



Research Digest

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

NEW RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Gatrell, P., Nowak, K., Banko, L., & Ghoshal, A. (2025). [*Refugee Voices in Modern Global History: Reckoning with Refugeedom*](#). Oxford University Press. Across modern history, refugees have articulated their experiences and wishes against the backdrop of mass displacement brought about by world war, civil war, revolution, population exchange, decolonisation, and state formation. Men and women displaced in different sites, at different times and from different backgrounds played for high stakes: they deliberated about what to say and to whom, and they sought, expected and generated a response from international organisations and other actors. *Refugee Voices in Modern Global History* places refugees at the centre of modern history. It demonstrates how ordinary refugees understood their experiences and engaged with institutions that sought to resolve their predicament. It asks how, to whom, and in what circumstances refugees spoke of the emotional impact of displacement and how they expressed themselves politically as well as personally. It shows refugees to have consistently exercised agency. By adopting the term ‘refugeedom’ the authors show how the voices and perspectives of refugees can be incorporated alongside the power dynamics associated with the multiple incarnations of the refugee regime that ‘managed’ refugees and articulated ‘solutions’. Extensive archival research across three continents makes it possible to explain in comparative terms the significance attached to the encounters between refugees and officials in modern Europe, South Asia, the Middle East, East Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa. The result is an original and in-depth study of the contrasting responses of refugees to displacement and to the arrangements made on their behalf at a series of critical junctures in the past.

Kortendiek, N. (2025). [*Global Governance on the Ground: Organizing International Migration and Asylum at the Border*](#). Oxford University Press. This book offers a new approach to how international organizations govern. Through an in-depth look at the case of migration and asylum, the book argues that international organizations (IOs) not only govern

global challenges through rules, standards, expertise, and numbers but also through practice on the ground. Much scholarship has been devoted to the question of how IOs become autonomous agents and exercise authority to shape governance outcomes. Far less attention has been given to the way IOs use their field access to govern global issues on the ground—without first going through formal policy channels or renegotiating their authority. The book demonstrates that through field-based practice, IOs directly regulate global issues in the spaces where they become virulent, in different locations across the globe.

Barber, S. (2025). [From silence to academic engagement: How refugee children with disabilities access learning through inclusive ‘artful’ schools in Canada.](#) *British Educational Research Journal*. **Open access.** Many newcomer children spend a ‘silent year’ in elementary school classrooms while they adjust to a new culture and language. This often delays inclusion in learning and forming friendships with peers. For refugee children with disabilities (RCDs) this phase may last for 3 years or more, impacting their mental health and sense of belonging, and potentially worsening issues they carry from experiences of war and violence. This paper suggests that these barriers might be overcome through capitalising on strategies that circumvent spoken language by relying on the universal language of art. While making art, children naturally explore their identities, decide how they will present themselves to others, find meaning in a healing narrative and safely process bad memories. The main goal of the study was to uncover hidden ‘knowledge of self and others’ through an arts-based research approach. Five arts education and art therapy methods with 49 children (aged 7–9) were implemented and evaluated, including self-portraits, emoji games, read-aloud story books, paper-bag puppets and digital stories. Findings reveal that over time, students undergo noticeable changes in their cognitive and affective understandings with exposure to art, and improve their language ability, self-esteem and well-being. An unexpected outcome was how the arts may scaffold RCDs into academic learning earlier than expected.

dos Santos Gonçalves, M. do C. (2025). [‘Operation Welcome’: Humanitarian Pathway and Admission Applied to the Reception of Venezuelan Migrants in Brazil.](#) *Quarterly on Refugee Problems - AWR Bulletin*, 64(1), 113–129. **Open access.** This article discusses ‘Operation Welcome’, a Brazilian government initiative to receive Venezuelan migrants and refugees, which has been managing emergency humanitarian assistance on the border between Brazil and Venezuela since 2018. The study seeks to analyse the dynamics of the reception of Venezuelan migrants through humanitarian assistance, drawing on the theoretical and methodological approach of anthropology on the border. The militarization of humanitarian action emerges as a hybrid perspective of migration control that is shared with NGOs and international agencies working on Operation Welcome in the context of the border analysed. The text suggests that Operation Welcome, by adopting interoperability as a framework for the actions of its actors, favoured the conditioning of the use of force by the State to the principle of social protection, shedding light on the creation of reception systems that are governed by the principle of guarantee and recognition of rights.

Ihnatenko, K., & Sadzaglishvili, S. (2025). [Barriers to social service access for Ukrainian refugees with disabilities in Georgia: Outreach and Communication](#). *Social Sciences*, 14(2), 95. Open access. This paper aims to identify the barriers to accessing social services for persons with disabilities among Ukrainian refugees and to examine how stakeholders can reach them through communication channels. The article analyzes the challenges faced by disabled Ukrainian refugees in Georgia. The findings reveal significant difficulties faced by Ukrainian refugees with disabilities in accessing essential services such as healthcare, employment, psychological counseling, rehabilitation, early intervention services, legal aid, and information. The primary strategies employed by stakeholders providing humanitarian aid include individualized approaches and communication. However, while many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) assist Ukrainian refugees, there are currently no NGOs specifically focused on supporting children and adults with disabilities in this population.

Jana, M. (2025). [Displacement and the reframing of reproductive autonomy: A case of Rohingya women in India](#). *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. Open access. Women's narratives are often absent or distorted in theorisations of displacement, reflecting an 'androcentric' international human rights framework. This paper examines the transformation of gender roles and reproductive rights among Rohingya women in Indian refugee camps. Based on qualitative research in the National Capital Region of Delhi and Haryana districts, the author argues that displacement operates as both a barrier and a catalyst, reconfiguring public-private boundaries and enabling subtle negotiations of power. Women's life histories reveal strategies of mobility and agency within oppressive structures. By integrating discussions on marriage, family planning and childbearing, the paper challenges reductive refugee stereotypes and advocates centring reproductive rights in policymaking.

REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS

[ACAPS Thematic report - Afghanistan: Implications of the US foreign aid cuts on the humanitarian response \(01 April 2025\)](#). (2025). Reliefweb. On 10 March 2025 – seven weeks into the 90-day pause and foreign aid review announced via executive order on 20 January 2025 – the US Government announced that it had cancelled more than 80% of all USAID programmes globally. These cancellations followed a series of stop-work orders (SWOs) issued on 24 January on all US-funded aid activities. Despite a waiver for life-saving humanitarian assistance announced on 28 January for some programming categories, some organisations still terminated programmes even without receiving a termination notice because of the unclear communication and implementation of the waiver. This report provides a detailed analysis of the extensive impacts of the funding freeze and cuts of USAID on Afghanistan.

[Analysing the 2025-26 Federal Budget: What it means for refugees and people seeking protection](#). (2025). Refugee Council of Australia. This report reviews the Australian 2025-26 federal budget with key points such as, “despite forced displacement globally at

unprecedented levels, Australia's Refugee and Humanitarian Program will remain at 20,000 places, the level set in 2023-24".

[Funding Cuts Threaten the Health of Nearly 13 million Displaced People. \(2025\).](#)

UNHCR. Without adequate resources, an estimated 12.8 million displaced people, including 6.3 million children, could be left without life-saving health interventions in 2025, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency warned on March 28, 2025. The current humanitarian funding crisis, exacerbated by declining health spending in hosting countries, is affecting the scope and quality of public health and nutrition programmes for refugees and host communities, disrupting access to essential services and increasing the risk of disease outbreaks, malnutrition, untreated chronic conditions and mental health issues. When support for refugee health care is cut, refugees will be forced to pay from their own pockets – but they do not have the funds – and will face challenges accessing already strained public services, overwhelming local clinics and hospitals.

[Pendular Movements in the Mandera Triangle: Tri-border region of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia. \(2025\). Mixed Migration Centre.](#)

This infographic explores cross-border and pendular movements within the Mandera Triangle — the tri-border region of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. Pendular movements refer to the cyclical or repeated movement of individuals or groups living in border areas between two or more locations, often crossing international borders. Home to approximately 350,000 people, the Mandera Triangle is a borderland region prone to recurring environmental shocks, including droughts and floods, as well as varying levels of conflict and insecurity. Consecutive failed rainy seasons have exposed communities to food insecurity and water scarcity, eroding agricultural and pastoral livelihoods. These conditions have shifted seasonal migration patterns and intensified displacement and cross-border mobility.

[UN and partners seek \\$934.5m for life-saving aid to 1.5 million Rohingya refugees and their hosts in Bangladesh. \(2025\). UNHCR.](#)

UNHCR. UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and partners called on the international community to enhance its support for Rohingya refugees and their hosts in Bangladesh amid rising insecurity in Myanmar and ongoing forced displacement. Unrelenting conflict in Myanmar, dwindling financial resources and competing global crises have made it critical for the international community to step up for the Rohingya refugees, who remain in a precarious situation, entirely dependent on humanitarian aid.

[What crisis affected communities need from a humanitarian reset - A guide based on two years of conversations with people on the front lines of crisis. \(2025\). Reliefweb.](#)

What does humanitarian assistance look like in a world with less money, less global solidarity and ever-increasing numbers of people in need? Over two years and across 12 countries, Ground Truth Solutions held more than 34,000 conversations with people experiencing crisis to find out what they want and need humanitarian action to do for them. They offer some clear priorities that should help to navigate this funding crisis.

NEWS AND BLOG POSTS

[DR Congo: Armed violence displaces thousands as cholera outbreak worsens](#), April 3, 2025. **United Nations.** Ongoing violence in North and South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) continues to kill, injure and displace civilians, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has warned. Preliminary reports from partners on the ground indicate at least two civilian fatalities and multiple injuries, with several wounded evacuated to Masisi General Hospital. Meanwhile, many civilians remain confined to their homes due to active crossfire, intensifying fear and limited access to basic needs and services.

[Myanmar and the Gutting of USAID](#) by Naw Theresa, April 4, 2025. **The Diplomat.** On March 28, what is being called a once-in-a-century earthquake struck central Myanmar, devastating huge swathes of the war-torn country. The cities of Mandalay and Sagaing, along with the administrative capital Naypyidaw and villages in the famed Inle Lake region in Shan State have seen widespread and catastrophic death and destruction. The State Administration Council (SAC) junta has reported over 3,000 dead and thousands wounded or missing, but the broad consensus is that the death toll will likely be in the tens of thousands. Strong aftershocks, destroyed highways, power outages, and deep political cleavages are hampering rescue efforts. While U.S. President Trump pledged aid in response, there was a notable absence of American rescue or coordination teams on the ground.

[Poland introduces law allowing suspension of asylum rights](#), March 26, 2025. **Notes from Poland.** President Andrzej Duda has signed into law a bill that will allow Poland's government to suspend the right to claim asylum for people who enter the country as part of the "instrumentalisation of migration", as has been happening on the border with Belarus. The measure has been criticised as a violation of European and international law by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Poland's own human rights commissioner. Instrumentalisation of migration is a phrase regularly used by Polish and other European authorities to describe the deliberate manner in which Belarus and Russia have used migrants and asylum seekers in an attempt to destabilise EU countries.

[Syria after Assad: why many Syrian refugees aren't returning home](#) by Charlotte Al-Khalili & Melissa Gatter, March 24, 2025. **The Conversation.** When news of Bashar al-Assad's downfall broke on December 8 2024, 13 years after the beginning of the Syrian uprising, Syrians around the world rejoiced. The authors rejoiced along with them, having spent the last decade in conversation with Syrians displaced to the neighbouring countries of Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, where they research humanitarian aid in refugee camps and revolutionaries in exile. The dream of Syrian refugees to return home now comes with existential, practical and legal questions.

[2 killed as Sudan's paramilitary intensifies attacks on displacement camp in North Darfur](#) by **Fatma Khaled, April 2, 2025. Independent.** At least two people were killed in attacks by Sudan's paramilitary forces on a famine-stricken camp in North Darfur for people displaced by the war in the country, officials and humanitarian organizations said. The Abo Shouk displacement camp in el-Fasher has been attacked on and off over the past 11 months, but attacks have intensified recently, Adam Rijal, the spokesman for the Coordination for Displaced Persons and Refugees in Darfur, said.

[3 million Afghans, many of them at risk for aiding U.S., face expulsion from Pakistan](#) by **The Associated Press, March 31, 2025. NBC News.** Pakistan plans to expel 3 million Afghans from the country this year, as a deadline for them to voluntarily leave the capital and surrounding areas expired. It's the latest phase of a nationwide crackdown launched in October 2023 to expel foreigners living in Pakistan illegally, mostly Afghans. The campaign has drawn fire from rights groups, the Taliban government and the United Nations.

[4 ways to prevent and manage climate migration](#) by **Eric Shahzar, March 20, 2025. World Economic Forum.** Accelerated climate change is reshaping migration and displacement patterns worldwide. Extreme weather events, rising sea levels and coastal erosion are making many areas uninhabitable, forcing millions to relocate. By 2050, an estimated 1.2 billion people could be displaced due to climate-related disasters. The scale and frequency of global climate displacement demand immediate and targeted policy intervention. Delays in action only deepen the crisis, pushing affected populations into vicious cycles of extreme poverty, insecurity and further migration. To address this growing crisis, countries can opt for four pre-emptive measures to tackle global climate migration

EVENTS, RESOURCES, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

[Fundamentals of Community-Based Research: A free workshop by Prof. Dina Taha.](#) **Resource Centre for Public Sociology, York University.** This workshop is a conversation starter about community-based research (CBR), an approach that bridges research to practice and prioritizes collaboration with community members and partners, and centers equity, social justice and research impact - in short, CBR is a tool to operationalize public sociology. Participants will explore the objectives and steps of CBR, key steps in the research process, and practical tools for engaging with communities. Through hands-on examples, we will discuss how CBR can empower marginalized groups, facilitates knowledge mobilization, and contributes to decolonization. By the end of the session, students will have a foundational understanding of how to apply CBR principles in their own research and community engagement journeys. This workshop will be on April 15, 2025, 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM (EDT) on Zoom.

[Immigration Actions in First 100 Days of Trump Second Term \(Webinar\).](#) **Migration Policy Institute.** During his campaign, Donald Trump pledged swift and sweeping actions on

immigration enforcement and policymaking more broadly. From his first day back in office, President Trump and his team began delivering on their promised “shock and awe,” with policies ranging from a halt to refugee resettlement and dramatically widened immigration enforcement in the U.S. interior to an effort to end birthright citizenship. Other high-profile actions, including the declaration of an “invasion;” dispatch of deportees to third countries such as Panama, Costa Rica, and El Salvador; and first-ever peacetime triggering of the 1798 Alien Enemies Act, have followed. Amid the “flood the zone” tempo and blizzard of headlines and legal filings during the administration’s first 100 days, it is sometimes difficult to anticipate which actions will have the greatest impact and be most long-lasting. On this webinar (April 24, 2025 at 11:30 ET), MPI analysts will assess the most consequential actions taken during the first 100 days, detail the litigation picture, and analyze some of the early effects of policies on communities across the United States.

[Making ‘Loot,’ a Film About Cambodian Crimes and Redemption: A conversation with director Don Millar \(Podcast\).](#) **The Diplomat.** From remote Cambodian villages to the world of elite art collectors and galleries in New York and London, the new film “Loot: A Story of Crime & Redemption” documents the theft of artifacts known as “blood antiquities” from in and around the temple ruins of Angkor Wat and Koh Ker during Cambodia’s civil war. Director Don Millar spoke with The Diplomat’s Luke Hunt about a documentary that was three years in the making, after its screening at the 14th Cambodian International Film Festival in Phnom Penh.

[Online NGO Dialogue: Mainstreaming Mental Health and Psychosocial Support across refugee responses in Europe.](#) **UNHCR.** Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) encompasses the range of interventions undertaken to address psychological distress and promote well-being. It is a critical component of protection and solutions for refugees, asylum-seekers, returnees, stateless individuals, and internally displaced people, who are often significantly impacted due to conflict, persecution, displacement, dangerous journeys and exclusion. In Europe, displaced populations face significant MHPSS challenges, including legal and administrative barriers to care, language difficulties, and limited access to both community-based psychosocial support and specialized services. Stigma surrounding mental health further compounds these challenges, contributing to underreporting and making it difficult to fully assess the scale and complexity of needs. This Regional Dialogue will be an opportunity to discuss how to further mainstream MHPSS across protection interventions, showcase NGOs’ experiences and good practices, and hear from NGOs and develop concrete recommendations on how UNHCR and NGOs can better support each other. This will be on April 11, 2025, 11:00 - 12:30 CET, online.

[Trauma casts a long shadow for immigration detainees \(Podcast\).](#) **Immigration Issues - SBS News.** A new report from the University of New South Wales in Australia has highlighted alarming mental health outcomes for individuals who have spent time in detention. Refugees and migrants already experience lower rates of mental health literacy - but one initiative is looking to raise awareness and provide easy English resources in culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The initiative has emerged amid debate

about controversial laws that would enable the government to deport any individual without a visa to a third country.

'Wicked' Challenges in Migration Management: Weaponization, Politicization, and Hostile Influence Operations (Podcast). Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford University.

As allegations of the weaponization of migration proliferate on both sides of the Atlantic, Professor Kelly M Greenhill explored a triad of intertwined and self-reinforcing challenges that inform, affect and complicate migration management and the politics around border security: 1) the weaponization of migration for political, economic and/or military gain; 2) the politicization and exploitation of fears of migration for domestic political gain - or the weaponization of the weaponization of migration, if you will; and 3) the weaponization of the politicization of migration, in the form of hostile influence operations that rely on the deployment of rumors, conspiracy theories, and other forms of what Greenhill calls "extra-factual information" as well as on the direct and indirect creation of actual migration outflows. Drawing upon evidence from recent and ongoing cases, Professor Greenhill also discussed how each of these three distinct phenomena can feed and exacerbate the others, creating vicious feedback loops. leaving target states less secure and more vulnerable to future acts of migration predation and further endangering the human rights of the true victims of migration weaponization, the displaced.