



# Refugee Research Network

## 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.

*Dear RRN Research Digest readers and contributors, we hope you had a lovely summer! We're excited to continue with the RRN Research Digest and look forward to a fantastic year ahead. If you have anything you'd like us to consider featuring, email us at [rrn@yorku.ca](mailto:rrn@yorku.ca).*

*We look forward to hearing from you.*

*Warmly,*

*RRN Digest Team*

## NEW RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

**Ansar, A. (2025). [Rohingyas and the Geographies of Precarity in Exile: Everyday Life in Bangladesh and Malaysia](#). De Gruyter. Open access book.** Focusing on Myanmar's Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and Malaysia, this study provides an in-depth analysis of the contribution of historical legacies of exclusion, along with contemporary practices of marginalization and otherisation, to the transcendence of the precarity landscape. In light of the 2017 displacement of over a million Rohingya from Myanmar's Rakhine state to neighbouring Bangladesh, the book offers a nuanced and empirically driven analysis of precarity across a wide spectrum at discrete and overlapping scales, shaped by statelessness, vulnerability, uncertainty, onward migration and everyday practices of exclusion. Bringing together the diverse manifestations along the lines of identity, status, space, mobility, gender and labour, the study proposes a comprehensive understanding of precarity, conceptualized as the 'interconnected geographies of precarity'. Elucidating the intricate web of structural constraints that predate (in Myanmar) and are continually reconstructed and actualized (in exile), the book examines the continuum of precarity in extended transnational spaces – a phenomenon that is complex, non-linear, transitional and multi-faceted.

**Çirkin, Z., Sakiz, H., & Çuhadar, P. (2025). [Career Construction Experiences of Syrian Refugee Women in Turkish Higher Education: Opportunities and Obstacles](#). *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, 41(1), 1–19.** This study explores the career construction and

higher education opportunities and challenges faced by Syrian refugee women in Türkiye through semi-structured interviews with 40 women enrolled at a public university. Findings reveal significant challenges in career construction and higher education stemming from the intersectionality of gender and refugee status, including job market discrimination, increased housework and caregiving responsibilities, and moral concerns about independent women. The study also identifies opportunities for empowerment through women's rights, autonomy, equality, and self-sufficiency. It contributes to refugee studies, higher education, and integration by acknowledging the transformative potential of education and employment for Syrian refugee women.

**Ferdous, J., & Atar, E. (2025).** [Stalled repatriation of rohingya refugees: Diplomatic hurdles, regional politics, and the path to Sustainable Solutions. Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies, 12\(3\).](#) **Open access.** The Rohingya people have sought refuge in Bangladesh following decades of ethnic and religious persecution in Myanmar. After the mass exodus in August 2017, Bangladesh launched emergency repatriation initiatives. In November 2017, Bangladesh and Myanmar reached a preliminary agreement on repatriation, despite widespread concerns from human rights organizations. This article examines the stalled repatriation of Rohingya refugees by analyzing diplomatic challenges, regional geopolitical dynamics, and potential solutions. The present study, from a policy standpoint, advocates for greater diplomatic pressure on Myanmar, stronger regional cooperation, and the development of a comprehensive refugee policy. Furthermore, empowering Rohingya refugees through education and economic opportunities can mitigate security risks while fostering sustainable repatriation models. Additionally, third-country resettlement and international burden-sharing must be prioritized to achieve long-term and dignified solutions.

**Iqtait, A. (2025).** [From conditionality to weaponisation: The transformation of aid in Palestine post-October 2023. Third World Quarterly, 1–21.](#) **Open access.** This article examines the shift from aid conditionality to aid weaponisation in Palestine in the aftermath of Hamas's 7 October attack. It argues that donor actions following this event represent a transformation in their approach to Palestinian aid, moving from aid conditionality to aid weaponisation, where aid is utilised not just as a securitised tool for development and governance but as a mechanism of punishment and control. The article constructs the evolution of aid conditionality, showcasing various forms encompassing both explicit and implicit conditionalities. It then explores how aid weaponisation has manifested through aid suspensions and withdrawals, donors' uncritical adoption of Israeli discourse, heightened surveillance of Palestinian organisations, and administrative measures that constrain autonomy. Thus, aid weaponisation serves as an active tool reinforcing conditions that perpetuate, rather than alleviate, settler colonial violence and, as in Gaza, ongoing genocide.

**Krawczyk, M., & Baselice Pelicioni, A. B. (2025).** [The Role of Art in the Liminal Setting of Nakivale Refugee Settlement, Uganda. Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees, 41\(1\), 1–21.](#) In this article, the authors examine the role of art in negotiating hybrid identities among refugees in the Nakivale settlement, Uganda. They highlight how refugees use artistic expression to navigate their sense of belonging and reconstruct their lives amid prolonged

displacement. The study explores the dynamic interplay between refugees' cultural practices and the influences of governmental and non-governmental organizations. By emphasizing the potential of bottom-up artistic initiatives, they challenge traditional views of refugee passivity and underscore the importance of supporting refugee-led cultural expressions to enhance policy-making and improve the quality of life for displaced individuals.

**Zakaria, N. N., & Alders, H. (2025).** [Cultural Rights and Social Inclusion: Reflections on the engagement of refugee communities in Egyptian museums.](#) **Curator: The Museum Journal. Open access.** In recent decades, Egypt has been a place of refuge for many individuals fleeing political upheaval, including Sudanese, Syrian, Yemeni, Iraqi, and Palestinian communities. The influx of Sudanese refugees since 2023 has further increased the country's refugee population. Yet, despite their growing presence, Egyptian museums have largely overlooked the stories, heritage, and experiences of refugees in their exhibitions and programs. This paper addresses this gap by exploring how Egyptian museums could advance social inclusion of refugee communities and support their cultural rights. The paper proposes practical strategies for Egyptian museums to move beyond their traditional agendas by developing sustainable initiatives—such as co-created exhibitions, intercultural workshops, and collaborations with refugee organizations—that amplify refugees' voices and promote shared values of diversity and inclusion.

## **REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS**

**[Beyond Camps and Communities: The Economics of Refugee Relocation in Bangladesh.](#)** (2025). **World Bank Group.** Relocating refugees to remote purpose-built settlements offers an alternative to hosting refugees in traditional camps or local communities. Yet, its consequences remain poorly understood. This paper evaluates the well-being and fiscal implications of relocating Rohingya refugees from the overcrowded camps of Cox's Bazar to Bhasan Char, a newly developed remote island settlement in Bangladesh. The paper documents two main findings. First, relocation is associated with a systematic reduction in refugee well-being, including lower food consumption (in both variety and nutritional value), higher illness and depression rates, and lower wages. Second, these outcomes occur despite significantly higher costs: per capita service delivery in Bhasan Char is approximately three times more expensive than in Cox's Bazar. These results raise important questions about the sustainability and effectiveness of purpose-built relocation models in displacement settings.

**[Beyond Tokenism: Displaced Persons' Participation in the Community Engagement Forum.](#)** (2025). **Reliefweb.** This report presents findings from a global research consultancy examining the value, accessibility, and inclusiveness of the Community Engagement Forum (CEF) for forcibly displaced persons (FDPs). The study responds to growing global commitments such as the Grand Bargain and the Global Compact on Refugees, urging humanitarian platforms to shift from tokenistic engagement toward authentic inclusion of crisis-affected populations. It assesses the extent to which displaced persons can access and meaningfully participate in the CEF's current platforms and 2025 strategic initiatives, and provides practical recommendations to strengthen their voice, leadership, and influence

within the Forum. Importantly, this study does not evaluate the utility, design, or effectiveness of CEF platforms for international humanitarian practitioners or coordination actors. Rather, it centres on the lived experiences, needs, and perspectives of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and their representative organisations, groups often underrepresented in global decision-making and humanitarian discourse.

**[Climate-Change Vulnerability and Climate Migration: Evidence from Guatemala.](#)**

**(2025). American University.** As extreme weather events, including floods, heat waves, droughts, and wildfires, have grown more frequent and severe, climate migration has become more commonplace. But to what extent does climate change vulnerability impact people's decision to relocate? Existing literature tends to blame resource scarcity, suggesting that vulnerability to climate change merely accelerates migration. The authors found a stronger relationship between a respondent's sense of climate vulnerability and their propensity to consider migrating when compared to their sense of economic hardship or poor government response to climate-related extreme weather. Extreme weather events serve as an intervening variable between economic adversity and migration, confirming the value of scholarship on climate vulnerability and adaptation policies.

**[Kaldor Centre Resource Bank for Displaced Scholars.](#)** **(2025). UNSW Sydney.** This resource bank has been designed to support researchers and scholars in the field of refugee and forced migration studies, with a particular focus on scholars with lived experience of displacement. This resource bank provides an overview of some of the key research, writing and support services that are available in English. The resource bank also provides details of some of the research networks and job recruitment platforms that are available to scholars around the world.

**[The intersection of mobility, environmental and climate change, and conflict in the East and Horn of Africa: A synthesis of the existing knowledge and remaining research gaps.](#)**

**(2025). Mixed Migration Centre.** This report synthesizes the state of knowledge on the interlinkages between environmental degradation, climate change, conflict, and mobility in the East and Horn of Africa, focusing on Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. This research was undertaken as part of the MECMEA project: Managing the impacts of environmental change and conflict on mobility in Eastern Africa through evidence-based inclusive policy dialogue and collaborative actions. The project is made up of a consortium of members led by the Horn of Africa Regional Environment Centre and Network (HoA-REC&N), and including Mixed Migration Centre (MMC), Association Djibouti Nature, South Sudan Nature Conservation Organization (SSNCO), and PanAfricare Kenya.

## **NEWS AND BLOG POSTS**

**[Protection or prevention? The global refugee system is at a crossroads](#)** by Mustafa Alio & Rez Gardi, August 18, 2025. **The New Humanitarian.** Across borders and oceans, refugee journeys continue – driven by conflict, persecution, and a lack of safety. Yet global

responses are increasingly focused not on ensuring protection, but on preventing movement. While the rhetoric remains humanitarian, the reality is a growing investment in containment, deterrence, and control. The infrastructure of refugee protection is being retooled to stop people from moving, not to help them survive displacement. This shift isn't just policy drift – it's a political choice. One that reflects a deeper problem: Refugees are wrongly treated as a crisis, while the real crisis is a system that approaches protecting human life as optional and stopping movement across borders as essential.

**[African migration: 5 trends and what's driving them](#)** by Kevin J.A. Thomas, August 20, 2025. **The Conversation.** The author is a social demographer and in a recent study, identified trends that will shape the future of African migration flows and are different from migration patterns of the past. There are at least five emerging trends: migration between African countries is not following colonial labour migration patterns, Africans are migrating to new destinations (for example in South America and Asia), there's more diversity in the types of African migrants, based on who they are, why they are migrating and how they are doing it, there is significant migration to Africa from non-African countries (like China), and institutions (such as municipal and traditional authorities) have an expanding role in migration.

**[Central Mediterranean deaths at 370 this year, with 300 missing – IOM](#)** by ANSA, August 18, 2025. **InfoMigrants.** At least 370 people have died and 300 are still missing along a migrant route in the Central Mediterranean from the beginning of the year until August 9, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Libya. Calls continue to be made for the opening of legal channels of migration and more funding by international organizations.

**[People dumping in the Pacific](#)** by Frank Brennan, September 6, 2025. **Pearls and Irritations.** Australian governments of all stripes have long maintained a commitment to secure borders and an orderly migration program. Utilizing the benefit of being an island nation-continent, governments over the last 30 years have taken expensive steps to stop boatloads of asylum seekers reaching Australia and to remove those who do manage to arrive to former colonies, Nauru and Papua New Guinea. Labour and Liberal are as good or as bad at it as each other, depending on your point of view.

**[Downpours stymie aid teams following deadly landslide in war-torn Sudan](#)**, September 4, 2025. **United Nations.** War-torn Sudan continues to face “a horrific humanitarian situation” as UN colleagues scramble to help communities affected by the devastating landslide that struck Tarseen village in South Darfur state. The death toll has not yet been verified as ongoing downpours and rugged terrain are making it extremely difficult to reach the impacted communities, according to the UN migration agency, IOM. To date, an estimated 150 people were displaced from Tarseen and neighbouring villages, with families now sheltering in nearby communities.

## EVENTS, RESOURCES, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

### **CRS Seminar - The (Im)mobility Nexus: Building Bridges Between Migration and Resistance Studies to Understand the “Self-Confinement” of Indigenous and Afro-descendant Communities in the Colombian Pacific Region.** Centre for Refugee Studies.

In the past twenty years, there has been a growing number of studies on the immobile aspects of human migration, referred to in recent literature as the “(im)mobility turn” in migration studies. Most of these studies problematize the binary or dichotomous distinction between mobility and immobility, as well as the marginalization of the latter, pointing to the intrinsic relationship between the two concepts/phenomena. Although this emerging literature highlights that immobility should not be taken for granted, much of it focuses on the forced, or “involuntary,” characteristics of this condition – in other words, on the constraints, regulations, and pressures that prevent people from exercising their human right to migrate. While recognizing the importance of this debate, this presentation aims to take a step further in migration and resistance studies by unpacking the (im)mobility nexus in the Colombian Pacific region. Drawing from an intersectional and intercultural perspective, it seeks to show that immobility is not merely the result of social structures that prevent or restrict movement, but can also be an expression of political agency and decision-making – even amidst a context of internationally recognized armed conflict and humanitarian crisis, as has been the case in Colombia for over half a century. This is a virtual event on Zoom, on September 30th, 2025, 1:00 - 2:30 PM ET with guest speaker, Raquel Araújo de Jesus, Postdoctoral Fellow, São Paulo Research Foundation.

### **Forced Displacement and the City: Lessons from Germany and the MENA Region.**

**DAAD.** This one-day symposium will explore the intersections of forced migration and urban development, addressing both challenges and opportunities from the perspectives of urban planning, sustainable development, architecture, and design. Bringing together voices from Germany and across the MENA region, the event aims to: Share experiences and lessons learned between diverse academic and professional actors, foster dialogue on inclusive and resilient urban strategies, encourage integration, spatial justice, and sustainable community development, and re-envision the role of architecture and design in complex processes such as refugee crisis. This will be on October 1, 2025, at the DAAD Regional Office in Cairo, Egypt. The deadline to register is September 20th, 2025.

**IASFM20 Podcast Series.** **IASFM20 and Washington University.** Drawing from the 20th International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) conference held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, in January 2025, this podcast on urban development and forced migration is produced by RDI UREF, a research group on urban refugees by Resilience Development Initiatives Indonesia, and contains material from the conference. Episodes in this podcast are delivered in a mix of Bahasa Indonesia and English.

**Metropolis International 2025 Summit.** **Toronto Metropolitan University.** The 2025 Metropolis International Summit is taking place at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) on October 2-3, 2025. This landmark event marks an exciting new chapter for Metropolis

International as it partners with the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration (CERC Migration) program at TMU. Over two days, global scholars, policymakers, and practitioners will convene for a cutting-edge dialogue on migration and integration. The program will offer fresh insights, critical analysis, and recommendations from leading experts on topics including solidarity cities, diaspora finance, and the evolving terrain of advanced digital technologies on migration research and policy. The event will also feature keynote addresses by Dr. Alejandro Portes, Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Princeton University, and H.E. Amb. Amma Twum-Amoah, Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development, African Union.

**The Making of a Crisis: Unpacking Sudan's Neglected War. University of Toronto.**

Activist and co-founder of Sudan Bukra TV, Husam Mahjoub, will speak to the role of the UAE in the war in Sudan, and Humanitarian Aid and Development Expert Iman Ahmed will speak to the humanitarian situation. This will be followed by a Q&A facilitated by student leaders from the Sudanese Student Union. The panel will take place on Monday, Sept. 22, at 6 pm at the William Doo Auditorium on the St. George campus. Delicious Sudanese refreshments and snacks will be served. The event is free, and you can register through the link to hold your place.