



Refugee Research Network

Research Digest

No. 158 | December 12, 2024

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

Dear RRN Colleagues and Friends,

Thank you for your continued readership this fall. This will be our last issue before the winter break; we will resume our bi-weekly digest in the new year. We wish everyone a happy and safe holiday!

The RRN Team

NEW RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Sangalli, L. C. (2024). [Migrants from Sudan in Germany and Jordan: Changing Belongings in the Context of Life and Family Histories](#). Göttingen University Press.

Migration often intensifies both how people construct a sense of belonging and how they are labelled or categorised by others. However, the ways in which power *transformations* shape these processes across generations and throughout a person's life are rarely analysed in relation to experiences of different forms of violence. This book – winner of the 2024 prize for the best dissertation at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Göttingen – provides an analytical framework for studying the transformation of autobiographical constructions of belonging through empirical cases of individuals and families who have migrated from Sudan. Through a transnational comparison of Sudanese diasporas and different generations of migrants, the book demonstrates that belonging for migrants and their descendants is shaped not only by their experiences and processes of remembering but also by sociohistorical power inequalities, different forms of violence and the intergenerational transmission of knowledge.

Asanov, A.-M., Asanov, I., & Buenstorf, G. (2024). [A low-cost digital first aid tool to reduce psychological distress in refugees: A multi-country randomized controlled trial of self-help online in the first months after the invasion of Ukraine](#). *Social Science & Medicine*, 362, 117442. Armed conflicts increase distress levels among affected populations, particularly impacting refugees who often face barriers to accessing psychological support. We evaluate an online version of a previously tested in-person and endorsed for online

adaptation by the WHO Self-Help Plus (SH+) program among Ukrainian refugees dispersed across 17 countries, internally displaced and not displaced Ukrainians. The findings suggest that Self-Help Online is an effective psychological intervention for reducing stress among geographically dispersed refugees at a low cost. We also find that the online delivery format of psychological interventions is feasible for internally displaced and non-displaced conflict-affected populations.

Byelikova, Y., & Taukeer, M. (2024). [Return intention outcomes of forced migrants.](#) *Border Crossing, 14(2), 150–165.* Why do some forced migrants intend to remain in their new location, while others plan to return? The study is based on in-depth interviews and focus groups with forced migrants from South Asia in Greece in 2017 and collected 423 responses to open-ended questions from Ukrainian refugees in Germany in 2022. For Ukrainian refugees, return intention outcomes are defined by the image of their country of origin and the temporality of their status. For forced migrants from South Asia, returning intention outcomes are connected to risky and often illegal ways of reaching the EU, their asylum status, and their attempt to recreate their cultural practices in the destination country. Therefore, the findings of the study help develop an understanding of the study of forced migration under the agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 of the United Nations. It would encourage researchers, policymakers and academicians to further research in the area of forced migration and refugees.

Koirala, S., Mekonnen, G. T., Deller, B., Arinaitwe, G., Kezabu, K., Swabey, K., & Kember, D. (2024). [Implementing a migrant and refugee mentoring program through action research.](#) *Heliyon, 10(22).* This article reports an implementation, through action research, of the mentoring of recently arrived refugee and migrant children in secondary school years 9 and 10. The mentoring, by education students, was in: English language skills; literacy skills for other subjects; and, planning pathways for further education. There was a very positive reaction to the program from the mentees, coordinating teachers, schools and mentors. There was strong evidence of improvements in English language skills. This enabled the mentees to successfully complete reading, writing and speaking activities and assignments across the whole range of subjects. As the mentees developed greater fluency and confidence in the use of English, they felt more able to participate in class activities and discussions. This led to better integration into the school community. There was also evidence of integration into the broader Australian society, as the migrants were taught to write resumes and some obtained part-time jobs.

Pearce, J., Verstraete, L., Mutswenje, M., Katsi, L., Magara, P., Goyol, K., Butterworth, J., Mondorf, D., & Henrike Klau-Panhans, D. (2024). [Water supply for refugees and their host communities in protracted situations: Costs and financing options for sustaining services in Ethiopia and Uganda.](#) *Journal of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Development.* This paper reports on a study to identify the actual costs of water supply in two contexts with long-term refugee populations: Itang in the Gambella region of Ethiopia and Rwamwanja in the Kamwenge District of Uganda. Following the initial rapid, overwhelming demand for services at these locations, the water services have evolved

through different phases of investment with concerted efforts made to both improve services and reduce costs. Most recently, this has included the adoption of utility management models. This paper seeks to provide evidence to support the discussion on how water services can be financed to meet the needs of refugees and their host communities on a sustainable basis.

Pruysers, S., Banerjee, K., & Blais, J. (2024). [Fear of crime and anti-refugee sentiments: Evidence from Canada.](#) *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, 40(2), 1–19. Many states have witnessed growing xenophobia and hostility towards refugees alongside the framing of refugees as a serious security or criminal threat in public discourse. Making use of an original cross-national survey of adults in Canada, this article explores the link between fear of crime and negative views of refugees. Its results reveal that even after controlling for alternative explanations, people with more fear of crime are significantly more likely to express anti-refugee sentiments. These results have implications for understanding ongoing challenges in maintaining domestic support for refugee protection and the importance of dispelling myths that refugees are sources of criminality.

REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS

[Community sponsorship for refugees in Poland: social attitudes and comparisons with other asylum and refugee policies](#) by **Partycja Hryciuk-Ziółkowska, Aleksandra Grzymala-Kazłowska, Maria Nawrocka, & Renata Stefańska. (2024).** **Centre of Migration Research.** In the context of rising social tensions around migration, searching for new solutions regarding hosting refugees becomes especially important. There is a particular need for programmes that facilitate the reception and support of refugees and their integration, which would gain wider public acceptance. In this issue of CMR Spotlight, the COPOCS team presents the results of their survey in Poland on social attitudes towards one such potential programme – community sponsorship – compared to other forms of support for refugees.

[Complementary Pathways: Key Factors in Future Growth](#) by **Susan Fratzke & María Belén Zanzuchi. (2024).** **Migration Policy Institute.** Complementary pathways have grown in popularity in recent years. These programs—which include humanitarian admission, sponsorship, and education- and employment-based mobility programs for refugees and others in need of protection—promise to better engage receiving communities in welcoming newcomers, promote public support for arriving refugees and capitalize on available private resources to sustain and expand protection-based pathways. This MPI Europe report explores the elements needed to build this supportive ecosystem, drawing on interviews, expert roundtables, and lessons from the three-year Complementary Pathways Network (COMET) Project. The study then offers strategies and recommendations for addressing these challenges and, in doing so, strengthening protection pathways.

[Digital Innovation for Migrants and Displaced Communities: Emerging Humanitarian Approaches.](#) (2024). **IFRC Network.** This scoping study aimed to improve understanding of where the IFRC Network is integrating digital tools into programmes for migrants and displaced people, including at Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs). The research documents different examples of the use of digital tools in Red Cross and Red Crescent programmes supporting people on the move globally. It also highlights sector-wide good practices and provides recommendations to enhance digital integration in humanitarian services for migrants and displaced persons, including addressing its opportunities and risks.

[Internal Displacement in Africa: An overview of trends and developments \(2009-2023\).](#) (2024). **Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.** Fifteen years ago, Africa was at the forefront of progress towards comprehensive responses to internal displacement. The African Union adopted the Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, known as the Kampala Convention, in 2009. It was the first – and is still the only – legally binding regional instrument that addresses all causes and phases of displacement. It reflected the determination of African countries to address the phenomenon and set international standards for its management.

[Secondary Education and Child Marriage in Forced Displacement and Crisis Settings.](#) (2024). **Secondary Education Working Group.** The brief presents an overview of actions and approaches to address child marriage within secondary education in forced displacement and crisis-affected settings. It showcases how gender-responsive and inclusive secondary education can support adolescent girls who are at risk of marriage, ever married, pregnant and/or young mothers. The brief is structured through the lens of the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergency Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery to highlight how education actors can, and must, take more intentional action to tackle child marriage in humanitarian programming. The brief includes a series of initial recommendations generated through discussion with SEWG members to advance secondary education programming, innovation and learning on child marriage.

NEWS AND BLOG POSTS

[Armenia to reduce housing aid for Nagorno-Karabakh refugees](#) by Ani Avetisyan, **December 2, 2024. Eurasianet.** The Armenian government has announced it is scaling back a program that provides housing subsidies to refugees from Nagorno-Karabakh, casting the decision as a move to promote self-sufficiency and stimulate the integration of refugees into society. But for the tens of thousands of Karabakh refugees receiving assistance, the announced reduction in benefits is likely to cause a spike in discontent. Armenia since November 2023 has provided a monthly stipend of 50,000 drams (about \$125) to refugees from Karabakh without housing or government shelter. This assistance has supported most of the estimated 105,000 Armenians who fled Karabakh after Azerbaijan reconquered the entire region in September 2023.

[Catastrophic Flooding and its Impact on Displaced People in Chad](#) by Julia Davatzes, December 5, 2024. Wilson Center. The forcibly displaced people in Chad are experiencing magnified flooding impacts and require prioritized, targeted assistance to meet their expanding needs. Since July 2024, catastrophic flooding in Chad has severely impacted an estimated 2 million people, including refugees and other displaced people. This year's floods exceed the "worst in a decade" floods of 2022, when 56,000 homes were destroyed. To date, the five months of recurring floods have destroyed over 200,000 homes and decimated 430,000 hectares of cropland. Over 13,000 people are displaced and nearly 600 fatalities have resulted from the immediate impacts of the floods, although the indirect excess mortality is hard to estimate. While these floods continue to drive internal displacement of Chadian nationals, the country already hosts over 1.2 million refugees and asylum-seekers. Chad hosts 45% of all Sudanese refugees in the world and other refugees from neighboring Central African Republic, Cameroon, and Nigeria.

[Immigration: the Nuts and Bolts of a Complex Issue | Guest Column](#) by Susan Martin, Donald G. Herzberg Professor Emerita of International Migration, November 27, 2024. The Journal of the San Juan Islands. A self-described immigration policy wonk for forty-plus years and is an internationally renowned scholar now living on San Juan Island in Washington State, Susan Martin writes about what can be expected with the new US administration led by incoming President Trump including a ban on migration from Muslim countries and the decimation of the refugee resettlement program. She then sets out five strategies that residents of the State can pursue to cushion the effects of Trump's policies. She concludes: "We are not without power to stop bad things from happening. Although it will be difficult, it is well worth trying."

[Syria: More than 280,000 uprooted in northwest escalation](#), December 6, 2024. United Nations. More than 280,000 people have been uprooted in northwest Syria in a matter of days following the sudden and massive offensive into Government-controlled areas led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), which is sanctioned by the Security Council as a terrorist group. Aid has continued to flow from Türkiye across three border crossings into the embattled northwest and the UN World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) said that it had opened community kitchens in Aleppo and Hama – cities now reportedly occupied by HTS fighters.

[Tamils arriving in UK after three years stranded on Diego Garcia speak of relief](#) by Diane Taylor, December 3, 2024. The Guardian. Dozens of people stranded in hellish conditions for more than three years on the remote Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia have arrived in the UK and told of their relief that their journey is over. Lawyers and campaigners hailed the arrival of 47 Sri Lankan Tamils on Monday night as a "big day for justice", with a further eight arriving on Tuesday morning from Rwanda, where they had been receiving medical treatment. Twelve children were among them. They are staying in a hotel on the outskirts of London, where some of the children were seen running around excitedly on

Tuesday. The group seemed relaxed about the freezing temperatures and unfamiliar surroundings.

US: Agents Block, Mistreat Mexican Asylum Seekers Next Administration's Policies Would Worsen US Abuse at the Border, December 5, 2024. Human Rights Watch.

United States Border Patrol agents are denying access to asylum to families fleeing violence in Mexico, in violation of US and international human rights law, Human Rights Watch said today. The agents have expelled asylum seekers to Mexico, where many said they feared persecution, as well as mistreated and ordered them to discard their belongings. US and international human rights law guarantee the right to seek asylum, and to humane treatment when in government custody.

EVENTS, RESOURCES, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Helton Fellowship Program. American Society of International Law. Funded by contributions from ASIL members, interest groups, and private foundations, Helton Fellowships provide financial assistance in the form of "micro-grants" for law students and young professionals to pursue field work and research on significant issues involving international law, human rights, humanitarian affairs, and related areas. The deadline to apply is January 17, 2025.

Participate in THE's and UNHCR's higher education survey on opportunities for refugees. Times Higher Education. Times Higher Education (THE) has partnered with UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, to produce the largest global mapping of higher education opportunities for refugees. This survey will allow us to collect the information needed to undertake this mapping exercise. This mapping will serve as an essential piece of information for governments, relevant ministries, higher education institutions (HEI), and refugee and asylum seeker students to explore and access higher education pathways, and as a vital advocacy tool for raising awareness and solidarity for refugee and asylum seeker inclusion in higher education. This survey will collect data on refugee and asylum seeker enrolments, scholarship opportunities, and practices on empowering refugee and asylum seeker higher education and will support the UNHCR's strategy to achieve 15% enrolment of refugees in higher education by 2030. The survey will close on January 31st, 2025.

Refugee Marketplace. Jumpstart Refugee Talent. The Refugee Marketplace is Canada's first online platform dedicated to showcasing and selling products made exclusively by refugee entrepreneurs. This initiative by Jumpstart Refugee Talent offers a thoughtfully curated selection of high-quality gifts, apparel, home décor, specialty foods, and more. Every purchase directly supports these talented entrepreneurs, fostering economic independence and sustainable growth for refugee-led businesses.

Women on the Frontlines: Adapting to Climate Change in Kenya and Nigeria.

Migration Matters. Women are disproportionately affected by climate change and immobility, yet they are often at the forefront of finding solutions. This episode features stories from Kenya and Nigeria, where women share how climate challenges have reshaped their roles and livelihoods. Experts Dr. Nassim Majidi (Samuel Hall) and Priscilla Achakpa (Women Environmental Programme) discuss the importance of a gender-sensitive approach to climate policy, emphasizing the need for cultural, economic, and political changes to support women's resilience and adaptation.