



# Refugee Research Network

## Research Digest

**No. 88 – June 11, 2020**

The RRN Research Digest provides a synopsis of recent research on refugee and forced migration issues from entities associated with the RRN and others.

## Recent Publications and New Research

**Douhaibi, D. (eds.)(2020). Emerging issues in forced migration: perspectives from research and practice. *Refugee Review, The Emerging Scholars and Practitioners on Migration Issues Network*, 4(1).** This issue of the Refugee Review set out to explore and expand on ethics, representation, and impact by focusing on four areas in forced migration research and practice: methodological challenges and innovations, bridging research to policy and practice, new dissemination practices and public engagement, and supporting emerging scholars and practitioners. [\(Open access\) Read here.](#)

**Otu, A., Charles, C.H. & Yaya, S. (2020). Mental health and psychosocial well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic: the invisible elephant in the room. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, 14, 38.** In the wake of the massively volatile global situation created by COVID-19, it is vital to recognize that the trauma it causes can affect people in different ways, at the individual and collective levels, resulting in mental health challenges for many. The author addresses the unique issues faced by migrants without permanent legal status, and argues that while it is crucial to limit the spread of infections, mental and behavioural health interventions should be fully included in public health response strategies. [\(Open access\) Read here.](#)

**Scott-Smith, T., & Breeze, M.E. (eds.)(2020) Structures of protection? Rethinking Refugee Shelter. Berghahn, New York.** This volume brings together essays on different forms of refugee shelter, in an aim to widen public understanding about the lives of forced migrants and developing theoretical understanding of this often neglected facet of the refugee experience. Drawing on a range of disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, law, architecture, and history, each of the chapters describes a particular shelter and uses this to open up theoretical reflections on the relationship between architecture, place, politics, design and displacement. [More here.](#)

**Akesson, B. & Sousa, C. (2020). Parental suffering and resilience among recently displaced Syrian refugees in Lebanon. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 29, 1264–1273.** This paper draws upon data from collaborative family interviews with 46 families ( $n = 351$ ) who fled Syria and are now living as refugees in Lebanon in an attempt to uncover the realities of refugee parents in situations of extreme adversity such as war and displacement. The findings describe the challenges parents faced and the ways they attempted to endure within three temporal dimensions: the past (pre-flight and flight); the present (initial resettlement in the Lebanon); and the future (hopes and aspirations for resettlement). [More here.](#)

## Report, Policy Briefs and Working Papers

**Issue Brief: Searching for Home: How COVID-19 threatens progress for Venezuelan integration in Colombia by Daphne Panayotatos and Rachel Schmidtke (May 26, 2020) Refugee International.**

Though Colombia has given its Venezuelan neighbours a relatively generous welcome, the shocks of the coronavirus have left displaced Venezuelans in a situation of heightened vulnerability. Many have lost or risk losing access to income, housing, food, and other basic needs. The authors recommend measures to mitigate that impact. [Read here.](#)

**COVID-19 derails Canadian immigration: The pandemic has dealt a temporary blow to Canada's newcomer-fueled growth strategy (May 29, 2020) RBC Economics - Royal Bank of Canada.** Amid ongoing border restrictions, travel-related health fears, and the global economic downturn, the authors expect immigration levels to be down sharply in 2020 and a recovery in 2021 will depend in part on the course of the pandemic. The authors argue the disruption will reverberate across the economy, given our reliance on immigration for labour-force growth and to offset Canada's aging demographic. [Read here.](#)

**Issue Brief: A new vulnerability: COVID-19 and tropical cyclone Harold create the perfect storm in the Pacific by Kayly Ober and Stefan Bakumenko (June 3, 2020), Refugee International.** Many countries will be grappling with the collision of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate-related disasters, the situation in the Pacific has made clear that climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction remain essential and urgent imperatives for countries vulnerable to sudden-onset disasters. The authors argue that the efforts must continue in the midst of the pandemic response, and underscore the centrality of local humanitarian responders. [Read here.](#)

## News reports and blog posts

**The rocky road to a mobile world after COVID-19 by Meghan Benton (May 2020) Migration Policy Institute.** With countries at differing points in their coronavirus trajectory, their reasons for maintaining

border restrictions vary widely. Deeply afflicted countries have enacted mobility restrictions well beyond border closures—including highly policed intraregional travel. The author argues that while all governments face the challenge of restarting mobility, their incentives may diverge even more as the pandemic spreads to new regions. [Read here.](#)

**Child repatriation in the time of COVID-19 by Jacqueline Bhabha and Vasileia Digidiki (June 4, 2020), Rethinking Refuge.** Child protection concerns have never been central to refugee policy or practice. In this latest article for Rethinking Refuge, two Harvard academics assess the impact of COVID-19 on existing pressures to repatriate child refugees. They argue that the pandemic presents an opportunity to rethink repatriation policies to better serve the interests of vulnerable child migrants. [Read here.](#)

**Many refugees living in Nairobi struggle to survive because of COVID-19 by Naohiko Omata (May 20, 2020) University of Oxford.** Local research assistants – community leaders, staff members of aid organisations, pastors and representatives of community-based organisations – who are well-networked with fellow refugees, all reported primarily on the acute economic challenges that the crisis has caused for Nairobi’s refugees. The current restrictions disable urban refugees from pursuing their livelihood. The author argues that once the health risks of COVID-19 are mitigated, the question of how to best assist refugees’ economic recovery should be a primary concern for refugee-assisting agencies. [Read here.](#)

## Digital and social media

**Podcast: Sustainability Research Group hosted at London South Bank University, Episode 1, (May, 2020).** In this episode, Ayar Ata – member of the research group and with first hand experience as a refugee – talks about an urgent need for fair access to health care for all forced migrants, especially for those living in refugee camps in this lockdown world. [Listen here.](#)

**Webinar on June 24, 2020 03:00-4:30PM BST: Mobility and immobility in the time of coronavirus: reflections from long-term study of migration and displacement by Professor Laura Hammond (SOAS University of London) presenter of the 2020 Annual Elizabeth Colson Lecture hosted by the University of Oxford.** In this lecture, Professor Hammond considers the legacy of Elizabeth Colson’s work to explore how forced migration studies might help us to better understand the monumental implications of the coronavirus pandemic on communities involved or affected by migration and displacement. [Register here.](#)

**Video: Irregular Migrants in European Cities: How to respond (April, 2019) COMPAS, University of Oxford.** This short film helps understand why cities across Europe think it is important to be inclusive

towards irregular migrants and the initiatives they have adopted to facilitate, rather than impede, their access to services. [Watch here.](#)