrates history with an understanding of the specific aspects of the post-colonial political and social structures.

- **Refugee studies, as an area of scholarship has been orientated towards policy driven research**, based on research funders' ideas of what has policy relevance. Some scholars argue that, since research is generally funded and carried out by institutions in richer countries, it maintains the power of the hegemonic state within the post-colonial world order, and can be tainted by post-colonial racisms.

- **Scholars also highlight ethical issues relating to the value of research and who benefits**. For example, Turton (1996) argues that it is hard to justify research into 'situations of extreme human suffering' where positive change does not form an explicit part of the research agenda. Mackenzie, McDowell, and Pittaway (2007) maintain that

research can only be ethical where it results in 'reciprocal benefits for refugee participants and/or communities'. And Jacobsen and Landau (2003) argue that the imperative for academics to conduct academically rigorous research while producing knowledge that protects refugees and influences policy can limit the type of research that is carried out.

- **The design of research using categories defined by policy interests (e.g. who is a refugee) limits possibilities for engagement with social processes and inhibits the development of theory**. Crawley and Skleparis (2018) call for engagement with the 'politics of bounding', which are the ways in which categories are constructed, the reasons and the effects.

The paper suggests three crucial areas for social science research in refugee studies going forward: durable solutions; borders and bordering practices; and experiences of second-generation people from refugee backgrounds. These proposed directions for future research reflect some of the key challenges for the field, namely: (a) ongoing failures and a rigidity in approach (durable solutions); (b) ways in which a preoccupation with controlling immigration has relevance beyond the physical space of the borders (borders and bordering); and (3) the need to take a longer term perspective by considering, not only the immediate crisis, but the extended impacts of refugee backgrounds (generations) and their intersections with transnational and diaspora studies.

The author argues that research and scholars must be attentive to ways in which knowledge is produced and used, and the power relationships that are at play. In particular, research should incorporate meaningful collaborations with displaced people, scholars, practitioners and policymakers in the regions where the majority of refugees and other forcibly displaced people live so that their expertise frames debates, interventions and theoretical advances.