

A large crowd of Syrian refugees is shown in a street that has been severely damaged by conflict. The buildings on either side are in ruins, with debris and rubble visible. The people are dressed in winter clothing, including coats, scarves, and head coverings. The scene is one of displacement and hardship.

A Comprehensive Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis: Highlighting the United States' Role in the International Effort

University of Washington

Henry M. Jackson School Of International Studies

Task Force 2016

Yarmouk Refugee Camp, Damascus, Syria

Cover image courtesy of Help For Syria

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Table of Contents

Cover Credits	1
Contributors	2
Dedication	3
Table of Contents	4
Glossary	5
Introduction	7
Executive Summary	12

Section 1: Humanitarian Interventions

Introduction	19
Internally Displaced Persons	21
Food Security	28
Health Care	34
Mental Health	43
Vulnerable Populations	51
Education	57

Section 2: Local Countries of Integration

Introduction	64
Nongovernmental Organizations & the Private Sector	66
Turkey	78
Jordan	86
Lebanon	95

Section 3: Third Countries of Resettlement

Introduction	104
EU: Common European Asylum System	106
EU: Security and Economic Concerns	114
United States	124
The United States & Germany: Integration	130
The International Refugee Regime	138
Bibliography	148
Endnotes	185

Glossary

- 3RP** - Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
- AFAD** - Emergency Management Presidency of Turkey (Afet ve Acil Durum Yönetiđimi Başkanlıđı)
- AKP** - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Justice and Development Party
- AMIF** - Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund
- AUBFZA** - Arbeitsmarktlichen Unterstützung für Bleibeberechtigte und Flüchtlinge mit Zugang zum Arbeitsmarkt
- CAIR** - Council on American-Islamic Relations
- CARE** - Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
- CEAS** - Common European Asylum System
- CEDAW** - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- CVE** - Countering Violent Extremism
- DGMM** - Turkish state department's Directorate General of Migration Management
- DHS** - Department of Homeland Security
- DOS** - Department of State
- DRC** - Danish refugee council
- EAM** - A European Agenda on Migration
- EASO** - European Asylum Support Office
- EBRD** - European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- ESF** - European Social Fund
- EU** - European Union
- Eurodac** - Or European Dactyloscopy, is the European fingerprint database for identifying asylum seekers and irregular border-crossers.
- European Commission** - Law-making and enforcing body of the EU, made up of Commissioners from 28 member states, including the President.
- European Council** - Institution of the European Union that comprises the heads of state or government of the member states, along with the council's own president and the president of the Commission.
- Eurosur** - Information-exchange framework designed to improve the management of Europe's external borders.
- GBV** - Gender based violence
- FAO** - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- FCS** - Food Consumption Score
- HUGO** - Hacettepe University Migration and Politics Research Center
- IBV** - Incentive-based Volunteering Scheme
- ICRC** - International Committee of the Red Cross
- IDP** - Internally Displaced Person
- IFRC** - International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- IMC** - International Medical Corps
- IMO** - International Medical Organization
- INGO** - International non-governmental organization
- IOM** - International Organization for Migration
- IRC** - International Rescue Committee

JHCO - Jordanian Hashemite Charity Organization
JRP 15 - The Jordan Response Plan 2015
JRP 16-18 - The Jordan Response Plan 2016-2018
MDD - Major Depressive Disorder
MDM - Médecins du Monde/ Doctors of the World
MEMR - Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources
MHPSS - Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MOH - Ministry of Health
MOU - Memorandum of Understanding
MSF - Médecins Sans Frontières
NATO - North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCD - Non-communicable disease
NEPCO - National Electricity Power Company
NGO - Non-governmental organization
NRC - Norwegian Refugee Council
PHC - Primary Health Care
PKK - Kurdistan Worker's Party
PRRI - Public Religion Research Institute
PTSD - Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
SAFE - American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015
SAMS - Syrian American Medical Society Foundation
SARC - Syrian Arab Red Crescent
SDF - Syrian Democratic Forces
SEZ - Special Economic Zones
SIS - Schengen Information System: governmental database used by European countries to maintain and distribute information on individuals and pieces of property of interest.
SNGO - Syrian non-governmental organization
STI - Sexually transmitted infection
SVA - Sector Vulnerability Assessment
TFEU - Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
TPR - Temporary Protection Regulation
UN - United Nations
UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF - United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UNRWA - United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
USCIS - United States Citizenship and Immigration Service
USRAP - United States Refugee Admissions Program
VIS - Visa Information System: Allows Schengen states to exchange visa data for the purposes of biometric screening.
WB - World Bank
WFP - World Food Programme
WHO - World Health Organization
YPG - People's Protection Unit
Za'atari – Jordanian refugee camp

Introduction

The Syrian refugee crisis is the largest humanitarian and geopolitical problem facing the world today. The consequences of this crisis, which are rooted in an ongoing civil war, are far reaching and have affected not only the Syrian people, but also Syrian neighbor countries, the European Union (EU), the United States, Russia, Iran, and many other members of the international community. Since 2011, more than four and a half million Syrian nationals have emigrated from Syria, while nearly eight million others have become internally displaced people (IDP) within their own country. The refugee crisis, which has already become the largest emergency of its kind since World War II, has significantly challenged many nations' abilities to provide effective relief and exposed shortfalls in international law. Yet the conflict in Syria has left the country in a state of disarray that does not indicate any quick return to normalcy or immediate opportunity for repatriation.

The civil war in Syria initially began with anti-government protests that surfaced in 2011 in response to the government's arrest and torture of several teenagers for painting revolutionary slogans. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's strong opposition to the demonstrations only resulted in a greater escalation of conflict that would eventually develop into a full-scale civil war. The war has now cost more than 250,000 people their lives as a result of the armed conflict between forces loyal to Bashar al-Assad, moderate opposition forces, and jihadist members of the Islamic State (ISIL). Additionally, more than 12 million Syrian citizens have been displaced while these forces vie for control of the region.

The consequences of this refugee crisis have so far presented a monumental challenge to the international community. Syrian neighbor countries have seen the largest influx of refugees, and their ability to effectively accommodate them has been greatly tested. Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon have granted asylum for the large majority of Syrian refugees and are providing them with services such as education, healthcare, and shelter. However, the large number of refugees has strained their economies, infrastructure, and political systems. As a result, many more refugees are seeking asylum in Europe where states are struggling to adapt to the growing influx. Consequently, political divisions have arisen within and between EU member states regarding international policy decisions and debate concerning each country's role in protecting refugees.

Global Actors Involved

While nations do have a tendency to respond to refugee crises according to their own political and economic situations, a more universal model does exist for how states and individuals should respond to and assist displaced peoples throughout the world. This international model is commonly referred to as the International Refugee Regime (IRR). The model, dating back to the Treaty of Westphalia, provides a framework for how modern states should support international refugees. Due to the millions of refugees who were displaced during World War II, the IRR evolved to more closely resemble the state in which it exists today. The international community established the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the eventual 1967 Protocol¹. These agreements define a refugee as any person outside his or her country of nationality and is unable to return on the basis of "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, [or] membership in a particular social group or political opinion"². The Convention also delineates the legal protections, assistance, and social

rights he or she is entitled to receive. The UNHCR frames its work in terms of the three durable solutions for refugees: repatriation to the home country, local integration within host communities, or resettlement in third countries³. In relation to this framework, perhaps the most essential right that refugees are permitted under the 1951 Convention is the principal rule of non-refoulement, which holds that a refugee shall not be returned to a country where he or she faces serious threats to his or her life or freedom. This implies a responsibility on the part of host states to protect individuals of foreign nationality designated as refugees by the five grounds listed above.

Currently, there are 148 nation states that are party to either one or both of the aforementioned agreements, and under these agreements the states are made primarily responsible for the protection of refugees. This requires that each state nominates a central authority responsible for the knowledge and expertise of all decision making concerning refugees. However, it is the responsibility of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to lead and help coordinate international action to protect refugees and refugee related problems worldwide. In terms of the countries most directly involved in the refugee crisis, it is important to note that Turkey is a signatory to the 1951 Convention yet applies geographical limitations on refugees that excludes Syrian refugees from protections under the 1951 Convention⁴, although the Law on Foreigners and International Protection enacted in April 2014 gives Syrian refugees “conditional refugee status” and some legal protections⁵. Meanwhile, Lebanon and Jordan are not signatories in any capacity to the 1951 Convention⁶, which influences what legal obligations these host countries have to the Syrian refugees within their borders.

Nations Involved

The nations most heavily involved in the refugee crisis are not just Syria and its neighboring countries but also countries geographically removed such as those in the European Union and the United States. The severe scale of this international crisis highlights a problematic dynamic between the necessity of multilateral action and the reality of international politics: the nation state is the unit through which almost all legal policy is enforced, but an emergency of global scale requires that all states involved work together to coordinate response and share responsibility. As there are many different actors involved in this crisis with a variety of responses due to each state’s own domestic and foreign policy interests, the question becomes how states can work collaboratively to coordinate policy response without compromising state sovereignty. As an international leader, the United States is tasked with the difficult role of encouraging multilateral, coordinated response without encroaching on state sovereignty. The U.S. cannot force any other state to enact or change their domestic policies, but it can use its geopolitical power, history of humanitarian action, and diplomatic weight to persuade reluctant players into a coordinated multilateral response.

Syria has the central role in the crisis as the country from which refugees are fleeing. However, the fact that Syria is currently embroiled in a civil war that shows no indications of resolution compromises Syria’s ability to effectively respond to the emergency. Power and authority are not held fully by the Syrian government, opposition forces or ISIL. Additionally, the Syrian government’s attacks on civilians and serious restrictions on aid into the region have weakened the Assad government’s credibility in the international arena as a legitimate source of political authority. Yet despite the high volume of refugees that have fled the conflict, more than 7.6 million Syrians remain in the country as IDPs⁷. This demographic could very well become

refugees soon in addition to other Syrians not officially considered IDPs but still endangered by the war. The continuing conflict means that the prospect of repatriation is not a realistic durable solution for refugees in the near future. Thus the second and third durable solutions - local integration and resettlement - must be considered as more plausible options, meriting the states that can provide these solutions with greater responsibility.

The states of Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan have taken in more than 5 million Syrian refugees collectively⁸ since the start of the Syrian civil war, a figure which dwarfs the 897,645 Syrians that have sought asylum in the EU between April 2011 and December 2015⁹, even including the number of Syrians that have arrived in the EU and are not registered as asylum-seekers. This figure emphasizes the importance of focusing a coordinated multilateral response on the local countries of integration, as this is where the vast majority of Syrian refugees are currently located. The sheer number of refugees has presented a significant strain on the resources of their host countries, some of which have already been hosting Palestinian refugees for several generations. As sovereign nation-states, each of these three countries also enacts its own domestic policy concerning the rights and privileges of refugees. For instance, Lebanon does not allow refugee camps on its territory¹⁰, which means all Syrian refugees are independently settled, typically in cities. Concerning the right to work, Turkey has recently granted Syrian refugees the right to apply for work permits in order to work legally within the formal economy¹¹. By contrast, refugees have no clear legal right to work in Jordan and are banned from legal employment accompanying a residence permit in Lebanon, meaning most Syrian refugees that work in Jordan and Lebanon are employed in the informal labor market. The issue of diverging refugee policy in these three states stems at least partly from the fact that Jordan and Lebanon are not signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its subsequent 1967 Protocol. Because these countries are in close geographical proximity to the conflict, Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan will play a crucial role in hosting Syrian refugees and must be taken into consideration as critical players in responding to the emergency, both as actors whose voices must be heard when forming policy responses and as recipients of the international community's multilateral efforts.

As previously stated, in comparison to the number of refugees being hosted in the aforementioned three states the amount of Syrians that have been successfully resettled in third countries such as the US and EU is relatively small. The US and EU have high security barriers to resettlement as well as strong domestic concerns of terrorism. However, because the US and the EU states are collectively wealthy, they have the capacity to be powerful financial contributors by offsetting immediate economic needs generated by the crisis. While the EU faces a greater influx of asylum-seekers due to its closer geographical proximity to the epicenter of the crisis, facilitated by the free internal movement of the Schengen system and weak policies governing asylum procedures that are not being followed, the US is geographically removed from the crisis. Furthermore, because the US occupies a place of great political leverage in the international community and is itself a nation composed of immigrants, the US additionally has the capacity to demonstrate diplomatic and moral leadership. While the US cannot explicitly shape sovereign states' policy responses to the refugee crisis, it can show initiative by following through on its commitments to the UNHCR and the IRR, providing humanitarian aid, and economic support to local host countries, in addition to resettling a greater number of Syrian refugees and demonstrating an accepting, compassionate attitude towards them.

The Role of NGOs and the Private Sector

Non-governmental organizations and the private sector are also important players in responding to the immediate needs of refugees. These actors have a unique ability to provide fast and (theoretically) apolitical assistance, unencumbered by international or state bureaucracy. NGOs in particular can cater to a wide variety of niche interests and meet specialized needs often overlooked by large bodies such as the UNHCR, including education, vocational training, and language training. Meanwhile, the private sector has the capacity not only to rapidly mobilize large sums of money as donations, providing critical financial resources that will help alleviate the burden of refugee hosting and the funding of humanitarian needs, but also to formulate innovative solutions to the refugees' complex problems. For example, Google was able to raise \$5.5 million for the refugee crisis in Europe within 48 hours and then matched those donations for a total of \$11 million in September 2015¹². Google also created Crisis Info Hub, an app designed to give refugees vital information upon arriving in a new country without draining battery power¹³. Thus both NGOs and the private sector act as channels that directly connect civil society and private citizens to the refugee crisis. While their long-term effectiveness and sustainability may be questionable, they can provide small-scale yet innovative and fast-acting responses to the critical short-term needs of the emergency. However, wherever NGOs and the private sector are involved, it is crucial that their activities are coordinated with local governments in order to ensure legality, efficacy and joint cooperation.

What's at Stake

With no political solution to the Syrian civil war in sight and continued military conflict between multiple parties, the number of Syrian refugees fleeing is likely to increase in 2016. Syrian lives are at stake at every part of the refugee cycle: as IDPs within Syria, in transit, as asylum-seekers in local countries such as Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, and when they travel to seek asylum in third countries. More than 3,695 migrants are reported to have died attempting to cross the Mediterranean in 2015 - most of those died on the crossing from north Africa, and more than 700 died in the Aegean crossing from Greece to Turkey¹⁴. Humanitarian conditions in refugee camps such as Za'atari in Jordan to holding stations on the Greek island of Lesbos are dismal, breeding sickness and malnutrition. The sheer number of refugees overwhelming refugee camps also pose the risk of "warehousing", compromising the futures of multiple generations. Syrian refugee children are in danger of becoming a lost generation that is uneducated, unskilled and has undergone emotional trauma, negatively impacting their ability to succeed. The consequences of a lost generation are not only dire for these children but also for the long term stability of the region. If Syria is to have a stable post-war future, this generation of Syrian children must not become casualties of the war.

Because the vast majority of the refugees are located in geographically proximate countries of Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, these states are being overwhelmed and (in addition to lacking legal infrastructure) are not economically equipped to provide adequate support. Legal discrepancies between these states regarding the protections granted to refugees means that refugees' rights are uncertain, resulting in tenuous access to work, education, healthcare, food, and water. The strain on domestic resources accompanying a continuing flow of refugees has exacerbated tensions with local populations, which may contribute to restiveness and instability within host countries. Unless adequate support is provided by other actors such as the

international community, NGOs and the private sector, the political stability of states suffering the greatest burden of the refugee crisis is at risk - a stability which is not only crucial for the protection of refugees, but also critical for the region and international geopolitics. Syrian refugees have already fled one failed state; they cannot ostensibly seek protection in another.

Finally, the entire system (IRR) upon which refugee protections are founded upon has been shown to be flawed. One of the key principles of this system is non-refoulement: yet if state resources are being overwhelmed by refugees, it becomes questionable whether they will continue to respect this principle. In the EU, the asylum procedures are already not being upheld as poorer countries such as Greece look the other way instead of enforcing the principle of applying for asylum in the Dublin Regulations. The Syrian refugee crisis is revealing cracks in the international refugee regime that have long existed but only recently have come to light. In reality, there is no responsibility-sharing mechanism in the international community to equitably distribute the burden of refugees, nor is there any universal guarantee of protections for refugees considering that not all countries are party to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocols.

Although this crisis represents an enormous challenge of international scale, it is an important opportunity to re-evaluate the international refugee regime and repair gaps in the system. The crisis is also an opportunity for the U.S. to show global leadership, not only by leading through example, but also by incentivizing multilateral action. Providing humanitarian aid, fixing a broken system of international refugee policies, and paving the path towards greater international responsibility-sharing and cooperation between sovereign states are tremendous payoffs for taking action in response to the Syrian refugee crisis. If the U.S. can demonstrate decisive and effective initiative in the face of this emergency, its position as a political leader in the international arena will only be strengthened.

Executive Summary

Syria has become a site of violence and turmoil since the eruption of the civil war in 2011. Consequently, millions of Syrians have been displaced, becoming refugees with no choice but to seek safety in neighboring countries. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates 4.5 million Syrians have become refugees since the start of the conflict, while nearly 8 million remain in Syria as internally displaced persons (IDPs)¹⁵. Due to the inundation of local countries' capacity to handle the surge, refugees are also seeking asylum in geographically removed countries such as the European Union (EU) and the United States. This crisis is not just a humanitarian emergency, as many Syrians are in desperate need of food, shelter, healthcare, and other basic necessities, but also a geopolitical issue involving the entire international community. While many nations have funded humanitarian interventions and welcomed refugees, others have been resistant to the influx of refugees. Thus far, no large-scale coordinated response exists among the involved nation states, and inconsistent policies continue to exacerbate an already tenuous situation. The international community's lackluster response is partially due to the inability of the current system of laws and policies governing refugees, known as the International Refugee Regime (IRR), to adequately deal with a crisis of such magnitude and complexity. The Syrian crisis has highlighted pre-existing shortcomings in this system that are in dire need of repair; thus this catastrophe is also an opportunity to improve upon the manner in which the international community responds to future refugee crises.

This report focuses on creating a comprehensive, multilateral response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Utilizing the UNHCR's framework of the three durable solutions for refugees - repatriation, integration and resettlement - it emphasizes the second and third durable solutions, as repatriation will not likely become an option for displaced Syrians in the near future. First, the urgent humanitarian needs of Syrian refugees and IDPs located within Syria will be addressed. This will include the needs of IDPs within Syria as well as food security, health care, mental health, the needs of especially of vulnerable populations, and education in the local countries of integration. These chapters will be followed by a shift in focus from short-term humanitarian responses to the policies and responses of states, first within local countries of integration, and then in third countries of resettlement. Because most of the refugees are seeking safety in the countries closest to the epicenter of the conflict, the emphasis of this report's recommendations will be directed toward Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. However, the EU is also being tested as the large number of Syrian refugees entering Europe is being compounded with an existing trend of migration from especially Iraq, Afghanistan, and other countries in the Middle East and North Africa. The United States is also dealing with domestic and political tensions in terms of accepting refugees and potentially raising its quota to accommodate more Syrians. Thus the EU and the U.S. will be addressed as significant players with important roles as third countries of resettlement, humanitarian actors, and leaders in shaping international policy. Finally, this report will conclude by analyzing the overarching rules of the International Refugee Regime (IRR), examining the framework currently in play, and recommending measures to improve the IRR's function and ability to adequately respond to future refugee crises.

By focusing both thematically and geographically on the various facets of this emergency, this task force will seek to coordinate a multilateral international response and also

highlight the U.S.'s role in this response, encouraging decisive humanitarian action while acknowledging and addressing geopolitical realities. This report offers recommendations that the U.S. should encourage other countries and international organizations to act on as well as recommendations that the U.S. itself should follow in order to address the immediate humanitarian needs, maintain regional stability, and assist refugees seeking resettlement. Each recommendation falls into one of three overarching themes crucial in responding to the refugee crisis: humanitarian interventions, local countries of integration, or third countries of resettlement.

Policy Recommendations for Humanitarian Interventions

Internally Displaced Persons

- Support a UN proposal to increase collaboration with NGOs and institutions working in various scopes of humanitarian efforts to further acquire data and real time information on dispersions of IDPs and civilians in hard-to-reach and besieged areas.
- Encourage the UN to endorse a new resolution that calls for strict monitoring on all humanitarian cargo to prevent usage of cross-border shipments for non-humanitarian reasons such as shipments of weapons.

Food Aid

- Encourage multi-sectoral emergency and resilience responses, led by regional governments.
- Incentivize increased 3RP funding through connecting regional food security with international interests, such as regional stability and the possibility of decreased migration to Europe.
- Advocate for comprehensive and equal food aid to both regime- and opposition-held regions in Syria, to prevent food aid from compounding the Assad regime's power.
- Ensure food security initiatives in local countries of integration are adequately reaching comparably disadvantaged individuals in the host communities.

Health Care

- Support macro-level organization of medical NGOs and international health organizations (WHO, UNICEF, etc.) via the UNHCR to ensure universal standards of care in camps and to eliminate healthcare gaps in transit, especially within Syria.
- Encourage local countries of integration to eliminate barriers to health care access for non-camp refugees including cost, legal status, education, and language
- Partner with State Ministries of Health to build resilience and improve immediate access to government health care facilities in local countries of integration.

Mental Health

- Encourage Ministries of Health, international health organizations, and NGOs to improve efficiency of mental health services in local countries of integration and remove refugees' barriers to access through funding
- Work with Ministries of Health, international health organizations, and NGOs to provide culturally sensitive mental health training to health care practitioners, both in camps and non-camp settings

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

- Work with NGOs and international health organizations to implement and educational and support groups in camps, schools, and places of worship

Vulnerable Populations

- Encourage host country governments, police, and humanitarian organizations, especially the UNHCR, to provide of legal counseling to women to inform them of their rights in order to close gaps between policy and implementation
- Call upon the UNHCR and host countries to establish safe, and easy accessible registration and services for women, particularly those services that allow women to report GBV and sexual violence
- Increase host countries' and humanitarian agencies' current capacity for educational opportunities, including informal language classes and GBV awareness programs to teach both local populations and refugee populations how to prevent and respond to it
- Support coordination and information-sharing between host country governments and NGOs such as the IRC and Save the Children in order to create a better system of identifying and registering unaccompanied children

Education

- Provide healthcare, including mental health services in schools. This could include nurses present in schools, student support groups and additional training for teachers around the effects of trauma. Teachers would serve as advocates in obtaining additional services such as lack of sleep, food or school materials.
- Support and standardize informal educational models utilizing Syrian refugees as well as host country nationals. Adult Syrian refugees as well as host country nationals fill the role of teachers and support staff. This provides employment for more residents of host countries as well as reduces tensions between refugees and locals.

Policy Recommendations for Local Countries of Integration

NGOs and the Private Sector in Local Countries of Integration

- Put pressure on the local countries of integration to facilitate the registration of international NGOs offering emergency aid for Syrian refugees in camps and cities, and allow the international private sector, UN agencies, international humanitarian organizations, and expert refugee agencies access to help with registering, assisting and monitoring Syrian refugees.
- Assist NGOs and the private sector operating in the local countries of integration both financially and materially. In addition, local countries of integration need to regulate and develop a standardized, simplified, and expedited policy for the flow of aid and passage of international humanitarian organizations on their soil.
- Improve coordination in the delivery of aid to refugees in local countries of integration, especially in regards to basic needs such as water, food, shelter and health care.

Turkey

- Direct increased international funding and the pledges made in London Conference 2016, to address Jordan's national challenges through shifting from a short-term emergency response to long-term development opportunity. Target aid that demonstrates solidarity with civil society, NGOs, international actors, and the Jordanian government to implement development projects in line with the Jordan Response Plan 2016-18.
- Engage and incentivize international community, specifically the Gulf States, to invest in water infrastructure and formalized labor opportunities for Syrian refugees as a means to promote security in the Middle East region.
- Allocate funding, in the form of scholarship grants, directly to Jordanian Universities to expand the knowledge economy in Jordan to benefit the future of both the Syrian population and Jordanian institutions

Jordan

- Direct increased international funding, such as the pledges made at the London Conference 2016, to address Jordan's national challenges through shifting from a short-term emergency response to long-term development opportunity. Target aid in solidarity with civil society, NGOs, international actors, and the Jordanian government to implement development projects in line with the Jordan Response Plan 2016-18.
- Engage and incentivize the international community, specifically the Gulf States, to invest in water infrastructure and formalized labor opportunities for Syrian refugees as a means to promote security in the Middle East region.
- Allocate funding, in the form of scholarship grants, directly to Jordanian Universities to expand the knowledge economy in Jordan to benefit the future of both the Syrian population and Jordanian institutions

Lebanon

- Increase international funding and humanitarian assistance to Lebanon's refugee situation and encourage investments in Lebanon's economy while keeping in mind that a significant portion of aid must be set aside to address the needs of the local Lebanese population.
- Establish additional settlements in order to address the shortage in refugee housing and the numerous gaps present in Beirut's current strategy to house Syrian refugees.
- Encourage the government of Lebanon to either formally recognize the 1962 Law Regulating the Entry, Stay, and Exit from Lebanon with regards to the current Syrian refugee crisis or make the principle of non-refoulement legally binding.
- Reduce or entirely eliminate the cost of the refugees' residence permits.

Policy Recommendations for Third Countries of Resettlement

The European Union: The Common European Asylum System

- Encourage the European Commission to update the Dublin III Regulation to be based on an annual quota system and decouple responsibility to register and fingerprint refugees from responsibility to receive, protect, and return those who do not qualify for asylum.

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

- Call upon the European Commission to implement a humanitarian admission scheme in partnership with Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, and continue to expand the resettlement program to accept more asylum seekers annually.
- Support an EU-wide reaffirmation of “the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility,” outlined in Article 80 of the TFEU, and creation of an agreement on the incentives and/or consequences of not following through with implementation of all legislation related to the treatment of refugees and granting of asylum.

The European Union: Security and Economic Concerns

- Increase funding to Frontex to establish a better cooperation with EU member states and the UNHCR, and ultimately make the EU’s borders more secure and keep refugees safer along their journey.
- Expand social programs in Greece that would help refugees find work legally and provide them with basic services both in the Greek islands and in urban areas, particularly by restoring and expanding prior funding directed at many agencies that were cut due to austerity programs.
- Establish a quota system that would designate a specific number of refugees to each EU country based on its population and economic strength

The United States

- Increase Fiscal Year 2016 Syrian Refugee Quota to 23,000 by enacting Public Law 96-212.
- Facilitate the increased resettlement and expedite the resettlement process via private sponsorship, more efficient vetting procedures, and localization of screening procedures at Fort Dix.
- Increase Fiscal Year 2017 Syrian Refugee Quota to 42,000.

The United States and Germany: Integration of Syrian Refugees

- Encourage the U.S. and German governments to create community initiatives such as interfaith dialogues through local outreach programs to establish intercultural understanding and create an environment conducive to integration for potential Syrian refugees as well as following generations
- Expand the existing U.S. and German integration services offered to refugees, including education, re-training, employment assistance and language instruction

The International Refugee Regime

- Pressure states who are non-signatories to human rights agreements such as the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1967 Protocol, and the Geneva Conventions to become signatories in order to advance their state’s commitment to human rights

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

- Facilitate international cooperation among EU Member States, the U.S., and local countries of integration in order to provide fair refugee status determination that occurs swiftly and justly.
- Advance UN action to pressure General Assembly member states to comply with International Refugee Regime components through international political and economic pressure, to prevent systemic human rights abuses committed against refugees.



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Section 1

Humanitarian Interventions

Introduction

While the Syrian refugee crisis impacts politics, the economy, and much more, it is first and foremost a humanitarian issue. Given the inherent value of all human lives, humanitarian aid focuses on those impacted by conflict or disaster and encompasses both the need to reduce suffering as well as “enhance well-being, human dignity, and quality of life.”¹⁶ This involves a wide variety of issues, from food security to healthcare to protection of vulnerable populations. However, in comparison to other events, the duration and magnitude of the Syrian refugee crisis are of a scale and intensity not often seen. António Guterres, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, has even gone so far as to label it “the biggest humanitarian crisis of our era.”¹⁷ Thus the Syrian refugee crisis presents unique challenges in multiple ways, including its geographical scope, politicization, rapidly changing status, necessity of building resilience, and potential for long-reaching impact. An effective response must therefore be innovative, collaborative, and carefully crafted.

Firstly, the humanitarian response to the Syrian refugee crisis is complicated by the geographical dispersion of refugees. Not only are there internally-displaced persons still living within Syria, but refugees are scattering across the globe and encountering a variety of circumstances and opportunities. This means that humanitarian needs within Syria, during transit, in the local countries of integration, and in the third countries of resettlement are vastly different and require tailored responses. This also makes initial gaps apparent, as in-transit humanitarian aid is particularly insufficient, and data on existing aid in this setting is paltry. However, in light of the sheer numbers of IDPs and refugees in local countries of integration in comparison to elsewhere, these are the main areas the following chapters will examine.

In addition, while emergency aid addressing short-term needs is the central focus of humanitarian aid, the protracted nature of this conflict suggests the need to pursue innovative long-term approaches to increase capacity for the local region to address its own needs. This approach would also have the benefit of preparing the region for stability in the post-conflict era, so that dependency can be reduced in advance of aid flows declining with the end of a conflict.¹⁸ Thus humanitarian aid must incorporate capacity building and resilience endeavors, and consider the impact of humanitarian programs on local industries, host populations, and regional stability.

The Syrian crisis also presents unique circumstances of the politicization of aid. While humanitarian efforts have the power to improve lives, they also can be used as a political tool. For instance, within Syria humanitarian aid is largely distributed via Syrian government forces that are a part of the Assad regime. Despite efforts at neutrality in aid distribution within Syria, this has inarguable political impacts. It gives Assad’s regime a tool with which to control and convince population groups to align with him, a power that opposition groups do not possess.¹⁹ Humanitarian aid cannot avoid some element of politicization, and this must be considered in crafting programs.

Finally, data on humanitarian programs is notoriously outdated and difficult to obtain, especially in a conflict of this nature where access to particular groups is withheld from humanitarian actors. This prevents adequate programs from being developed, as they require knowledge of the particular needs, context, and realities of a specific local environment to be successful.²⁰ As such, innovative, technology-based approaches - such as mobile text surveys -

could prove useful in obtaining data on humanitarian needs as well as program successes and failures.²¹

Despite all of these problems, humanitarian aid offers a great deal of hope. It not only can increase human dignity and improve lives, but it has the capacity to have a strong impact in a variety of sectors. On a simple level, a physically and mentally healthy population with a chance at an education offers a stronger economic outcome, both individually and on a national basis. In terms of geopolitical interests, humanitarian aid has been correlated with reduced terrorism and radicalization by a variety of studies.²² In addition, refugees cite insufficient humanitarian provisions – for food especially – as a prime motivation for continuing migration to Europe.²³ Thus, improving humanitarian systems has the possibility to reduce the stress of the refugee crisis on the European Union system, reduce terrorism concerns, and improve economies.

Finally, any improvements in humanitarian systems can have wide-reaching impacts, as humanitarian issues compound each other both for positive and negative. This not only means that various aspects of humanitarian aid must be addressed cohesively and comprehensively, but also that there is a synergistic benefit to interventions. An example is school feeding programs, which both improve diets and increase school enrollment.²⁴ This single intervention not only improves education rates (as children are not removed from school to work to afford food), but food security and health outcomes as well.²⁵ Conversely, improved gender parity and rights influences dietary diversity and therefore health.²⁶ Thus, despite much progress to be made, any improvements are likely to have multiple positive impacts.

In sum, while the humanitarian system is doing a great deal of good, that does not excuse it from the need for critique. After all, it is not enough to merely endeavor to do good, but it is important to strive to do good well. With the crisis worsening and no immediate end in sight, these issues must be addressed rapidly with multilateral attention, coordination, and action. The time to act is now, rather than waiting and grappling with the negative consequences.

Internally Displaced Persons within Syria

Michael Kono

Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, ongoing conflict and violence is continuing to destroy the livelihoods of civilians, including millions of IDPs. Latest figures announced by the UNHCR show a staggering number of at least 7.6 million IDPs²⁷ alongside a massive depopulation of 22 million during pre-war times to 16.6 million.²⁸ The critical situations the IDPs face must be addressed as IDPs are not eligible for the legal protections that refugees are granted under the United Nations' 1951 Refugee Convention, which outlines basic rights and necessities.²⁹ UNHCR states in their "Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons" that in the case of national authorities failing to secure the protection of IDPs in one's own state, then the responsibility of securing critical protection falls on the hands of the international community.³⁰ Additionally, the current system of aid distribution in Syria proposes numerous challenges for NGOs' and the UNHCR's access to various parts of the country, including besieged and hard-to-reach areas. Sieges and attacks among the various players in the conflict such as the Assad regime, international jihadist groups, and Islamist Syrian opposition groups constantly change areas of control.³¹ The existence of checkpoints and international border restrictions has prevented many of the IDPs from fleeing to areas of safety. Moreover, strict area restrictions and complex border and aid procedures enforced by Syrian authorities on international humanitarian organizations hinder necessary aid for non-combatant civilians. This chapter will first address the needs and current situation of IDPs, then outline the barriers that lead to inefficiencies in the current system of aid disbursement, followed by an explanation of the political component of humanitarian aid that resulted in an inadequate response from the international community. Lastly, recommendations are stated to encourage further collaboration and partnerships of NGOs and the UN.

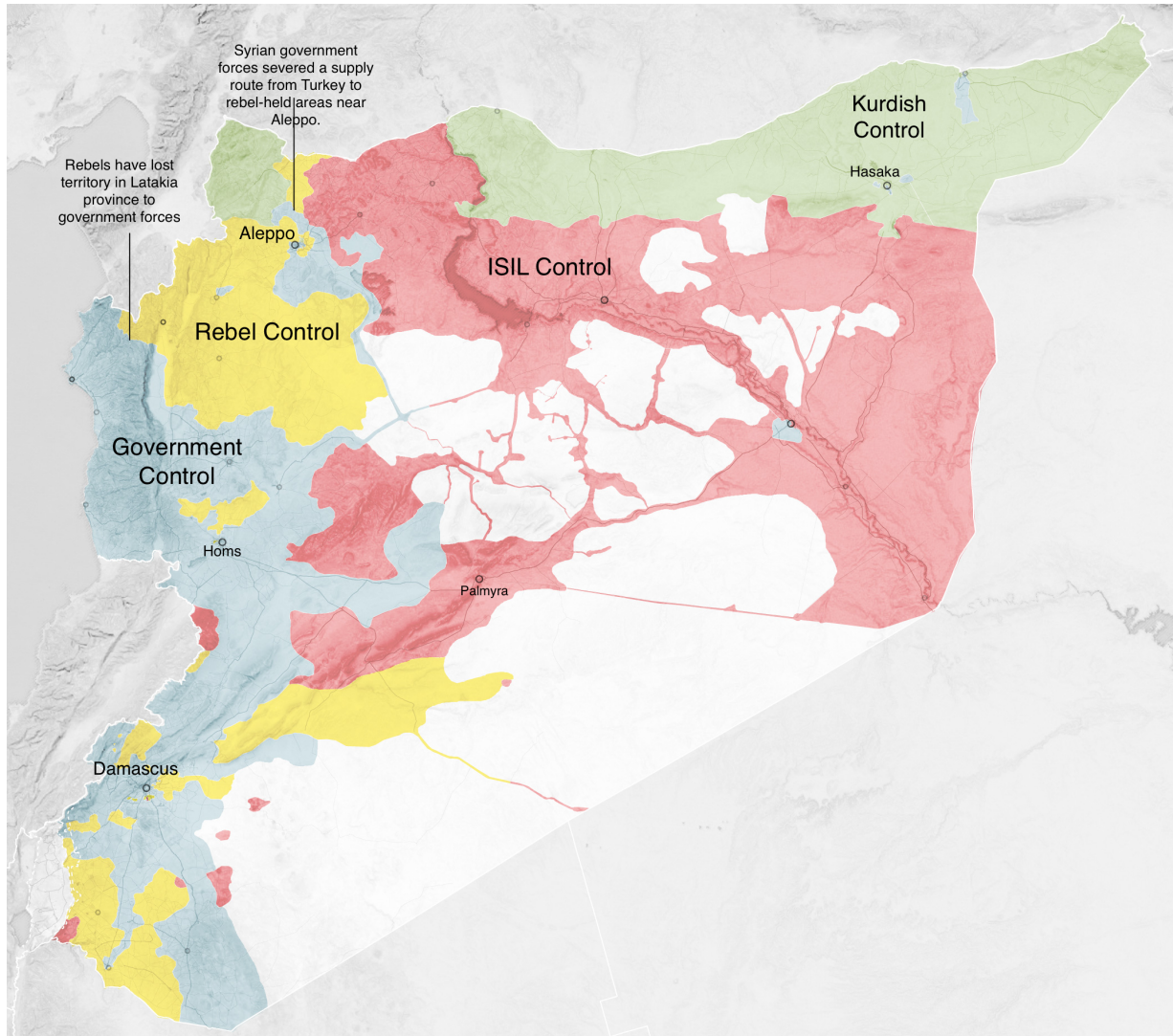
The Reality of IDPs

To this day, civilians are constantly facing widespread attacks, causing displacements with an average of 9,500 Syrians on the run everyday.³² In the initial start of the war back in 2011 protests against the Assad regime that erupted in the capital of Damascus and the major city of Aleppo led to a major displacement of 1.5 million IDPs to the suburbs and rural areas surrounding the two cities.³³ As the protesting escalated into a full-scale civil war involving multiple oppositional forces throughout the country, the concerns of civilians further heightened when the Syrian government started its use of barrel bombs filled with explosives and shrapnel to directly attack urban cities, causing high numbers of civilian deaths.³⁴ The UN has expressed deep concerns on the attackers' aim of forcing IDPs to relocate to certain areas of control, in addition to IDPs being denied ample protection, which is in direct violation of Principle 10 in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.³⁵ Considering the above, Assessment Working Groups in

Syria state that the “highest priority for intervention is the protection of civilians from violence, fighting, shelling and psychological trauma.”³⁶

Displaced and isolated people are constantly on the rise, especially in major cities and borders of conflict as depicted in the figure below, many of whom are suffering from inadequate living conditions. The UN’s joint statement estimates that “up to 4.5 million people in Syria living [are] in ‘hard-to-reach areas’ including 390,000 people in 15 besieged locations who do not have access to the life saving aid they urgently need”³⁷, though other organizations such as Siege Watch suggest a much higher number of 1.1 million besieged citizens.³⁸ Syrian American Medical Society Foundation (SAMS) has stated that the UN has not incorporated besieged or nearly besieged areas in Homs province such as Talbiseh and Al Waer into their data.³⁹

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS



Graphic 1 ⁴⁰

IDPs living in and around Damascus are settled in buildings and public places⁴¹ and/or with host families. On the other hand, in the suburbs of Aleppo such as Kefraya and Foah, 400,000 besieged IDPs⁴² are living in enclaves or scattered informal settlements⁴³ controlled by opposition groups, most of which reside in ISIL controlled areas.⁴⁴ With the country's social and economic systems collapsed, IDPs are facing a number of devastating realities including lack of food, water, and fuel, a damaged infrastructure, and nonexistent services such as waste collection.⁴⁵ Food shortage is persistently a major issue as stated in subsequent chapters. In urban areas such as Aleppo and Damascus, foods and goods are imported through a bribery system at border checkpoints, causing rapid increases in the cost of living especially during the colder months. Moreover, staying warm during the winter season has become a luxury; utilities costs are triple the amount in Damascus City along with a limited supply of essential goods, forcing IDPs besieged in Eastern Ghouta to burn plastic and wood, causing serious health concerns and

accidents.⁴⁶ Harrowing depictions of the IDPs were shown to the world through a Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) report that announced the deaths of 16 IDPs in January 2016 due to malnutrition in the small neighbourhood town of Madaya, located northwest of Damascus City.⁴⁷ Siege Watch classifies Madaya as Tier 1, the highest intensity among the three classification levels, indicating areas with little to no smuggling of goods as well as insufficient amounts of humanitarian aid.⁴⁸ As many as 42,000 IDPs are facing devastating conditions in this area controlled by Hezbollah and governmental forces, including malnourished mothers that are unable to feed their newborns and babies.⁴⁹ Examples such as the dire conditions in Madaya indicate that Hezbollah and government forces are committing a war crime- using starvation as a weapon against civilians. The UN Security Council has reported that forced starvation has become routine and systematic in Syria.⁵⁰ Despite the show of frustration and constant calls made by the United Nations to end all violence against civilians, the situation in Syria is getting worse as “another 1.3 million people joined the 12.2 million people already in need of assistance (in 2015)”.⁵¹

However, on 11 February 2016, the International Syrian Support Group (ISSG)⁵² announced a successful diplomatic negotiation between the UN and Syrian Government that agreed to allow deliveries of assistance to Fouah, Kafrayah, the besieged areas of Rural Damascus, Madaya, Mouadhimiyeh, and Kafr Batna through land routes, and to the ISIL-held town Deir Ez Zour through airdrops.⁵³ The New York Times reported 115 trucks with food and medical supplies dispatched for the 100,000 people residing in the government-held towns.⁵⁴ A significant breakthrough was made, as these disbursements were the first ones to be delivered under a diplomatic arrangement.⁵⁵ Spokeswoman, Dibeh Fakhr from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) states that “the aid organisation hopes the agreement ‘will translate into concrete action on the ground, giving us unimpeded and regular access to all areas where millions of people are in dire need of help’”.⁵⁶ Furthermore, in pursuit of a local agreement known as the “Four Towns Ceasefire Agreement”, a total of 463 people from the four besieged towns of Zabadani, Madaya, Fu’ah and Kafraya, were evacuated to Turkey and Lebanon by the United Nations team with the critical assistance of ICRC, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), the Lebanese Red Cross and the Humanitarian Relief Foundation, as well as the governments of Turkey and Lebanon.⁵⁷ Such agreements as the one detailed above exemplify how crucial it is for “all parties to exert every possible effort to support the United Nations in launching the negotiations”⁵⁸ as stated by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to persuade the all parties of the civil war including ISIL to increase evacuations of IDPs and besieged citizens. As a Syrian-led political settlement cannot be expected in the near future, continued support from the ISSG, UN, and NGOs to local countries of integration is imperative in evacuating IDPs and besieged citizens.

Why Aid is Not Reaching Syria Efficiently

Restrictions imposed by parties of the conflict, especially by the Assad regime, present many barriers for international organizations and NGOs to deliver aid into all parts of the country,

resulting in a disproportionate disbursement of aid between government and opposition-held areas. Since 2012, international aid for IDPs has been arranged for disbursement from Damascus by the ICRC, UN Agencies (including WFP, UNHCR, UNRWA) and approximately a dozen other international NGOs.⁵⁹ Shipments of aid to various areas surrounding Damascus are channeled through Syrian organizations authorized by the Assad government such as the SARC.⁶⁰ Due to the government's strict monitoring on operations and disbursements⁶¹, this current system eliminates NGOs' and the UN's control over the specifics of where, when, and how the shipments of aid are being conducted, resulting in a lack of cohesion between Syrian NGOs (SNGO), International NGOs (INGO), and UN agencies. Moreover, Syrians situated in hard-to-reach areas are relying on INGOs such as Mercy Corps and Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) for delivery of aid due to INGOs having more leeway in working in opposition-held areas.⁶² As conditions of access to regional parts imposed by the government increase, INGOs have called for more support from UN agencies to support them in terms of funding, security measures, technological assistance, and capacity building to secure safe and timely shipments into hard-to-reach areas.⁶³ Overall, lack of guaranteed protection and safety of UN and NGO aid workers within Syria has been an issue since the outbreak of the war. The UN reported the deaths of 64 NGO workers and 17 UN staff members since the outbreak of the war, along with 34 UN staff members currently detained or missing.⁶⁴ UN agencies must utilize local information, processes, and channels that are established by NGOs to be aware of the safety levels in complex territories, especially in areas of territorial conflict to prevent further killings and detainments of aid workers.

Since the UN Resolution 2165 passed in 2015 authorized UN agencies to use four border cross-points: Bab al-Salam (Turkey), Bab al-Hawa (Turkey), Al Yarubiyah (Iraq), and Al Ramtha (Jordan) to ship aid convoys without the consent of the Assad government, UN agencies have actively joined in hands with previous humanitarian NGOs shipping aid, especially through the Syria-Turkey border. Although this was a significant step in increasing aid convoys, INGOs and SNGOs have experienced shortcomings as they do not receive the support and funds to cover the costs of transporting shipments of aid allowed under Resolution 2165.⁶⁵ SAMS states that by funding and providing support, "this will ensure that the partners best positioned to deliver this aid are able to do so financially, and prevent them from diverting funds needed for other assistance to the logistics UN convoys"- which in turn will increase the number of available UN partners to strengthen SNGO's capacity.⁶⁶ In 22 Dec 2015, the hopes of NGOs for increasing additional border cross-points for UN aid shipments were turned down when Resolution 2258 was adopted as a sole renewal of Resolution 2165.⁶⁷ Though the new resolution recognized additional cross-border points used by INGOs such as the Turkey Red Crescent, it has failed to alleviate the issue of a limited customs capacity at two crossing points in Turkey, limiting the amount of UN cross-border aid.⁶⁸

MSF reports sporadic cross point closures on the Turkey-Syria border, forcing dozens of international NGOs to wait at the border attempting to gain access into Syria despite targeted bombings.⁶⁹ Although the UN has announced that cross-border deliveries of aid from Lebanon and Turkey are the most efficient method to reach displaced civilians sieged in the northern and

western parts of Syria, UN agencies have not created maps and outlined projects clearly defining the areas of Syria to be assisted through cross-border assistance versus areas to be assisted through Damascus.⁷⁰ The lack of an information network outlining areas based on proximity and access is creating confusion and overlap among NGOs and UN agencies.⁷¹

UN agencies are finding ways to better collaborate with SNGOs; however, the sheer number of leaders and representatives creates difficulty for humanitarian actors to assess their reliability and effectiveness.⁷² As larger INGOS such as Mercy Corps and SAMS have the desired level of organizational capacity, they are contracted to work with UN agencies to directly transport UN cross-border aid into Syria.⁷³ On the other hand, small SNGOs are forced to deal with another layer of bureaucracy within INGOS to legally transport UN cross-border aid causing further delays and additional costs.⁷⁴

Politics in Humanitarian Aid

Despite constant pushes by the UN to increase aid into Syria alongside successful endorsements of resolutions mentioned in the previous section, the Syrian government has been persistent in denying NGOs and the UN humanitarian aid access to civilians. Starvation and malnutrition to the extreme is exemplified in the critical situations of the besieged population in Madaya and Zabadani. Along with commitments of war crimes, breaches of the international humanitarian law by all the players, and a statement from the Secretary-General referencing the IDPs as “the victims of the worst humanitarian crisis of our time”⁷⁵, why is humanitarian aid rejected? Certainly, a multidimensional war such as the one in Syria forces regimes and opposition groups to utilize rejection of humanitarian aid as a tactic of gaining advantage over one another. Yet the use of aid in the course of political agenda results in worsening current situations.

Although humanitarian aid is founded on the three principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence,⁷⁶ history has repeated itself in subjecting humanitarian aid to the sphere of political action, thus the political impact of aid must come into consideration. Reflecting on the Bosnian and Afghan Wars, aid intended for IDPs was “instrumentalized by the objectives of donors and recipients”.⁷⁷ If the Syrian government were to deem disbursements of aid into opposition-held areas as underhanded support for anti-governmental groups, Assad’s initiative to siege multiple areas and delay UN and NGO shipments of aid across the country is logical. In retrospect, the government has increased sieges in its area of control. By “cutting off access to a populated area, blocking the entry of food and medicine, and preventing the free movement of civilians into or out of the area”⁷⁸, the Assad regime is collectively punishing IDPs that are considered supporters of opposition groups. In turn, IDPs not in favor of the Assad regime are fleeing to government held territories, as it is their only method of survival in the war-stricken country.⁷⁹

In addition to increasing sieges, the Assad regime’s creation of numerous checkpoints and intentional attacks on humanitarian facilities serve a purpose of weakening the opposition and placing pressure on local authorities to care for the starving IDPs.⁸⁰ Such attacks conducted by

supporters of the Assad regime on MSF's hospitals in Idlib Province that killed 9 staff members and 16 patients⁸¹ provide evidence to foresee future increases of civilian deaths in opposition-held areas. As the leading cause of death is war injuries and lack of medical care among civilians, the Assad regime's deliberate attacks on humanitarian facilities are not likely to stop. Whilst the humanitarian aid from UN agencies is distributed for non-political reasons, the Assad regime's tight control on the recipients of aid is in turn legitimizing the regime as the sole source of authority capable of governing the country. In the backdrop of the politicization of aid, the UN's relief agencies have continued to maintain cooperation with the Assad regime to continue their work in reaching the millions of civilians within government held territories. To this day, the UN aid agencies are facing the moral dilemma of whether to go against the orders of the Assad regime to increase aid shipments throughout the country at the cost of jeopardizing the lives of civilians in government-held areas. In addition, the continual dispersal of humanitarian aid through the Assad regime has contributed to compounding his power while delegitimizing opposition forces.⁸²

As the UN faces harsh criticisms from Syrian opposition leaders and some Western and Arab governments for failing to increase access to besieged and hard-to-reach areas, UN relief officials state that "(our critics) have oversimplified the country's aid needs, portraying cross-border delivery of aid as the 'end-all be-all solution' to the crisis".⁸³ The UN has advocated for a Syria-led peace process, likewise outlined in Resolution 2254, that will aim to create an end to the conflict.⁸⁴ Siege Watch and Integrated Regional Intelligence Networks (IRIN) have questioned the effectiveness of UN-led local ceasefire agreements and ISSG-led negotiations, mentioned before. While increasing aid into former besieged towns may seem morally correct, Valerie Szybala of the Syria Institute has stated that this in turn has "created a systematic pattern of sieging and starving civilians by the Syrian government that the UN and aid agencies have accepted".⁸⁵ MSF's Regional Emergency Coordinator, Pierre Boulet Desbureau has described besieged areas as "bargaining chips" for the Assad regime to "grant relief only when it becomes strategically expedient".⁸⁶ It is imperative for the UN to stop aid requests to the Syrian government that encourage the Assad regime to utilize aid as a "tool of war"⁸⁷ to continue its sieges.

Furthermore, the UN's stance on preserving cooperation between the Syrian government is creating diversion among foreign donors regarding whether funding UN sponsored aid programs is legitimate. Joshua Landis, director of the Center for Middle East Studies at the University of Oklahoma, states that maintaining the status quo would legitimize the Syrian government,⁸⁸ thus forcing IDPs to rely solely on obtaining humanitarian aid and medical assistance only within government controlled areas. To counteract indirect assistance of governmental forces, countries such as Saudi Arabia, France, Turkey, and Qatar are funding and providing aid being sent over the Turkey-Syria border in an act of "sympathizing with the opposition".⁸⁹ As of January 2016, the UN's appeal for more than \$3.18 billion to help victims of the civil war is currently only 0.06% funded- a total amount of just \$2 million.⁹⁰ It is an unfortunate reality that donors are reluctant to give funds and show support when secure

deliveries of aid are not being equally distributed among different regions in Syria. Some see funding opposition forces with aid as much more cost effective means leading to a faster end, while others seek to directly fund cross-border NGOs that focus on dispersing aid from the Turkey-Syria border into ISIL controlled areas, where the bulk of the hard-to-reach areas are.⁹¹

Conclusion

The current aid disbursement system in Syria is in dire need of structural changes. Further collaboration between the UN aid agencies and among NGOs themselves is critical. The UN must propose information-sharing methods to further acquire data and real time information on dispersions of IDPs and civilians in hard-to-reach and besieged areas along with the reliance on the channels and networks founded by NGOs working in the most dangerous regions throughout Syria. NGOs and institutions such as Syria Institute, Siege Watch, and IHS have proven to give much updated information on population data and up-to-date specifics on current relief aid programs. The residents of the besieged town of Madaya were already facing shortages within a month of UN aid shipments in January 2016.⁹² As the UN was accused of greatly underestimating the population in these areas, this is a clear indication of UN's lack of data in blockades and displacement figures throughout the country. In addition, the UN must include SNGOs working directly with notable INGOs in the discussion of future humanitarian aid programs. As SNGOs have expertise and knowledge in the region, funding INGOs and actively incorporating them into coordination efforts will increase information and data. Secondly, the UN must create a new resolution that calls for strict monitoring on all humanitarian cargo to prevent the usage of the cross-border points for non humanitarian reasons such as the shipments of weapons, as suggested by Vladimir Safronkov, a representative of Russian Federation in the UN Security talks.⁹³

In summary, Syria's multifaceted war has erected many challenges to the UN and NGOs to deliver aid in an effective and cohesive manner in order to meet the needs of IDPs and citizens remaining in besieged areas. Repeated aid disbursement requests and temporary ceasefire agreements conducted by the UN indirectly allow Assad's continuance of utilizing aid as a political tool. The UN must consider alternative ways to stop sieges on civilian areas in order to provide long-term humanitarian aid to the millions of Syrians in dire need.

Policy Recommendations

- Support a UN proposal to increase collaboration with NGOs and institutions working in various scopes of humanitarian efforts to further acquire data and real time information on dispersions of IDPs and civilians in hard-to-reach and besieged areas.
- Encourage the UN to endorse a new resolution that calls for strict monitoring on all humanitarian cargo to prevent usage of cross-border shipments for non-humanitarian reasons such as shipments of weapons.

Food Security in Syria and Local Countries of Integration

Diane Bolme

“My son is too weak; my body doesn’t produce milk... [and] we can’t afford to buy milk. Our lives are miserable with no food, we only have this not-clean water to fill our stomachs with.”⁹⁴ This is the voice of Kutana al-Hamadi, a Syrian refugee in Jordan, describing her life with her 7-month-old malnourished baby boy.⁹⁵ Her voice could speak for countless other Syrians who are facing food insecurity and malnutrition as a consequence of the Syrian war and refugee crisis.

Food security, simply put, “exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”⁹⁶ As a result of the Syrian civil war and refugee crisis, food security throughout the region has deteriorated significantly. Within Syria, 9.8 million people are food insecure, and in local countries of integration food security has dropped precipitously.⁹⁷ In 2014, 52 percent of Syrian refugees in local countries of integration were considered food secure, but by 2015 that number had declined to 15 percent – and this was before drastic aid cuts occurred.⁹⁸

Thus, food security and adequate nutrition should be crucial components of the humanitarian response to the Syrian IDP and refugee crisis, and they ought to be led by local governments. The UNCHR recommends local national ownership of the food security response, as its centrality offers a “more effective and sustainable response to the crisis.”⁹⁹ Therefore, an adequate food security response requires regional leadership of multi-sectoral programs that emphasize emergency needs, encourage a thoughtful transition to regional resilience, consider the political implications of food aid, and are supported by greater fiscal and infrastructure assistance from the UN, World Food Programme (WFP), NGOs, and international governments. This chapter will begin with an examination of the importance of food security for both Syrian refugees and international actors. Following this will be a brief overview of the state of food security in the region, concluding with analysis and recommendations on current programs.

Importance of Food Security

First and foremost, food security is a human rights issue. Not only does food insecurity result in hunger, malnutrition, and reduced health, but it also increases refugees’ and IDPs’ vulnerability in many ways as they turn to negative coping strategies.¹⁰⁰ According to the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), José Graziano da Silva, “Food security [is] central to the global response to the refugee crisis. War causes hunger and hunger too, kills and forces people from their homes.”¹⁰¹

While the humanitarian and human rights concerns surrounding food security are paramount, food security is also significant for international and regional geopolitical reasons. In Syria, food aid has unfortunately been utilized by President Bashar al-Assad’s regime to exert control over local populations and delegitimize opposition groups, as at present food aid is only delivered through government channels.¹⁰² Co-opting or circumventing this power not only could distribute life-saving food aid to more Syrians, but it could potentially help to reduce Assad’s

power – a strong incentive in light of the United States’ foreign policy interests. In local countries of integration, food insecurity greatly compromises the government’s ability to successfully support refugees as well as their own populations. In addition, pursuing food security projects that address both host community and refugee needs can help to ease tensions between these groups.¹⁰³ As for the geopolitical concerns of third countries of resettlement, refugees have listed the rising food insecurity as a key factor for their ongoing migration to Europe.¹⁰⁴

Finally, food security is vital for household economic stability and a thriving economy. Food insecurity often results in negative coping behaviors; examples include accruing debt and removing children from school to earn money, which reduces their ability to obtain an education and thus impacts their future livelihoods.¹⁰⁵ In addition, malnutrition increases the cost of medical care and overall reduces the economic productivity of a region, contributing further to instability.¹⁰⁶ With so many multifaceted consequences to food insecurity, the international community ought to prioritize food security in Syria and the local countries of integration.

Current State of Food Security

Food security encompasses four interrelated elements – utilization, access, stability, and availability. Utilization represents what and how people eat, and is often measured with a Food Consumption Score (FCS) that denotes the overall nutritional profile of diets.¹⁰⁷ Amongst Syrian refugees and IDPs, the rates of acceptable FCS levels as determined by the WFP have been declining.¹⁰⁸ FCS is correlated with caloric intake and nutrient diversity – thus, lower FCS scores suggest a predilection for malnutrition.¹⁰⁹ Malnutrition in conflict-ridden areas of Syria is considered serious, and malnutrition is increasing for Syrian refugees and citizens in the host communities.¹¹⁰ Many refugees have low consumption rates of certain nutrient-dense foods, especially meat and fruit. This can result in negative health impacts like micronutrient deficiencies, which are found more frequently in camp refugees.¹¹¹ For instance, iron-deficiency anemia, which is often caused or exacerbated by low animal protein diets, was found in 48.4 percent of children and 44.8 percent of women who live in the Za’atari refugee camp in Jordan – rates that classify it as a major public health issue.¹¹² Finally, utilization also addresses the cultural appropriateness of foods. In-kind assistance is of particular issue, and has been viewed as culturally unacceptable by refugees. For example, rice is often included as the staple food in these donations, when bulgur is the staple food in Syria.¹¹³

Access to food – both economically and physically – is considered one of the greatest impediments to food security in the region.¹¹⁴ Physical access includes issues of the geographical scope of relief aid and the ability for refugees to obtain transport.¹¹⁵ Physical access is especially constrained in Syria, where the government limits food aid for those residing in opposition-held regions.¹¹⁶ Limited access is also a crucial issue in Turkey, where the government restricts humanitarian presence and thus food aid.¹¹⁷ Restricted access also results in limited data available for humanitarian and international organizations on specific food security and nutritional needs, preventing effective, location-specific interventions from being crafted. Economic access encompasses the purchasing power of households and the prices of food. Refugees and locals in the host communities they live in both face limited income as a primary barrier to food.¹¹⁸ In Jordan, 74 percent of refugee households state that food vouchers constitute

the majority of their income.¹¹⁹ As such, the recent budget shortfalls that caused voucher cuts suggest a perilous situation for economic access. Economic access issues are further compounded by the increased population, which raises the demand for food. Combined with food prices, these factors have caused household expenditure on food percentages to rise across the board, constituting 40 percent of income in Jordan, 51 percent in Lebanon, and between 50 and 80 percent in Syria.¹²⁰

Regional food availability has declined as a result of the conflict's impact on food production and trade.¹²¹ In 2014, cereal harvests in Syria were 50 percent less than before the war began, due to an interplay of drought and reduced planting due to violence and displacement. Half of all livestock in Syria has been lost, the poultry sector's production dropped by 70 percent, irrigation systems have been destroyed by conflict, and crop production is declining every year.¹²² Local countries of integration are also experiencing lower crop yields due to drought and insecurity, such as a 42 percent productivity decline in Lebanon from 2013 to 2015. Finally, trade routes throughout the region have significantly been impacted by the civil war.¹²³

Stability is the final component of food security, and it addresses the consistency of the other components of food security over an extended period of time.¹²⁴ Stability is primarily impacted by natural, political, and economic factors – all of which are resulting in decreased food security regionally.¹²⁵ The ongoing drought in the local region has been compounded by the political climate, as violence and forced displacement reduce food production and trade. This decreased availability in combination with rising populations in local countries of integration has required greater and greater food imports to sustain food needs. This import dependency makes the region more vulnerable to market fluctuations worldwide in food supplies and prices.¹²⁶ The security situation and refugee flow has also contributed to uncontrolled border crossings of plants and animals, which raises the risk of stability-threatening transboundary animal diseases.¹²⁷ Increased competition for agricultural land and reduced subsidization of agricultural inputs also decrease stability.¹²⁸ All of these factors, plus inflation, resulted in increased food prices. For example, between 2011 and 2015 prices in Syria went up 197 percent for wheat flour, 403 percent for rice, and 180 percent for bread.¹²⁹ Overall, the food stability of the region climactically, politically, and economically is not promising.

Syrian IDPs, refugees in the local countries of integration, and host communities resort to negative coping strategies when they lack food security. This increases their vulnerability and threatens their chances for economic opportunity and adequate quality of life, especially in population groups such as women and children. The most common of these strategies in the long-term is using savings and borrowing money, while in the short term, individuals are utilizing less preferred foods or eating fewer meals.¹³⁰ Other strategies include removing children from school in order to earn an income, marrying daughters at a young age, buying on credit, working at dangerous jobs, or sending children to beg. Use of negative coping strategies is statistically very high across the entire region, at around 70 percent in both Lebanon and Turkish refugee camps and up to 75 percent in areas of Syria (with higher rates in IDPs).¹³¹

Major Successes in Food Security Interventions

While there is great need for improvement in food security programming, there have been some successes. The most notable improvement is the shift in emergency food aid in local countries of integration from in-kind provisions and paper vouchers to e-cards, which help improve all four aspects of food security. Begun in a large scale in 2013 in Lebanon by the WFP, the e-card program in the local countries of integration is the largest program of this nature worldwide, and supports 90 percent of Syrian refugee WFP beneficiaries.¹³²

E-card advantages are manifold, including their benefits of “promoting operational cost effectiveness, contributing to a sense of normality, empowering beneficiaries to make their own choices, [and] strengthening the nutritional impact of assistance.”¹³³ They utilize existing private sector infrastructure from such entities as MasterCard and local banks, and are thus easier to implement.¹³⁴ Since e-cards allow emergency food aid funds to be spent in supporting the local food system as opposed to on food imports (which are used for in-kind aid), their funds stimulate local economies.¹³⁵ For instance, e-cards in Lebanon had the benefit of doubling revenue on average in participating stores and creating 1300 jobs.¹³⁶ As a total, by March 2015 the WFP voucher program had contributed over \$1 billion into the local countries of integration since program inauguration.¹³⁷ In addition, e-cards increase food utilization by allowing for consumers to purchase individually chosen and culturally appropriate items in a discreet and less-stigmatizing way, thus improving dietary diversity and meeting nutritional needs.¹³⁸ E-cards also address access issues, because refugees can spend them in multiple visits to shops and do not require regular travel to receive disbursement of their vouchers. Instead, the funds are automatically deposited to their cards.¹³⁹ In addition, they promote stability of food security, because they can continue to be utilized when insecurity prevents humanitarian actors from accessing an area, such as in Lebanon’s Aarsal region in 2014-2015.¹⁴⁰ Finally, the ease of data-collection from e-cards allows for constant improvement of the program. For instance, “should a large number of beneficiaries be found to be purchasing food with low nutritional value, WFP and partners may wish to roll out awareness-raising activities to better inform beneficiaries about diet and nutrition.”¹⁴¹ Along with such endeavors as implementation of iris scanning to confirm e-card holder identity, there is still opportunity to improve this program.¹⁴² However, this modality is not appropriate for all areas, including many areas in Syria where the private sector infrastructure is not in place to implement these programs. Nonetheless, this response addresses multiple issues of food insecurity, and e-cards are an innovative example that international and humanitarian institutions ought to turn to in addressing the following major gaps that still exist.

Major Gaps in Food Security Programming

In light of the earlier data on the declining state of food security, it is clear that there are opportunities for improvement in the humanitarian response to food insecurity in the Syrian refugee crisis. Successful responses must address utilization, access, availability, and stability cohesively. In examining the gaps, the data shows manifold issues, from the need for increased veterinary services to the need to increase dietary diversity. While all gaps deserve individual and adequate attention, the following are issues that impact food security on the broadest scale.

Funding

Funding is perhaps the largest issue, as none of the programming to address the multiple aspects of food security will be successful without adequate funding. The decline in food security across all regions is largely the result of dependency on food assistance programs and the drop in these programs due to funding gaps.¹⁴³ This confirms the need for a dual approach to food security that continues to supply emergency aid while increasing local capacity to provide for food needs in the long term, which can improve regional self-sufficiency and decrease dependency on expensive emergency programs.¹⁴⁴ However, resilience-building programming also requires that funding gaps be closed. According to the 3RP plan, the fiscal requirements of food security surpass those of any other sector at close to a billion dollars.¹⁴⁵ Funds have considerably fallen short of needs, resulting in program cuts. The total sector funding requirements for food security, as decided by the 3RP, were at 41 percent of the USD \$905 million needed as of the end of September 2015.¹⁴⁶ The WFP supported 2.1 million refugees in January 2015, but this number had dropped to 1.3 million by September 2015 due to budgeting shortfalls, and the value of vouchers was cut in half.¹⁴⁷ New funding returned the value of vouchers to 80 percent of their intended value in October 2015, but the funding shortfall continues to make food security in the region perilous.¹⁴⁸ While a recent conference in London resulted in \$10 billion pledged from donor countries, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi has insisted that fiscal needs will be ongoing until the war is ended.¹⁴⁹

As Nigel Pont of Mercy Corps notes, “Unlike natural disasters, the complex geopolitical causes of the Syrian crisis do not generate the same emotional response from potential donors.”¹⁵⁰ As such, incentivizing and encouraging fiscal support – from international governments, the private sector, and civil society – is a key element to improving food security in the local countries of integration. As Tendayi Achiume notes, “northern states contributed to refugee protection in southern states only when they appreciated the substantive linkages between ‘in-region protection and their interests.’”¹⁵¹ Likewise, incentivizing fiscal involvement in food security must necessitate a linkage between regional food security and international interests, as mentioned previously. While a humanitarian concern ought to be significant motivation, appeals for fiscal support should incorporate the economic and geopolitical benefits of food security such as possible decreased migration to Europe, increased economic productivity, regional stability, and the potential to counter the Assad regime’s tactics.

Emergency Aid Gaps

While funding is one of the biggest areas to improve emergency food aid, there are other major concerns that ought to be addressed. First, while much of the focus on humanitarian aid in local countries of integration is understandably on refugees, this can disregard the negative impact the crisis has on host community food security as well. This factor can contribute to increased tensions between host communities and refugees, as refugees are targeted for aid while vulnerable populations in the host communities are not.¹⁵² While the 3RP plan does acknowledge the need of local communities, greater awareness (especially from NGOs and international donors) may help to ensure equality of humanitarian programs and thus reduce tensions.¹⁵³

Programs in local countries of integration and within Syria necessitate a multi-sectoral response that connects food aid and other basic needs together. Humanitarian aid elements cannot

be addressed isolated from one another, as they interact to compound both benefits and detrimental impacts.¹⁵⁴ Lack of attention to this need can result in ineffective programs. For instance, in light of their severe need for non-food aid, vulnerable refugees have been found to sell portions of their e-cards intended for food purchases.¹⁵⁵ Thus, multi-sectoral approaches are necessary to address the complex and interrelated etiology of various humanitarian issues. Projects of this nature have been shown to be more efficacious in short-term emergency needs, but also are a crucial element of supporting long-term resilience and recovery.¹⁵⁶

Syria has particular issues and gaps in emergency food aid that differ from the local countries of integration. Not only is food insecurity considered a factor in the public dissatisfaction with the Syrian government prior to the outbreak of civil war, but as mentioned previously, the Assad regime is presently utilizing food aid for its own political purposes.¹⁵⁷ Starvation tactics – and even multiple bombings of bakeries where Syrians in rebel areas awaited bread distribution – have been utilized by the Assad regime, along with efforts to destroy the infrastructure that supports the food system in Syria.¹⁵⁸ With the combination of intentional efforts by the Assad regime, the violence caused by the war, and ongoing drought in the region, food security within Syria is dire, and Syria is incapable of adequately providing for its own food needs.¹⁵⁹ While the current tactic of utilizing the government for aid disbursement may facilitate the goal of international organizations such as the WFP to reach as many people as possible with aid, it also compounds control in the Assad regime’s hands and undermines the legitimacy and potential sovereignty of rebel forces.¹⁶⁰ According to Dr. Najib Ghadbian, who is a UN representative of the opposition Syrian National Coalition, the lack of food (and other) aid in rebel-controlled areas “amounts to preferential treatment for regime-held areas and perpetuates the regime’s starvation tactics and empowers the regime to continue to use food and medicine as a weapon of war.”¹⁶¹ This is a crucial consideration in crafting the United States’ response. As Eng and Martinez note, “Food aid soothes the global conscience while implicitly contributing to international political inertia.”¹⁶² Yet addressing food insecurity in Syria has the potential to do both a great deal of humanitarian good and negate the power that Assad gains by controlling it himself. It is important to remember, “Whether as weapon, welfare or outside aid, food is a crucial thing to control, as forces on all sides of the Syrian conflicts understand.”¹⁶³ As such, food aid in Syria ought to transcend distribution through a single route, and must attempt to evenly and adequately be distributed to both rebel-held and regime-held areas.

Resilience Gaps

As has been made clear throughout this chapter, improving the ability of the region to meet its own food needs – or resilience – is a key component. Thus, like the FAO asserts, agricultural programming “cannot be an afterthought” in the regional food insecurity crisis, and must be a crucial element of the multi-sectoral approach advocated above.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, restoring or increasing agriculture productivity in the region is significantly cheaper than importing food and is beneficial to the regional economy and stability.¹⁶⁵ Both within Syria and in the local countries of integration, increasing the focus on self-sufficiency is gaining attention, but much more support is needed. The 3RP plan had achieved a mere 39 percent of their targeted

support of agricultural livelihoods as of September 2015.¹⁶⁶ The FAO believes that the situation will only continue to deteriorate without support for the regional agricultural sector.¹⁶⁷

In Syria specifically, agricultural production is still feasible in many areas, though the overall food system infrastructure has deteriorated and far from immediately rectifiable. The agriculture industry has declined significantly – while approximately 70 percent of households were engaged in agriculture prior to the civil war, now only 10 percent are.¹⁶⁸ As such, backyard food production kits are a new opportunity to allow for small-scale production of nutritious food at the household level. These are self-contained plots that allow for intensive cultivation of nutritious vegetables, eggs, or dairy in compact spaces. In a few short weeks, they result in increased dietary diversity and nutritional profile at the household level, and also have the potential to increase income if the surplus is sold. A micro-farming project of this nature has just begun in the besieged city of Madaya, sponsored by a Turkish NGO.¹⁶⁹ These kits can also help relieve the infrastructure burden on local countries of integration, and can even be supplied to host community households as well.¹⁷⁰ In local countries of integration, the agricultural industry can be supported as well through subsidies on inputs, increased surveillance and vaccination for animal diseases, and cash-for-work programs to rehabilitate agricultural infrastructure systems. Finally, the entire region would benefit from climate-smart agricultural practices, as climate change impacted the drought in Syria and is likely to be an ongoing problem threatening agricultural productivity, food security, and thus regional stability.¹⁷¹ As a whole, regional agricultural support is increasing, but efforts are still far from sufficient.

Conclusion

Humanitarian food aid in Syria may seem simple, but that view underestimates the complex interconnections between food security and other humanitarian issues, the power of food (for good and for ill), and the room still available for improvement. Thus, the complex causes, factors, and potential outcomes must be taken into consideration in crafting effective humanitarian responses that address the immediate need while establishing long-term stability.

Policy Recommendations

- Encourage multi-sectorial emergency and resilience responses, led by regional governments.
- Incentivize increased 3RP funding through connecting regional food security with international interests, such as regional stability and the possibility of decreased migration to Europe.
- Advocate for comprehensive and equal food aid to both regime- and opposition-held regions in Syria, to prevent food aid from compounding the Assad regime's power.
- Ensure food security initiatives in local countries of integration are adequately reaching comparably disadvantaged individuals in the host communities.

Addressing Healthcare Challenges for Syrian Refugees

Kevin Celustka

Every human has the right to health, defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “a complete state of physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”¹⁷² This right has been violated for Syrians forced to flee the violence of a civil war, and structural violence is often perpetuated by host countries and bystanders during their transit and resettlement. The countries that have ratified the 1951 Charter¹⁷³ and the 1967 Protocol have made a commitment to provide “access to health services equivalent to that of the host population”¹⁷⁴; however, of the local countries of integration, which host a vast majority of Syrian refugees, only Egypt and Turkey have made this commitment.

In order to protect their right to physical well-being, the provision of both primary and emergency health care to Syrians must be expanded and improved throughout their journeys as asylum seekers. Integration into the local system of healthcare and access to its full services is the penultimate goal for an effective response, thus reducing barriers to access should be first and foremost. However, these barriers differ between various populations and states, and a unique response for each is required.

This chapter will examine the quality of health and the health care currently available to Syrian refugees throughout their transition into local countries of integration. Moreover, this chapter will provide recommendations to achieve improved physical well-being for this displaced population and to promote their successful integration as healthy members of society.

What’s at Stake: the Costs of Inaction

Undoubtedly this investment will come at great cost, but investing in effective interventions now will yield benefits of much greater value in both the immediate and distant future. To fully fund the UN Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) humanitarian goals for health care in Jordan require, \$532 million¹⁷⁵, in Turkey \$29 million¹⁷⁶, and in Lebanon \$290 million¹⁷⁷. Fully funding these requirements is just a start, as these costs would only support the number of refugees who have already entered these countries. The United States and the global community (namely the UNCHR, International Organization for Migration (IOM), UN Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the World Health Organization (WHO)) have already made a considerable investment in the supply of healthcare to refugees, but much more is still needed. Although it is impossible to quantify the value of reduced human suffering, regional stability, a healthy workforce, reduced illegal border crossing and reduced radicalization of refugees, all of these benefits are expected and quantifiable outcomes of improved humanitarian aid, including health care.

The United States has the opportunity and the responsibility to lead the international community in this response, contributing to the preserved regional stability of Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey. Leading by example, the United States should demonstrate its commitment to ensuring Syrian refugees have access to healthcare through financial and political support. The U.S. should continue to call on other signatories of the 1951 Convention to fulfill their promises, and pressuring non-signatory stakeholders to sign on. Interventions should be targeted at collecting better data, connecting existing uncoordinated medical relief efforts, supporting the expansion of current efforts to meet acute medical needs, and expanding the long-term capacity

for health care networks. Partnering with Ministries of Health, International Organizations, and smaller NGOs, a coordinated effort is required to systematically meet the medical needs of the refugees who the U.S. has committed to protect.

Local countries of integration should be incentivized to continue receiving and registering refugees while supporting their medical care through aid from the UN and directly from the U.S. The UN and U.S. should also demonstrate increased support for nations that show progress in improving refugee health care access and demonstrate measurably improved outcomes in health. In turn, the local host communities will benefit as well, seeing improved health services that outlast the immediate burden of the Syrian refugee crisis, in addition to reduced risk of outbreaks of measles and other infectious disease due to widespread vaccination immunity.

Health Care Challenges Facing Syrian Refugees

Every Syrian faces a myriad of health risks and challenges between their initial departure and settlement in a local country of integration. When planning and executing macro-level health care interventions on behalf of vulnerable populations, it is imperative to keep their perspectives, stories, and desires in focus. The following section will briefly describe the common health-related experiences of Syrian refugees.

Many Syrians, unable or unwilling to leave the borders of their country, endure a virtually nonexistent Syrian health care system supported by limited intervention from international aid organizations. More than 95 percent of health professionals originally in Aleppo have left or been killed since the beginning of the war¹⁷⁸. Physicians for Human Rights¹⁷⁹, an organization that has been tracking attacks on health care workers and infrastructure amid the Syrian conflict, says that 697 health care workers have been killed in 336 attacks on medical sites¹⁸⁰, the vast majority carried out by the Syrian government and its allies.¹⁸¹ Most humanitarian organizations such as Medecins Sans Frontières (MSF) have been forced to withdraw from regions held by the Islamic State¹⁸² leaving large portions of the remaining population entirely out of reach: “as health care professionals are killed or driven out, entire communities are left without any medical care.”¹⁸³ The human right to health and health care has been continually and deliberately violated as a tactic of war and Syrian civilians are paying the price, suffering illness, injury, and loss of life.



*"Fever is very dangerous for him because of his condition. One night he got a fever and there was nothing I could do. The doctors and the pharmacists had all fled our village. It was too dangerous to even go outside. We didn't even have a phone. All I could do was take his clothes off and wipe him with cold water. He shook all night. At one point his eyes rolled into the back of his head. He was like a body without a soul. I cried all night. The fever broke in the morning, but that was enough for me."*¹⁸⁴

Millions of Syrians have chosen to seek safety outside of Syria. As refugees move towards the borders of Turkey, Lebanon, or Jordan, they are most often without adequate shelter, supplies, or humanitarian support. Camps for IDPs have become full and are unable accommodate the waves of newcomers. Newly arriving families are left in the peripheries of these camps, unserved by the medical services provided by NGOs¹⁸⁵. As borders close in response to escalating violence near the Syrian borders of Turkey, thousands of refugees are left in this purgatory indefinitely.

During this transitional period, medications for chronic conditions run out, adding additional challenges to the journey. For those injured during transit, inadequate treatment can lead to infections in cuts or blisters, frequently on their feet. Many women require obstetric care en route and some will even deliver without medical assistance. Without a well coordinated system of aid, refugees rely on sporadic and temporary interventions made by a diverse group of aid organizations along the road.

Upon entering Jordan, Lebanon, or Turkey, asylum seekers must access care in a foreign system, sometimes systematically designed to limit their access¹⁸⁶. Complications of legal status, ability to pay, understanding of available services, discrimination, new languages, and cultural norms all present barriers to health care. The decision making process for a refugee navigating the health care systems of a new country is never simple, and making errors in navigating the complex process might leave refugees in worse health than had they chosen not to seek treatment at all.

Improving Refugee Health and Health System Strengthening

Syrian refugees face poor outcomes in health regardless of their destination due to the ubiquitously poor social determinants of health¹⁸⁷. The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people live, shaped by the distribution of money, power, and resources. These include (among many others): level of education, ability to provide daily needs (e.g. food, housing), lack of social support, language barriers, access to economic opportunity, and perhaps most important, access to healthcare.

Improving health for any population must be approached holistically, addressing each of these determinants to eliminate disproportionate burdens and poor health outcomes for vulnerable populations. Many of these social determinants are central to this chapter's recommendations, while others will be addressed at length in other chapters including food security, education, and economic opportunity. Access to health care, however, should not be ignored and is in fact critical as refugees will inevitably require care during their period of asylum, whether this period lasts for five months, five years, or even multiple generations. Ability to access care is critical for successful integration.

While most refugees will eventually access healthcare, there are many barriers that could prevent or delay them from seeking or receiving treatment. Demand side barriers, those associated with the decision-making of the refugee, are often cost, legal status, or registration status, but can also include transportation, awareness of available services, cultural stigmas, and language barriers. These demand side barriers are especially evident in non-life threatening conditions, as a refugee weighs the implicit risks and costs of seeking care versus waiting to evaluate if their condition worsens without care. Waiting to seek care can result in more expensive treatments and increased suffering for the patients in comparison to preventative care.¹⁸⁸

There are also supply side barriers, which culminate in the state or organization's ability to provide appropriate services to patients. Supply side barriers are almost always due to funding constraints, which result in long waits, staffing shortages, and supply shortages. In the context of Syria's civil war, these supply side barriers are often deeply political.

Both supply and demand barriers should be addressed to connect refugees to the services they require to maintain quality of health. Throughout these interventions, the refugees impacted should be directly questioned as part of the evaluation process, and their perspectives incorporated into adaptations and evolutions of medical programs. Host communities should also be given as much ownership in development as possible so that interventions benefit both refugee populations and serve the needs of the host community as well.

The Primary Health Care Model

The Primary Health Care (PHC) model utilizes a referral system to alleviate burdens from higher level institutions¹⁸⁹. Networks of small clinics expand the reach of medical services including vaccinations, health care education, and monitoring of outbreaks in communities. Many Middle Eastern states have already made considerable investment in primary health care for their native populations, among them Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. Refugees were initially allowed free access to these services in Jordan and Turkey; however, as demand has continued to grow, only Turkey has maintained free access to PHC. Exceeding Jordan and Lebanon's funding limitations, the rising costs fell to the refugees through the development of cost sharing models and decreased subsidization of services. Supporting and expanding these systems to sustainably support additional demand and reduce cost barriers will be essential to improving healthcare

access. These strategies will be addressed in depth on a case-by-case basis in the following chapters on local countries of integration.

Response Strategy

There are three critical populations where health care interventions should be targeted: refugees who are in transit, refugees living in camps, and refugees living in host communities of local countries of integration. Health care during transit and within camps can be adopted under universally successful models such as vertical interventions which address the immediate and temporary needs of transient groups. The majority of refugees, however, live integrated into a host country and access healthcare through their local public or private systems, which require a diagonal approach, incorporating a horizontal buildup of facilities for sustainable improvement.

Benefits to local populations are critical to maintain local support of all interventions, as the growing refugee populations are beginning to weigh heavy on the fragile inter-community consensus of hosts¹⁹⁰. This approach aims to mitigate the socio-economic and political impacts of the refugee influx and hopes to reduce negative interactions with local hospital staff. Apart from competition with local populations for low-cost labor jobs, one of the most critical points of tension is the burden on basic health care services, resulting in reduced access for already vulnerable local populations, especially in countries with large portions of the population under the poverty line such as Lebanon.

Beyond strictly addressing the macro-level availability of care, the micro-level social experiences of refugees must also be considered when addressing the unique circumstances in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. The socio-political and economic power structures of each region influence the decision-making process of the refugee and can ultimately lead to poor outcomes of care if not appropriately addressed. These power structures include the relationships between refugees and hosts, other refugees, and local legal and political structures. Certain populations, such as women and children, are especially vulnerable in these power dynamics, which manifest in worse outcomes in health for women due to reduced access to family planning, gender-based violence, and a disproportionate risk for STIs¹⁹¹. While this chapter will continue to focus primarily on providing medical services to refugees, it would miss the intention of humanitarian efforts not to recognize the importance of these relationships and power structures, which influence the perceived well-being of the refugees during their attempts to access medical services.

Healthcare in Transit

One of the most dangerous parts of a refugee's experience is transit, encompassing their escape from the violence within Syria and their journey into local countries of integration, although even more dangerous is the crossing of the eastern Mediterranean on the way to third countries of resettlement within the EU. While it is paramount to ensure availability of emergency response to those who make the trans-Mediterranean journey, this chapter will focus on the general challenges of migration and border crossing relevant to all refugees leaving Syria.

As countries continue to close or restrict their borders to asylum seekers, illegal immigration will continue to rise, resulting in many unregistered or unaccounted refugees entering states without access to the provided health services. It is imperative that borders remain open to legal crossing for those who need medical treatment, and especially to medical

professionals in order to both treat patients and bring supplies where they are needed. In country and in between countries, these teams are generally organized under the mobile clinic model.

Mobile clinics are used to provide PHC for transitory or hard-to-reach populations, including consultations, first aid, basic medications, and other easily transportable services. Patients typically seek treatment for “sore throats, coughs, fever, ear aches, skin rashes, diarrhea and joint pain,” says Dr. Andja Rosic, who works with a mobile medical team providing care for Syrian asylum seekers moving through Serbia. “We also see a lot of wounded, infected and swollen feet from all the walking. But the vast majority of consultations right now are for symptoms of colds and flu.” Their team, including one doctor, nurse, counselor, and a coordinator/translator, can treat nearly 100 patients daily.¹⁹² Many international humanitarian organizations such as the International Rescue Committee, International Medical Corps, and others operate independently, working with geographically exclusive populations. Coordination between these independent organizations under UNHCR administration would increase their efficacy of identifying the populations with the greatest need, as well as achieving better coordination with permanent facilities for referrals.

Emergency medicine is currently provided haphazardly by a combination of reception centers and field clinics. These centers are often unable to respond to the high demands of asylum seekers who may have sustained physical trauma during their journey. The mobile clinic model, while unable to treat severely injured patients, can assist in the transportation of refugees to higher tier facilities, filling the gaps where emergency medicine is unavailable.

Healthcare in Camps

Although nearly 90 percent of refugees in Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan live integrated into host communities, nearly 500,000 Syrian refugees live outside of civil society, sequestered into designated camps.¹⁹³ Among the local countries of integration, camps are present in Jordan and Turkey, whereas Lebanon has not allowed the development of formal Syrian refugee camps. Without immediate access to the resources that locals enjoy, the delivery of primary health care services in camps is coordinated between the state and supporting humanitarian organizations such as UNICEF. In most camps, basic needs are met and reported mortality rates are low¹⁹⁴, but satisfactory quality of life and health care still depend on adequate staffing, funding, and supplies.

The provision of humanitarian aid is relatively straightforward in these circumstances. The UNHCR has published a document of universal standards that ensure quality of life while living in a camp,¹⁹⁵ which establishes basic metrics in achieving important components of health including PHC, vaccinations, referrals, sanitation, and supply of basic medicines for acute and chronic illnesses. In order to evaluate whether each camp meets these standards, an effective surveillance system should be implemented where available data is insufficient. Jordan’s camps have adequate data, but improvement is necessary in Turkish camps. Tied aid should be used to encourage states to provide adequate support for these camps, and in Lebanon’s case, should be encouraged to set up additional temporary settlements.

Refugees often experience poor outcomes in health during their arrival to camps, often weak or injured after an arduous journey. Upon arrival, they are at elevated risk for diarrhea, respiratory infections, measles, malnutrition, or other respiratory diseases, which account for the majority of clinical visits.¹⁹⁶ Poor sanitation can lead to foodborne illness such as hepatitis A and rotavirus, and should thus be well maintained as a prophylactic measure. Dr. Pier Paolo Balladelli, WHO Regional Emergency Coordinator for the Syria, stated these challenges as top

priorities for camps, and cited a need for “exploring how to improve waste management and hygiene of food stalls.”¹⁹⁷

Beyond the scope of primary care within the camp, a strong referral network to local secondary and tertiary institutions is necessary to ensure access to care for complex or critical health complications. These services should include some provision of transport. Beyond the camp borders, refugees become reliant on the services provided by the local public health care system, demonstrating the symbiotic nature of a strong healthcare network for non-camp refugees.

Healthcare in Local Countries of Integration

For the majority of refugees who live in host communities and are integrated into the local population, the response becomes much more complicated. Refugees living outside camps are difficult to monitor, assess, and treat, thus do not receive the same level of humanitarian aid targeted exclusively at camps. Additionally, few non-camp refugees are able to fully access the local government’s health care facilities due to many of the supply and demand barriers previously discussed. Providing health care to non-camp refugees should balance both immediate response and resilience building.

Often living among the poorest communities of the local population, Syrian refugees share already scarce resources and add additional strain to governmental service budgets. Humanitarian aid should be implemented in coordination with local governments whenever possible with the intent to improve the capacity of government health services to a rapidly increasing demand. Development of health care infrastructure must benefit the entire population, not just Syrian refugees, but additional steps should be taken to reduce barriers to access specifically for refugees. These interventions should include, but not be limited to, cash-based incentives (CBIs), allowing Syrian health care professionals to practice temporarily, and campaigns to increase awareness of available services in all local countries of integration.

One challenge associated with this goal is the inadequate health data provided by local governments in the region, which often ignore non-citizens¹⁹⁸. International stakeholders should focus on improving data collection via population surveys of all individuals living in Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon to ensure appropriate responses and planning to address existing and future needs. Currently Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon have all restricted their borders to new asylum seekers, meaning refugees who choose to enter illegally will likely not be registered, exacerbating the challenges of creating accurate epidemiological evaluations of the region.

Lebanon

Lebanon hosts the most refugees per capita of any other nation, more than 1.5 million to date in addition to 500,000 Palestinian refugees. Both populations are stressing an already failing public health care system. Before the influx of Syrian refugees, cheap public health care was more widely available to both the Lebanese and Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon (LRS). The state, however, has more than halved their government spending on health care over the past decade, placing a higher burden on patients and user fees.

The majority of refugees in Lebanon live in informal tented settlements or else sleeping in common shelters like mosques, rented urban apartments, or rooms in Palestinian refugee camps.¹⁹⁹ Lebanon has not allowed humanitarian organizations to establish formal Syrian refugee

camps nor field hospitals, leaving refugees completely dependent on the public sector and mobile clinics. Because many refugees already live in existing informal temporary settlements permitted by the Lebanese government, establishing additional temporary settlements as well as field hospitals would allow more efficient humanitarian aid in all sectors by NGOs and International Medical Organizations (IMOs). The pre-existing Palestinian camps are especially attractive to undocumented refugees where they can avoid encounters with Lebanese security, a risk carefully weighed when exiting camps to seek health services. Instead of risking fines, deportation, or other consequences for being unregistered, encounters with law enforcement should be employed to encourage registration in order to reduce barriers for UNHCR subsidized healthcare through the public healthcare network.

One of the major supply barriers unique to Lebanon is an absence of a strong public health care system, a vacuum which is filled by a myriad of private providers²⁰⁰ available only to the wealthy or those with good insurance. Access to these private providers is also politically influenced, inherently biased against refugees who do not belong to any Lebanese political parties, as well as against those Lebanese living in poverty who are politically uninvolved.²⁰¹ Some Lebanese politicians have even gone so far as to suggest intentional depletion of health services to discourage immigration of Syrians into the country. In order to begin to fill the void of a national healthcare option, the UN and international stakeholders should counteract Lebanon's divestment from a public healthcare system through increasing aid directly to the state, tied to adequate state reinvestment in healthcare.

The network of UNHCR subsidized public hospitals in Lebanon includes only 28 of more than 200, and only 14% of hospital beds in the country²⁰². The UNHCR scheme is limited to obstetric and life-threatening conditions, and currently covers 75 percent of hospitalization fees with the expectation that the UNHCR registered refugees will cover the remaining 25 percent.²⁰³ Uninsured Lebanese only pay five percent out of pocket at public hospitals. The majority of refugees become burdened by debt or face extortion when unable to pay the costs up front. These financial and legal burdens present demand side barriers that currently prevent access to health care. To mitigate the financial burden and incentivize seeking health care, the full cost of hospital expenses should be subsidized, which will require more complete funding of the UNHCR.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) report published in March 2014 that 74 percent of refugees living in Northern Lebanon and 55 percent living in Mount Lebanon and Beirut experienced difficulty accessing health care. Access to specialized services is particularly bad for those living in Palestinian refugee camps, and the circumstances have only worsened in the past year.²⁰⁴ Expanding the strength of public hospital networks by partnering with the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health will serve to improve access for both Syrian refugees and the Lebanese, reducing tensions between the two communities. These strengthened networks will be better able to deliver higher level care such as emergency medicine or surgery. Increased funding will also ensure more complete deliveries of supplies to PHC clinics, improving widespread vaccination campaigns, surveillance for communicable disease outbreaks, and availability of medicines for chronic medications.²⁰⁵

Jordan

Jordan has one of the strongest healthcare infrastructures in the region, balanced between public and private healthcare facilities. Health care has accounted for more than 18 percent of Jordan's governmental spending, a rising figure since the development of the refugee crisis. WHO

identified primary needs for development in the Jordanian healthcare structure as improved coordination between providers, improved referrals, and information management.²⁰⁶ These areas are critical to refugees who are more mobile than the average Jordanian.

Since the crisis began, however, the number of Syrian refugees seeking health services has increased by 250 percent and the number of medical operations in public hospitals by 600 percent.²⁰⁷ While The Jordanian government initially provided free healthcare to Syrian refugees, in 2014 they began charging refugees the rate of uninsured citizens due to the increasing national cost.²⁰⁸ A survey conducted in May 2015 showed that 58 percent of adults with non-communicable diseases (NCDs) were unable to access medicines or other health services primarily due to an inability to pay fees compared to 24 percent in 2014. 33 percent of surveyed families reported that they could not access health services when needed during the last six months.²⁰⁹ The growth of this demand side barrier of cost demonstrates a need to fully subsidize refugee health care costs, which could be addressed through the UNHCR or direct support to the state to expand the national health insurance program.

The Jordan Response Plan (JRP) Health Care Sector Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) also identified a need for development of the ministry of health, citing a need for 2,886 hospital beds and 22 comprehensive medical centers in Jordan, 69 percent additional hospital bed capacity, and growth of comprehensive health care capacity by 83 percent.²¹⁰ These shortfalls are especially severe in the Zarqa, Irbid, and Amman governorates, thus increasing infrastructure should be targeted in these locations. Incorporated into the development of these resources, improved connections must be made to the PHC structure of primary, secondary, and tertiary facilities with strong referral systems in place.

Turkey

Turkey hosts more than 2.6 million refugees, more than any other country in the region. The Turkish government thus far has been the most successful of any of the local countries of integration in managing the health of the refugees it hosts. The Temporary Protection Regulation (TPR) ensures that registered Syrian refugees are provided with the same health care services as Turkish nationals, and health insurance is provided by the government. Even non-registered refugees can receive free emergency care and efforts are being made to extend free care into the many refugee camps in Turkey.²¹¹ Over the past two years, the patient load in hospitals has increased by more than 40 percent²¹² and although hospitals have been equipped to handle this inundation of medical need, quality of service has suffered due to faster consultations. Strengthening this existing national health care system will ensure that refugees and nationals can receive quality health care now and build resilience for the future.

A unique challenge facing Turkey is the language barrier between Turkish speaking medical professionals and the Arabic speaking refugees. Two strategies could be adopted to mitigate this issue: either hiring translators (potentially refugees themselves) or allowing Syrian healthcare professionals to practice, which would be particularly appropriate in the expansion of health services to camp refugees. This exception has already been implemented on a small scale in Turkey, and should be expanded where appropriate.

The Turkish ministry of health has identified “lack of information about the health care services available and how to access them” as one of their main challenges for treating Syrians. Two educational campaigns should also be run in order to remove this barrier. First, an information campaign should be employed throughout the country targeted at non-camp refugees,

to ensure universal understanding of available service. Second, a campaign should be run to unify the practice of the TPR among all tiers of medical facilities, which is interpreted differently throughout different provinces leading to inconsistent standards of care throughout the country.

Policy Recommendations

- Support macro-level organization of medical NGOs and international health organizations (WHO, UNICEF, etc.) via the UNHCR to ensure universal standards of care in camps and to eliminate healthcare gaps in transit, especially within Syria.
- Encourage local countries of integration to eliminate barriers to health care access for non-camp refugees including cost, legal status, education, and language.
- Partner with State Ministries of Health to build resilience and improve immediate access to government health care facilities in local countries of integration.

Addressing Mental Health Needs in Countries of Local Integration

Maja Stamenkovska

A joint assessment by the UN and the Syrian government cited Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) as one of the most urgent issues arising from the crisis.¹ From the time their lives are impacted and disrupted by the conflict, to the time they are displaced, in transit, or relocated in a local country of integration, Syrian IDPs and refugees experience traumatic events that have enormous psychological implications. This population needs access to continuous and culturally sensitive mental health care in order to maintain or achieve the emotional wellness necessary to fully integrate into the local countries of first integration, adjust to life in third countries of resettlement, or prepare for repatriation. This chapter examines the sources of trauma arising from the crisis, their implications on mental health, and the impact of mental state on daily activities, local integration, and repatriation. It also analyzes the current mental health challenges and services, as well as prevalent coping methods, present in the local countries of integration. Finally, this chapter explores culturally specific conceptualizations of mental health, illness, and treatment, and seeks to apply those conceptualizations to culturally appropriate services.

Background

Conflict, displacement, relocation, and instability continue to have a detrimental effect on Syrian mental health. Unaddressed mental health needs, in turn, have profound negative effects on psychosocial wellbeing, social integration, and resilience. While screening and treatment of infectious diseases has been long practiced and strides have been made by both governments and non-governmental organizations to address the healthcare needs of refugees, the identification and treatment of mental health needs among Syrian refugees is lacking. Of the local countries of integration, only the Lebanese health department provides funding for mental health expenditures as part of the health budget.²¹³

The trauma experienced by Syrian refugees manifests in emotional, cognitive, physical, behavioral, and social problems. When these problems have a significant impact on daily functioning, the person may have a mental disorder. Mental disorders among Syrians have gone up significantly since the start of the civil war.²¹⁴ The largest psychiatric hospital in Lebanon has seen an increase in Syrian patients, and 700 of the 6000 (11.67 percent) Syrian refugees treated by the International Medical Corps (IMC) had psychotic disorders.²¹⁵ The figure is a stark contrast from the worldwide prevalence of bipolar disorder and schizophrenia, which is four percent and less than one percent, respectively.²¹⁶

As displacement has disrupted most Syrians' primary support network of friends and family, Syrian refugees turn to both positive and negative coping activities.²¹⁷ People who turn to smoking, obsessively watching the news, and socially withdrawing are said to be coping negatively and can experience more stress and negative thoughts. Syrian refugee men resort to negative coping mechanisms – smoking, crying, withdrawing, and anger instead of working or socializing – due to limited opportunities and cultural norms about masculinity.²¹⁸ Positive coping mechanisms include praying and socializing. Women in particular find solace in socializing as well as distraction in daily routines and household chores.²¹⁹ Thus, when the camp setting makes it difficult to perform daily household tasks, women may also turn to passive and negative coping

mechanisms. These tendencies echo the importance of providing both support groups and resources for the active coping of women, as well as gender-appropriate opportunities for men in order for the population to cope effectively.

Under such great psychological distress, parents become unable to attend to the needs of their equally distressed children, resorting to maladaptive coping strategies like beating or overprotecting. Young adults can also resort to disruptive behaviors like beating or stealing.²²⁰ The overbearing symptoms caused by the great trauma and distress hinder refugees' ability to integrate into their new communities. If left untreated, such symptoms can also cause further turmoil through negative political and economic consequences of negative coping strategies and aggressive symptoms. Furthermore, the cultivation of individual and community resilience that will result from effective mental health services has a significant potential to counter violent extremism, echoing the mission of the White House's 2011 *Strategic Implementation Plan for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States*.²²¹

While mental health is a crucial component of individual functioning and wellbeing, mental disorders are also associated with high rates of unemployment and underperformance in the workplace. Both of these factors limit labor participation and output, which are a critical component of economic growth.²²²

Syrian IDPs: Initial Causes of Trauma

There is overwhelming evidence that prolonged exposure to distress and trauma, insufficient resources, forced displacement, and lack of safety have negative effects on mental health and adaptation.²²³ In a 2012 assessment of Syrian IDPs by the MHPSS Working Group, 60 percent of the respondents indicated that the lack of basic needs impacted their mental health and wellbeing.²²⁴ In subsequent focus groups conducted by the UNHCR around Damascus, Syrians experienced fear, fatigue, anxiety, depressed mood, and changes in gender roles due to separation of families by displacement.²²⁵ The persistent stress of worrying about the safety of loved ones, grieving losses, and struggling to meet basic needs can lead to family tension and violence, and often drives refugees into dangerous situations and illegal means of housing and employment, which greatly increase the risk of exploitation.²²⁶

These traumatic effects demonstrate the high need to improve access to basic needs (food, water, safety, healthcare, education); however, these resources will not undo the already developed psychosocial trauma. Unfortunately, the tremendous safety risks that the Syrian conflict poses has made both further research into IDP mental health needs and possible solutions extremely challenging. Thus, the opportunity to address mental health needs arises in the countries of local integration, where the resources have the potential of swift implementation and widespread effects.

Syrian Refugees in Local Countries of Integration

Jordan

Jordan has no legislation dedicated to mental health. However, a national 10-year policy and a 2-year action plan on mental health were launched in 2011.²²⁷ The government health department does not fund mental health and mental hospital expenditure.²²⁸ There are approximately 3 psychiatrists, 0.1 medical doctor, 12 nurses, 0.5 psychologists, and 0.75 social workers per 300,000 people.²²⁹

Currently, 47 organizations are working to provide MHPSS to Syrian refugees in Jordan.²³⁰ In an IMC and UNICEF joint assessment of Za'atari Camp in 2012, Syrian refugees demonstrated increasing levels of fear, grief, and psychological distress; 45 percent of the refugees reported feeling intense fear all or most of the time. The most common coping methods reported were praying, socializing, and smoking.²³¹ While negative coping practices are present, some evidence suggests that over time, with the support of family, friends, and service providers many aspects of refugee children's distress are reduced: adolescents in Za'atari reported feeling less fearful and more supported by family than refugees in urban settings.²³² While it is easier to provide resources and address the needs of refugees in camps, 80 percent of Jordan's refugees live in urban areas.²³³ The necessary resources must be accessible to the millions of refugees struggling in urban settings.

Non-camp refugees are more vulnerable to violence and isolation within the local population, while lacking a social support network. In addition, these refugees are difficult to reach by humanitarian services.²³⁴ In order to reach these populations, the IMC has made strides with the Jordanian Ministry of Health and Jordan Health Aid Society to provide both mental health services and education. IMC has also established mental health e-learning for healthcare practitioners in Jordan, providing education on disorders and treatment in order to enable the practitioners to respond to the crisis.²³⁵

Lebanon

Lebanon has outdated legislation dedicated to mental health; there is no approved policy, but the mental health program of the ministry of health has adopted a mental health strategy.²³⁶ The government health department allocates 4.8 percent of the health budget to mental health expenditures, 54.17 percent of which is spent on mental hospitals.²³⁷

Resembling the combined effort in Jordan, the network in Lebanon providing MHPSS to Syrian refugees is comprised of 36 organizations.²³⁸ A 2011 assessment by the IMC showed similar results to that of Jordan, but also demonstrated the prevalent symptoms of eating and sleeping problems, as well as relationships affected by the distress. Refugees also experienced a lack of unity, community organization, and trust among each other. Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) rates soar at 36-62 percent in adults and 41-76 percent in children. The most prevalent coping methods were going out, exercising, playing with children, smoking, and watching TV.²³⁹

In Lebanon, mental health treatment exists primarily through the private sector. With 70 psychiatrists and 100 psychotherapists in the country, neither refugees nor Lebanon's poor have access to mental health services.²⁴⁰ There are approximately 4 psychiatrists, 0.75 medical doctor, 5 nurses, 6 psychologists, and 1.5 social workers per 300,000 people.²⁴¹ Thus, extending the necessary mental health services to refugees presents opportunity for new infrastructure in Lebanon. Médecins du Monde (Doctors of the World) have been working to develop this infrastructure alongside the Amel Association, which sets up specialized units in primary care centers and provides training in psychological first aid. Médecins du Monde psychologist Chantale Eid, who works in support group sessions, reports primarily cases of women experiencing exploitation, domestic violence, and fear; while some are sent to safe housing or obtain visas to leave Lebanon, most return to their husbands. The support groups, however, allows people "to strengthen their defense mechanisms, help each other, and find solutions."²⁴²

The Adn Center of Psychological Treatment and Support is a free psychology clinic whose doctors and trainees conduct rounds in the refugee camps. In al-Minieh, a tented settlement in northern Tripoli, the doctors and trainees conduct two weekly sessions, one to advise parents

and the other with the children themselves, who suffer mostly from panic attacks and nighttime incontinence.²⁴³ Médecins du Monde anticipates 10-15 years until an efficient mental health care system is established in Lebanon.

Turkey

Turkey has no legislation dedicated to mental health, and the most recent mental health policy was last revised in 2006.²⁴⁴ The government health department does not fund mental health and mental hospital expenditures.²⁴⁵ There are approximately 3 psychiatrists, 0.1 medical doctor, 12 nurses, 0.6 psychologists, and 0.75 social workers per 300,000 people.²⁴⁶

A study of refugee children in Islahiye refugee camp conducted by Bahcesehir University in 2013 showed devastating results: 75 percent of the children had lost a loved one, 60 percent have experienced life-endangering events, and 30 percent separated from their families. In addition, 60 percent of the children showed signs of depression, 45 percent had PTSD, 22 percent experienced symptoms of aggression, and 65 percent had psychosomatic symptoms that seriously reduced their level of functioning.²⁴⁷ The percentage of children receiving MHPSS in Turkey is 45 percent, higher than both Jordan (23 percent) and Lebanon (18 percent).²⁴⁸ This difference can be attributed to fewer social outlets and activities for children in Turkey due to the language barrier that isolates Syrian refugee children from the local population.²⁴⁹

Provision of MHPSS is increasingly difficult due to the language barrier and limited facilities.²⁵⁰ The Mental Health Gap Action Programme instituted by WHO aims to scale up services. In 2015, the Programme held two trainings (in Arabic) on Mental Disorder Detection and Referral and Psychosocial Support in conjunction with the IMC.²⁵¹ Falling behind Jordan and Lebanon in terms of both legislation and funding of mental health services, the Turkish mental health system requires a swift and coordinated response in order to prevent a lost generation.

Children

Children comprise more than 50 percent of the IDPs and refugee populations, 75 percent of whom are under the age of 12.²⁵² A 2015 study of Syrian refugee children registered with the Caritas Lebanon Migrants center concluded that the crisis has highly impacted children's mental wellbeing.²⁵³ While ten percent of the children were injured prior to coming to Lebanon, 67 percent had witnessed a bombing and 37 percent had seen a killing.²⁵⁴ Although a majority of the subjects were indirectly affected, most of them developed symptoms associated with trauma. Additionally, in their new environments children may find themselves in completely new roles, becoming providers for their families, encountering exploitation, and experiencing overwhelming humiliation as an effect. The loss of stability from changing homes and schools is an additional source of trauma.²⁵⁵

Children experience a multitude of traumatic symptoms: high levels of fear, difficulty sleeping, aggression, bedwetting, temper tantrums, and hyperactivity.²⁵⁶ Dr. Henrike Zellmann, a Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) psychologist, reports bedwetting, a reaction to intense anxiety or fear, as the most serious issue among Syrian children refugees in Iraq's Domeez refugee camp. Bedwetting leads to embarrassment and is coupled with parents' inability to deal with the problem, leading to strains on the parent-child relationship. Dr. Zellmann stresses the importance and effectiveness of support groups, stating that reassuring a child often leads to resolution.²⁵⁷

IMC outpatient data from Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey indicated that epilepsy, developmental disorders, and severe emotional disorders are most common among children.²⁵⁸ Of

the mental health cases managed by the IMC, 54 percent were severe emotional disorders and 17 percent had epilepsy, while the epilepsy rate among children was 26.6 percent.²⁵⁹ The high rates of epilepsy further demonstrate the limited capacity of local physicians to diagnose and manage such cases, usually immediately referring them to international organizations like the IMC.²⁶⁰

The most effective coping methods for children include retreating into their families for support and establishing social networks.²⁶¹ When parents resort to maladaptive coping strategies like beating, the disruption of the family support system has debilitating effects on children's mental health. Thus, it is necessary to institute preventive mental health interventions to lessen individual mental health issues by improving family protective resources.²⁶² It is also crucial to provide support to families of patients with severe mental illnesses. A multiple-family group program for Kosovar refugee families of patients with severe mental illnesses resulted in reduction of the family's sense of isolation and despair, as well as decreased psychiatric hospitalization and increased medication compliance.²⁶³ Establishing daily routines is also an extremely helpful coping mechanism for children.²⁶⁴ Encouraging activities in which refugee children can be engaged, like drawing and painting, can increase coping skills.²⁶⁵

Experiencing constant, debilitating symptoms undoubtedly affects refugee children's functioning, impairing their ability to access an education, form social connections, and integrate into society. In turn, failing to do so will have detrimental effects on the future psychosocial development of refugee children, who comprise most of the population that will one day likely repatriate Syria. Thus, addressing the mental health needs of the children affected by the Syrian refugee crisis is crucial to not only ensuring their wellbeing and successful integration, but also nurturing a stable and productive population for the future of post-conflict Syria.

Culturally Sensitive Methods of Healing

Culture has a significant influence on the interpretation of mental health needs and services. Cultural interpretations of mental health can even act as a barrier to recognizing the presence of mental health problems.²⁶⁶ Thus, it is crucial for mental health service providers to understand the client's conceptualizations of his or her issues and not presume a shared construct.²⁶⁷

While there is skepticism and stigma towards mental health services, emotional suffering is accepted as a part of life among Syrian refugee populations. There are explanatory models that involve religious or supernatural explanations for their emotional suffering. For this reason, some are often reluctant to seek mental health services. Furthermore, if a person perceives suffering as an act of God, he or she is less likely to perceive it as needing medical attention. However, the awareness of mental health care has increased, especially in urban settings, and many are increasingly willing to seek help.²⁶⁸ Nonetheless, understanding and consideration of culture is a critical component of engaging refugees who have already accessed services.²⁶⁹ A lack of respect and understanding has negative effects on a refugee's engagement with mental health services. In cases that need ongoing support, this effect could be detrimental.²⁷⁰

Many Syrian refugees turn to religious methods of coping: praying, attending religious ceremonies, and building shrines.²⁷¹ Religious leaders are identified as having "significant influence over community perceptions and beliefs."²⁷² In a similar case, the mental health response following the Haiti earthquake of 2010 included protocols for religious mourning services to include psychological language. The Haiti Ministry of Health then utilized this method in national radio addresses to effectively emphasize the importance of mental health.²⁷³ Learning from the Haitian example, leveraging the resources respected and used by the Syrian refugee

community can provide those who may be reluctant to seek mental health services with education about and pathways to mental health care.

Syrian men are often taught to suppress overt expression of emotions and thus resort to individual and often negative coping mechanisms. In the camps, single men are a particularly vulnerable group. In Domeez refugee camp, there is a designated area where single men are housed in tents of five or six. Because stigma is higher within this group and the men lack family support, their ability to cope is diminished.²⁷⁴

The hopelessness experienced following prolonged stays in camps and non-camp settings with no future prospects has negative effects on both men and women. One way that this hopelessness can be addressed is through restoring ownership by testimony psychotherapy. Bosnian refugees in a 1998 University of Illinois at Chicago study showed significant decrease in rates of diagnosis and symptom severity of PTSD and significant decrease in depressive symptoms as a result of sharing the stories of their trauma.²⁷⁵

The household activities that women may turn to as a distraction and coping mechanism are disrupted by the camp environment and shifting gender roles, as women who have lost their husbands become the breadwinners and heads of households. Thus, providing women with the space and resources to maintain a daily routine can provide comfort. Women also find comfort in social interactions and experience positive results from participating in support groups.

The effectiveness of support groups is not limited to women. A study at University of Illinois at Chicago implemented a Coffee and Family Education and Support (CAFES) intervention in community locations near the homes of Bosnian refugees suffering from PTSD.²⁷⁶ While the intervention helped with family knowledge and comfort about trauma, it also significantly increased the number of mental health visits amongst the refugees.²⁷⁷ In conclusion, although there is stigma surrounding mental health, culturally appropriate services can increase rates of access.

Barriers and Solutions

Upon settlement in local countries of integration, refugees are at high risk for developing mental health problems, yet they exhibit low rates of service access.²⁷⁸ The main reason for this disparity is that the mental health services in the local countries of integration tend to be “overburdened and inaccessible.”²⁷⁹ The location and appearance of services, criteria for acceptance, and appointment systems are all factors that may enhance or impede access to mental health services.²⁸⁰ Low knowledge of available services, distrust of services, and stigma are the main barriers to access.²⁸¹ Furthermore, it is imperative that mental health services are accessible by public transportation. The appointment system must also be efficient, as extensive criteria for admission, waiting lists, and limited hours of operation can all serve to discourage seeking treatment.²⁸²

Additionally, discretion of the facility is preferred due to the stigma surrounding mental health.²⁸³ The effects of the stigma surrounding mental health services can be combatted by provision of the previously discussed culturally appropriate services. Another possible solution is a holistic approach that intertwines physical and psychological care, eliminating the stigma of solely seeking out mental health services.²⁸⁴ Refugees may first present physical symptoms to healthcare practitioners before revealing signs of emotional distress.²⁸⁵ Thus, training healthcare practitioners in mental health disorders and treatments is imperative in providing resources to the population that needs them. Refugees may also exhibit a generalized fear of doctors or authority

figures due to traumatic experiences. Mental health professionals can alleviate this fear by engaging refugees in community settings, stressing the importance of support groups.²⁸⁶

Actions must also be taken to build refugees' trust in the provided services. Trust can be built by ensuring that refugees are matched to providers and interpreters by gender, race, and ethno-cultural factors.²⁸⁷ Employing qualified Syrian refugees as cultural brokers can also build trust in services by fostering a sense of ownership.²⁸⁸ Community members like program liaisons and religious leaders can also facilitate trust between the refugees and mental health services.²⁸⁹

The fact that most Syrian refugees in local countries of integration live in non-camp settings is a challenge to providing comprehensive mental health services. Due to cultural interpretations and stigma, many Syrian refugees do not seek mental health services. Even if they wish to seek treatment, refugees in non-camp settings often lack knowledge of the services available. Thus, the advertisement of facilities is necessary to ensure access.²⁹⁰ The UNHCR follows a three-pronged approach when providing services to refugees in urban settings: advocate, monitor conditions, and augment capacity of existing public and private services.²⁹¹ Augmenting the capacity of existing resources provides the local countries of integration with an opportunity to improve their own mental health systems, while evading the sectarian tensions that come with establishing separate services for refugees.²⁹²

Strengthening local services also ensures sustainability, an increasing concern as communities become reliant on international organizations.²⁹³ A possible solution to this is the mental health response system following Haiti's 2010 earthquake. The 5 x 5 Model is a system of five key skills (from emergency action and intervention to quality oversight) and five implementation rules (centered on quality improvement) necessary for sustainable delivery of care.²⁹⁴ The care enabled patients to reintegrate into meaningful activities and "noticeably reduced stigma... both in the community and within the medical system."²⁹⁵ The 5x5 Model relied on primary care clinicians, psychologists, and pharmacists receiving training to serve as a multi-disciplinary team, prescribing medication and providing individual and group psychotherapy.²⁹⁶ Like the aforementioned e-learning in Jordan, the 5 x 5 model showcases the importance of leveraging current health care providers to meet the mental health needs of the refugee population. Another effective training method is the use of virtual patients. A study at Karolinska University Hospital in Stockholm found that the confidence of psychiatry residents to provide trans-cultural clinical care improved significantly upon a training session with a virtual refugee patient who suffered from PTSD.²⁹⁷ The Mental Health Gap Action Programme Intervention Guide also provides vital information for health care providers not specialized in mental health to facilitate interventions in emergency mental health responses.²⁹⁸

Mental health issues will continue to be a risk factor for Syrian refugees until the conditions necessary for mental wellbeing— food security, comfortable and sanitary living conditions, education, employment— are met. In the meantime, the current mental health systems in local countries of integration must be strengthened to accommodate existing and new refugees, who will be arriving having experienced even more trauma than the ones already there and in dire need of support.²⁹⁹

Policy Recommendations

- Encourage Ministries of Health, international health organizations, and NGOs to improve efficiency of mental health services in local countries of integration and remove refugees' barriers to access through funding

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

- Work with Ministries of Health, international health organizations, and NGOs to provide culturally sensitive mental health training to health care practitioners, both in camps and non-camp settings
- Work with NGOs and international health organizations to implement and educational and support groups in camps, schools, and places of worship

Vulnerable Populations of the Syrian Refugee Crisis: Women and Unaccompanied Minors

Amanda Sandoval

With every conflict that occurs across the globe, state actors, NGOs and IGOs vow to protect the vulnerable: children, and in particular women, because in any conflict it is women whose suffering tends to be overlooked. As stated in UN Resolution 1325, women bear the greatest burden of armed conflicts, yet are also critical agents of conflict prevention and resolution.³⁰⁰ The regularity of horrific violence on the basis of gender is often left unheard and without support. Alongside women, unaccompanied children also face unique vulnerabilities in the face of armed conflict. This chapter seeks to report the vulnerable populations perspectives about the violence they experience and the reality of the dangers they face; first looking at the historic legal framework, main issues women face, problems unaccompanied children face, looking at what's already being done, what are the gaps in protection, and finally discussing what measures should be taken to address these problems. Ultimately, this is a matter of listening to the voices of women children, of the Syrian refugee crisis and breaking the legacy of violence that continues against them specifically in neighboring host countries.

Legal Framework Concerning Gender Based Violence

“In 1993, the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women offered the first official definition of the term “Gender-based Violence” (GBV): “Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.”³⁰¹ Although there are many examples of gender-based violence, they are predominantly grouped under five categories: sexual violence, physical violence, emotional and psychological violence, harmful traditional practices, and socio-economic violence.³⁰² In armed conflict and refugee/IDP situations the likelihood of GBV increases because of breakdowns in social and familial structures, ethnic differences, hostility of local population, male leadership (in communities and camps) and lack of police or security.³⁰³ First and foremost, sexual and gender based violence is a direct violation of human rights principles enshrined in several human rights instruments including the right to life, liberty, and security of a person, the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the right to freedom of movement, opinion, expression, and association, the right to enter into marriage with free and full consent and the entitlement to equal rights to marriage, during marriage and its dissolution, the right to education social security and personal development, the right to cultural, political, and public participation, equal access to public services, work, and equal pay for work.³⁰⁴ Within the framework of the IRR there have been many resolutions, conferences, and laws that mention GBV, the most important ones being UN Resolution 1325 and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). UN Resolution 1325 states that “women are disproportionately affected by armed conflict and are also critical agents of conflict prevention and resolution.”³⁰⁵ and the CEDAW concludes that “GBV is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women’s ability to enjoy rights and

freedoms on a basis of equality with men.”³⁰⁶ Although there is an immense legal framework concerning GBV, the issues lies in implementing these laws and resolutions. In times of conflict, especially those that involve multiple actors, “women’s issues” take a backseat to other “more prudent problems,” but with the Syrian refugee crisis affecting predominately women and children – these groups compose 75 percent of the entire refugee population³⁰⁷ - it is imperative that the existing laws are used to the full extent so that Syrian women do not continue to suffer.

Women’s Issues

Daily reality of sexual exploitation

Conflict makes women a target for sexual violence from men in power and leads to a desperation among women that causes them to exploit themselves to take care of their family. Women who have escaped Syria and fled to neighboring countries feel they experience such high levels of harassment from locals because they are considered outsiders who steal community resources and take locals’ jobs and patients’ spots in medical facilities³⁰⁸. But harassment from locals is not the only problem; women are at risk of physical and sexual violence from armed groups, strangers, neighbors, family members, and even aid workers. To get a job or even to get aid at distribution sites, many employers and aid workers demand sexual favors. In Jordan one shopkeeper told a young girl, “I crave you- if you refuse to give yourself to me then you can forget about the job.”³⁰⁹ Organizations usually put locals in charge of distributing aid, and many women have reported they are not able to pick up basic needs because the men in charge will touch them inappropriately or tell them the women they will not give them anything until they perform sexual favors for them. Similarly, “in camps, distribution sites are considered the second highest area of risk of physical violence for adult women after the home.”³¹⁰ As well as being targets of violence, many women are so desperate to provide for their family that they turn to prostitution. This “survival sex” is the only way some are able to secure money, food, or a place to live: “this form of bodily violence is not an open choice, and it is pressured from the society and family. It is a consequence of the dire situation”³¹¹

Domestic violence

As families flee from their homes in Syria to neighboring countries, the role of men and women shift. Previously men were perceived as the breadwinners, and often in their new situations women pick up the bulk of the workload. Due to fixed gender roles in Syrian society, “men’s low self esteem and feelings of disempowerment have generated acts of violence against the family... men feel they have been stripped of their function and disempowerment is manifested in abuse of power that they feel remains.”³¹² When men cannot find jobs and see no future outside of their country, they often become angry, tired, and depressed. For some men, the coping mechanism is domestic violence as they feel useless and depressed, and violence acts as a temporary means of stress relief. Many women do not know their rights and are scared to leave their husbands; they do not want to feel more isolated and are aware that if they left their husbands they would become a more vulnerable target of exploitation for other men. In turn the children suffer as well when they see their mother being beat and come to hate their fathers for treating their mothers this way. As a coping mechanism, many women turn to this same method

of stress relief and lash out at their children: according to one study, “women confided that they had beaten their children as a way to relieve the stress and anger they felt after being beaten themselves. A Syrian woman explains, “I’m depressed; I’m short-tempered—I never was before. But here...I beat my daughters—this one I beat every two to three days; this other all the time. I don’t want to; I just—I’m angry all the time.”³¹³ In a survey of 452 Syrian women aged 18-45, 74 percent could not manage their anger and reported beating their children to release their frustration,³¹⁴ but the humanitarian community has been reluctant to address domestic abuse, seeing such violence as a private matter outside the scope of traditional aid mandates.³¹⁵

Forced marriage

Financial needs and fear are the leading factors of early forced marriage. Yet for young refugee girls marriage only brings more difficulties such as household responsibilities, physical and emotional abuse, and health complications associated with conceiving and giving birth at a young age. Many families have no money and are desperate; although the minimum age of marriage in Syria for girls is 16, it is becoming an increasingly normal practice to marry daughters as young as 13 to rich men from the Gulf States who can help support the bride and her family.³¹⁶ When tents and apartments become overcrowded, marrying off daughters is a solution that lessens the burden of feeding family members. With rape and sexual violence being so common in the areas Syrian refugees settle, families see their daughters being married as protection for them, considering it better to marry their daughters than to have their daughters be raped.³¹⁷ Yet since these marriages are conducted in haste and under stressful conditions there is often no formal registration or other traditional mechanisms that would usually provide girls some protection in the event of divorce.³¹⁸ Furthermore, girls who marry young are not physically ready to conceive because their bodies are not fully developed and consequently suffer throughout the process: “pregnancy is consistently among the leading causes of death for girls aged 15 to 19 worldwide... [girls] younger than 15 are five times more likely to die in childbirth than women in their 20s.”³¹⁹ However, the situation for Syrian refugee women is so bad that many young girls do not object to the idea of marriage; “some adolescent girls themselves talked about marriage as a way to obtain a level of freedom and security they don’t currently have.”³²⁰

Unaccompanied and Separated Minors

Unaccompanied or separated minors are children “who have been separated from both parents or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may include children accompanied by other adult family members but who are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.”³²¹ Children who are alone are some of the most vulnerable and are at a higher risk for abuse and exploitation³²². Unaccompanied children arriving to Jordan are registered as either “unaccompanied” or “separated” and sent to special children’s centers run by the IRC at Za’atari and Azraq refugee camps.³²³ There the children receive food, water, and shelter. They can learn, play with older children, and receive psychological support, all while the volunteers work to find their parents, family members, or alternative foster families³²⁴. The process to be reunited with parents or family members is slow and complicated, often taking up to seven months³²⁵. Children can become separated from guardians for various reasons; some have parents who have died or been detained and make the journey to neighboring countries alone, while some are sent by their parents to avoid the violence and others lose their families in transit and hope to be reunited with them at refugee camps.³²⁶

The official number of unaccompanied minors is not known because they are highly mobile and difficult to quantify, but the last reported number of unaccompanied minors by UNHCR was 3,760 in Lebanon and Jordan.³²⁷ According to a source speaking with Save the Children, unaccompanied children are at the greatest risk from human traffickers and are often forced into manual labor, domestic work, drug smuggling, and prostitution³²⁸. In fact, with the so many children traveling alone to Syria's neighboring countries and those within the EU, a vast criminal infrastructure has been created to exploit them. In Europe, many unaccompanied children have simply disappeared, while 10,000 children who have been targeted and trafficked for sex work and slavery.³²⁹ Not all children have been criminally exploited, but some could have been passed onto family members or friends. Yet as one source states, "we just don't know where they are, what they're doing, or whom they're with."³³⁰

Services Currently Offered

Jordan

The IRC started the women's protection and empowerment program in 2007 for communities in Jordan; all programs are open to Syrians and Jordanians. The IRC has also supported two reproductive health clinics and three centers for women and girls in Ramtha, Mafraq, and Irbid. In Za'atari, Jordan's largest refugee camp, the IRC has supported four women's and girl's centers.³³¹ The UN, with help from the Jordanian government, supports a women's reproductive clinic in the Za'atari camp, and while the Jordanian government has no policy for GBV, the UN has worked with the minister of health to improve clinical care for victims and distribute post-rape kits.³³²

Regarding minors, in both of Jordan's largest refugee camps "unaccompanied children are registered as soon as they reach the camp and are hosted in the UNICEF/IRC interim care center where they receive food, basic support, shelter and psychosocial support. If family members are found, the child is then reunited with them and in accordance with a best interest determination process."³³³ If families cannot be found, foster families take in children or social workers support them in assisted living centers.³³⁴

Turkey

Turkey receives little aid in terms of services or programs from NGOs in comparison to Jordan and Lebanon because the Turkish government has strict policies regarding NGO and INGO operations on Turkish soil. However, there has been some progress: there have been 10 women's clinics built in camps and outside of the camp setting.³³⁵ The IRC has facilitated cash transfers for vulnerable families, as well as hosting gender discussion group for males and females to try and reduce GBV.³³⁶ Unaccompanied minors are protected under Turkey's Child Protection Law No. 5395, and housed in state run facilities.³³⁷ Depending on availability and children's registration status with authorities, unaccompanied minors can receive services such as primary education, language training, and medical care.³³⁸

Lebanon

The IRC has made great progress in Lebanon, already having established five women's and girls' centers in Bekka Valley, specifically in Batroun, Wadi Khaled, Berqayel, Asraal, and Bar Elias.³³⁹ Alongside stationary clinics the IRC also has mobile teams who travel to reach remote groups of refugee women and girls. Within communities, the IRC distributes dignity kits that include cleaning supplies, underwear, sanitary napkins and other essential items for women. Additionally they include activities for women to establish a network of friends and have supported capacity building of local health providers and organizations to ensure females are referred to clinics and getting quality care.³⁴⁰

In Lebanon the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) works at the country's borders, trying to identify unaccompanied and separated children. Those who are deemed especially vulnerable are taken to short-term shelters until other long-term solutions are found.³⁴¹ However, finding places for the rising numbers of unaccompanied children is difficult; organizations advocate for children to stay in family- or community-based settings as state institutions or juvenile detention centers should be a last resort. .

Gaps in Service and Implementation

The gaps in what is currently being done to fix issues experienced by women and children have many similarities. First and foremost, host countries and organizations fail to actually get the refugee women involved. Rarely do they ask the women what problems they are experiencing, how they can be of assistance, or what kind of programs they would like. Women are facing sexual exploitation, domestic violence, and forced marriage, thus they need to have a say in what should be done to address these issues. Secondly, one of the biggest barriers to service is simply that women aren't aware of their rights or that these types of services for women exist. Organizations need to make sure "that information about program services reaches women and girls consistently in camps and urban areas via safe spaces and aid worker outreach."³⁴² Especially with so many women living in urban settings, they often feel isolated and scared to venture outside the home in an unfamiliar country. As for unaccompanied children, it is not unusual for them to get lost in the journey or upon arriving to a host country. There is no universal or effective registration system so these children are alone in an unknown country, and for the ones who make it to a children's center or temporary housing unit, they often face inadequate resources.

Conclusion

For many years the international community has stated that they will not allow sexual and gender violence to occur in armed conflicts, describing GBV as a horrific crime against humanity that is avoidable and intolerable, yet once again GBV is present in the Syrian crisis. The suffering of women and children who make up much of the large population of refugees often goes overlooked or unaddressed. Sexual exploitation, domestic violence, and forced marriage are issues that come with conflict but can be avoided. The legal framework is already in place to protect the women and children, but it must be utilized and implemented effectively. Women

must be allowed to register by themselves so they can receive services and are informed of their rights, and more importantly, the host community must be aware and involved in order to fight gender based violence. Likewise, children are easily targeted and it is of utmost importance that they are taken care of and receive all the aid and resources possible. Women are the backbone of the community, and children the future of countries; it is time their voices are heard.

Policy Recommendations

- Encourage host country governments, police, and humanitarian organizations, especially the UNHCR, to provide of legal counseling to women to inform them of their rights in order to close gaps between policy and implementation
- Call upon the UNHCR and host countries to establish safe, and easy accessible registration and services for women, particularly those services that allow women to report GBV and sexual violence
- Increase host countries' and humanitarian agencies' current capacity for educational opportunities, including informal language classes and GBV awareness programs to teach both local populations and refugee populations how to prevent and respond to it
- Support coordination and information-sharing between host country governments and NGOs such as the IRC and Save the Children in order to create a better system of identifying and registering unaccompanied children

Meeting Educational Needs of Syrian Youth

Sarah Conklin

Approximately 40 percent of Syrian refugees are children under the age of 12.³⁴³ Many of these children have missed years of school, and some have never attended school at all. In Turkey, a 16-year-old girl named Rasha speaks of her experience with attaining education as a Syrian refugee. After arriving in Turkey, she attempted to enroll in school and she was not admitted. Now, two years later, she has tried again and been rejected a second time. In Syria, Rasha was a bright and engaged student. “Now that I can’t go to school, it’s a tough situation. It’s hard to get used to it. I work occasionally, filling in for my sisters at the factory. When I picture my future, I see nothing.”³⁴⁴ Rasha’s hopelessness is not unusual among refugee children, and it is unacceptable that the brightest, youngest and most talented members of the next generation are not being provided the necessary tools to continue improving the world we live in. Rasha’s experience illustrates the common struggle in accessing an education as a refugee.

Syrian refugee children are at great risk for becoming a lost generation. The children of Syria are often referred to as a lost generation because they are not being consistently provided with education.³⁴⁵ According to the United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) a lost generation is a generation of children shaped by violence, displacement and an ongoing lack of opportunity.³⁴⁶ Inadequate education for Syria’s children, coupled with the continuous adverse experiences brought about by the war, may have “profound long-term consequences for Syria, the region and beyond.”³⁴⁷

The problem of an entire generation lacking critical thinking, technical skills, literacy and the social development will have a global effect, most noticeably when the children become adults, which will trickle down for generations. In order to minimize the future loss for not only Syrians but also the world, it is imperative that education does not continue to be neglected. Currently there are not enough resources of any kind available to refugee children, leaving many without access to education. Although there are education efforts underway these do not meet the current needs.³⁴⁸ This chapter seeks to address the current situation of education in the local countries of integration, the role of international organizations in providing education, current barriers to education, and recommendations for implementing policy that can provide refugee children with the opportunity to continue their education.

Many adult Syrian refugees are well educated, although unable to professionally use their skills in their local country of integration.³⁴⁹ The majority of Syrian children, both boys and girls, have completed some level of education before fleeing the country.³⁵⁰ Their education has since been interrupted, adding to the logistical dilemma of accommodating such a sudden influx of students. Education is always important, but it is particularly important to these children and their families, for whom returning to Syria is not an option in the near future. The process of integrating refugees, whether it is in a local country of integration or a third country of resettlement, requires problem solving, creativity, leadership and innovation. These are all things that cannot develop without education. It is for these reasons that it is critical that education is not forgotten during this time. Education provides the next generation of students like Rasha with hope, and empowers them to be self sufficient in regards to their own integration. At this time, some children reside in camps, which are intended as a short-term solution.³⁵¹ However, the

average stay in refugee camps is 10 years.³⁵² Many children are attending school within camps, but attendance rates of children in host communities are very low³⁵³.

Although providing education for this many students is challenging, expensive and requires significant work on the part of governments, it is possible to improve the situation. Initially, analysts predicted that the Syrian conflict would be short term.³⁵⁴ This led countries to respond with short-term solutions, such as camps and tutoring. However, this has turned into a long-term crisis, meaning countries need to think long term in how they provide for and integrate refugees. With increased funding, alternative types of education and a holistic approach, Syrian refugees can be offered a brighter future.

State of Education in Syria

The state of education has quickly deteriorated in Syria. During the 2010-2011 school year 5.5 million Syrian children were enrolled in school³⁵⁵ Just four years later, during the 2014-2015 school year, that number had decreased to 3.2 million.³⁵⁶ This number is below the gross enrollment rate for 1996, indicating that the Syrian war has caused 20 years of lost educational progress³⁵⁷.

US and International Interests

Education teaches skills such as critical thinking, peaceful debate and self control in addition to providing practical life skills that allow students access to jobs in the future.³⁵⁸ These benefits result in future stabilization of the area and improved economic and political outlooks³⁵⁹. Education decreases successful recruitment efforts of refugees into militant groups, turning out a new group of leaders.³⁶⁰ The stability that education provides to the region supports US interest in the disassembling of ISIL.

Current Situation

There are 2,139,246 Syrian refugee children in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon alone³⁶¹. UNICEF, the EU, Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and a number of international organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations such as Save the Children have been the primary source of funding for refugee education. In 2015, 200,000 refugee children accessed education in Turkey, 145,458 in Jordan and 147,285 in Lebanon³⁶².

Turkey has 25 government run camps, and nearly 90% of children are regularly attending school within these camps.³⁶³ In Turkey 87% of school aged refugee children live in towns and cities and the education rates for these children are much lower, in the 2014-2015 school year attendance rates were just 25%³⁶⁴. Turkey is utilizing Syrian run schools, United Nations built schools, and cultural and language services for students to aid in their integration³⁶⁵ Turkey has taken steps to ensure policy is in place to reduce barriers for students, and in 2014 established the refugees right to a formal education in Arabic.³⁶⁶

This sudden influx of students has overburdened Turkey's education system and continues to do so while the Turkish government struggles to accommodate everyone. Turkey has made it

clear it is committed to education for both Turkish students and Syrian students, yet it hasn't been able to find enough financing and has faced significant logistical challenges in educating all students. The majority of refugees in Turkey are located within Istanbul and along the Turkey-Syria border.³⁶⁷ In government-run camps within Turkey, the education rate of Syrian children is quite high, reaching 90% of students.³⁶⁸ However, within cities and rural areas the current education rate is only 25%³⁶⁹. The gaps in education vary; some children have never been to school due to conflict, and some have missed as many as 4 years of their primary school education.³⁷⁰ Turkey has made moves to alleviate the burden of attending school in Turkey such as only requiring an ID to enroll in school, rather than produce lengthy paperwork that details residency.³⁷¹

While Turkey is committed to helping refugees access education while maintaining education for Turkish students, Turkish locals and refugees still face significant hurdles in providing and receiving education.

Jordan lacks adequate funding and infrastructure to accommodate local and refugee children. An advantage that Jordan has in providing education to Syrians is that classes are taught in Arabic, which is Syrian refugees' first language.³⁷² Jordan also offers free education to refugees,³⁷³ which removes one aspect of the financial burden for families.

Jordan is emphasizing awareness of educational resources available to refugees by sending out flyers, making door-to-door visits and partnering with existing communities, these efforts are coordinated by the UNICEF Learning for All campaign. These efforts have resulted in a 10% increase in student enrollment.³⁷⁴

Lebanon has had significant success using a double shift system, which slightly shortens the school day for local Lebanese children who attend school in the morning and allows classrooms and teachers to be available to teach a second shift of school in the afternoon and early evening for refugee children. This method significantly reduces costs and materials needed, averaging \$10 per week per child. As this model has been successful, Turkey and Jordan are both taking steps to implement similar systems.³⁷⁵

Similarly to Turkey, Lebanon is working towards providing a comprehensive and inclusive education system but is severely limited by finances and educational infrastructure. Lebanon has been strong in their efforts to communicate with families about student progress and additional resources the family may find helpful. One such method has been to send relevant information out via text. This has been successful in improving parent-school relations.

Problems within Education in Host Countries

Decline in Quality of Education in Host Country

Prior to the influx of Syrian refugees, Jordan had a strong education system with a 95% enrollment rate.³⁷⁶ With the sudden arrival of Syrian children requiring educational services, the school system quickly became overburdened and has been disrupted. Syrian refugees have increased the population in Jordan by 10-20%,³⁷⁷ imposing a sudden burden on the Jordanian education system. Before the surge of refugees in 2015, the Jordanian Department of Education estimated that to accommodate all children local and refugee children in Jordan, approximately 72

new schools would need to be built, staffed, and funded³⁷⁸ The Jordanian government has recently updated the number of schools needed to accommodate all refugees to 450.³⁷⁹

Lebanon has more Syrian children enrolled than Lebanese children.³⁸⁰ This has put an extreme strain on the Lebanese education system, which is currently being solved through the double shift system.³⁸¹ Although there is concern from both Syrians and Lebanese that the educational resources are being spread too thin, resulting in lower quality education for everyone.

Documentation and Communication

In Turkey there are many issues in communication between government, school officials and parents. As Turkey's policy surrounding education changes frequently, school administrators often have out of date information. This results in children being denied enrollment incorrectly. This leads to tensions between parents attempting to enroll their children and the school, which further discourages connection for the family and gives further reason for the child to not enroll. Parents don't understand why they can't get their children registered, and they have conflicting information concerning what is required to register.

Once a child is enrolled, it is also difficult to maintain communication between the school and parents. Often the family does not speak the same language as the teachers and so there is no way to communicate between the two. As a result parents are often completely cut out of their children's schooling, leading to further disconnect of Syrian children in Turkish schools. Parents often lack access to email, or notes get lost by students on the way home.

Language Barriers

In Turkey, school is instructed in Turkish, which is difficult for older Syrian children to learn.³⁸² Turkey is currently offering education in Arabic while including Turkish language classes, with hopes that further educational integration is possible in the future. Language barriers result in high drop out rates for older children, and discourage many students from enrolling at all.³⁸³

The Role of Family

Education is very expensive, both for the state and for the families of children that attend.³⁸⁴ Many families have not been given work permits and so they must work illegally or depend on their children working to feed their families.³⁸⁵ Not only does child labor indicate that children are working at young ages, but also that they are not able to attend school.³⁸⁶ In Turkey, parents often do not know what their rights to education are for themselves and their children, nor do they understand the education system in Turkey.³⁸⁷ This information is difficult to seek out due to language barriers and attending to other pressing needs such as healthcare or food.

In Jordan there are currently half as many boys enrolled in school as girls.³⁸⁸ This is mainly attributed to boys working to support their families. Jordan has restricted work permits for adults in an effort to reserve jobs for Jordanians. This policy has resulted in an unofficial economy among refugees as well as child labor, as this is not monitored as closely. Many boys

are not able to go to school, as they are the next in line after their fathers to be the breadwinner for their families.

Lack of Resources

Turkey is currently utilizing Syrian educators to help fill in gaps within education. Turkey has request \$92,470,000 to meet the educational needs of host country and refugee students.³⁸⁹

The majority of Syrian children in Jordan attend public school as it is cheaper and has a less complex enrollment application. Currently, Jordan does not offer any transportation to public schools forcing children to walk or utilize other expensive transportation methods.³⁹⁰ This results in most children not attending, as they don't have a safe, reliable route to get to school and back home, exacerbating bullying. Students whose families choose to have them attend anyways, must walk or find friends to carpool with.

Lebanon is striving to provide education for Syrian children but lacks the infrastructure and resources to do so. One way that this is seen is that the Lebanese government and many Syrian families are unable to afford the current costs of education. Lebanon has recently stopped charging parents for school fees and is now offering free compulsory education through grade 9.³⁹¹ This is funded through \$94 million dollars provided by UNHCR, UNICEF, the World Bank and other sources of multilateral aid in October 2015.³⁹² The goal of this funding surge in education is to nearly double enrollment, bringing education to 200,000 more refugee children.³⁹³ However, to reach all 200,000 of these children an additional \$25 million is required. Although doubling the number of children offered education in one year is an impressive feat, this still leaves half of Syrian refugee children in Lebanon under the age of 14 without access to education.³⁹⁴ Additionally Lebanon is struggling to provide enough teachers, teaching materials and space for all children.

Like Jordan, a barrier to education in Lebanon is transportation.³⁹⁵ Refugees in Lebanon are generally dispersed throughout the country rather than concentrated in a few areas. This presents a challenge in getting children to and from school. Often transportation is not available or is simply unaffordable. One solution that many families consider is allowing their children to walk to school if school is close enough. However, many children get lost as they are unfamiliar with the area or they are bullied while walking to school. There has been some success in mitigating transportation as a barrier to education through coordinated walking groups.

Social Integration and Safety

Concerns for social integration and safety serve as barriers to education in Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon. Many Syrian children report that they are bullied and harassed at school, sometimes involving physical violence. Children are teased for any variety of reasons, but primarily because they do not speak the language well if at all and they are often much older than their peers due to missing many years of school. This bullying restricts social integration, often causing children to perform poorly and even drop out.³⁹⁶

Bullying and violence towards Syrian children by Lebanese children or local gangs is a concern of parents.³⁹⁷ Lebanon presents a particularly complex cultural situation for Syrian

children. Due to the continued poor integration of Palestinian refugees, some Lebanese are hesitant to welcome Syrian refugees.³⁹⁸ In addition to cultural and economic concerns expressed by parents that then encourage their children to perpetuate separation between themselves and Syrian children, parents are concerned about the decline in quality of education. This concern only encourages separation between Syrians and Lebanese.

Effects of Resettlement

Additionally, it is well known that many Syrian children are dealing with emotional trauma while also trying to go to school.³⁹⁹ This is exhausting and often causes behavior, withdrawal and situations that are not conducive to academic success. This strengthens the divide between Syrian and Turkish children, preventing future integration.

Jordan does not have a method to placing older children when they are behind.⁴⁰⁰ The current policy does not allow children to skip grades or be in a classroom with significantly younger students.⁴⁰¹ As a result students who have been out of school for any amount of time find there is no place for them within the Jordanian education system.

Conclusion

Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon are struggling to educationally accommodate the large numbers of Syrian children arriving daily due to costs and lack of infrastructure. These three countries would be better able to accommodate these children by implementing a double shift school system, employing both adult refugees and host country nationals to run these schools. Many of the Syrian refugee children have lost their vision for a future. These children are bright and capable but lack the resources to develop their talents. Many of these children experience significant barriers to their education, and providing healthcare and social support groups at school will decrease the difficulties they have in attending school as well as their preparedness while in the classroom. It is the responsibility of the international community to provide the resources necessary for children to heal from violence, displacement and lack of opportunity. These children are the key to future stability and development in the region and if the international community does not provide education, this generation, and their opportunity to improve the world will be lost.

Policy Recommendations

- Provide healthcare, including mental health services in schools. This could include nurses present in schools, student support groups and additional training for teachers around the effects of trauma. Teachers would serve as advocates in obtaining additional services such as lack of sleep, food or school materials.
- Support and standardize informal educational models utilizing Syrian refugees as well as host country nationals. Adult Syrian refugees as well as host country nationals fill the role of teachers and support staff. This provides employment for more residents of host countries as well as reduces tensions between refugees and locals.



UNHCR/J. Kohler 1

Section Two

Local Countries of Integration

Introduction

As the plight of refugees and migrants crossing into Europe dominates international news headlines, the world's attention is drawn away from the situation playing out in Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon, the three countries of first asylum and perhaps the most urgent aspect of the Syrian refugee crisis. To illustrate the gravity of the situation, two million refugees and asylum seekers have crossed into the entirety of Europe, whereas more than twice that number now reside within Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. The massive influx of refugees, especially in 2014 and 2015, has brought with it a number of issues that are increasingly stretching the capacity and capabilities of the three local host countries. Such a large number of refugees residing in such a limited space has taken a considerable toll on the host countries' economy and infrastructure and has created newfound social tensions and exacerbated existing ones. Without the sustained assistance of the international community – whether it be state governments, NGOs, or other private entities – Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan continue to teeter on the brink of social and economic downfall.

Turkey, host to the largest number of Syrian refugees in the world, has taken in more than 2.5 million asylum seekers since the beginning of the crisis. While initially demonstrating that it could single-handedly deal with the refugee situation within its borders through its rejection of outside aid, Turkey has all but reversed its position, petitioning the international community to send much needed assistance. Though the Turkish economy shows some potential to absorb the influx of the Syrian refugees, the sudden presence of such a large foreign population has negatively affected the view Turkish locals hold towards their new guests. With a full-scale civil war in neighboring Syria and a renewed conflict with Kurdish separatists in its southeastern border, Turkey's security situation has also deteriorated rapidly – in turn negatively affecting the prospects of hopeful asylum seekers, as the country has all but sealed off its southern border.

Like Turkey, Lebanon is also home to an enormous number of Syrian refugees: to date, an estimated 1.8 million is residing within the country's borders. However, Lebanon has a much smaller local population than Turkey and territory is also much more limited. In terms of proportionality, Syrian refugees represent over a quarter of Lebanon's population. This massive influx of mostly Sunni Syrian refugees threatens the country's longstanding sectarian balance between its Sunni, Shiite, and Christian populations. Combined with an overstretched and mismanaged infrastructure system, an ailing economy, and a rising unemployment rate, the arrival of such a large number of Syrian refugees risk plunging Lebanon into a new era of instability.

In Jordan, the estimated number of both registered and unregistered Syrian refugees combined is roughly 1.4 million individuals. Like Lebanon, Jordan's economy – having never recovered from the 2008 recession – is also in poor health, and its ability to absorb the large number of refugees into its local population, much less its workforce, is extremely limited. As such, most of the refugees in the country now reside within one of two overpopulated camps with overstretched resources: Za'atari and Azraq. Furthermore, Jordan's perpetual issue concerning the availability of its water has become increasingly aggravated due to the arrival of such a large number of refugees. With an economy in poor shape and water scarcity rising, local Jordanians have become increasingly frustrated and disgruntled with the Syrian refugees they now host. Without much needed international support, the situation in Jordan, both for the refugees and the Jordanians, will only deteriorate in the future.

As the countries most affected by the Syrian refugee crisis, Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan are in dire need of international aid and assistance. As the world keeps its eyes trained on

Europe's future, it fails to see that its fears are already playing out in these three countries of first asylum. Much needed international support – whether it be from state governments, NGOs, or privately-owned entities – is integral in improving not just the conditions of the refugees and the livelihood of the local population, but to also alleviate potential social tensions that may form and to prevent the region from becoming further destabilized. By addressing the major security and socioeconomic concerns of Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, this section of the report aims to provide the reasoning behind the need to adapt existing policy measures, enact additional ones, and deliver further assistance to these three countries of first asylum.

Role of NGOs and the Private Sector in Local Countries of Integration

Ismail Moussa

Since March 2011, Syria has been plagued by a bloody conflict. NGOs and the private sector bring crucial assistance to the Syrian refugees in the local countries of integration. According to Mercy Corps, more than 11 million Syrians have been affected by this crisis, which is approximately half of the national population. 6.6 million Syrians need humanitarian assistance in Syria.⁴⁰² At least 7.6 million Syrians are displaced by the violence inside Syria and more than 4 million Syrians have fled to neighboring countries, mainly Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan.⁴⁰³ The crisis in Syria is placing immense strains on local countries of integration. The work of NGOs and the private sector in those countries has saved the lives of millions of Syrians and contributed to the improvement of their living conditions. However, the dramatic lack of funding they receive restrains these organizations from fully accomplishing their missions.⁴⁰⁴ This lack of funding has an impact and is sorely felt on the ground where humanitarian organizations are not able to assist all the Syrian refugees in need.

NGOs and the private sector are providing emergency aid to people affected by the violence, informing refugees about their rights, distributing food and non-food items (clothes, kitchen utensils, mattresses), improving access to water and sanitation, providing financial support (for basic needs, rent payments or access to health care) and psychosocial support, finding jobs for refugees, etc. Nonetheless, foreign NGOs are not meeting their potential because they have a hard time getting permits to work and they are subject to administrative difficulties.⁴⁰⁵ But given the number of Syrian refugees, states cannot act alone; thus, they should facilitate the registration of international NGOs. Humanitarian organizations play a vital role in assisting Syrian refugees as they integrate into neighboring countries. However, funding shortages from the US and the international community to NGOs have a serious impact on the Syrian refugees' living conditions. Furthermore, the lack of coordination among humanitarian organizations reduces their efficacy, partly due to the fact that they primarily work to achieve their own mandates and to increase their own visibility. All humanitarian organizations should follow a comprehensive approach and speak with one voice to reinforce consistency, coordination of actions, and responsibility for the success of their activities. The Syrian refugee crisis revolves around several interconnected problems that NGOs confront on the ground. Addressing them requires cooperation between NGOs and their partners.

NGOs in Local Countries of Integration

Among other NGOs that operate on the ground in local countries of integration, Mercy Corps, in collaboration with local authorities, provides significant assistance to the Syrian refugees.⁴⁰⁶ This includes providing food assistance, renovating buildings to provide safer shelter, and distributing essentials like clothing, blankets, mattresses and infant care supplies to families who have lost everything.⁴⁰⁷ In addition, Mercy Corps is involved in renovating water systems and digging wells that serve refugee camps in order to address long-term water shortages and reach the larger population, especially in Jordan.⁴⁰⁸ In regards to the well-being of refugee children, Mercy Corps builds playgrounds, sports fields, and other safe spaces for children, as well as providing constructive, healing activities and helping children with special needs get access to school.⁴⁰⁹ Moreover, Mercy Corps focuses specifically on the needs of adolescents,

bringing them together with host communities to develop friendships and continue building life skills.⁴¹⁰ In order to dissipate tensions between the two sides Mercy Corps works toward bringing refugees and host community members together with trainings in order to identify joint problems and work together on projects like building playgrounds and expanding schools to meet their collective needs.⁴¹¹

Oxfam, another well-known NGO operating in local countries of integrated has responded similarly. Oxfam has provided nearly half a million refugees in Jordan and Lebanon with clean drinking water, cash, and relief supplies such as blankets and stoves in the winter and vouchers for hygiene supplies in summer.⁴¹² They also help families get the information they need about their rights and connect them with medical, legal and support services.⁴¹³ Oxfam has built shower and toilet blocks in Jordan's Za'atari refugee camp and in informal settlements in Lebanon, and installed or repaired toilets in communities hosting refugees.⁴¹⁴ Piped water schemes are being developed for the Za'atari refugee camp as well as in Lebanon.⁴¹⁵ In Jordan, Oxfam is also developing programs to support refugees and vulnerable families from local communities to access improved livelihood options.⁴¹⁶ In Lebanon, Oxfam is working to support the social rights of vulnerable communities hosting large numbers of refugee.⁴¹⁷

The Private Sector in Local Countries of Integration

The private sector is also playing a significant role in response to the Syrian refugee crisis, particularly in local countries of integration. Its response to the refugee crisis has helped create innovative ways of addressing the problem. The business community's response has generally proved to be faster and more flexible than governments, due to the fact that the private sector is not encumbered by the political constraints and slow moving bureaucracy that oftentimes impede government action. Many companies are organized to move quickly in response to market opportunities or, in this case, a humanitarian emergency. For instance, in response to the refugee crisis, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is building a pipeline of infrastructure and investment projects to support the local countries of integration with a package of 900 million.⁴¹⁸ The EBRD strategy for responding to the refugee crisis aims to address infrastructure challenges in affected countries, support small business initiatives, and offer employment opportunities, especially to the young.⁴¹⁹

To encourage global cooperation in responding to the Syrian crisis, Google Inc. posted an \$11 million challenge.⁴²⁰ The tech business pledges to match donations up to \$5.5 million for the Syrian refugees. Google has identified four global non-profit organizations which have exhibited excellence in sheltering and nurturing victims of unfortunate events and restoring these people to normal lives. Save the Children, Doctors Without Borders, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the International Rescue Committee will all receive the funds raised by Google.⁴²¹ The Silicon Valley Company has previously donated \$1 million to the same cause.⁴²²

With more and more private companies raising funds and offering their services in response to the refugee crisis, taking part in problem solving has never been easier and more encouraging. Other global companies are also actively involved in the relief effort. "The TripAdvisor Charitable Foundation committed \$250,000 to International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Mercy Corps [\$125,000 each] for emergency response operations. TACF will match traveler community's donations up to \$5,000 per person, made to the IRC and Mercy Corps with a total cap of \$375,000."⁴²³ Investment bank Goldman Sachs is donating \$3.1 million to the UNHCR for migrants arriving at European borders. JP Morgan Chase encourages its employees

to donate by promising to match their given amount, up to \$500,000, for a total of \$1 in additional support. The money will go to Oxfam, the International Medical Corps, Save the Children, and the International Rescue Committee.⁴²⁴

FedEx Corp. has committed approximately \$1 million in cash and transportation support to deliver emergency supplies and critical medical aid to the thousands of migrants and refugees escaping the conflicts and will provide on-going assistance to both the people and the local communities affected by the crisis.⁴²⁵ FedEx is working with international relief organizations, using its global transportation network and resources to assist refugees and improve their living conditions. Furthermore, besides a donation of \$1 million to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in response to the Syrian refugee crisis, FedEx is also providing transportation behalf of Direct Relief organization, shipping large volumes of medical supplies for use into refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, and offering shelters for Syrian refugees.⁴²⁶

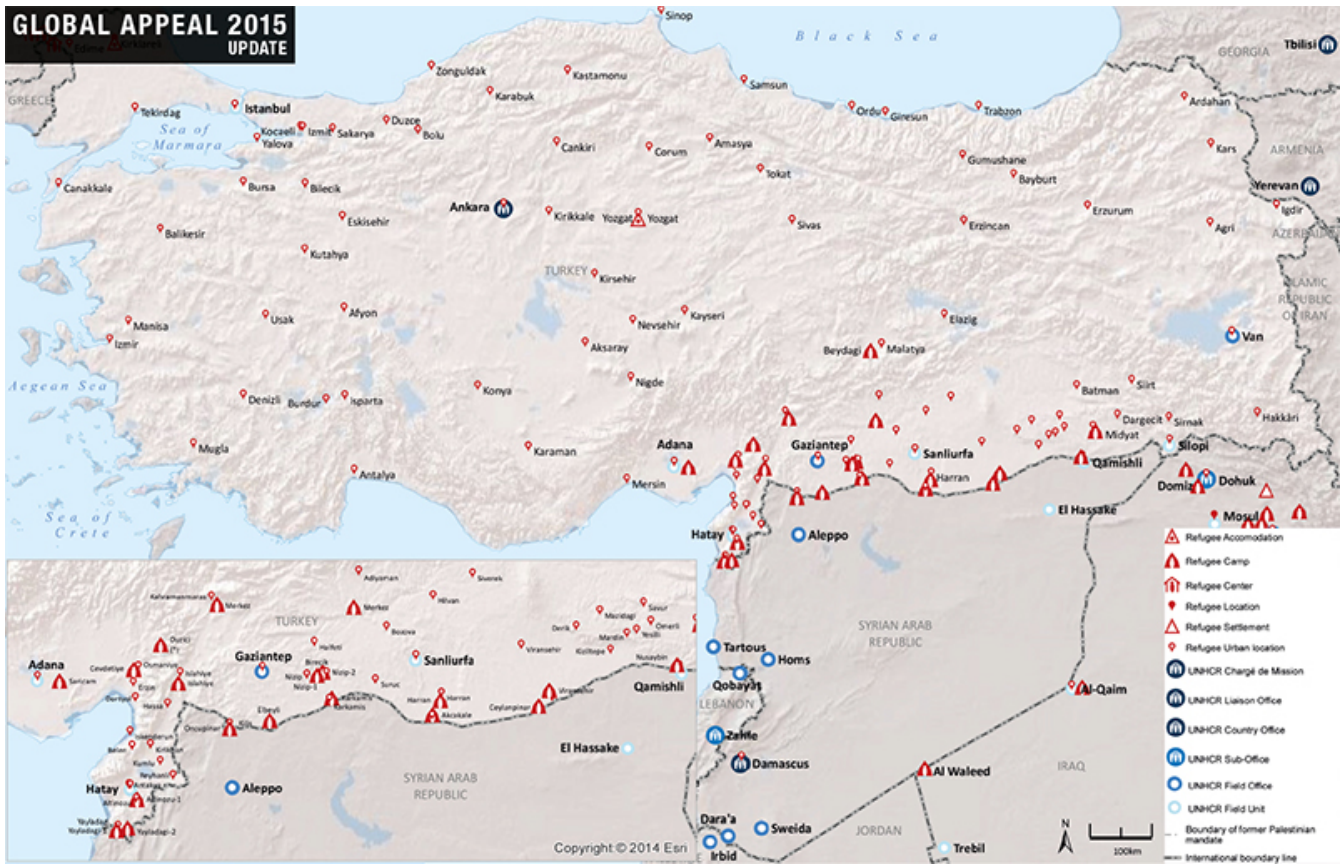
In its response to the refugee crisis, Western Union is donating \$1.8 billion to Mercy Corps for assistance to Syrian refugees in local countries of integration.⁴²⁷ Moreover, Western Union pledged more funds for effective support to families and communities most affected by the Syrian refugee crisis.⁴²⁸ The company is mobilizing a multi-faceted response leveraging its global network of employees and Go-to-Market business leads, Western Union Retail Agents and customers, Western Union Business Solutions clients as well as company vendors.⁴²⁹

Besides Mercy Corps, Western Union finances several other humanitarian organizations like Save the Children, Caritas and more. Working with its partners, Western Union's response to support relief efforts includes meals, shelter, healthcare and other necessities to the families and children most affected by the crisis.⁴³⁰ Some of Western Union's relief efforts through Mercy Corps consist of providing food assistance and distribution of essentials items like clothing, blankets, mattresses and infant care supplies to Syrian refugee families.⁴³¹

NGOs and the Private Sector in Turkey

The overwhelming influx of Syrian refugees in Turkey has reached frightening levels. Thus far, the Turkish government recorded more than 2.5 million Syrian refugees, making Turkey the country with the most refugees in the world.⁴³² The vast majority of Syrian refugees in Turkey live outside camps, a situation that complicates the NGOs and other private sector efforts to reach and assist them. Since 90 percent of Syrian refugees in Turkey live in urban or rural areas, often they are not registered and survive in extremely difficult condition.⁴³³ Because of this, their access to information, registration and public services, including education, employment and health, are particularly limited.⁴³⁴

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS



Map: NGO areas of operation in Turkey 1

NGOs and the private sector offer different types of assistance to the Syrian refugees in Turkey. They work with local authorities to help register Syrian refugees when they cross the Turkish border, inform them about their rights and obligations in Turkey, ensure their protection throughout the country, provide psychosocial and legal counseling for them, and assist them with accessing their rights (health, security, education, etc.). Additionally, humanitarian organizations are heavily engaged in Turkey in preparing booklets for different satellite cities to help refugees integrate into the socio-economic life, and providing assistance (shelter, financial resources, etc.) for the most vulnerable cases by mobilizing various resources, organizing social and peace-building activities, and providing job training.

The NGO Caritas responded to the refugee crisis in Turkey through distribution of food and non-food items, health, education, social activities and funding of social work.⁴³⁵ Furthermore, NGOs Malteser International and International Blue Crescent are running a hospital in the Turkish town of Kilis, close to the Syrian border, where refugees receive medical treatment, medicines, psychotherapy and more.⁴³⁶ These NGOs support schools in Kilis, opening access to education for refugees' children. Also, in Kilis, Malteser and Blue Crescent set up numerous training programs like language courses to ease the integration of Syrian refugees into Turkey.⁴³⁷

Doctors Without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), another non-profit organization, launched several programs working with Turkish civil society associations to help Syrian refugees in the country. MSF is providing financial and technical support to many organizations who are offering high-quality basic health care, such as mental health services, to refugees. Besides providing water and sanitation conditions, this NGO assists Syrian refugees through distribution of shelter materials and non-food aid items such as soap, blankets, and plastic sheeting.⁴³⁸

Among private businesses providing assistance in Turkey, especially notable is the UPS Foundation. The UPS Foundation has been supporting relief efforts for Syrian refugees for the past three years, including transporting personal protective equipment and medical uniforms to Turkey for Syria Relief & Development and providing in-kind and volunteer support for Medshare to get medical supplies to refugees.⁴³⁹ It is also partnering with UNICEF for numerous relief initiatives including packing and transporting 17 ocean containers and 23,400 winter clothing kits for Syrian children.⁴⁴⁰ UPS worked with UNHCR to bring 28 ocean containers to Gaziantep, Turkey, with mobile warehouses, sleeping mats, water cans and blankets.⁴⁴¹ Additionally, the foundation deploys skilled volunteers to southern Turkey as part of the World Food Program's Logistics Emergency Team to assess capacities of ports, roads and airports along key supply lines in support of Syrian refugees.⁴⁴²

However, private businesses, and especially NGOs, have a hard time operating in Turkey and getting access to Syrian refugees due to the difficult and complicated administrative policies put in place by the Turkish government. The Turkish government denies many NGOs the right to operate on its soil. It refuses to hand the management of refugee camps to international organizations for reasons of national sovereignty.

The role of the NGO is not well understood and recognized, especially in Turkey. Ankara often aims to monitor the activities of the humanitarian organizations. NGOs, whose mandate is to contribute to causes such as assisting refugees, are often misunderstood by the authorities because they are seen as spies, lobbyists against the government, or even competitors. Turkey monitors all foreign NGOs because the government views them with intense suspicion. Ankara

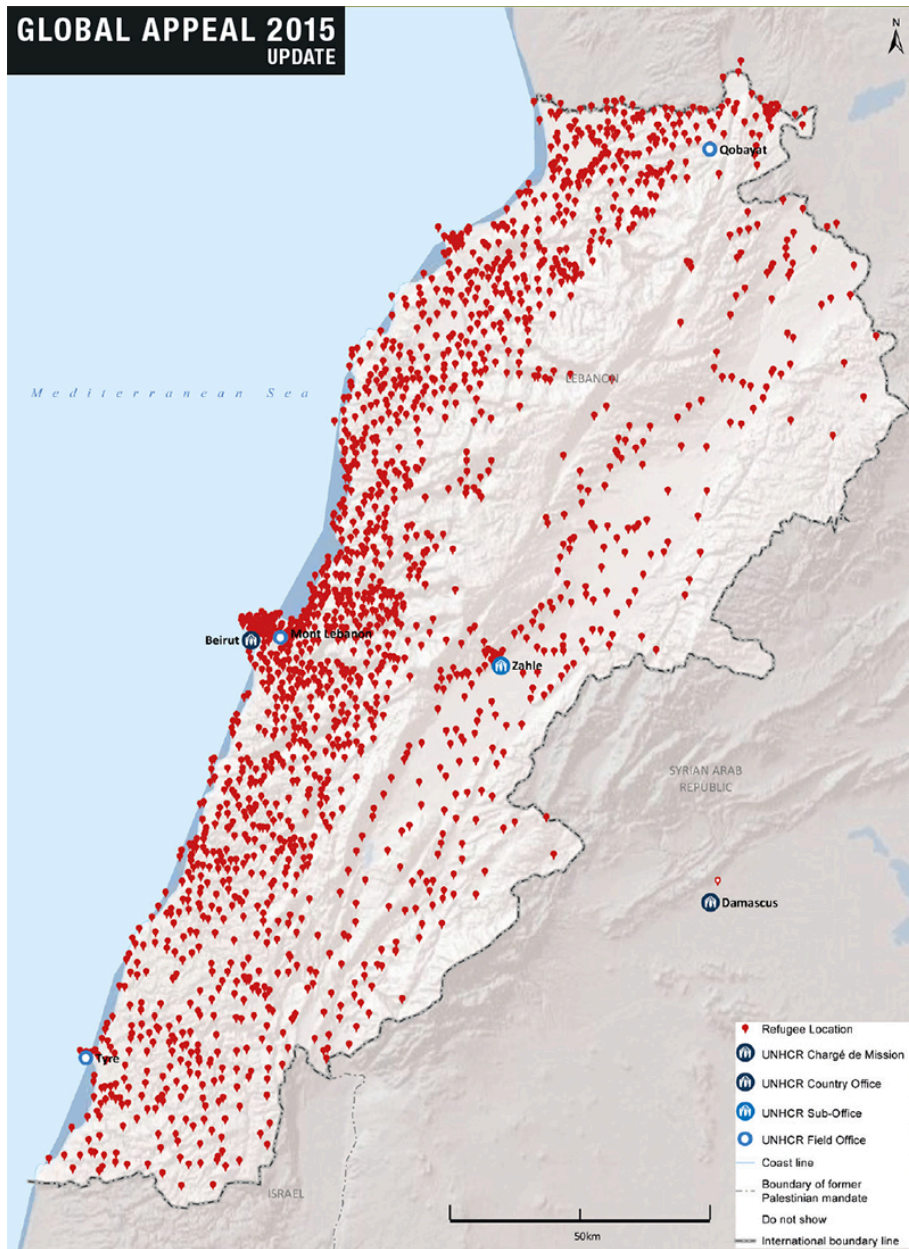
views foreign NGOs as fronts for foreign governments seeking to interfere with internal affairs and destabilize the country.

Gaining access to entrance visas as well permission to operate in the country are some of the biggest challenges NGOs in Turkey currently face. Sometimes it can take more than a year for NGOs to receive permission from government to operate, and there is no legislation that regulates them. Even if they are able to get visa, foreign NGOs access to the refugee camps in Turkey are limited by the government. The Turkish government fears that external actors have political agendas or constitute a threat to Turkey's sovereignty or security. Turkey has often refused to accept the assistance of NGOs, arguing that it will cause security issues and may lead to instability. Turkey needs to allow international humanitarian NGOs to operate on its soil and find more creative ways to work with international donors. Cooperation with international NGOs and the private sector will help find an effective global solution to the refugee crisis in the country.

NGOs and the Private Sector in Lebanon

In Lebanon, the massive influx of Syrian refugees has had a serious impact on its economy, society, politics, demography, environment, and national security. Even before the Syrian refugee crisis, Lebanon's infrastructure was in poor condition and inadequate to provide sufficient public services. More than 1.5 million Syrians who fled the civil war have sought refuge in Lebanon, which became the first host country per capita worldwide.⁴⁴³ Currently, the Syrian refugees represent some 25 percent of the Lebanese population.⁴⁴⁴ Unlike Turkey and Jordan, there are no formal refugee camps in Lebanon.⁴⁴⁵ Most refugees live in Lebanese communities throughout the country.⁴⁴⁶ NGOs and the private sector are working hard to develop programs, like the renewal of sanitation (drinking water reservoirs, boreholes, new sewerage, etc.) that provide adequate water service to all communities, including both refugees and natives. However, these programs require colossal financial resources that are now reaching exhaustion. Humanitarian actors are calling for the international community to consider the refugee crisis in Lebanon seriously, and to fund refugee programs in this small country that is running out of resources.

Most Syrian refugees left everything behind in Syria. A lot of them have only the clothes they wore when they fled. In addition to the trauma caused by violence, these people are living in very precarious conditions in local countries of integration. Besides basic needs, such as water and food, Syrian refugees are also in crucial need of non-food items. Thus, NGOs, such as CARE, in Lebanon provide mattresses, blankets, buckets, kitchen sets, hygiene kits and baby products.⁴⁴⁷ So far, the NGO Save the Children has helped more than 530,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon, including 313,000 children with critical protection, food, and shelter assistance.⁴⁴⁸



Map: NGOs areas of operations. Refugee’s locations. Source: UNHCR Lebanon ⁴⁴⁹

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) operates in Lebanon in addition to Turkey.⁴⁵⁰ The NGO opened a women’s center, which provides counseling, medical consultations, and group activities for both Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese nationals.⁴⁵¹ In addition, IRC is assisting hundreds of refugee and host families with cash assistance to pay for rent, food, utilities and other needs.⁴⁵² IRC also provides education for refugee children and job training programs for adults.

In Lebanon, the private sector plays a key role in the response to the refugee crisis. For instance, Apple Co. and JPMorgan Chase & Co. have both committed to help refugees. JPMorgan Chase has announced giving funds up to \$2 million in donations from its foundation and for

employees to provide immediate relief to refugees. Grants totaling \$1 million from the JPMorgan Chase Foundation will support Save the Children, Oxfam, International Rescue Committee and International Medical Corps. These organizations, all on the ground, are providing vital resources from food to water to hygienic kits and medical support refugees arriving in Lebanon and in neighboring countries.

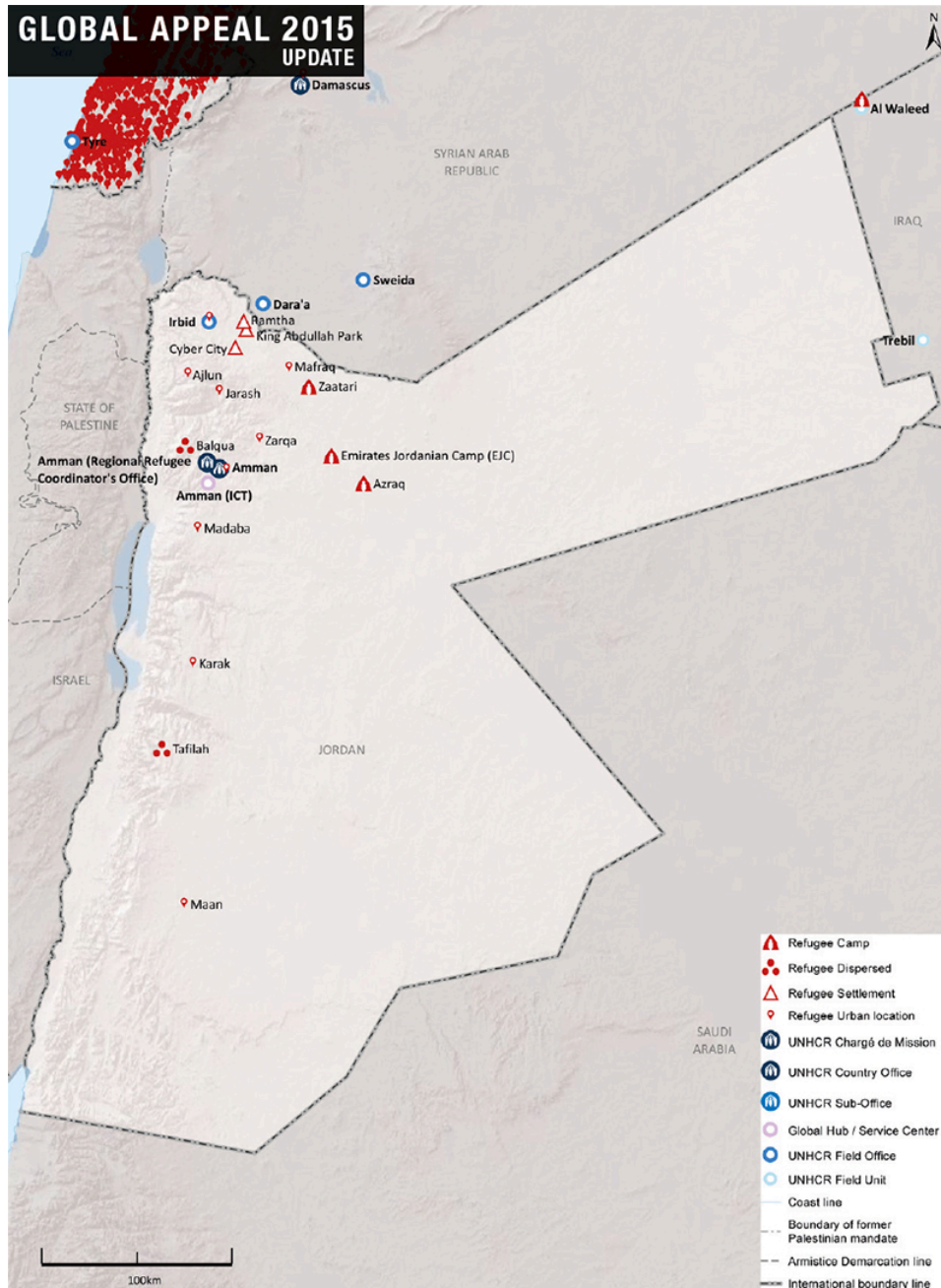
In the aim of providing assistance to Syrian refugees and protecting their rights, the NGOs and private sectors in Lebanon, in collaboration with the government, are working toward addressing and improving the conditions that refugees have been experiencing in Lebanon for years. Without any discrimination based on religion, sexual orientation, political or ideological beliefs, and on any other basis, NGOs, private sectors, and many local humanitarian associations are concerned with defending the rights of Syrian refugees and addressing their humanitarian needs. NGOs, advocates and lobbyists direct their activities at the local, national, as well as the international level, to improve the legal framework, policies and practices concerning refugees' living conditions and rights. Furthermore, these humanitarian organizations are mobilizing immense efforts to bring the refugee crisis in Lebanon to the attention of the international community, as well as the degrading abuses and exploitations of the refugees and intervening in these situations.

NGOs and the Private Sector in Jordan

UNHCR recognizes more than 600,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan, which represents a tenth of the Jordanian population.⁴⁵³ The majority of refugees are located in cities.⁴⁵⁴ The most vulnerable settle in camps like Za'atari, which is the largest refugee camp in the region and the fourth largest city in Jordan by its population (80,000).⁴⁵⁵ Non-governmental organizations are on the ground, providing assistance to Syrian refugees in different sectors; thus, they lighten the burden made by the influx of refugees to Jordan, which already suffers from a chronic shortage of resources. The weight of refugees is felt in several sectors, such as housing and education. NGOs, the private sector, and local humanitarian organizations continue providing materials and equipment, raising funds intended to assist Syrian refugees, and responding to their basic needs, such as food, water, health, education, construction of facilities and more.

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

In response to the Syrian refugee crisis in the Kingdom of Jordan, non-governmental international organizations, in cooperation with the Jordanian authorities, supply food, water and sanitation, furniture, shelter, public health, education, job training, access to employment, and many other resources to refugees. For instance, NGOs such as World Vision, UNICEF, and Save the Children provide equipment, latrines, toilets, power and water pipes in camps. Furthermore, in addition to providing basic needs, humanitarian organizations open schools for Syrian refugees



where they provide furniture, computers, and access to the internet. NGOs and private sectors also respond to concerns regarding children and women's health and safety. Activities of other humanitarian organizations, such as Caritas, consist of protecting and preventing abuse and gender-based violence, including rape, assault, harassment and early marriage.

Map: NGOs areas of operations. Refugee camps, settlements & urban locations⁴⁵⁶

In partnership with local NGOs, such as the Jordanian Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO), the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is assisting refugees through the distribution of emergency cash, winterization assistance, hygiene kits, shelter support, education, legal assistance and protection.⁴⁵⁷ Another NGO working in Jordan in response to the refugee crisis is Medecins du Monde. In collaboration with the Jordanian Ministry of Health, Medecins du Monde provides medical assistance to refugees through three primary health care centers located in Za'atari camp, the border city of Ramtha, and King Abdullah Park camp.⁴⁵⁸ Regarding the vulnerable health status of Syrian refugees, Medecins du Monde offers free medical consultations, provides medicine, and offers psychosocial counseling.⁴⁵⁹ In the city of Ramtha, this NGO provides medical assistance not only to the Syrian refugees, but also to the needy Jordanian citizens.⁴⁶⁰

Along with NGOs, the assistance of the private sector is vital to Syrian refugees in Jordan. For example, the Ikea Foundation provided solar power to thousands of Syrian refugees in Jordan's Azraq refugee camp, improving the lives of thousands of vulnerable families.⁴⁶¹ In its cooperation with UNHCR, Ikea Foundation provides Syrian refugees with renewable energy and lighting.⁴⁶² In the remote Azraq refugee camp, Ikea's assistance consists of funding the construction of a solar farm that will meet the energy needs of 27,000 Syrian refugees.⁴⁶³

Conclusion

The ongoing influx of Syrian refugees is a heavy burden to the local countries of integration. International NGOs and the private sector, in cooperation with local associations and authorities, are providing vital assistance to the most vulnerable people. This aid saves lives of millions of refugees, protects them, and improves their living conditions. Humanitarian organizations' responses to the refugee crisis in the region target different sectors, from basics such as food, water and health, to education, sanitation, housing, finances, employment and more.

However, to overcome the refugee crisis in local countries of integration, humanitarian organizations need international support, financially and materially. Therefore, the US and the international community, in collaboration with NGOs, should consider the Syrian refugee crisis seriously and provide sufficient funds and other forms of assistance to Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan.

Moreover, improving coordination between humanitarian organizations is vital for an efficient response to the refugee crisis. A lack of coordination between humanitarian organizations means assistance is not reaching certain refugees in priority areas; it also leads to repetition and duplication of aid, as well shortsighted needs assessments. Therefore, this creates an ineffective response to the Syrian refugee crisis. For instance, a possible duplication of assistance in some cases and a lack of assistance in others could occur if an NGO handed out too many food to a family that is in crucial need of water, a shelter, blankets, or heating materials. Coordination between NGOs allows better resource management, a wider area of coverage, and less overlap. It means each NGO can focus on its expertise and there can be a significant sharing of information.

Policy Recommendations

- Put pressure on the local countries of integration to facilitate the registration of international NGOs offering emergency aid for Syrian refugees in camps and cities, and allow the international private sector, UN agencies, international humanitarian organizations, and expert refugee agencies access to help with registering, assisting and monitoring Syrian refugees.
- Assist NGOs and the private sector operating in the local countries of integration both financially and materially. In addition, local countries of integration need to regulate and develop a standardized, simplified, and expedited policy for the flow of aid and passage of international humanitarian organizations on their soil.
- Improve coordination in the delivery of aid to refugees in local countries of integration, especially in regards to basic needs such as water, food, shelter and health care.

Security and Socio-economic Concerns in Local Integration for Turkey

Natali Smiley

Turkey adopted an open door or open border policy at the beginning of the war. Due to the roughly 250 miles of border between the Turkey and Syria, many people have fled from Syria to Turkey. The latest estimates of registered and unregistered refugees in the country are up to 2.5 million.⁴⁶⁴ Initially, Turkish immigration policy towards refugees was very welcoming, calling immigrants “guests” instead of “refugees.” The April 2014 Law on Foreigners and International Protection⁴⁶⁵ made the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), the sole institution responsible for asylum matters. This new law provides protection and assistance for asylum-seekers. Many reports have explained that the refugee camps in the southeastern region of Turkey are “relatively comfortable and secure,” and yet upwards of one million refugees in Turkey have decided to migrate into urban settings. Both those in the camps and outside have pursued means by which to be employed in the formal and informal sector. Most of those Syrians living outside of camps “live under bad and/or inadequate conditions due to the lack of financial sources.”⁴⁶⁶ As shown during summer of 2015, refugees will continue towards Europe if they do not achieve socio-economic integration in Turkey.

In November 2015, the European Union agreed to a deal with Turkey that would offer the country an approximate 3 billion euros to “stem the flow of refugees into the 28-country bloc.” The EU is primarily motivated to provide funding to Turkey out of fear of its own inability to host such a large population of refugees accompanied by growing Islamophobia sentiments. However, the United States’ reason to incentivize Turkey to encourage local integration is not out of fear. Rather, the United States should provide increased funding and support to Turkey’s efforts to include Syrian refugees because of its dedication to the welfare of the refugees. Turkey has long acted as the United States’ primary ally in the Middle East and its corresponding foreign political actor in the region, as well as being a member of NATO. However, with the sheer numbers of refugees, and after the most recent suicide bombings in Istanbul and Ankara, Turkey is at an impasse of needing to decide to protect and prioritize its citizens or provide for the needs of the refugees.

Considering the Turkish President’s recent comment blaming America for turning the Middle East into “a sea of blood,” it the U.S. should proceed very carefully with its long-time ally.⁴⁶⁷ This should resemble putting significant effort into funding and assisting Turkey with its economic and security concerns, *specifically* regarding Syrian refugees. This chapter addresses the ever evolving and increasing security concerns of Turkey, including its border with Syria. In addition, the chapter will discuss the economic benefits of integrating Syrian refugees into Turkish society, both for Turkey and the refugees themselves, and the barriers that currently exist towards this integration.

Deteriorating Security

War at Home

The geo-political situation in Turkey and the surrounding areas is constantly changing. The situation of Syrian refugees in Turkey becomes more complex when contextualized within

Turkey's war efforts against ISIL, the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK), and the main Syrian Kurdish militia, the People's Protection Unit (YPG). "With nearly 200 people killed in just seven months, the beat goes on in Turkey. Four attacks, four targets, one goal: more terror, chaos, and violence."⁴⁶⁸ The international community agrees that ISIL is a terrorist threat, no doubt, but when it comes to Turkey's conflict with the Kurds, within its borders and beyond, foreign powers do not necessarily agree. Turkey has been in conflict with its Kurdish minority, which amounts to almost 18 percent of the Turkish population across the southeastern region, for over three decades.⁴⁶⁹ Tensions heightened after the July 20, 2015 bombing in Suruç that the Turkish government has blamed the PKK for. Since then President Erdoğan has lumped both bombings in Ankara (October 2015 and February 2016) that have ties to ISIL, with the Kurdish separatist militancy.⁴⁷⁰ On February 18th, Turkish officials identified a Syrian Kurd, Salih Nekar, as the suicide bomber who drove a car "laden with explosives into the midst of shuttle buses carrying military personnel and civilians outside the air force headquarters in the Turkish capital, killing himself and at least 27 other people."⁴⁷¹ A Turkish security official interviewed on condition of anonymity explains that "The world sees the PKK as a Turkish problem, but [ISIL] as an international problem...but, for Turkey, the PKK is the number one problem, and it's always been international."⁴⁷² The Turkish government considers the YPG an offshoot or 'franchise' of the PKK, concerned that the YPG is trying to create an autonomous region in northern Syria on its southern border.⁴⁷³ The United States, however, has been supporting the YPG in the fight against ISIL. The rise in Turkish shelling of YPG bases across northern Syria (as opposed to ISIL forces or Assad's army) seems to reveal their true concerns.

Turkey's security has "deteriorated considerably at the very moment its security challenges have multiplied and grown more deadly, thanks to spillover from Syria."⁴⁷⁴ Head Turkish government officials like Özgür Ünlühisarcıklı, the Ankara Office Director of the German Marshall Fund, has called for "a foreign policy prioritizing Turkey's own national security rather than the transformation of its neighborhood."⁴⁷⁵ This may look like Turkey resuming peace talks with the PKK, especially since there are no elections on the horizon, and therefore no need for the government to continue to politicize the conflict. All the while, "Turkish nationalist sentiment has been further inflamed by the most recent Ankara bombing...and Erdoğan's polarizing politics have already divided the country."⁴⁷⁶ Now the specter of cross-communal violence looms.

Stuck in the Middle

Turkey's war with the Kurds has caught Syrian refugees, literally, in the middle. Russian pro-Assad shelling of the Syrian rebel-held Aleppo (only 36 miles from Turkey's border in) has caused a mass mobilization of Syrians towards its northernmost border. According to the United Nations, between February 1 and February 22 upwards of 100,000 Syrians have fled from Aleppo towards Turkey.⁴⁷⁷ Up until this last week, Turkey has had an open border policy, but after the most recent suicide bombing, Turkey virtually sealed its borders. Now thousands of Syrian refugees are "gathered—trapped, really—in an encampment on the southern side of the Bab al-Salama crossing point, just out of sight from Turkey."⁴⁷⁸ They hear the shelling of the PYG by the Turkish military. Turkey has also recently called for ground forces in Syria which would include its own and allied forces. The future of Turkey's involvement as well as what the Syrian war will eventually evolve into is unclear, but "what [is] clear is that the Russian-backed offensive has upended the already chaotic geopolitical calculus in northern Syria, producing a multipolar

showdown between an array of local and international actors.⁴⁷⁹ Russia's expanding involvement in Syria should invoke a sense of urgency within the international community. Because Turkey is the primary NATO actor in the region, it is essential for NATO members, especially the U.S. to be very sensitive to how it navigates its political relationship with Turkey. The Turkish Prime Minister said that his "mind is not now in London, but [on the] border -- how to relocate these new people coming from Syria? Three hundred thousand Aleppo people, living in Aleppo, are ready to move toward Turkey."⁴⁸⁰ Any recommendations posed towards Turkey in how it should handle Syrian refugees needs to be situated in an understanding of the political disillusionment Turkey's government is in.

Turkey's primary reaction to the refugee crisis was not one of security but increasingly the country has tried to adopt a humanitarian approach. The DGMM promises to adopt a human rights-oriented view of immigration and move away from the previous security-oriented approach.⁴⁸¹ National security works in tandem with human security of the refugees. Registration of refugees is an essential aspect. Turkey has many registration centers throughout the country. Authorities have "tried hard to reach the refugees so that they can register and take advantage of the rights and services that they are by [domestic and international] law entitled to."⁴⁸² These registration centers and the general registration process hopefully ushers in the establishment of healthy relationships between refugees and the authorities. Refugees can access information and rest assured about Turkey's adoption of the non-refoulement law. This creates a safer legal environment for refugees. Despite refugees being subject to misinformation and oftentimes living in fear of the authorities, progress has been made, "as the number of registered refugees is close to 2 million."⁴⁸³ Turkey has now provided some 1.5 million Syrian refugees biometric identity cards.⁴⁸⁴ The identity registrations "include fingerprints and personal data, which will also be used in the provision of aid, job offers, education, and social opportunities to displaced people."⁴⁸⁵ The registrations will also be "used to mark those who are [or have been] involved in crime."⁴⁸⁶ These measures are predominantly being taken at the network of camps in the southeast of Turkey. While this expanding database is essential to increased knowledge and accounting for refugees, a majority of Syrian refugees in Turkey today live in cities across the country and therefore are much more difficult to reach and register.

Locals of Turkey are overwhelmed by the "feeling of being vulnerable to terrorist attacks" because many believe "that it is very possible that there are individuals among the Syrian refugees who are closely associated with Assad, ISIL or the PKK."⁴⁸⁷ The January and February 2016 Istanbul and Ankara bombings have instilled fear and triggered political reactions. After the January attack in Istanbul, Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu said "Turkey would be taking more visible security measures in densely populated areas."⁴⁸⁸ As of now, the primary security concerns facing Turkey with regards to Syrian refugees are results of what might happen if their integration does not take place. If social animosities continue and gain momentum, they may result in violent mass uprising towards Syrian refugees.⁴⁸⁹ Considering the bombings were carried out by Syrian Kurds who entered Turkey under the guise of refugee status, the divide between refugees and Turkish locals may become more polarized, posing an increased risk to national security. Violent attacks have already occurred in Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş. This has caused authorities to worry that the trend may continue.⁴⁹⁰ Without necessary steps towards including refugees in Turkish society, refugees may mobilize and provide security from local aggression for themselves. This in turn would escalate existing tensions between refugees and locals.

War at the Border

Since December 2015, Turkey has responded to Western pressure and escalated its border security with Syria. European and American powers had pointed accusatory fingers at Turkey for its lax border policy, which had permitted jihadis to travel into ISIL territory. Succumbing to foreign pressure, Turkey has since suspended its open border policy and replaced it with aggressive deterrence mechanisms. The “border guards who once fired warning shots...now shoot to kill” and the government is currently extending its 3-meter high and 2-meter wide wall along the border with Syria.⁴⁹¹ The open-border policy was being taken advantage of by smugglers who make their living smuggling foreign fighters, weapons, and explosives into Syria and Iraq for ISIL.⁴⁹² It is not only the bombings that have prompted increased border patrol and security, but also an increase in ISIL activity. Smuggling activities by illegal networks were exacerbated in the context of a worsening civil war, challenging and complicating Turkey’s open door policy. Border security issues limited Turkey’s foreign policy “choices by challenging its open door policy on multiple fronts.”⁴⁹³

With tens of thousands of refugees eagerly waiting on its border, Turkey has very important decisions to make. It is currently more concerned with fighting the Kurdish forces than ISIL. This focused political agenda against the Kurds negatively affects the effort Turkey is putting into handling the sizeable refugee population within and right outside its borders. “All of which is to say that Turkey is being squeezed—squeezed by refugees, by Europe, by Kurds inside and outside the country, by Russia, by the U.S....If it’s not careful, it will be sucked into Syria’s chaotic undertow, making a messy situation that much worse.”⁴⁹⁴ Suleyman Tapsiz, governor of Turkey’s southern Kilis province, explained that “the doors are not closed, but at the moment there is no need to host such people (referring to Syrian refugees) inside [Turkey’s] borders.”⁴⁹⁵ Instead, the Turkish government’s strategy is to set up safe zones on the Azaz-Marea line, and to continue setting up camps as more and more refugees flow out of Aleppo and other sieged cities. The deputy secretary of the UN stated that it “hopes that [the refugees along the Turkish border] are secure where they are, but [the UN] would also hope in the end there would be continued Turkish generosity” despite Erdoğan’s preference of “safe zones.”⁴⁹⁶ Turkey is now struggling to appease several international forces, which oftentimes seem to contradict their national interests. Here lies an opportunity for them to regain lost ground and recalibrate their interests in alignment with the international community. Turkey could accept the 100,000 refugees from Aleppo and run them through an improved screening process. With their acceptance, Turkey would gain leverage to ask for increased international financial assistance as well as prove to the world that that the country is not lost in its own war but still has humanitarian sympathies, which will hopefully gain back its credibility.

Economic Opportunity

As of September 2015, Turkey has spent an estimated \$8 billion hosting refugees.⁴⁹⁷ At the beginning of the crisis in 2011, Turkey rejected any international assistance for its humanitarian effort, as it wanted to prove that it could deal with matters on its own. By mid-2012, however, Ankara started to ask the international community to share the burden.⁴⁹⁸ In October 2014, the Turkish government announced that it had received only \$250 million from international donors in the four years since the beginning of the crisis. It also blamed the international community for failure to fulfill refugee quotas requested by the UN, and for failure to provide even half of the funds requested to help Turkey in its humanitarian effort.⁴⁹⁹

Societal Barriers

With no realistic end to the Syrian civil war in sight, as well as the impending threat of ISIL, the stay of Syrian refugees in local countries cannot be considered temporary. Because Turkey will be their home for an indefinite period of time, they require a certain level of integration in order to thrive. Social integration is directly linked to economic integration. Although Turkey's initial approach towards refugees was welcoming and hospitable, some predict that hospitality will turn into hatred, even enmity,⁵⁰⁰ which will have negative effects on integration.

There have been several studies conducted by various Turkish universities and international academics on locals' attitudes and sentiments towards Syrian refugees. In November 2014 Hacettepe University Migration and Politics Research Center (HUGO) conducted a study titled, "Syrians in Turkey: Societal Acceptance and Integration." The purpose of the study was to investigate the national and regional sentiments and attitudes of locals in Turkey towards Syrian refugees in the hope of understanding public attitudes towards the social integration of refugees. The data shows that on a national level 56 percent, and in the southern provinces 69 percent, of all Turkish citizens worry that "they [Syrian refugees] are going to take our jobs."⁵⁰¹ In this study they surveyed citizens and refugees alike to grasp the locals' attitudes and perceptions alongside the hopes and reactions of refugees. Turks surveyed across the country have shown fierce opposition to the attitude that Syrian refugees "should be sent back home even though the war is ongoing."⁵⁰² Very interestingly, while Turkey's population is a majority Sunni Muslim (98 percent), the same as in Syria, the primary mentality behind Turkish support is "to support those who escape from tyranny" rather than "religious fraternity."⁵⁰³ Humanitarian sentiments notwithstanding, most Turks do not feel or share cultural affinity with the Syrians, with only 17 percent of locals supporting the statement that "I think we are culturally similar with Syrians."⁵⁰⁴ There is a widespread cultural loyalty to specific ethnic, racial, and religious groups in Turkey, which makes it even harder for Syrians to have hope for integration. A new survey from the German Marshall Fund (October 2015) reported that 75 percent of Turkish locals interviewed were reported saying that they do not believe Syrian immigrants integrate well.⁵⁰⁵ The chief takeaway from the study conducted by HUGO is that throughout Turkey "it is a common perception that Syrians are an economic burden" and "70.7 percent of the people shared the opinion that the Turkish economy has weakened due to Syrian refugees."⁵⁰⁶ Common perceptions are fueled by fear of competition in the job market, increasing rent prices, decreasing wages, and even the rise of polygamy and crime.⁵⁰⁷

Part of the Workforce

Economic inclusion has to be driven by demand, particularly as a result of a growing local economy. Therefore, "local economic growth should be seen as the priority objective of the new social contract and economic inclusion of refugees as a logical cause and consequence of this growth process. The overall goal should be to create opportunities to raise living standards for both populations beyond mere subsistence and dependence on external support."⁵⁰⁸ Turkey is considered an emerging market economy, with an averaged annual GDP growth rate of 3.9 percent between 1999 and 2015.⁵⁰⁹ On a macro scale, employing a larger population would mean that more people would have money to pour back into the local economy. By employing the

refugees and putting money into their pockets they will theoretically turn around and invest more into the Turkish market. A direct means by which Turkey can strengthen and grow its economy, therefore, is by employing refugees alongside the ten percent of Turkish citizens who remain unemployed. Syrians who live in the cities want to actively engage and integrate themselves into the formal as well as informal labor markets.⁵¹⁰ The government granted refugees the right to apply for work permits on 15 January 2016, and Syrian refugees have been increasingly eager to join the workforce. Syrian immigrants have brought with them assets that they can invest in the Turkish economy. At the end of 2014 “1,222 out of the 4,249 foreign owned businesses in Turkey were established by Syrians,” which goes to show the proactivity of Syrians for economic integration and their willingness to invest into Turkey.⁵¹¹ Additionally, “many Syrian businessmen transferred their capital to Turkey due to the crisis, which ensured a significant amount of foreign capital inflows.”⁵¹²

In both the formal and informal markets, arrival of refugees shocks the system. An increase in refugees has caused there to be a greater demand for formal markets, and a greater supply of labor in the informal. In the 2015 World Bank Group policy research working paper, “The Impact of Syrian Refugees on the Turkish Labor Market,” the empirical data are as predicted, showing that Syrian refugees have largely displaced Turks in informal employment.⁵¹³ In another 2015 research study conducted by the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey entitled, “The Impact of Syrian Refugees on Natives’ Labor Market Outcomes in Turkey”, they “[used] a difference-in-differences strategy motivated by the regional variation in refugee settlement patterns in Turkey.”⁵¹⁴ The study found “that Syrian refugee inflows have negatively affected the likelihood of employment for natives, while their wage outcomes have not been affected in a statistically significant way.”⁵¹⁵ More specifically, the refugee inflows have affected informal employment the most. Wage outcomes, they explain, have “mostly remained unaffected.”⁵¹⁶

An increase of Syrians in Turkey has also affected the consumption of public services, further stressing social relationships as well as increasing depletion of resources. Because of the high number of refugees who need medical attention due to wartime injuries as well as the physically arduous journey to Turkey, “hospitals are suffering from insufficient capacity in terms of [sic] operational conditions and personnel.”⁵¹⁷ Some locals believe that they are not getting the services they want and need, which leads to an increase in already existing negative sentiments towards refugees. As of now, there is no stress on the Turkish education system, primarily because unlike in Lebanon and Jordan, Syrians do not speak the local language. Because they do not speak Turkish, they are unable to attend school. However, this can greatly contribute to social issues in the long term. The greatest threat to public services is the strain on utilities and infrastructure. Considering the majority of refugees are living in cities, urban areas in the southeast have grown greatly in population. This causes a strain on the municipalities because they “are provided a budget according to their population” and the “infrastructure in the cities is designed to serve only a certain amount of people.”⁵¹⁸

Turkish Trade and Jobs in Context

The economic impact of Syrian refugees goes beyond the expenditures by the government. Any sort of empirical data that shows ‘causal’ differences or changes in the Turkish economy must be understood in the context that the entire country’s trade has been affected by the external factors of the Syrian civil war. Prices, especially rental costs, have increased, particularly in the border regions. As a truck driver waiting to enter Syria remarked, “One kilogram of tomatoes has

gone up from 1 TL to 3 TL.” This is a 200 percent increase in a country with an inflation rate just under ten percent.⁵¹⁹ Even if the Syrian war ended definitively tomorrow, instability within the region would persist. For this reason, it is a widespread conclusion that refugees will stay in Turkey long after the war ends. Thus, the Turkish government must come up with more policies aimed at integrating refugees. There is a need to increase capacity but also a great necessity to inform the Turkish public about the realities of the refugees’ situation.⁵²⁰ Any long-term integration policy has to have a strong public relations strategy built into it. This approach will also offer the benefit of developing the capacity of national and local institutions throughout Turkey.

Conclusion

What occupies most of Turkey’s attention is how it is going to handle the PKK and the YPG.⁵²¹ This security concern, while valid, detracts from the needs of the approximate 2.5 million Syrian refugees. The US State Department and the Pentagon have pressed for Turkey to “immediately stop shelling YPG forces,” but Erdoğan is frustrated and does not listen due to their alliance with the YPG.⁵²² The US should continue to urge Turkey to take up ceasefire talks with the Kurds once again. Most importantly, Turkey must differentiate its relationship with the Kurds, PKK, and YPG from its relationship with the Syrian refugees. The urban fighting between government forces and the PKK in Turkey’s southern city of Diyarbakir and its focused efforts against the YPG are causing Turkey to sink into the quagmire of alliances that characterizes the Syria conflict.⁵²³ Western powers should finance an improved, systemized screening process within Turkey’s desired “safe zones.” As announced on 21 February 2016, the Turkish government is going to enhance its border security, which suggests that Turkey is not intending to accept the refugees from Aleppo currently massed at its borders.⁵²⁴ The UNHCR continues to encourage Turkey to allow these refugees in, but creating a screening process that would alleviate Turkey’s concerns of increased security risks would make this request more salient. The international community should make it extremely clear that Turkey’s continued war with the Kurds will not do it any favors in terms of international monetary aid. Instead, the US should continue to explain that its highest priority remains to contain ISIL and provide humanitarian provision to Syrian refugees. If Turkey wants assistance from the international community, it must abandon its Kurdish affront.

Considering President Erdoğan’s recent remarks over the role the United States has had in the region, the US should take caution when directing Turkey in any specific political action.⁵²⁵ Instead, the US should find alternative routes by which to introduce a widespread multilateral partnership with Turkey to construct a framework that is aimed at creating local economic opportunities and mitigate the cost of socio-economic inclusion of refugees. Ultimately, this framework will be a driving force towards cohesion between Syrian refugees and Turkish host communities. It is in Turkey’s best interest to use the Syrian refugee situation to their economic advantage by channeling foreign aid to bolster job security, economic incentives, and particular projects that will provide jobs for both Turks and refugees. By employing the most vulnerable, the international standing of Turkey will improve, ultimately gaining it the approval of the international community as well as producing economic growth. The Turkish government should pass a law permitting skilled Syrian workers and professionals to work as soon as possible in urgently needed sectors, such as early education and healthcare. In the future this could be expanded to other sectors where Turkish businesses need it the most. It should be intentionally implemented in phases so as not to provoke any social or political backlash against refugees.

The primary barriers to long-term development are crippled or depleting capacity to deliver services.⁵²⁶ Scaling up provision of services, such as education and health, has a beneficial effect on the local economy, which generates “a first consumption led growth induced by the increase in both demand and supply of services paid for by public expenditure.”⁵²⁷ This would be financed by the international community as a whole and be channeled directly towards the municipalities of Turkey that are most heavily affected by the influx of Syrian refugees. As agreed upon in the London Conference of 4 February 2016, in the following three months, “Syrian teachers will be formally appointed by the Ministry of Education, and Syrian health professionals appointed by the Ministry of Health,” who will be directly involved in supporting the needs of Syrian refugees.⁵²⁸ This is an example of labor matching, which now that Syrians have been granted the access to work permits, could be used as a valuable tool. The infrastructure should resemble a multilateral labor market that ensures that all new jobs that are created by increased spending on social services are occupied, and that the best-qualified people are chosen to fill them. In addition, this would help to maximize returns to public spending.

The international community should finance the creation of special economic zones (SEZ) throughout the major southeastern cities of Turkey. These SEZs will increase both local and international trade as well as investment opportunities, and create jobs. The US should lead by example and, “finance the construction of residential buildings, offices, warehouses and public-sector facilities that will increase the demand for local construction services.” Displaced Syrian entrepreneurs and foreign companies could set up shop and employ both Syrian refugees and Turkish workers. Low interest loans could be made available for new entrepreneurs, both local and foreign, and the creation of business incubators could help the establishment of new enterprises.⁵²⁹ Building businesses together promotes a sort of mutual investment into a shared community while also developing improving dialogue. These SEZs would likely need subsidies from the international community, or international organizations such as the World Bank in order to be attractive to investors.

If returning to Syria one day becomes an option for the majority of refugees, Turkey wants to make certain that the well educated and better trained among them stay in Turkey “to help their compatriots chart a future for themselves closer to home.”⁵³⁰ Socio-economic integration would extend to Syrian refugees the opportunity to support themselves, rebuild their lives, and maintain their skills and finances. Turkey can directly profit from an increase in investors into their economy as well as understanding that the more they empower Syrians now, the faster they will be able to rebuild and return to Syria after the war.

Policy Recommendations

- Encourage Turkey to abandon its fight with the Kurds and differentiate politically between Kurdish fighters and Syrian refugees in order to acquire more international humanitarian aid.
- Support international partnership with Turkey to create a framework aimed at creating local economic opportunities and mitigate the cost of socio-economic inclusion of refugees.
- Spearhead the funding of SEZs throughout the major southeastern cities in Turkey.

Security and Socio-economic Concerns in Local Integration for Jordan

Payton Young

Over the last five years, hundreds to thousands of Syrians have crossed through a dilapidated border crossing into Jordan under an eerie sign that now reads “god bye” rather than “good bye”. As of recently, Jordan announced that it has closed its border to more refugees fleeing the Syrian war. Approximately 16,000 Syrians are left stranded in a remote area of open rocky desert between two sand berms that mark the border of Jordan and Syria.⁵³¹ Jordan refuses to take in more refugees due to security concerns, threats from ISIL, and failed support from the international community. On January 18th, 2016 Mohammad al-Momani, Jordan’s government spokesman stated, “We hope that the world will step forward and help hosting countries deal with the refugee issue, because otherwise they will deal with this problem all over the world – at the shores of Europe, North America, and elsewhere”.⁵³² As the war in Syria continues, peace talks continue to be delayed, and the reality of Syrians being able to repatriate in the near future is unlikely. Jordan is forced to assess the ability of its own limited humanitarian capacity and prioritize the economic and security needs of the Jordanian people. The Syrian refugee crisis has reached a critical moment: the situation in Jordan demands that the international community step up and respond to the emergency that has the country stripped of resources and in economic crisis.

The bleak conditions and lack of opportunities within Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey have forced many refugees to make dangerous journeys to seek asylum in the European Union. Jordan alone is currently hosting more than 630,000 Syrians, which in five years, has drained the Kingdom’s already limited natural resources and challenged the nation’s economy and infrastructure.⁵³³ The impact of this number of refugees would be equivalent to the United States taking 29.4 million refugees in the span of four years.⁵³⁴ The majority of Syrians have no material resources, have depleted their savings, and live below the poverty line. Jordanians living in these communities are negatively affected by overcrowded schools, competition for public services, and price increases. The patience of vulnerable Jordanians who have shared their resources for the past five years is wearing thin. Public discontent has risen as Jordanians resent the humanitarian organizations for prioritizing the needs of Syrians over the needs of Jordanians.

Historically, Jordan has been a key ally of the United States. Supporting the stability and economic success of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is integral to the national security interests of the U.S. Despite its vulnerable geographic location, surrounded at all borders by countries in violent crisis, Jordan has remained stable and has maintained benevolent relations with the United States. However, over the last five years Jordan’s own stability has been called into question. Since the onset of the Syrian crisis, Jordan’s trade deficit has plummeted, government expenditure has increased by 38 percent, GDP decreased by 56 percent, and public debt has grown by 53 percent.⁵³⁵ Jordan is calling for solidarity with the international community to reach a holistic approach to long-term integration and national development that benefits the refugees as well as the host communities. The U.S. must contribute to supporting Jordan’s efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region, in which Jordan’s capacity to do so has been limited by its own economic, environmental, and social problems.

The presence of the impoverished Syrian population will continue to erode Jordan’s economic potential and social stability. Sufficient international aid alone will not solve the Syrian

refugee crisis in Jordan. Even if the UNHCR budget is fulfilled in 2016, opportunities must be opened up for refugees to increase their economic contribution to the host communities, while utilizing the increased labor force to grow the Jordanian economy. Allowing refugees access to better livelihoods in a way that benefits Jordanians is integral to the security and stability of Jordan. The U.S. can play a role in incentivizing Jordan to change policy through investing in infrastructure projects that promote sustainable economic growth within the region.

This chapter will assess the impact of the refugee crisis on the state of Jordan and focus on proposing solutions for the integration of the 85 percent of refugees living outside of refugee camps into host communities. Part one will analyze national security concerns and practices for documenting and monitoring Syrian refugees crossing the Jordanian border. In addition, this chapter discusses the concerns and conflict over resource security, which contributes to national and regional security as a whole and builds community resilience towards future conflicts in the region. Secondly, the chapter will address Jordanian civil society's response and the economic consequences of the influx of Syrians on the host communities, most significantly in the northern governorates. The chapter will conclude with recommendations for Jordan and the role of the U.S. in promoting economic growth that benefits the host communities as well as the Syrian refugee population. Emphasizing the urgency of the U.S. and international community to support the stability of Jordan is vital to achieving progress in the Syrian refugee crisis.

National Security and Social Integration Concerns

One thing is certain: Jordan is running out of water. The desert's major water artery is the Jordan River, which is nearly depleted before entering the Jordanian territory. In fact, the kingdom is the third poorest country in terms of water security in the world.⁵³⁶ As more and more refugees move into host communities and camps, draining the supply of groundwater and surface water has become the largest threat to national security. It is estimated that Jordan stopped having enough water for its needs as early as the 1970s. Now, with the significant increase in population and affects of climate change, Jordan has declared water security a primary national interest: "Water scarcity in the country is a risk not only for human needs and expectations, but also for economic growth, political stability and national security".⁵³⁷ In the city of Al Mafraq, the water deficit has increased four times due to the Syrian influx, where the water supply has fallen below 30 liters per person.⁵³⁸ Even before the crisis, Jordan's population was expected to double by 2024, while the water supply was projected to be cut in half.⁵³⁹

Tensions between Jordanians and refugees over scarce resources are rising. Summagah, a water manager in the border district of Jordan, told the Washington Post that, "during a hot spell last summer (2014), angry patrons burned tires in front of the water office where he works" adding that, "angry customers show up at his house when promised water deliveries don't materialize".⁵⁴⁰ Syrian refugees have become a scapegoat for the economic and security problems of the country. Rumors and facts have spread among civil society that are used to instigate public resentment towards the Syrian refugee population. One regional government official was quoted saying, "Syrians are consuming 35 liters per day — six times more than the average Jordanian. You see them washing cars or even hosing the streets. Meanwhile, some villages in Jordan are down to two water deliveries a week".⁵⁴¹ In some areas of Jordan, Syrian refugees have doubled the demand for water.⁵⁴² In addition, Jordanian citizens are hesitant to conserve water for fear that the government will redirect resources to the Syrians, which has further aggravated competition between the two groups.⁵⁴³

Despite hosting one of the largest refugee populations in the world, Jordan has a relatively limited national refugee policy. Jordan has not signed onto the UN's 1951 Refugee Convention or signed onto the 1967 protocol.⁵⁴⁴ Jordan is no stranger to foreigners. In fact, more than 40 percent of Jordan's current population is comprised of non-Jordanian nationals, including 2 million Palestinians, up to 1.3 million Syrians and 29,000 Iraqis.⁵⁴⁵ Despite its lack of international obligations and lack of resources, Jordan's humanitarian response is progressive in comparison with others in the region and upholds many of the international standards on refugee treatment. Jordan has explicitly committed to not return persons through its ratification of the UN's 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.⁵⁴⁶ Alternatively, Jordan's limited obligations under international law mean that they do not have a legal obligation to continue admitting refugees or protecting human security of refugees within the country.

The rapid pace of refugee migration into Jordan has caused a breakdown in the security process and surveillance of refugees. All Syrians arriving at the Jordanian border without passports are brought to one of two refugee camps, Za'atari and Azraq. Technically, only refugees who secure a sponsor are allowed to leave the camp through a procedure called "bailout".⁵⁴⁷ The sponsors are supposed to pay for the needs of the refugees once they leave the camps, but those regulations are rarely enforced. Alternatively, smugglers bypass the Jordanian security forces stretched out around the perimeter of Za'atari and transport refugees out of the camp. In July 2014 the Jordanian government made it so that Syrians without bailout papers or with sponsors who don't support them would no longer receive identity cards from either the UNHCR or the Ministry of Interior. The UNHCR card is the ticket to all humanitarian aid in Jordan and without it refugees are forced to fend for themselves. Despite the risks, refugees continue to leave the camps illegally in search of work and threaten the national security of Jordan due to improper monitoring of the new members of society.

Violence will only become more prevalent if significant efforts are not made to address underlying sources of instability between the Syrians and the Jordanians.⁵⁴⁸ In a speech given by King Abdullah in the United States on 28 September 2014, he stressed the importance of Jordan's security to maintaining stability in the Middle East:

"The security of every nation will be shaped by the fate of the Middle East. Together we can and must undertake urgent humanitarian and security measures, create durable solutions for today's crisis and provide new opportunities for dialogue, reconciliation, and prosperity and peace".⁵⁴⁹

Jordan's confidence in international support has dwindled due to underfunded initiatives and humanitarian support directed only towards refugees.⁵⁵⁰ In the peak of political instability, public discontent and limited resources are significantly decreasing the government's willingness to host additional refugees.

Economic Concerns and Impact on Host Communities

Jordan faces significant fiscal needs, which have been exacerbated by conflict in the region, lack of accessible trade routes, and massive increases in vulnerable populations within the kingdom. Jordanian citizens and government officials continuously place the blame for Jordan's poor economic position on the presence of refugees. However, the Jordanian economy struggled with destabilizing challenges before the Syrian crisis. Jordan has never recovered from the world recession in 2008. The graph indicates that GDP growth has declined significantly since 2007 and

never improved.⁵⁵¹ Jordan is striving to revive its economy, which averaged below three percent and public debt ratio of 87.75 in 2014.⁵⁵²



The primary concern for the Jordanian economy is that multiple crises, in addition to the large costs involved in hosting Syrian refugees, have forced the government to shift expenditures from capital investment to current expenditures.⁵⁵³ Without the continued support of the international community, Jordan has little incentive to provide more resources for the Syrian population as it faces its own national challenges. As the international community continues to underfund the response to the humanitarian crisis, Syrians experience restrictions on their protected spaces and a lack of vital resources within Jordan.

The Jordanian government is stretched beyond its capacity to deliver essential services such as healthcare, education, and waste management in the northern governorates most affected by the Syrian refugee crisis. As services worsen, Jordanians place more blame on the refugees for the economic downturn, which presents the government with significant political pressure around its response to the refugee crisis. Jordanians generally feel they are worse off because of the Syrian refugees. In fact, 97 percent of Jordanians are not satisfied with the economy and believe that the reasons for the economic problems is the number of refugees and immigrants.⁵⁵⁴ Civil society’s response can largely be attributed to the high visibility of refugees within their communities, which creates the perception that they are the reason for unemployment and inflation.

The crisis has raised fears over competition for resources and economic opportunities within the local communities. As hope for the Syrians’ return home becomes bleaker, Jordanians fear what impact the refugees’ migration into the cities from the camps will have on inflation and access to public services. In some sectors, host communities have benefited from the presence of refugees, such as some business owners and property managers who have enjoyed an increase in demand for their goods. Contrarily, the most vulnerable people in the community are hurt due to increased rent, price hikes, and strains on public services.⁵⁵⁵ According to the International Labor Organization, 85 percent of Jordanian workers believe that Syrians should not be allowed to enter Jordan freely, and 65 percent believe that all Syrians should live within refugee camps.⁵⁵⁶ Humanitarian aid and services that are directed toward refugees has increased frustration among Jordanians who experience inequalities in aid distribution and services. Shockingly, 84 percent of Jordanians believe Syrians receive unfair financial support.⁵⁵⁷

The Jordanian government has granted Syrian refugees access to free education in the kingdom's public education system. Unfortunately, what was meant as a positive step towards providing Syrians with basic human rights has had profound consequences for the local communities: "The number of Syrian refugee schoolchildren has increased from 121,000 at the beginning of 2015 to around 141,00 in June 2015 (16.5 percent increase)"⁵⁵⁸. The total cost of Syrian students in public schools in 2015 was 193 million JDs.⁵⁵⁹ The dramatic population increase has resulted in a decrease in the quality of education in public schools due to shortages in qualified teachers and overcrowded classrooms. In addition, Jordanians fear there is increased risk of infectious diseases, more demand on health services and infrastructure, and a greater need for already limited medical supplies in the northern governorates. In response to the reemergence of previously eradicated diseases, the Jordanian government has provided vaccinations that have, "simultaneously been one of the most important public health missions in Jordan and one of the costliest services provided to Syrian refugees"⁵⁶⁰.

The large number of Syrians entering the local communities has led to considerable price increases within Jordan's local markets. It is estimated that the total food subsidy cost for Syrians, excluding those in camps, amounted to around JD 54.3 million in 2015.⁵⁶¹ World Food Programme (WFP) food cuts in September 2015 resulted in the number of refugees returning to Syria from Jordan to double because of the increased difficulty of living in Jordan.⁵⁶² These food cuts also caused a great migration of refugees to leave Jordan to seek asylum in the EU. In addition, the increased demand for property has led to augmented rental prices and subsequently, a rise in homelessness. There is an estimated need for an additional 120,000 housing units to accommodate Syrian refugees since 2012.⁵⁶³ The competition for decent, affordable housing has become one of the leading sources of conflict and has led to the worsening of Jordanian sentiments towards Syrian refugees within host communities.

The effect of the Syrian refugee crisis on the water infrastructure is of utmost concern to the Jordanian people. The crisis has put increased pressure on the already limited sewage and communal waste systems, which are only available to roughly 62 percent of the Jordanian population.⁵⁶⁴ In addition, the amount and frequency of delivery of water to households has decreased and many people are forced to supplement their water supply by purchasing additional water. Most critically, poor water infrastructure and broken pipes wastes already limited water sources. The amount of water lost nation-wide each year could satisfy the needs of 2.6 million people.⁵⁶⁵ This brings attention to the environmental effects of the refugees on the host communities and the urgent need to improve water infrastructure by fixing broken pipes and limiting water theft. These environmental impacts will affect the long-term livelihood opportunities of both refugees and host communities.

Another drastic impact on the Jordanian economy is the increasing cost and dependency on imported energy. The cost of imported energy has increased from US\$2.67 billion in 2009 to US\$5.64 billion in 2014.⁵⁶⁶ According to the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR), 17 percent of the losses incurred by the National Electricity Power Company (NEPCO) are attributed to the hosting of Syrian refugees. It is important to note that Jordan's energy crisis is not a direct result of hosting refugees, but rather a result of decreased access to natural gas imports from Egypt.⁵⁶⁷ Municipalities lack sufficient capacity and funding to provide essential services for the rapidly growing population. The arrival of the refugees has created an urgent need for new roads, expanded electricity infrastructure, and waste collection systems.

Unemployment is the most critical issue facing Jordanians and Syrian refugees living in the northern governorates. As the Syrian civil war continues, even the most well-off Syrians are

running out of ways to support themselves and are forced to take jobs working in the informal sector. Previously, the state's solution to the Syrian employment problem was to tighten restrictions on refugee labor, which is justified by the claim that Jordanian nationals need the jobs. The overarching fear among Jordanians is that since, "the Jordanian economy is characterized by small, informal enterprises, [sic] Syrian refugees will, over time, develop more contacts and relationships with Jordanian employers in host communities, and progressively encroach on the informal employment sector".⁵⁶⁸ Many Syrians are working in the informal sector doing jobs that are unattractive to middle and upper class Jordanians. The unregulated work of Syrians places downward pressure on wages through competition with other migrant workers and poor Jordanians, which threatens to intensify the degree of poverty among the 14.4 percent of Jordanian whose household incomes already place them below the official poverty line.⁵⁶⁹

According to Jordanian law, Syrians, like any other nationality, are allowed to apply for work permits in specific sectors. Despite this, Syrians have received less than 6,000 work permits out of more than 620,000 refugees registered and approximately 1.4 million total Syrians living in Jordan.⁵⁷⁰ Applying for a work visa involves the difficult and expensive process of finding an employer sponsor. The rest of the Syrian workers are forced to work illegally, driving down wages and saturating the informal labor market, which makes up 44 percent of Jordan's domestic businesses.⁵⁷¹ Although the government has been mostly tolerant towards informal Syrian labor, some Syrians have been imprisoned, fined, and forced back into camps.⁵⁷² The incentives for Jordanian employers to hire Syrians is low due to the possibility of being fined or shut down. In addition, organizations working to provide vocational training to refugees for income generation have experienced difficulty in receiving aid and permits from the government. As work becomes increasingly difficult to find and pay is decreased, many families are forced to depend on their children for income: an estimated 30,000 Syrian children are working in the informal sector.⁵⁷³ As long as Syrians are forced to sustain themselves by working in the informal sector, workers will be vulnerable to abuse, unfair treatment, and oppressive work environments.

The Syrian population in general places great value on productive work; the lack of opportunity and hopelessness of life within the refugee camps leads many to leave Azraq and Za'atari in search of a better life. A research study published by Care International assessed the demand for work within Azraq refugee camp in April 2014. The camp residents have very little to occupy their time outside of daily errands and household activities. A recent program implemented within Azraq provides around 440 skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled positions to the camp population for a population of 20,000 refugees.⁵⁷⁴ This program called the Incentive-based Volunteering Scheme or IBV, was created in response to the poor conditions in Za'atari, and focuses on providing opportunities within the camp for mainly unskilled and semi-skilled physical work. The study found that most youth participants, 45 percent of camp residents, come from families with entrepreneurial involvement in the Syrian economy and possess at least one vocational skill such as metalworking, carpentry, painting, or farming.⁵⁷⁵ As of now, the scheme allows Syrians to work within the camp, but does not provide wages. The scheme allows for improvements in quality of life, but does not allow refugees to provide financially for their families or replenish savings depleted by the war.

On 7 February 2016, the Jordanian government published a comprehensive national response to the Syrian crisis, with the primary goal of turning the crisis into an opportunity for development. The Jordan Response Plan 2016-2018 (JRP16-18) provides a three-year vision to ensure that humanitarian interventions are better integrated, sequenced, and completed. Any UN agency or registered organization is able to implement the JRP 16-18 projects. The total cost for

response interventions is \$7,987,632,501 for three years: US\$ 2,482,123,101 is required for refugee interventions, US\$ 2,304,180,602 for resilience strengthening in the host communities, and US\$ 3,201,328,798 for budget support needs.⁵⁷⁶ The plan seeks to meet the humanitarian needs of Syrian refugees and of the Jordanian population impacted by the crisis, while striving to foster economic resilience and effectiveness of Jordan's service delivery system in the areas of education, energy, health, justice, municipal services, social protection, water, and sanitation.⁵⁷⁷ Last year, the JRP 15 was only 23 percent funded, leaving many of its initiatives unfulfilled.⁵⁷⁸

Conclusion

On 4 February 2016, the UK, Germany, Norway and the United Nations co-hosted a conference in London and raised US\$11 billion in pledges: \$5.8 billion for 2016 and \$5.4 billion for years 2017-20 to prepare sustainable solutions to the Syrian refugee crisis.⁵⁷⁹ Thus far, the U.S. has pledged roughly \$62 million for the 2016 fiscal year, resulting in a new total of \$730 million in aid provided by the U.S. government since 2012.⁵⁸⁰ The U.S. has directed funding towards implementing security measures for non-camp refugees through documentation and registration. The funding will also provide for humanitarian needs, food vouchers, education, maternal and child health care, psychological support and rehabilitation of inadequate shelters.⁵⁸¹ Even with this funding, the UNHCR budget as well as the Jordan Response Plan 2016-2018 are severely underfunded. 2015 was the fourth consecutive year in which two-thirds of the need for the JRP remained unfunded.⁵⁸² According to the UNHCR, there is a deficit of 56% in finances needed to support the 640,000 refugees living in Jordan in 2015.⁵⁸³ Although the weight of this fiscal gap cannot fall exclusively on the United States, it must use its political leverage to engage and motivate the Gulf States and other international actors to participate in the international humanitarian response in the region. The U.S., specifically, must follow through on pledges for humanitarian aid and hold other members of the international community accountable.

Jordan must shift from a short-term emergency response to a long-term sustainable approach to foster community resilience. Jordan has the capability to turn the refugee crisis into a development opportunity, with the help of international investment and organizational solidarity. This can be done through an effective, cooperative response across Jordan that provides protection for rights and livelihoods of refugees, while channeling financial resources into opportunities for development. Jordan will be able to rebuild trust within its host communities through adequate funding allocated in the Jordan Response Plan 2016-2018. The international community must recognize and fund Jordan's own initiatives for long-term integration that benefit both the host communities and the refugees. Jordanians need to see that the international community is not prioritizing the needs of the refugees at detriment to the communities hosting them. If host-community tensions and donor fatigue increase in tandem, Jordan will likely continue to erode the protection space for Syrian refugees.⁵⁸⁴ Further marginalizing the refugee population due to Jordanian discontent, will only exacerbate Jordan's long-term problems and worsen the situation for Syrians.

The UNHCR and affiliated NGOs must work closely with the Jordanian government to ensure that the endemic national issues including pervasive resource, economic, and governance challenges are addressed while simultaneously improving conditions for Syrians living within the country. Implementing targeted aid programs can strengthen local systems of governance and will leave municipalities more effective in service provision than before the Syrian crisis. This is only possible through a unified response of NGOs, the private sector, local communities, and the

Jordanian government to better implement JRP 16-18 projects. The international community must stand in solidarity to pursue the transition from emergency, through recovery, towards long-term economic sustainability and community resilience.

Investment by the U.S. and Gulf States in Jordan's sustainable water projects and infrastructure would proactively improve stability and security in the region. Investment in new water infrastructure must be seen as a means of investing in peace, stability, and sustainability in the region. In addition, building infrastructure, implementing sustainable energy projects, and replacing water systems will create more skilled and unskilled jobs for both Syrians and Jordanians. Formalizing the employment sector will increase access to livelihoods, which will strengthen the Jordanian economy and allow Syrians to be self-sustaining. One aspect of formalizing the Syrian labor force is utilizing the strengths and skills of the Syrian population to the benefit of the Jordanian economy. There must be coordination with local businesses and communities to assess economic growth opportunities to ensure that refugees and host communities benefit from the opening of the market within refugee camps and Jordanian cities.

The international community should invest in Jordan's strength: the potential for a knowledge driven economy. Because Jordan lacks significantly in natural resources, the country must capitalize on other economic potential, such as higher education. The primary way to fight systemic issues is through educating the Jordanian population by improving access and incentives for higher education. International funding should be allocated to scholarships and grants for higher education, made available to Jordanians and Syrians equally. Sending more young people to university will encourage innovation, leadership, and development of the region as a whole. International grants for higher education will improve and grow Jordanian universities, while also preparing the next generation of Syrian leaders for the rebuilding of their nation.

Lastly, the international community cannot force Jordan to take more refugees and provide for the increasing number of refugees held on the border of Syria and Jordan without also offering to resettle more refugees within third countries of resettlement. Although third country resettlement will not solve the refugee crisis alone, Jordan and its neighbors need a proportional response from more countries through accepting more refugees, at a faster rate.

The Syrian refugee crisis has reached a critical moment. Jordan and the international community must shift towards long-term sustainable development, rather than emergency responses. Jordan requires the support and investment from donor nations in order to confront the systemic issues restricting economic growth, while simultaneously providing for its most vulnerable population. Poor Jordanians have borne the weight of the Syrian refugee crisis, as workers are forced to work for lower wages while paying more for basic goods and competing for limited government resources. The Syrian crisis has exacerbated inequality between the elite and the vulnerable populations. In the last year, Jordan has witnessed increased vocalization of these issues by marginalized Jordanians, leaving Jordan in political turmoil in response to the refugee influx. Presently, Jordan has chosen to mitigate host-community tensions in the short term instead of instituting policy responses that will affect the country's economic and security challenges in the long-term. International support is integral to incentivize Jordan to provide for the Syrian population while improving its national political and economic challenges.

Policy Recommendations

- Direct increased international funding including the pledges made in the London Conference 2016, to address Jordan's national challenges through shifting from a short-

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

term emergency response to long-term development opportunity. Target aid with solidarity with civil society, NGOs, international actors, and Jordanian government to implement development projects in line with the Jordan Response Plan 2016-18.

- Engage and incentivize international community, specifically the Gulf States, to invest in water infrastructure and formalized labor opportunities for Syrian refugees as a means to promote security in the Middle East region.
- Allocate funding, in the form of scholarship grants, directly to Jordanian Universities to expand the knowledge economy in Jordan to benefit the future of both the Syrian population and Jordanian institutions

Security and Socio-economic Concerns in Local Integration for Lebanon

Paritt Nguikaramahawongse

Like Syria's other neighbors, Jordan and Turkey, Lebanon has been greatly affected by the massive influx of Syrian refugees within its borders. Ever since the beginning of the Syrian civil war in 2011, over 1.2 million UNHCR registered Syrian refugees have arrived in Lebanon⁵⁸⁵. That number increases to over 1.8 million refugees if those not registered with the UNHCR are taken into account. Considering that Lebanon only has a small population of 4.5 million individuals, Syrian refugees now account for roughly 25 percent of the population, or one out of every four people. To illustrate how grave the refugee situation in Lebanon is, consider the fact that the number of refugees that arrived in Europe in 2015 was a bit over one million. In 2014, that number was significantly less at 280,000⁵⁸⁶. Even with over 500 million native residents in the European Union alone, the arrival of less than 2 million refugees has caused widespread social panic and political disputes as member states argue over how best to integrate the refugees or whether or not they should be admitted at all. As the European states bicker, Lebanon continues to shoulder the burden integrating a disproportionately large amount of refugees into a tiny country.

The arrival of such a large number of Syrian refugees into Lebanon has had widespread consequences for the small country. The presence of the refugees, most of whom are Sunni Muslims, has exacerbated tensions within Lebanon's characteristic sectarian divide of Sunnis, Shiites, and Christians. Their numbers have also strained the country's already precarious economy, depressing wages and threatening the employment prospects of Lebanese job seekers. In addition to this, the capacity of the country's poorly managed and underfunded infrastructure has been stretched thin due to the burden of servicing almost an additional two million individuals. All of these problems have in turn discouraged the Lebanese government from implementing measures that will positively impact the livelihood of refugees, for fear of angering the local population and to prevent the newcomers from permanently settling down within the country.

As a major advocate of human rights and the country most adequately equipped to provide much needed assistance in the current refugee crisis, the United States must do more to improve the refugee situation within Lebanon and the other two local countries of integration, Jordan and Turkey. The United States should not only provide additional funding and humanitarian assistance, but also commit to resettle more refugees within its own borders in order to alleviate the burden placed on Syria's overwhelmed neighbors.

Palestinian Refugees and Lebanon's Sectarian Divide

In order to envision how the attempt to integrate Syrian refugees into Lebanon will play out, it is useful to first examine the history of Lebanon's other refugee population: Palestinian refugees that fled the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, and their descendants. While the refugee population in Lebanon today is mostly comprised of Syrians, there are also over 450,000 refugees of Palestinian descent within the country⁵⁸⁷. Though these Palestinian refugees have been in Lebanon for over 60 years, they have not been integrated, are still confined in camps, and are not allowed to work or own property.

The reason for Lebanon's harsh restrictions on Palestinian refugees is mainly due to the country's concerns over its sectarian balance⁵⁸⁸. While no official census of Lebanon's demographics has been conducted since 1932, the population is thought to be mainly comprised of Christians, Sunnis, and Shia Muslims⁵⁸⁹. Historical tensions between the country's three main religious groups have been significant, and this delicate balance has long shaped Lebanon's society and politics. Palestinians are seen by the government as a threat to this divide since they mostly consist of Sunni Muslims, and their integration could have upset the country's longstanding sectarian balance. As such, measures were imposed by the Lebanese government to prevent them from being included in Lebanon's domestic population.

The treatment of the Palestinian refugee population in Lebanon does not bode well for Syrian refugees within the country. This is mainly because what is happening in Lebanon now is reminiscent of what occurred with the Palestinian refugees 60 years prior, albeit on a much larger scale. Syrian refugees, mainly composed of Sunni Muslims like their Palestinian counterparts, now make up a quarter of the population in the country, and as such their integration could pose a major threat to Lebanon's delicate sectarian balance.

Legal Framework

Despite its large refugee population, Lebanon is not party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 Protocol due to its opposition to the resettlement of Palestinians⁵⁹⁰. However, the country is still obliged to uphold the rights of refugees due to their participation in a number of other human rights treaties such as the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the 1984 Convention Against Torture, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Arab Charter of Human Rights⁵⁹¹.

While Lebanon may not be party to the 1951 Convention or its 1967 Protocol, the country had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the UNHCR in 2003 as a means to potentially narrow the gap between Lebanon's domestic legal framework for refugees and international standards for asylum. While the MOU states that Lebanon does not consider itself an asylum country and will not permanently host refugees, it does allow for temporary humanitarian assistance to be provided and lets the UNHCR assume the role of managing the everyday refugee situation in the country. Under the MOU, the UNHCR must determine the refugee status of an asylum seeker within 3 months of registration and resettle them in a third country within a year. In practice, however, the entire process usually takes much longer than the allotted 12 months – with third country resettlement often being impossible⁵⁹². Though the MOU is only a partial reconciliation, it did prove to be an important milestone for Lebanon's refugee system since it is the first time in which Lebanon formally recognized the right of refugees whose lives and freedom are in danger, to remain in Lebanon⁵⁹³.

In terms of domestic law, Lebanon does not have a legal framework concerning the handling of refugees and does not make a legal distinction between Syrian refugees and other types of immigrants⁵⁹⁴. All foreigners, including refugees, fall within the purview of the country's 1962 Law Regulating the Entry, Stay, and Exit from Lebanon⁵⁹⁵. A number of articles within this law point to rights granted to refugees. For one, Article 26 states that “any foreign national who is the subject of a prosecution or a conviction by an authority that is not Lebanese, for a political crime, or whose life or freedom is threatened, also for political reasons, may request political asylum in Lebanon”⁵⁹⁶.

Non-refoulement

Lebanon's 1962 Entry and Exit law also has an article concerning the issue of non-refoulement. Article 31 states that a former political refugee "may not be removed to the territory of a country where his or her life or freedom is threatened"⁵⁹⁷. The country has also acknowledged that refugees recognized by the UNHCR would not be returned. Despite all of these protections, they may in reality have limited effect on the current crisis since the government of Lebanon has claimed that the Syrian refugee crisis is not governed by the 1962 law. Ultimately, discretion concerning the return of Syrian refugees rests entirely in the hands of the government, whose official policy may change at any time.

Despite the 1962 law not being recognized by the government of Lebanon regarding the current refugee crisis, deportations have occurred only in isolated instances, and the overall actions of the government indicate that they have largely lived up to their promises. However, two major cases of deportations have occurred due to the government's refusal to formally recognize the principle of non-refoulement. The first instance was when the Lebanese government deported fourteen Syrian refugees in August 2012⁵⁹⁸. The reason for their deportation, according to a Lebanese official, was due to them having committed crimes – though such crimes were not specified – and not because they were political activists fleeing persecution⁵⁹⁹. The second instance occurred in early January 2016 when Lebanese authorities deported more than 100 Syrians that had arrived at Beirut airport en route to Turkey. The reason for the deportation was due to Turkey having passed a new regulation that required Syrians to have a visa in order to enter the country by air or sea⁶⁰⁰.

While these two cases of deportations were significant setbacks to the enforcement of the principle of non-refoulement, they do not represent a systematic procedure on the part of Beirut to send Syrian refugees back into their war-torn country. Even so, in order to ensure that such cases do not occur in the future, the government of Lebanon must make the principle of non-refoulement legally binding. Failure to do so effectively causes all unregistered Syrian asylum seekers within the country to become perpetually at risk of deportation. Placing the sole discretion to deport refugees in the hands of the Lebanese government paves the way for the practice to become potentially systemized in the future.

Entry Policy for Refugees

Since the start of the Syrian refugee crisis, Lebanon has officially maintained an open-door policy by allowing Syrians to enter by just showing their identification cards⁶⁰¹. However, the large number of refugees that have arrived in the country has prompted officials to amend the policy to now require additional Syrian refugees wishing to enter to justify the purpose of their visit⁶⁰². They can now only enter for work, for onward travel, or for tourism, effectively barring Syrians from entering Lebanon solely on a humanitarian basis⁶⁰³. As a result, the border is now considered 'de-facto' closed for people fleeing violence who are wishing to enter Lebanon⁶⁰⁴.

Social and Security Concerns

Lebanon's Sectarian Divide

As mentioned before, Lebanon's primary concern when it comes to the integration of its refugee population has to do with the country's delicate sectarian balance between Christians, Sunnis, and Shia Muslims. This concern has extensively affected its longstanding Palestinian refugee population, as they continue to be confined in camps and barred from working or owning property. These same prospects, with the exception of being kept in camps, face arriving Syrian refugees as the government has resisted concrete steps towards integration due to a fear of skewing the country's sectarian balance.

Concerns about upsetting this balance have led the government to implement measures aimed at protecting domestic Lebanese economic interests by barring Syrians from acquiring work. The reasoning behind this move is that a massive influx of Sunni Syrians into the Lebanese workforce would exacerbate sectarian tensions due to Lebanon's already strained economy and high unemployment rate.

Hezbollah

Hezbollah has been openly involved in Syria since 2013 and has steadily committed troops into the country to battle forces opposed to President Bashar al-Assad. Support for Assad by the Shiite Lebanese party is largely due to their longstanding alliance in what is known as the Iran-led Axis of Resistance⁶⁰⁵. This Axis of Resistance includes both the Assad regime and the Lebanese Hezbollah, as well as other Shiite groups within the Middle East⁶⁰⁶. Assad's Syria has proven itself to be integral to Hezbollah as it acts as the main conduit with which Iranian supplies flow through to Lebanon. Since Hezbollah's 2006 war with Israel, Iran and Syria have also provided the group with sophisticated military equipment and weaponry. In addition, the Assad regime has also proven to be a safe haven for Hezbollah's training camps and weapons storage⁶⁰⁷. The main consequences for Hezbollah if Assad's Syria were to fall would be the demise of one of the group's staunchest allies and increased difficulty in the transfer of much needed financial and military assistance from Iran.

Hezbollah's deepening involvement in Syria has had major social and political repercussions back in Lebanon. Opposition of the group's involvement is unsurprisingly most evident among Lebanon's Sunni population, which has viewed Hezbollah's role in Syria as choosing sides in sectarian conflict, killing fellow Muslims, and straying from its primary goal of resistance in Israel⁶⁰⁸. Salafism – a radical version of Sunni Islam – and support for al-Qaeda linked groups have increased in Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps, especially in the Ein el-Hilweh camp⁶⁰⁹. In Tripoli, Lebanon's second largest city, Sunni militias aligned with Syrian rebels often clash with Alawites sympathetic to Bashar al-Assad⁶¹⁰.

More direct attacks have also occurred against Hezbollah and its Shiite support base in Lebanon. Among a number of attacks aimed at the group, the largest occurred in May 2013 when a car bomb detonated in a Hezbollah neighborhood in southern Beirut killing 18 people and wounding almost 300 more. The Bekaa Valley, which is home to a number of Hezbollah strongholds, has also seen an increase in tit-for-tat violence between Shiite and Sunni areas in the last 12 months⁶¹¹.

While Hezbollah's involvement in Syria may not have immediate repercussions for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, it has exacerbated sectarian tensions that have long been part of the country's history. The increasing radicalization among Lebanon's Sunni community and the opposition they have expressed towards Hezbollah's activities in Syria, coupled with increasing

sectarian violence, may exacerbate the Lebanese government's already reluctant stance towards integrating the mostly Sunni Syrian refugees into the country.

Refugee Shelter and the “No-Camp” Policy

Another policy that has led to inflamed tensions among Lebanon's sectarian divide is the government's official “no-camp” policy, which restricts the formation of large-scale refugee camps for Syrian refugees⁶¹². The reasoning behind the no-camp policy stems from the increasing permanency of the twelve Palestinian refugee camps already existing within Lebanon, all of which are plagued with numerous problems such as overcrowding, lack of adequate infrastructure, and poor housing conditions⁶¹³.

However, such a policy, in its attempt to avoid the same problems that have plagued Palestinian camps, fails to consider that the alternative of housing such a large number of Syrian refugees among its domestic population might be unsustainable and exacerbate sectarian tensions. The sheer number of Syrian refugees that have arrived coupled with the limited availability of land and the country's already strained infrastructure, has revealed the ineffectiveness of such a policy and negatively affected the livelihood of the refugees themselves. The housing options available to Syrian refugees have thus far been limited to: renting housing for the fortunate few, squatting in one of the UNRWA's twelve camps for Palestinian refugees, residing in informal tented settlements, or living with local hosts, all of which still fail to meet the housing needs for the refugees⁶¹⁴. The influx of refugees into Lebanon's housing market has also caused rent prices to skyrocket and landlords to exploit vulnerable individuals in need of a place to stay⁶¹⁵.

Nearly half of the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon lives in non-traditional shelters such as empty stores, parking lots, on the margins of agricultural fields, and in predominantly Shiite areas like the Bekaa Valley⁶¹⁶. Almost 9 out of 10 refugees live in one of 251 locations, which are some of the poorest neighborhoods in Lebanon⁶¹⁷. Beirut, Lebanon's capital city, is filled with homeless Syrians and young refugees begging and selling insignificant merchandise such as flowers and tissues. The city reports that petty crime has been up by 60 percent and that Lebanon's prison population now consists of Syrians who were arrested for robbery or working illegally⁶¹⁸. Furthermore, having such large numbers of refugees live in Lebanon's cities and towns has put considerable pressure on the country's already strained infrastructure including sanitation, water, electricity, and education⁶¹⁹.

Backlash against Syrian refugees by the local population has also occurred. Violent attacks against refugees, including with guns and knives, have increasingly occurred as the spillover from Syria's civil war has caused some residents to view refugees as security threats, partly due to fears that some of the refugees may be part of ISIL's sleeper cells within the country⁶²⁰. Some municipalities in Lebanon have also introduced curfews on refugees⁶²¹. Human Rights Watch documented 11 violent attacks against Syrians and those perceived to be Syrians in August and September 2014. All those attacked were targeted because of their Syrian nationality, perceived or not⁶²².

In light of the widespread problems that characterize refugee settlements in Lebanon, a number of actors, including the country's health minister, have advocated for the creation of camps as the only viable solution for the current housing shortage for refugees⁶²³. While the government has so far stuck to its “no-camp” policy, it has to an extent tolerated the formation of small informal camps for the refugees to live in. It is estimated that roughly ten percent of the refugees live in these settlements throughout the country. The UNHCR, for one, is pushing to set

up these small-scale temporary settlements as a short-term solution for the lack of refugee housing, though the Lebanese government has so far resisted the effort. Other organizations have also attempted to tackle the problem through more innovative means. Box shelters, small plywood shelters built on a concrete foundation, have been introduced by the Danish Refugee Council. Unfortunately, they have also been banned by the Lebanese government because they seem too permanent and could potentially encourage refugees to stay⁶²⁴.

While Beirut's resistance to the formation of formal refugee camps is understandable due to the permanency of the existing camps for Palestinian refugees, the massive influx of Syrian refugees into the country leaves it with little alternative. There is an acute lack of housing for Syrian refugees within the country and the absence of camps has increasingly forced refugees to reside in informal locations characterized by squalid conditions and the absence of security. The presence of such a large number of Syrians in close proximity with the local Lebanese population has also led to increased tensions between the two groups as the latter perceives their new neighbors not just as security threats but also threats to their economic wellbeing. Despite their potential for permanency, the creation of formal settlements seems to be the only viable option left since the overwhelmingly large number of Syrian refugees currently residing within Lebanon has exposed numerous problems in Beirut's current policy to house them. The creation of additional settlements will help to address the dangerous conditions that refugees now face, living in abandoned lots and empty fields, and help to isolate the large number of refugees from the local Lebanese community in order to mitigate tensions.

Economic Concerns

Employment

There is also a severe lack of economic opportunity for Syrian refugees that have fled to Lebanon. Refugees that hope to stay in Lebanon must apply for a \$200 annually renewable residence permit which comes with an agreement that bars them from being legally employed in Lebanon. The reason for imposing such a restriction on the earning power of refugees is simply due to Lebanon's already poor economic health. A large portion of Lebanon's jobs is in low-productivity sectors such as construction and trade. In addition, high-productivity sectors such as telecommunications and transportation have experienced a decline in labor demand. Presently, it is estimated that 51 percent of Lebanon's jobs are found in the service sector, 20 percent in trade, and the rest in construction and agriculture⁶²⁵. Over the past decade, poverty among Lebanon's domestic population has increased by two-thirds and unemployment has also doubled to 24 percent (that rate is 35 percent among youths)⁶²⁶.

Despite efforts by relief organizations and NGOs to provide Syrian refugees with vocational training, the government of Lebanon has stressed that with already high unemployment rates, it is politically inconceivable for refugees to receive such support since it threatens the competitiveness of Lebanese job seekers⁶²⁷. The government has so far resisted expanding such programs for the refugees, claiming that the oversaturation of Lebanon's labor market will only cause these programs to generate increased social tension. Lebanese law states that individuals who work without a permit are sentenced to at least one month in prison and must pay fines. However, the law does not create much of a deterrent, as illegal jobs remain necessary for the survival of many refugee families⁶²⁸.

The inability for the refugees to earn income has caused their quality of life to deteriorate. In 2015, 70 percent of Syrian refugees lived below the Lebanese extreme poverty line, an increase from 46 percent in 2014⁶²⁹. This restriction on employment has led refugees to become increasingly dependent on illegal jobs and caused food insecurity to mount. Moderate food insecurity has doubled from 12 to 23 percent of refugee households, with 65 percent classified as mildly food insecure⁶³⁰. Refugees have become increasingly dependent on food vouchers and loans as their primary source of livelihood.

While increase in unemployment and job competition with refugees vary from region to region, the agriculture and construction sector have been most affected by the refugee influx.⁶³¹ To reiterate, Lebanon's agriculture and construction sector together comprises almost 30 percent of all available jobs. However, the agricultural sector also faces difficulties in absorbing the increased supply of unskilled labor due to the limited availability of land and the lack of infrastructure. Since both the construction and agriculture sectors employ mostly low-skilled workers, the competition among Syrian refugees has caused already vulnerable people to become increasingly affected. Lebanese households have increasingly relied on diminishing savings and reducing expenditures to respond to the declining wages. Some households have been forced to sell property and other liquid assets in order to compensate⁶³².

An increase in international funding and the provision of humanitarian assistance to Lebanon's refugee situation is the most direct method of improving the livelihood of Syrian refugees within the country. However, any aid that enters the country must also have a portion set aside to address the needs of the local population. Doing so would help mitigate potential tensions that may form among the Lebanese due to perceived injustices resulting from aid only being directed towards the refugees. International investments into the Lebanese economy would help in raising employment prospects for the local Lebanese population which in turn may translate to the relaxation of restrictions placed on the ability of the refugees to generate income. Facilitating economic stability within the country would also help to prevent negative views and tensions directed towards Syrian refugees from forming as the improvements to the livelihood of the local population could help to alleviate perceived injustices.

Furthermore, reducing or entirely eliminating the cost of the refugees' residence permits is also strongly encouraged. Coupled with the limited means to generate income within Lebanon, the \$200 annual cost for the residence permit is very hard for Syrian refugees to afford. Inability to pay for the permit effectively makes refugees illegal residents and as such puts them at risk of becoming detained by law enforcement and potentially deported.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure was an issue for Lebanon long before the Syrian refugee crisis and problems relating to it impeded development within the country and strained government revenues. The country's electricity, water, and waste management sectors have consistently been unable to meet demands. The electricity sector, for one, was only able to respond to roughly 60 percent of demand⁶³³. Provision of drinkable water was able to reach almost 80 percent of the population before the conflict, though shortages were common throughout most of the day and in many areas private water providers had to step in to compensate for such shortages. For wastewater, while the network covered 60 percent of Lebanon, only 8 percent of the water was treated⁶³⁴.

Due to the influx of refugees, Lebanon's infrastructure has become even more strained than it was before. The increased demand for drinkable water has reduced water supply by seven

percent⁶³⁵. The same has also affected the country's ability to provide electricity, and daily electric supply is expected to drop by ten percent nationwide⁶³⁶.

Conclusion

The Syrian refugee crisis has significantly affected Lebanon. The arrival of over a million and a half mostly Sunni Syrian refugees has drastically increased Lebanon's population and skewed the country's delicate sectarian balance. The massive number of refugees has also put additional pressure on the country's already strained economy and its poorly-managed and underfunded infrastructure. The problems that have been caused or aggravated by the addition of Syrians to Lebanon's population have in turn negatively affected the wellbeing of the Syrians themselves, as the Lebanese government imposes policies that discourage their stay and resists implementing measures that will improve their livelihood. In areas where public perception of refugees is negative, social backlash has also been experienced.

By examining the present situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, a group that has been in the country for over 60 years, it becomes clear that future prospects for Syrian refugees remain grim. With the end of the Syrian conflict nowhere in sight, repatriation impossible, and resettlement unlikely, Syrian refugees in Lebanon face a daunting and uncertain path forward. If additional measures aimed at improving the lives of Syrian refugees within the country are not implemented, they face becoming more like their Palestinian counterparts: isolated, disillusioned, and unable to effectively support themselves and thrive.

Policy Recommendations

Overall policy recommendations must allow refugees to acquire a steady source of income while protecting the Lebanese labor market and preventing, or at least containing, tensions within the local population. In addition to the goal of providing humanitarian assistance to the refugees, recommendations must also address Lebanon's national security and incorporate incentives for the Lebanese government to adjust policy to benefit refugees.

- Increase international funding and humanitarian assistance to Lebanon's refugee situation and encourage investments in Lebanon's economy while keeping in mind that a significant portion of aid must be set aside to address the needs of the local Lebanese population.
- Establish additional settlements in order to address the shortage in refugee housing and the numerous gaps present in Beirut's current strategy to house Syrian refugees.
- Encourage the government of Lebanon to either formally recognize the 1962 Law Regulating the Entry, Stay, and Exit from Lebanon with regards to the current Syrian refugee crisis or make the principle of non-refoulement legally binding.
- Reduce or entirely eliminate the cost of the refugees' residence permits.



The Italian Coastguard/Massimo Sestini 1

Section Three

Third Countries of Resettlement

Introduction

The international community has failed to adequately respond to the displacement of people caused by the Syrian civil war. Indeed, multi-million dollar human trafficking and smuggling operations are being conducted in the Mediterranean and Aegean seas, strong anti-refugee sentiments are rising in Europe and the United States, record numbers of refugees are dying along the route to safety, and tens of thousands of Syrians are stuck within the Syrian-Turkish border. The lackluster response by the international community is in part due to the lack of cooperation and preparedness of the European Union and the United States to accept refugees seeking resettlement. Neither the EU nor U.S. was adequately prepared to resettle the tens of thousands of Syrians seeking asylum in recent years.

To respond to such a high level of refugees, new policies must be swiftly implemented by the EU and U.S. An improvement in EU resettlement procedures will provide refugees with swift and fair asylum status determination, reducing the risk and cost for Syrian refugees seeking asylum in Europe. The Common European Asylum System must be adjusted to provide legal travel for refugees into Europe and reinforce the clauses of human rights treaties, such as the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the Geneva Convention. The EU must improve the efficiency of the admissions process via provision of economic advancement and security to both refugees and European Union member states. The United States must also improve its Syrian refugee admission process and live up to its role as a world leader. To this end, the United States should look to increase its Syrian refugee quota and implement modifications that maintain security standards and expedite the refugee admission process.

There are major security concerns held by the United States and European Union complicating possible resettlement in the third countries. Amid the growing ISIL movement and its global network, refugees from the region may have alleged links to terrorist organizations. The attacks in San Bernardino and Paris have shocked the world and created fear towards people that identify with radical Islam. However, the innocent people leaving the region due to the Syrian civil and ongoing violence are looking for safety are only met with more barriers. To accommodate the needs of desperate Syrians looking for temporary or permanent asylum as well as the security concerns of the third countries of resettlement, appropriate protocol must be established. By creating an efficient resettlement process, the possibility of effectively aiding the crisis can become a reality.

Third countries of resettlement must also provide language and culture education programs for refugees to ensure successful long-term integration. Germany, for example, should take advantage of its leadership role in Europe by revamping its integration processes with anti-discrimination policies and increased intercultural public dialogue. Creating an environment where refugees can successfully integrate is a positive response to the ongoing refugee crisis which can also be beneficial to host nations by encouraging a more diverse, inclusive national dialogue. As the situation remains at an urgent level, the third countries of resettlement must respond due to their ability to receive and also protect asylum seekers financially.

By taking specific steps in order to facilitate the asylum admissions process and enhancing integration programs, third countries of resettlement will benefit from refugees' contributions to their economies and an increased solidarity among a currently divided international community.

Securing strong and appropriate rights for refugees will allow refugees to create a stronger association with each host nation. The opportunity for personal development that follows will ensure a stable foundation where refugees can then progressively restore social and economic independence in order to rebuild their lives.

The international involvement of the refugee crisis has garnered a response from nearly each major state and remains one of the foremost international humanitarian priorities. Multiple layers to the situation require different methods of analysis and approaches towards finding different solutions. Resources the United States and Europe share which can aid the situation must be maximized to the fullest extent, from the policies dealing with international factors to those addressing domestic factors.

EU: Common European Asylum System

Jennifer Ryder

The Common European Asylum System (CEAS) was first drafted in 1999 as a framework to streamline the procedure for processing and accepting asylum seekers across all EU Member States.⁶³⁷ It consists of several legal directives that bind all EU states to the same asylum procedure while also promoting fair distribution of asylum seekers and the social and financial burdens this entails to all states. All of the directives were updated in 2013 to better handle the influx of refugees from the Middle East and North Africa that began in 2011.⁶³⁸ However, in 2015 EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker decided that due to the increasing number of deaths of migrants en route to the EU and at its borders, more action was necessary.⁶³⁹ On June 5, 2015, the European Commission published “A European Agenda on Migration,” which established a ten-point plan for immediate action to address faults in the Common European Asylum System that were allowing the influx of Syrian migrants to become a human rights crisis.⁶⁴⁰ Since June, the European Commission and EU member states have either started or completed many of these steps – such as providing special aid to Greece and Italy and triggering an emergency relocation scheme.⁶⁴¹ While this is a move in the right direction, it has proven to be inadequate regarding the prevention of migrant deaths, processing asylum applications quickly and fairly, supporting member states who are struggling financially under the strain, and promoting assimilation and tolerance among newcomers and native Europeans. This chapter will briefly describe the existing CEAS and European Agenda on Migration and the progress that has been made since the European Agenda on Migration. In addition, it will outline three steps the EU should take to address areas where these pieces of legislation are still falling short, and establish a lasting solution for future crises. Lastly, it will describe several ways the United States can support Europe in taking these steps.

Legal Structure of the CEAS

The existing CEAS is organized into several directives. The Asylum Procedures Directive outlines clear steps for processing asylum seekers, the rights they have during the process, and what happens if they are not admitted.⁶⁴² The Reception Conditions Directive outlines what material provisions must be provided to asylum seekers while they are waiting to be processed.⁶⁴³ The Qualification Directive states the criteria for granting someone refugee status in the EU, and what disqualifies them from being eligible.⁶⁴⁴ The Eurodac Regulation set up an EU wide fingerprinting system which documents all asylum seekers and their country of first entry.⁶⁴⁵ Lastly, and arguably most importantly, the Dublin III Regulation assigns responsibility for granting asylum to the country where the refugee is first fingerprinted.⁶⁴⁶ The process, as outlined in the Asylum Procedure directive, begins when a refugee arrives at the border of the EU. They are fingerprinted by national border control agents, and the prints are entered into Eurodac so that they are available to authorities across the EU. The country where they are fingerprinted is thus considered the country responsible for processing and accepting or rejecting their application for asylum⁶⁴⁷. As dictated by the Reception Conditions Directive, asylum seekers should be provided, “certain material reception conditions, in particular

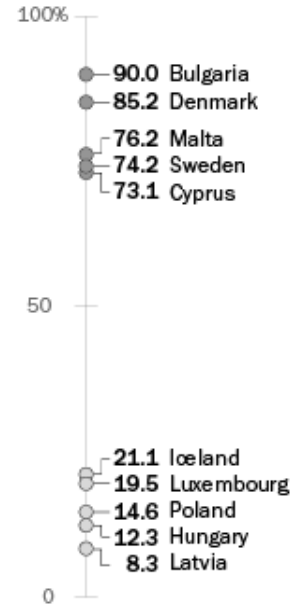
accommodation, food and clothing, in kind or in the form of a financial allowance. Allowances must be such that they prevent the applicant from becoming destitute.⁶⁴⁸ They have the right to medical and psychological care, provided by the host country, their children have the right to attend school and take language courses which enable them to go to ordinary school, and they have the right to family unity while they are awaiting an asylum decision.⁶⁴⁹ A caseworker trained in EU law and the criteria of the Qualifications Directive is supposed to individually interview them, with the help of a translator.⁶⁵⁰ They must prove that they qualify as a refugee under the 1951/1967 Geneva Refugee Convention definition, that they do not have a criminal history, and that their documents are correct.⁶⁵¹ If the individual meets these criteria, they are granted legal refugee status that gives them access to a residence permit, the right to work, and health care.⁶⁵² However, receiving a positive asylum decision, regardless of which EU state you apply in, is definitely not guaranteed. According to Eurostat, in 2014 132,405 people applied for asylum in the 28 EU member states. Only 23,295 were actually granted full asylum.⁶⁵³ Syrians are the nationality most likely to be granted asylum.⁶⁵⁴ The CEAS was designed when the total number of people seeking asylum in the EU each year was around 200,000.⁶⁵⁵ However, the number of asylum seekers in the EU has risen every year since 2005, and in 2015, it was more than 1 million.⁶⁵⁶ The sheer number of migrants arriving on the EU's borders in 2015 revealed fault-lines in the system that threaten the entire European structure if not addressed. The European Agenda on Migration (EAM) was the first step.

A European Agenda on Migration

The EAM outlined core measures aimed at immediately reducing human rights infringements and laying the groundwork for a lasting solution; first, to step up search and rescue missions in order to save lives at sea.⁶⁵⁷ On May 27, 2015 the budget for Frontex joint operations Triton and Poseidon was tripled.⁶⁵⁸ These operations ensure border control and surveillance in the Mediterranean Sea, while also serving a vital search-and-rescue role for migrants crossing into Europe.⁶⁵⁹⁶⁶⁰ In addition, member states have provided ships and aircraft, although they fall short of what has been requested by Frontex.⁶⁶¹ Second, the European Commission highlighted targeting criminal smuggling networks that exploit vulnerable migrants. On May 27, 2015 the EU Action Plan against migrant smuggling was adopted, which states specific steps the EU will take to reduce the smuggling of migrants and human rights abuses which ensue.⁶⁶² This included

Which Countries Are Most Welcoming of Asylum Seekers?

EU countries with highest and lowest asylum approval rates, Jan.-June 2015



Note: Iceland is not an EU member but applies EU law on asylum applicants. Source: Eurostat. Accessed Sept. 25, 2015

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Figure 1

adding Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) operations to systematically identify, capture, and destroy vessels used by smugglers, which was a goal of the EAM.⁶⁶³ As a result of these pieces of legislation, Frontex and Europol now work together and share information from JOT MARE, the EU's joint maritime information operation, to identify smuggling operations, monitor their movements, and shut them down. Third, it called for the triggering of the emergency response system envisaged under Article 78(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), as a precursor to a lasting legislative solution.⁶⁶⁴ On the basis of this article, the Council adopted two measures to be carried out within the next two years, one on September 14, 2015 to relocate 40,000 people from Italy and Greece to other member states,⁶⁶⁵ and one on September 22, 2015 to relocate 120,000 people from Italy, Greece, and other Member States in a state of emergency.⁶⁶⁶ As of January 13, 2016, 272 people had been relocated.⁶⁶⁷

The Commission recognized the EU's duty to provide asylum not only to those already on EU soil, but all displaced persons in need of international protection, and suggested steps to making the EU asylum process more uniform, inclusive, and safe. These suggestions included a resettlement scheme offering 20,000 places over the next two years, which was confirmed by the Member States at the Relocation and Resettlement Forum on October 1, 2015. 132 Syrians living in local countries of integration have been resettled to the Czech Republic (16), Italy (96), and Liechtenstein (20), as of October 14, 2015. The EAM provides a table outlining the total number of persons out of the 20,000 to be resettled in each state based on "GDP, size of population, unemployment rate, and past numbers of asylum seekers and of resettled refugees."⁶⁶⁸ A more durable long term system on resettlement is scheduled to be discussed in Spring 2016.⁶⁶⁹ This solution provides a safe channel for refugees to reach Europe without taking a perilous journey and relying on smugglers.

Those who do take the clandestine journey (as there are far more people seeking asylum than the 20,000 spots currently offered by the EU), enter the EU through Greece or Italy. Both countries are overwhelmed logistically and financially, and cannot process refugee's asylum applications in a timely manner or provide them with the material reception outlined in the Reception Conditions Directive.⁶⁷⁰ To solve this, the EAM implemented a "Hotspot" approach in which the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Frontex, and Europol will deploy Migration Management Support teams to aid frontline member states with identifying, registering, and fingerprinting incoming migrants.⁶⁷¹⁶⁷² Those who qualify for asylum will be processed by EASO, and Frontex will coordinate the return of those who do not.⁶⁷³ As of January 13, 2016, six hotspots have been identified in Italy, and five have been identified in Greece. Of these, one in Greece (Lesvos) and two in Italy (Lampedusa and Trapani) are fully functional, however there is a specific deadline.⁶⁷⁴ In addition, the Commission mobilized EUR 60 million in May 2015 in emergency funding to Greece and Italy to support them in providing material reception.⁶⁷⁵ Lastly, the Commission recognized that solving the underlying cause of Syrian migration to the EU is the best long-term solution to the current crises. The EAM suggests more cooperation with Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan to prevent refugees from seeking asylum in the EU except through legal resettlement channels.⁶⁷⁶

As far as long-term solutions, the EAM points to building on the immediate action steps. Ameliorated border management is crucial. Currently, border control regulations are in place but vary drastically from state to state. A Union standard for border management will be created in 2016 to amalgamate these divergent policies.⁶⁷⁷ This policy will make better use of IT systems and technologies, such as Eurodac, the Visa Information System, the Schengen Information System, and Eurosur.⁶⁷⁸ A coherent implementation of the Common European Asylum System is also essential. Currently, there is a mutual lack of trust between Member States based on the fragmentation of the CEAS, which encourages the idea that the current asylum system is inherently unfair.⁶⁷⁹ This is what

Open infringement cases within the Common European Asylum System				
Asylum Procedures Directive 2005/85/EC	Reception Conditions Directive 2003/9/EC	Qualification Directive 2004/83/EC and 2011/95/EU	Dublin II Regulation 343/2003	Long-Term Residence Directive 2011/51/EU
4 cases: Greece Italy Cyprus Hungary	5 cases: Greece France Italy Cyprus Hungary	14 cases: Bulgaria Greece Spain France Italy Cyprus Lithuania Hungary Malta Poland Portugal Romania Slovenia Finland	1 cases: Italy	11 cases: Belgium Germany Greece France Italy Latvia Malta Austria Poland Slovenia Sweden

Figure 2

creates the rhetoric of “every country for themselves,” which prevents the EU from working together to address the increasing number of refugees in a fair, efficient, and humane way. Many of the discrepancies in the implementation of the EU could be solved if Member States simply followed through with the directives. The EAM calls for new monitoring and evaluating systems for the CEAS which would encourage member states to comply. This would also boost confidence that other states were being held to the same standards, increasing voluntary participation in the system.⁶⁸⁰ Since August, the Commission has sent Letters of Formal Notice, Reasoned Opinion, and Administration to almost every Member State (exempting the UK, Ireland, and Denmark), as shown in Figure 2.⁶⁸¹ Many of these states have not responded to these infringement notices.⁶⁸² The Commission will continue to actively follow up on all infringement proceedings and reinforce implementation of all CEAS directives.

Gaps in Current Policies

Much has been done by the European Commission to address the refugee crisis, but there is a lot of ground left to cover. The CEAS is outdated, and does not have the capacity to handle the large numbers of refugees that are currently seeking asylum in the EU. The addition of the European Agenda on Migration helped to fill some of the holes in the CEAS, but it has fallen short of solving the problem, partially due to a lack of complete implementation by member states. Despite the Commission’s commitment, refugees are still dying by the hundreds trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea. Because the European Union is an association of independent states, the advances made by the European Commission at a federal level to fix the discrepancies in the CEAS can only go so far without national governments’ support. Due to the nature of the EU, the very assumption that Asylum Policy should be a centralized issue is met with some disagreement by member states.⁶⁸³ Thus, it is clear why the CEAS is not always followed, and securing a common European response to the failures of the CEAS has been extremely difficult.⁶⁸⁴ On the

one hand, some European states are reluctant to raise the minimum standards for asylum in the face of economic downturn and a general mistrust of Europeanization.⁶⁸⁵ On the other hand, European governance has been experiencing a crisis of legitimacy based on racial and economic lines for several years and this resistance to increasingly centralized asylum policy reflects the distrust many states have in the European system as a whole.⁶⁸⁶ Several experts cite the Dublin Regulation as one of the main causes of distrust among member states because frontline states are unfairly pressured, and all other states complain that frontline states are not upholding their end of the bargain if they allow asylum seekers to move on.⁶⁸⁷ Thus, Member States are caught in a struggle between their commitments to freedom of movement and trade for its positive outcomes and the fact that open borders mean they are less capable of focusing domestically in times when it would be beneficial. In order to achieve EU solidarity in implementing the CEAS and its amendments, unified actions must be taken to increase trust among member states, promote the idea that what is best for the EU as a whole is more important than what is best for each individual nation-state, and abolish policies which do not promote “the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility.”⁶⁸⁸

Policy Suggestions

Many experts have offered countless ways to address the failures in the EU asylum system over the past year; there is no lack of good ideas. However, there is an extreme lack of implementation. Much of this is due to a lack of funding both within Greece and Italy, countries of first asylum, and the EU budget. On February 4th, the “Supporting Syria and the Region” Conference was held in London and more than \$11 billion were raised in one day to support Syrians fleeing the conflict.⁶⁸⁹ This was a positive step towards addressing the developing human rights crisis caused by the Syrian civil war. However, there are several ways that the European Union can improve its reaction and fortify their asylum system for the future. As one of the most prosperous and powerful nations in the world, the United States can aid Europe in addressing the remaining deficiencies in the CEAS.

First, the Commission needs to reassess and update the Dublin Regulations once again. This is currently being discussed, with proposals due in March 2016.⁶⁹⁰ Under the current Dublin Regulation, Greece and Italy are obligated to process all refugees who arrive at their borders and grant asylum to those who qualify. Because they are the frontline countries and receive almost all refugees directly, they are overwhelmed with the cost and sheer logistics of accounting for more than 50,000 people annually (and counting).⁶⁹¹ Due to this pressure, Greece, Italy, Denmark, and several other states have chosen to ignore the Dublin Regulation and not enter the fingerprints of many refugees into the Eurodac database. Because of this, countries such as Sweden, Denmark, and Germany, who accepted relatively high numbers of asylum applicants last year,⁶⁹² are frustrated and distrustful of the whole Dublin System.⁶⁹³ An overhaul of the Dublin Regulations must provide for the active enforcement of the legislation, either through deterrence or encouragement mechanisms agreed upon by the European Commission. In order to promote fairness and insure states comply with the regulation, they have to be able to trust that all other states are being held accountable as well. A more equilibrated system could be achieved by creating annual acceptance quotas, allowing states to pass the responsibility to another Member

state once they have reached their quota. This quota should be based on the same four criteria outlined in the EAM in reference to the EU resettlement scheme: “a) the size of the population (40%) as it reflects the capacity to absorb a certain number of refugees; b) total GDP (40%) as it reflects the absolute wealth of a country and is thus indicative for the capacity of an economy to absorb and integrate refugees; c) average number of spontaneous asylum applications and the number of resettled refugees per 1 million inhabitants over the period 2010-2014 (10%) as it reflects the efforts made by Member States in the recent past; d) unemployment rate (10%) as an indicator reflecting the capacity to integrate refugees.”⁶⁹⁴ In addition, decoupling the responsibility to register and identify all refugees who enter the EU from the responsibility to receive, protect, or return every migrant, would help assure that both these aspects of the CEAS are actually implemented.⁶⁹⁵ This will increase EU security by ensuring that more migrants are actually identified and put into the system, and improve conditions for refugees who qualify for assistance.⁶⁹⁶

On December 15, 2015 the European Commission adopted a recommendation creating a voluntary humanitarian admission scheme which would provide for the legal entry of Syrian asylum seekers into the EU via Turkey.⁶⁹⁷ Refugees would be granted temporary residence permits in Europe based on their nationality, since Syria has been deemed an unsafe country by the EU. Once refugees enter Europe legally this way, they can begin the process to be granted permanent asylum, or return to Syria when it is safe. Under the recommendation on December 15, member states are not required to participate in the scheme, and the Turkish authorities must have registered potential candidates prior to November 29, 2015.⁶⁹⁸ In point 16 of the decision, the Commission recommended that if this plan functions well in Turkey, it should be applied to Jordan and Lebanon as well.⁶⁹⁹ This decision was an excellent addition to the EU wide pledge to accept 20,000 more refugees per year by the year 2020.⁷⁰⁰ However, the deal was dismissed by a Senior Turkish official as impossible on February 10th. This was due to the new ““tsunami”” of refugees pouring into Turkey from Aleppo as a result of the assault on that city by the Russians and Syrian regime,⁷⁰¹ which made it impossible for Turkey to hold up their end of the agreement of blocking the sea route through the Aegean sea. This announcement came only two days after Germany’s Chancellor, Angela Merkel, visited Turkey to try and work out the deal, reflecting the fact that her influence in Europe is at an all time low.⁷⁰²⁷⁰³ It is imperative that Merkel and other European leaders work closely with Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan to create humanitarian admission schemes which fit their needs and the needs of refugees, in addition to expanding their long-term resettlement program to relieve the burden on the European border in the future.

An agreement with the UNHCR, EASO, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Asylum, Migration, and Integration fund (AMIF), and the International Security Fund (ISF) should help create and fund application centers in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan which would allow refugees to directly apply for resettlement or a humanitarian visa.⁷⁰⁴⁷⁰⁵ This solution is desirable to Member States because it shifts much of the burden for processing refugees into the hands of extra-governmental organizations such as the UNHCR who are specifically designed to address refugee crises and fund relocation. In addition, if screening and processing is done outside of Europe, frontline states such as Greece and Italy will cease to be inundated by migrants who may or may not qualify for asylum, and can invest more time and money in resettling the ones they are allotted. In conjunction with the structured EU-wide resettlement system that the

Commission is scheduled to produce in Spring 2016, which would allot annual numbers of refugees for resettlement to each Member State, the humanitarian admission scheme will reduce pressure on the borders and streamline the granting of asylum and resettlement process. Such a scheme is desirable for Turkey because financial assistance and the building of a “Refugee Facility for Turkey” will help ease the burden of refugees currently residing there. Additionally, the proposed lifting of Schengen visa requirements for Turkish nationals by October 2016 can allow Turkish citizens to enter the EU more easily, and the EU has agreed to reopen the EU/Turkey accession process.⁶⁴

However, it will not suffice to admit refugees from Turkey. As of February 3, 2016, “Lebanon hosts approximately 1.1 million refugees from Syria which amounts to approximately one in five people in the country, and Jordan hosts approximately 635,324 refugees from Syria, which amounts to about 10% of the population.”⁷⁰⁶ These countries are in desperate need of international support, both through financial donations such as those raised at the recent “Supporting Syria and the Region Conference,”⁷⁰⁷ and through the physical relocation of many of the refugees currently residing within their borders. The United States must lead by example and accept a larger number of Syrian Refugees from Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. The United States should also come alongside the European Union politically and pressure the UNHCR, Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan to participate in implementing a humanitarian admission agreement in Europe. This would allow an adequate number of Syrians to enter Europe legally and take the burden off the countries of first resettlement (Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan), countries of first arrival in Europe (Greece and Italy), and countries with comparatively high levels of asylum status’ granted (Germany and Sweden).

The main obstacle preventing the EU from responding appropriately to the arrival of refugees over the past five years is a lack of cooperation among member states. As previously mentioned, this is mainly due to a lack of trust and skepticism about whether EU asylum policies fairly distribute the burden, coupled with a reluctance by most countries to take on the economic, social, and security strain which accompanies the addition of a large number of refugees into a community at one time. The only way to insure that the recommendations in this report and all other initiatives produced by the Commission are universally implemented in the member states is to reach an EU-wide agreement about the continued commitment to “the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility.”⁷⁰⁸ In addition, EU member states must agree on the incentives and/or consequences for not following through with implementing the CEAS, EAM, (what will be) the revised Dublin Regulation, and all other legislation relating to the reception and protection of asylum seekers.

Conclusion

Syrian refugees fleeing to Europe are the minority. Of the nearly 5 million forced to flee Syria, only 897,645 have applied for asylum in Europe.⁷⁰⁹ Most refugees settle in Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, and make it work despite the many flaws in the asylum processes in these countries as well. Those who do choose to make the journey to Europe do so because it is their last hope. As one young Syrian woman was recorded saying in a report by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) in the Middle East, “It’s better to die than stay here (in Lebanon). We’ll carry our

‘kafan’ (burial shrouds) in our hands and go.”⁷¹⁰ Europe has a responsibility to protect the vulnerable, and they have expectations that Europe will follow through. Another Syrian in the DRC report expresses this yearning: “We’re going to live in peace and safety. We’re going to be treated like humans.”⁷¹¹ Unfortunately, the Common European Asylum System, European Agenda on Migration, and subsequent follow-up pieces of legislation have failed to establish a system which can process the high-levels of refugees trying to enter Europe since 2011. The failure of these legal frameworks is threatening the very existence of the European Union and causing undue suffering for an already vulnerable group of people. It is crucial that the European Commission make immediate changes to the Dublin III Regulations in order to distribute refugees evenly within the EU and reduce the economic, social, and security strain on border countries such as Greece and Italy. This will reduce human rights abuses overnight if implemented swiftly. The European Commission, in partnership with the UNHCR, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and the international community (specifically the United States) must launch a humanitarian admission scheme allowing refugees to legally enter Europe on a refugee visa. This will reduce the pressure on Europe’s border in the future, and reduce the cost and risk for refugees trying to reach Europe by providing a feasible legal route. In order to assure the timely, universal implementation of these and all other asylum policies, the EU must reinforce the principles of solidarity and cooperation, and draft an agreement outlining the consequences for states who do not follow asylum policies. The United States, as one of the most politically and economically powerful allies of the EU, should lead by example on the issue of refugee resettlement, and support the EU politically and economically in this endeavor.

Policy Recommendations

- Encourage the European Commission to update the Dublin III Regulation to be based on an annual quota system and decouple responsibility to register and fingerprint refugees from responsibility to receive, protect, and return those who do not qualify for asylum.
- Call upon the European Commission to implement a humanitarian admission scheme in partnership with Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan, and continue to expand the resettlement program to accept more asylum seekers annually.
- Support an EU-wide reaffirmation of “the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility,” outlined in Article 80 of the TFEU, and creation of an agreement on the incentives and/or consequences of not following through with implementation of all legislation related to the treatment of refugees and granting of asylum.

EU: Economic and Security Strategies for Handling the Refugee Crisis

Daniel Engstrom

Refugees from Syria and migrants from many other countries have been coming into Europe since the Syrian civil war started at rates not seen since after World War II. Although this crisis only recently gained worldwide attention because of the influx of refugees into Europe after the summer of 2015, there have been Syrian refugees coming into Europe since the start of the Syrian Civil War in 2011. Europe's system for assisting and processing these migrants has essentially collapsed since this crisis escalated. Europe needs to restructure its existing system in order to ensure that migrants receive necessary aid while also preserving national security and minimizing short-term economic costs. The EU also needs better coordination among its many countries regarding this issue, which should include the non-EU Balkan states and Turkey. The discrepancies between what different European countries can do in response to the crisis is one of the main contributing factors regarding inefficiencies of the migration policy and implementation. The inflow of many refugees from Syria has presented a number of security concerns for both the EU and the refugees themselves. Since there are many militant groups fighting in Syria there is a risk of some migrants coming to Europe with the intention of doing harm to European people. There are also security concerns for the refugees themselves because of their vulnerability for exploitation by smugglers and any other hazards from the journey, including drowning in the Mediterranean Sea.

The European region that has been hit the hardest by the refugee crisis is Southern Europe, particularly Greece and Italy. These countries have faced economic difficulties in handling the refugees effectively, which has led many refugees to flee to Northern Europe, usually passing through the Balkan states of Macedonia, Serbia, and Croatia. Consequently, Balkan nations have also faced economic and security issues while helping refugees travel north. However, once the refugees make it through the Balkan states they are not always able to enter other EU countries as many of them have closed their borders to refugees. Therefore, Northern Europe has also been heavily involved in the refugee crisis since it is often the intended final destination for many refugees. Countries like Sweden and Germany have taken in many refugees while other countries have hardly taken in any. Refugees have also had a significant impact on the economies of these countries because of both the cost of resettlement and aid given to Southern European countries to assist them with their part in the crisis. In light of these particular issues, which have grown due to the influx of refugees, the EU needs a more organized and effective way of making sure that every country has the money to care for refugees and keep both refugees and EU citizens safe. This includes a fair and measured distribution of refugees among each country as well as the funding programs that provide social services to refugees.

Security

Apart from the economic cost created by the flood of refugees into Europe, the most significant concern of the European Union is security, which can be defined as both national security for European citizens and security for migrants who are either already in Europe or traveling between countries. The large number of migrants coming from Syria and other countries in the region has raised concerns for many Europeans regarding the potential for terrorist attacks,

especially after the 2015 Paris attacks. Although there has been no definitive link made between the attackers and refugees, the refugees often suffer as a result of such incidents because of restrictive policies and general prejudice and uncertainty from Europeans.⁷¹² It is often difficult to ensure national security in Europe because of the Schengen Agreement, yet recent border controls have restricted the flow of people between European countries.

It is also essential for the EU to find ways to reduce the influence of human smugglers, as their motives are driven by profit rather than ensuring a safe passage into Europe. In fact, the prevalence of smugglers bringing refugees into the EU has complicated the matter, making it more difficult for authorities to keep track of the flow of migrants, which could be a weakness in the system if people on watch lists enter the EU using these means. Thus, it is essential for Europe's security that the EU find a better way to register and provide transit for refugees that are being smuggled in, ideally limiting the necessity for refugees to use smugglers by providing an easier legal route into Europe. Refugees often seek the services of smugglers because they do not have the correct documentation to enter the EU legally. This problem is growing as many countries in Europe tighten border controls and increase deportations of migrants.⁷¹³ Consequently, refugees in many cases are left with no option but to hire a smuggler or return to the local countries of integration in the Middle East. As tensions rise, European countries have made entering the EU even more difficult with increased border restrictions. The EU would be able to monitor their borders much better and increase their security if they gave refugees an easier legal route into EU countries instead of barricading their borders. This could involve issuing humanitarian visas so that refugees can cross the European border legally; however, this could open up the risk of too many people or militants entering Europe. Another way to help migrants get into Europe legally without involving smugglers is to bring them directly from Turkey, Jordan, or Lebanon. This is more expensive because it would require screening refugees in these countries and flying them into Europe directly, which realistically, could only be done for the most vulnerable refugees. However, many more refugees could be brought in from the Middle East either on planes, boats, or trains. This would also decrease the amount of refugees drowning at sea since they would be given a safe passage across the Mediterranean.⁷¹⁴ Often times the most vulnerable refugees are not the ones who can afford a smuggler. Thus, if the EU helped to register and bring the most vulnerable in directly from the Middle East it would decrease exploitation and security risks as they could be screened before entering the EU.

Security for migrants is also within the interests of the European Union, with the largest focus being a reduction in the number of migrant deaths that occur while crossing the Mediterranean Sea on boats. Migrants have been drowning in the Mediterranean since long before the 2015 surge in Syrian refugee migration; however, the increased desperation of migrants has caused them to take riskier routes into Europe, and the Southern European countries have too few resources to keep these migrants safe at sea.⁷¹⁵ Refugees would not need to travel to Europe on boats if there were a larger availability for safer routes and humanitarian visas. Meanwhile, the security of these people is also at risk once they have arrived in Europe, often in the Greek islands where humanitarian resources are scarce. More efficient ways to process refugees and other migrants will ensure safety and provide them with basic needs, including food, water, and shelter. This includes registering each migrant's name and fingerprint with the help of Frontex, an EU agency that coordinates and develops European border management.

A major obstacle to the implementation of these measures is the rise of right wing extremism and Islamophobia in Europe, which has decreased the safety of refugees entering Europe both in transit and while trying to settle long-term. There have been an increased number

of attacks on refugees as they try to cross the Mediterranean, particularly between Turkey and Greece. Vigilantes have in some cases removed motors and fuel from boats, and even punctured holes in inflatable boats.⁷¹⁶ If these holes are not noticed before disembarking, it could cause every migrant on that particular boat to drown. There have also been cases of men armed with guns in motorboats ramming into boats filled with refugees, stealing the engine, and then fleeing.⁷¹⁷ The Greek coast guard has been trying to prevent these attacks but its efforts are only a temporary fix and do not address the underlying cause. The reason these refugees are so vulnerable on boats is that they have no other options. It is unlikely that all migrants will stop attempting the dangerous journey into Europe on unsound rafts even if there is a more effective solution, but a consolidated and coordinated effort by the EU can help keep these refugees safe from vigilantes and death at sea.⁷¹⁸ This should not only involve Greece, Italy, and Spain, but all EU countries in a joint effort to patrol the coastlines where most migrants are arriving to shore. Their goal should not be to arrest refugees or send them back, but to strengthen efforts to ensure safe passage to mainland Europe without demanding papers.

Greece has been working with Frontex in an operation called Poseidon Rapid Intervention where Frontex is deploying people and ships to the Aegean Sea to help identify and fingerprint incoming migrants in order to strengthen border surveillance. Frontex has the power to deploy border guard teams in member states for a limited period if requested, however, the member state must work alongside Frontex. Frontex has deployed 775 border guards to Greece because of the pressure on Greece's borders, as well as 280 in Southern Italy.⁷¹⁹ Greece in particular is in need of many more boats and planes to patrol the borders and try to keep the migration process organized. With Frontex's budget at 250 million euros for 2016 and increasing to 320 million euros in 2017, one of the most important actions that EU Member States must take is to help fund this budget.⁷²⁰ Frontex itself suggests funding their organization through a contractual relationship with their beneficiaries. It also understands that a large part of its operations are not just to keep Europe's borders secure, but to cooperate with third countries such as Turkey in order to monitor the flow of migrants.⁷²¹ Thus, they should focus on smuggling and human trafficking networks within Turkey and North Africa. The only way to do this is with full cooperation of the Turkish Government, which further complicates the issue. In addition to keeping the EU's border's secure, Frontex's primary goal should be to keep refugees secure. Frontex should not be working to deport refugees, but rather to help them reach safe areas even if it is within the EU and to help process their requests for asylum while running security checks.

Increasing aid to Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan to reduce the number of refugees that are forced to travel to Europe is critical and should be a top priority for the EU to protect its security and the security of refugees.⁷²² This refugee crisis has involved a much larger number of refugees risking their lives getting to Europe than any wave of migration since WWII. While the EU could be doing more to resettle refugees, it is not realistic to expect the EU to resettle every refugee seeking asylum in Europe. Therefore, it is paramount for the EU to decrease the amount of people fleeing to Europe from first countries of integration. Aid to Syria's neighbor countries to help incorporate the large numbers of refugees into their societies would reduce the flow into Europe. One approach that the EU could take would be similar to the Marshall Plan, which partnered public and private sectors to provide both long term and short term aid for refugees in the Middle East. This approach will affect a much larger number of refugees since the majority of them are not seeking third country resettlement in Europe. Providing aid and resettlement in the Middle East is critical, otherwise, refugees will continue to flow into the EU at rates it cannot handle, even with massive reform.

Southern Europe

The European countries most affected by this crisis have been the countries that refugees reach first, such as Greece and Italy. The fact that these countries were already hard-hit by economic struggles, has left them ill equipped to properly handle the large influx of refugees. Greece, in its current economic crisis, is doing as much as it can with its resources to assist refugees; however, austerity programs have hindered its ability to provide for refugees.⁷²³ In these austerity programs some of the first public services to be cut are programs that provide for refugees. This is a politically safer move since refugees do not have a say in local governments. Due to the Dublin Agreements in the EU, migrants are required to apply for asylum in their country of first entry, which is usually the less wealthy Southern European states. This leaves Greece and Italy in an even more difficult situation since the majority of migrants want to eventually reach Northern European countries. Unless the Dublin Agreements are changed and migrants are allowed to apply for asylum in any European country, the majority of the initial care for Syrian refugees in Europe should be focused on the most affected Southern European states. This requires Northern European countries to share more of the responsibility by increasing funding to Southern European countries. If the EU provides more initial care for refugees in Southern Europe, then less refugees will be encouraged to continue migrating north, and face more dangers along the way.

Greece has asked the EU for additional assistance in handling the migration crisis due to their role in the crisis and economic woes. Many refugees arriving in the EU are stranded on Greek Islands in the Aegean Sea without a system to take care of them or a way to process them efficiently enough to get them to mainland Europe.⁷²⁴ This is where the issue is the most severe and the greatest need exists for short-term assistance as the conditions are often no better than refugee camps in the Middle East. Refugees that are stuck on the Greek islands are in need of not only food, water, and shelter, but also legal assistance to help them apply for asylum so they can reach either mainland Greece or other areas in the EU.⁷²⁵ Local residents of these Greek Islands have been very generous to migrants in terms of their charitable contributions.⁷²⁶ However, due to Greece's lack of resources to handle such a large influx of migrants it will need substantial assistance from the EU and in particular Northern European countries such as Germany.

Despite Greece's current economic crisis and extremely high unemployment, it is still common for migrants to find work. Migrants in Greece, as well as the rest of Southern Europe have relatively high employment rates despite the high unemployment in Greece.⁷²⁷ Most of these migrants work in construction, manufacturing, tourism, retail, and agriculture. Migrants are often overqualified for the work they find and are forced to rely on risky temporary labor contracts. Many refugees, if they need to earn the money to either survive or hire a smuggler to get them to Germany, are forced to work illegally in Greece, often in the agricultural sector. In addition, because they are working illegally, they are not protected by the government and are easy to exploit by the people who hire them. In extreme cases, events such as the 2013 Manolada shooting can occur in Greece because the landowners are not regulated by the government and their workers are in many cases undocumented migrants.¹⁵ Undocumented migrants working illegally also represent a major loss in tax revenues to the state. While there is a shortage of jobs in Greece, making it very difficult for anyone to find work, migrants in many cases are more willing than Greeks to work in agricultural or manufacturing jobs.⁷²⁸ At the very least, allowing migrants to work legally and under government regulation, would keep them safer from harm and

exploitation. But as it stands, the job situation for migrants is one of the reasons they are leaving Greece for Northern Europe. Allowing migrants to work legally would decrease their need to flee further to the north. Similar to Germany, Greece is a country with an aging population and would benefit greatly from the young labor force migrants would provide.

If refugees were allowed to work legally, they would compete with Greeks for jobs. If they continue to work illegally, they could easily be exploited and paid less, making it impossible for Greeks to compete with them for work in certain settings.⁷²⁹ However, if migrants work legally then it will result in more Greeks being employed in positions formerly held by migrants, which should incentivize Greek labor unions to support migrants receiving the right to work legally. Greek unions should support the successful integration of migrants so that fewer jobs are being taken by people who are exploited by their employers. Despite the fact that migrants are often able to find some kind of work, even in countries such as Greece, this usually does not translate into successful integration due to exploitation and remaining separate from the rest of Greek society.⁷³⁰ If Greece allows more migrants to work legally, the country would benefit economically with increased revenues and overall unemployment would be lowered as Greek people would appear more competitive for jobs formerly held by migrants who were being underpaid due to a lack of protections.

Greece has received bailouts from the EU for its economic crisis under the condition that they cut public spending. Much of the spending cuts have been to programs that support migrants, whether they are legal residents or not.⁷³¹ Those programs involve the processing of migrants as well as legal services, provisions, and most significantly healthcare.⁷³² It is possible to make up for the loss of many of these programs through international assistance. Substantial assistance from the EU for providing for migrants would benefit not only Greece's economy, but also Germany's economy if migrants were allowed to work and given safe passage to Germany.⁷³³ Hopefully, with the increase in severity of the refugee crisis, the EU would not see programs that provide for refugees as expendable as they did in the past when they cut programs in Greece, the European country that needs them the most. However, the only way to make Greece more capable of handling an influx in migration is to end its economic issues and drastically lower unemployment. If the EU increases refugee assistance and continues to support overall economic growth, Greece will be a stronger member of the EU. This should include assistance from the EU to help restore many social programs that were cut during austerity measures in order to strengthen Greek agriculture and manufacturing, which would provide many jobs to local Greeks as well as migrants. Austerity has not only affected social programs in Greece that provided aid to refugees, but it also clearly is affecting Greece's ability to control its own borders and process the many migrants entering the country.⁷³⁴

Spain and Italy, in addition to Greece, have been the main points of entry into the EU for Syrian refugees and all other migrants. Spain and Italy are countries that have been similarly hit by economic crises but are in a better position than Greece because of fewer refugee arrivals and less refugees living in emergency situations. Spain in particular would receive more refugees based on the proposed quota plan that would allocate a certain number of refugees for each EU country, which Spain's current government has already agreed it would do.⁷³⁵ Currently, Spain is accepting some of the smallest numbers of refugees in Europe and has tightened its border controls significantly, but this would all change if the proposed quota plan passes. For example, less people have applied for asylum in the last 30 years in Spain than the amount of people who have applied for asylum in the last year in Germany. Although Spain is willing to do its part and accept more refugees, it would need a way to support them economically. There has been a large

movement in many Spanish cities calling for residents to register with the city government to help refugees or allow refugees to stay in their homes.⁷³⁶ The majority of Spain's largest cities are participating in this program which gives individual Spanish citizens the right to help refugees, most significantly by allowing them to stay in their home for a period of time.⁷³⁷ Although this method could not be used to help every refugee, it is an effective way for local individuals to assist incoming refugees when the government either does not have the political will or the economic ability to help refugees on a larger scale. Currently, refugees in Spain receive 50 euros a month for six months and are given basic Spanish lessons.⁷³⁸ This is clearly not enough to effectively resettle refugees and it would take a much greater economic contribution from Spain to make these refugees want to stay in Spain rather than flee to Germany or Sweden, which is becoming increasingly difficult with their closing borders. Like Greece, Spain would require economic assistance from the wealthier EU countries in order to make providing for refugees a more popular opportunity for Spanish politicians. In the meantime, many individuals are doing what they can to help refugees, but this is not a sustainable or long-term solution. The only way to provide for refugees in the long run, with is for the government to set up a more extensive program rather than relying on private citizens. Of course, it will need a steady flow of aid.

For the most part, Italy has been hit by the refugee crisis similarly to Greece and Spain. In Italy, however, refugees are concentrated in the southern part of the country while the more economically prosperous Northern Italy is not contributing its fair share to help resettle refugees. In Southern Italy, refugees often face exploitation by the Italian Mafia, which is a concern they would not face if they arrived elsewhere in Europe. The mafia in Sicily has been smuggling refugees into Europe and is suspected of a variety of other activities. These include providing food, clothing, medicine, housing, and a means of transportation to Northern Europe to refugees.²⁴ Many asylum seekers who stay in Sicily are being exploited by the mafia and forced into becoming drug dealers or prostitutes. It is unknown how much the Sicilian Mafia is making off of migrants but it is suspected it could be in the realm of billions of dollars.⁷³⁹ So much money is made from migrants that it has even become a more profitable business than drugs.²⁴ Many of the services provided by the mafia in Italy are so popular, partially because the services provided by the Italian government are insufficient, that refugees are often forced to turn to the mafia for help, or in more extreme cases to help smuggle them to Northern Europe. If Italy provided more resettlement assistance for refugees and other migrants it would result in a decrease in the mafia's power. With Italy's economy not as strong as its northern neighbors it would need assistance from the EU to provide a more extensive resettlement program for refugees. The Italian government has been particularly critical of the EU's lack of response in dealing with the refugee crisis. Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni criticized the EU and Northern European countries because the idea that the EU's southern border countries should deal with the majority of the crisis is totally unrealistic.⁷⁴⁰ This is especially true since many refugees' intended final destination within the EU is Northern Europe and not Greece, Spain, or Italy.

The Balkan States

Another area of need for the initial care of refugees in Europe is required when refugees migrate from Greece to Central Europe, often passing through the Balkan nations, which are not part of the EU. The number of asylum requests has not only grown in the EU, but also in countries such as Serbia and Macedonia. These are both countries where refugees face a very dangerous journey to the EU.⁷⁴¹ Their main means of transportation is walking through the

Balkans; however, the refugees usually do not have enough food to make the journey. Recently EU countries that border the non-EU Balkan states have been closing their borders to refugees, forcing them to either wait at the border to try to get in legally, try to enter illegally, or return to Greece.⁷⁴² While these migrants are waiting at the Hungarian and Austrian border crossings, they are in need of food, water, and shelter. Most of these countries are seeking EU membership and it would benefit their ascension process if they were to work with the EU to help refugees. On the other hand, bordering EU countries could lift the ban and allow refugees to enter their countries so that precious resources do not need to go towards providing humanitarian aid to refugees stuck at border crossings. The EU must work with these non-EU Balkan countries to find a solution for this crisis and this must include countries like Serbia and Macedonia sharing the responsibility with the European Union. These countries should not be abandoning refugees by leaving them to walk across the country, while facing the risk of deportation back to Greece.

Many of the European Union's leaders met in 2015 to discuss a plan to deal with the flow of refugees on this Western Balkans route. The EU discussed how they need to coordinate with these non-EU Balkan countries economically and through communication. The EU proposed providing financial assistance to these countries to fund temporary shelters for migrants and an efficient passage of them to the EU. The EU has also said that it will discourage migrants from going to the border of another country because there is no way to keep track of them if they cross the border away from a monitored border post. The EU stated that they will work with the UNHCR in the Balkans who has been a leader on this issue in this particular region, as well as European financial institutions to help fund the temporary relief efforts in the Balkans.⁷⁴³ The EU is planning to register as many refugees as they can by getting their fingerprints. However, it has also said that it will work with Frontex to return migrants to their countries of origin that are not in danger. They will work with Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh to do this. Although the EU cannot grant asylum to all economic migrants, simply returning people to where they came from is not in the best interests of every group. For example, these migrants provide a much-needed source of labor, especially in Central and Eastern European countries that have shrinking populations. The EU should be careful not to send migrants back simply because they did not come from Syria because the migrants could be in danger if they came from other countries as well. Much of the EU's action plan involves tightening border controls, makes the system more orderly, but also makes it more difficult for refugees to reach Europe and encourages them to turn to smugglers. The EU plans to use Frontex extensively in the Balkans as well as any other route into Europe taken by refugees. The EU also wants to make their laws known to migrants before starting their journey to Europe as well as their rights and obligations.

Another security concern is for refugees walking through the Balkans on their way into Northern Europe, particularly in Croatia and Bosnia. With Hungary increasing border controls, including putting up a razor-wire fence and arresting refugees who manage to slip through, it has forced many refugees to take an alternate route through Croatia which has leftover explosives from the Yugoslav Wars.⁷⁴⁴ Because these countries were recent warzones themselves, many minefields with unexploded ordinances still exist. Unfortunately, the international ban on landmines was not enacted until 1998, after the Yugoslav Wars. As a result, as many as 51,000 unexploded landmines are suspected to be scattered across Croatia, while many unsuspecting refugees walk over the same ground. In order to avoid minefields, refugees have been advised to stay on the highways in many areas, but this makes them vulnerable to smugglers who often take the shortest route, even if it is the most dangerous. Luckily the Croatian Government and former Prime Minister Zoran Milanović have strongly opposed the creation of tougher border controls

and fences.⁷⁴⁵ The Croatian Government has taken positive steps to guide refugees through their country safely and avoid minefields. Their policies are a positive example of an EU country taking the correct steps to ensure safe passage of refugees, but this further highlights the variance between EU countries and their policies.

Northern Europe

Much of the responsibility for handling this crisis should naturally fall on the wealthier countries that have the money to provide for refugees in their countries. These countries, such as Germany and Sweden, also happen to be the places that most refugees who come to Europe hope to settle. However, because of the recent surge of refugees into Europe, even Germany and Sweden have decided to introduce some border controls. The existence of these new border control policies are not necessarily because of the number of refugees, but because of the failure of the systems and countries on the way to Northern Europe. However, much of the failure of Southern European countries could be reduced if Northern European countries were more willing to help.

Countries like Germany and Sweden have historically accepted many refugees, but there are many other countries in the EU that are not doing their share to put an end to the European migration crisis. German people are becoming increasingly skeptical that Germany will be able to successfully integrate an increasing number of refugees in the long-run, especially after sexual assaults against women in December 2015, which were committed by asylum seekers in some cases.⁷⁴⁶ Angela Merkel suggested in April 2015 that there should be a quota system that tells each EU country how many refugees they should admit each year.⁷⁴⁷ Merkel proposed a quota program that would distribute refugees based on the size of the country and the relative strength of its economy.⁷⁴⁸ This program has been met with criticism from countries such as Poland with a newly elected soft Eurosceptic President, Andrzej Duda.⁷⁴⁹ Poland has a fairly large population and land area with a growing economy and thus it should be one of the countries that needs to accept many more refugees than it does under Merkel's proposed quota program.⁷⁵⁰ Therefore, the EU countries must coordinate with each other so that no particular country is taking on more than their share of the economic costs of the refugee crisis. This is dependent on pro-EU political parties from across the political spectrum in Europe working together so that each country takes on their share of the economic responsibility.

One of the main arguments against accepting more refugees in Europe, but especially Northern Europe, is the fear that more refugees will put a strain on the welfare system of that country. The amount of truth in this varies by country but the amount of strain on the welfare system compared to the economic benefits of accepting more refugees is either neutral or in favor of accepting more refugees.⁷⁵¹ In most countries it has been generally proven that migrants contribute enough to pay for the welfare costs to their host country, with certain exceptions such as Germany. However, Germany has the strongest economy in the EU and would be able to absorb a slight net economic cost of refugees. Although it is true that in some European countries the amount spent on refugees is greater than the amount of money the refugees generate in the long term, accepting refugees generally has neither a negative nor a positive impact on the economy of these countries as a whole.⁷⁵²

In Northern European countries most migrants have legal status and are able to contribute to the economy legally. In these cases migrants have not been as much of an economic cost since

they have provided a larger workforce in manufacturing jobs, positions that these countries were lacking. When migrants are working legally they are able to pay taxes and spend money, and both of these actions improve the economies of the host countries. Many countries in Europe also have extensive welfare systems, which are commonly argued to be exploited by refugees. As a result, many Europeans are in favor of cutting welfare benefits.⁷⁵³ However, there has not been much of an economic strain on the welfare programs of European countries because if migrants are legal residents they are paying for their own welfare benefits through taxes, and if they are not legal residents then they are typically not receiving many benefits.

Although the economic benefits of migration of skilled workers are clear, there is also clear economic benefits of unskilled workers, particularly in countries such as Germany as long as there are low barriers to entering the labor force. The aging populations of countries such as Germany and Scandinavian countries demand a young labor force that is willing to participate in industrial jobs when locals are less willing to do so.⁷⁵⁴ Germany especially has a greater net export surplus than any country in the world and this means they require a labor force that works in manufacturing. However, with more Germans having fewer children and less people willing to work in manufacturing, there is an increased need for unskilled labor in the German economy. Germany has also been able to hire many unemployed teachers to teach German to refugees which further decreased unemployment and increased the amount of money in the economy.⁷⁵⁵ Since there are many more jobs that refugees can find in countries such as Germany, many refugees might migrate to Germany even if there is a quota system in place that assigns each refugee to be resettled in another country.⁷⁵⁶ Thus, there cannot simply be a quota system in the EU, but there must also be policies taken by both the EU and each country to help refugees find work so they can be effectively resettled as intended. Any quota program must also not simply designate a particular number of refugees to each country, but it must do this based on the needs of that country and the skills of each refugee. For example, if a country is in need of unskilled labor then they should be assigned more unskilled refugees. However, if a country is experiencing brain drain then they should be assigned more skilled refugees.⁷⁵⁷ Effective integration of refugees into the EU is dependent on their ability to find jobs. In order to find jobs they must be in the right locations based on their current job skills and the needs of that particular country. No refugee will be forced to go to any particular country; they will simply be informed where they will have the best chance of finding work based on their skills. Family will also be a deciding factor in where in the EU each refugee should be resettled. All of this should be done after the refugee has already been screened and accepted into the EU based on their vulnerability.

Conclusion

It is clear Europe's existing migration system has failed and that it needs leadership in order to both solve this crisis in the short term and better handle and future refugee crises. It is in the United States' interests to make sure migration crises are handled more efficiently in Europe so the U.S. is both safer from militants who aim to harm civilians and has to take in less refugees itself.⁷⁵⁸

In order to achieve the durable solution of resettlement, refugees must be able to work and contribute to the economy. Unlike Northern European countries, the migrants in Southern European countries are often in those countries illegally and are not able to contribute to the economy. If the EU could decrease discrepancies between nations, Southern European countries would benefit economically from the wave of migration in the same way Northern European

countries have. One of the most important things that not only the Southern European countries need, but all of Europe, is greater cooperation between EU countries. So far the wealthy EU countries have for the most part left Greece to provide for refugees and process their asylum requests on its own. Therefore, the EU must either implement or continue to develop these policies in order to further the economic solidarity of the EU amidst this crisis and increase the security in the region.

Policy Recommendations

- Increase funding to Frontex to establish a better cooperation with EU member states and the UNHCR, and ultimately make the EU's borders more secure and keep refugees safer along their journey.
- Expand social programs in Greece that would help refugees find work legally and provide them with basic services both in the Greek islands and in urban areas, particularly by restoring and expanding prior funding directed at many agencies that were cut due to austerity programs.
- Establish a quota system that would designate a specific number of refugees to each EU country based on its population and economic strength

U.S. Syrian Refugee Resettlement Concerns

Jo Tono

As the Syrian civil war shows no foreseeable end in the near future, the United States must continue addressing both the immediate and long-term needs of the Syrian refugee crisis. At present, the U.S. provides the most financial aid towards the Syrian refugee humanitarian response, and in doing so, provides much-needed basic and development assistance to host countries and organizations on the ground. However, while humanitarian aid constitutes the bulk of the U.S.'s Syrian refugee response, the current national dialogue is centered on U.S. resettlement of Syrian refugees. In light of the Paris attacks on November 13, 2015, the United States is under increased pressure to inspect the link between refugees and terrorism. Considering Obama's decision to accept 10,000 Syrian refugees this fiscal year of 2016, there have been voices for both increases and decreases in the refugee acceptance quota.⁷⁵⁹ This section will highlight the security, moral, and geopolitical concerns revolving around Syrian refugee resettlement in the U.S.

Security

Given the current circumstances within the Middle Eastern region, the extensive screening procedure for Syrian refugees is justified, and the U.S. refugee program successfully prevents the entrance of potentially dangerous Syrian refugees.

Beginning with ISIL's claim of responsibility for the Paris terrorist attacks, security concerns surrounding Syrian refugees have come to the forefront of U.S. national discourse. It is surmised that one ISIL operative utilized a stolen Syrian passport to gain access into the EU as a refugee.⁷⁶⁰ The discovery of the Syrian passport is seen as ISIL's attempt to instill xenophobia, anti-Islamic, and anti-refugee sentiments.⁷⁶¹ In response to this discovery, 29 Republican governors and one Democratic governor rejected further Syrian refugee resettlement, which exacerbated anti-immigrant sentiment within the U.S.⁷⁶² Indeed, this sentiment is reflected in the national political arena, where Republican presidential candidates Donald Trump, Ted Cruz, and former candidate Jeb Bush, have all advocated for either limiting resettlement to Christian refugees or halting the resettlement program entirely.⁷⁶³ Recently, Congress debated the passage of the American Security Against Foreign Enemies Act of 2015 (SAFE), an act made to impose more stringent vetting procedures on refugees. While the SAFE act was ultimately blocked by all Democrats in the Senate, the act passed the House with the support of 242 Republicans and 47 Democrats.⁷⁶⁴ Outside of congress, a national survey indicates that 51% of Americans are opposed to accepting more Syrian refugees for resettlement.⁷⁶⁵ Therefore, the perceived threat of Syrian refugees is reflected within the political scene across both parties and the civilian population at large.

In relation to the admission of other refugees for U.S. resettlement, the admission of Syrian refugees poses a few novel security threats. First, Iraq and Syria have the highest number of foreign fighters aligning themselves with terrorists groups, and some of these fighters have migrated into the West.⁷⁶⁶ Indeed, with evidence of ISIL activity in some refugee camps, Syrian refugee vetting procedures must prevent entry of both foreign fighters and refugees potentially influenced by radical ideologies.⁷⁶⁷ Second, due to the volatility of Syria and the resulting lack of data collection, the U.S. intelligence community's understanding of Syrian extremists is narrower than extremist activity within Afghanistan and Iraq⁷⁶⁸. The motivation to look for refugee-

disguised extremists is legitimized by statements made by officials involved in Syrian refugee vetting procedures. “ISIS has vowed to send its operatives into the West posing as refugees,” says McCaul, chairman of the Homeland Security Committee. “The threat is real.”⁷⁶⁹

While these threats are real, they do not excuse closing our borders to those in need. Instead, they represent the crucial necessity of sufficient security procedures. To this end, Syrian refugees undergo a preliminary screen conducted by the UNHCR. T. Alexander Aleinikoff, Former UNHCR deputy, claims the UNHCR screening process to be rigorous with its biometric screening, iris eye scans, basic facial recognition, 2-D screening to detect fake passports, and categorization of applicants under the criteria of the pre-WWII refugee convention.⁷⁷⁰ UNHCR workers are also trained in detecting lies behind refugees’ explanation regarding country of origin information. As one UNHCR worker put it, “Listen, I know where your school is, I know the colors of its walls... We detect lies based on what’s happened in the country of origin. It’s not just hour-by-hour events; it’s ethnicity, region, family. We know the custom — we know what their dresses look like.”⁷⁷¹ Once potential resettlement applicants are processed, UNHCR then advocates for applicants at most risk (i.e. orphans, children, mothers, women), who fall under 10% of the refugee population. Finally, UNHCR chooses the location of resettlement for refugees, depending on the needs of the applicant and resources of potential resettlement countries.⁷⁷² Since refugees are unable to choose their resettlement location, there is extreme difficulty in strategizing a successful attack on U.S. soil via route of refugee admission. If refugees are selected to resettle in the U.S., the UNHCR checks for individuals’ military ties to further guard against the possibility of refugees having any links to terrorist groups.

Once the UNHCR directs refugees to the U.S., American refugee vetting procedures preclude refugees associated to terrorism from arriving to the states. Refugees apply for U.S. resettlement through either the P-1 program, where the refugee interviews with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), the P-2 program, where resettlement offers are given to refugee populations of U.S. special interest, as defined by USRAP, and the P-3 program, where reunification offers are provided for immediate family members of refugees previously admitted by USRAP.⁷⁷³

After the refugee application to the U.S. is received, the candidates visit the State Department’s Resettlement Support Center for a prescreening interview. Each individual is run through several databases within the Department of Homeland Security, the National Counterterrorism Center, the F.B.I. and the Department of Defense, and then recorded into the Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System, which holds data for facilitating interagency screening checks of refugees.⁷⁷⁴ In sum, the U.S. security measures revolve around multiple interviews and security checks by the state department, USCIS, and Homeland Security.

While concerns for security should not be discounted, it is important to place the U.S. refugee program in context of the European refugee program. First, the U.S. refugee security concerns completely differ from Europe, since refugees are pre-screened by the UNHCR and then administered security checks by the U.S. Therefore, the U.S. is able to accept a predetermined amount of refugees, which gives the country a significant amount of control over the entrance of refugees. Second, as indicated by the U.S.’s response to the September 11, 2001 attacks, the refugee program may be swiftly halted under justified security concerns.⁷⁷⁵ The EU, on the other hand, by way of geographical proximity and international refugee rules, has no such luxury and is unable to control the influx of refugees into European countries. “In October 2015, just 5,348 refugees were resettled across the United States—including 187 Syrians. The figures for November 2015 were 3,692 and 250, respectively. Only 1,682 Syrians arrived in the United States

during the whole of FY2015.”⁷⁷⁶ As indicated above, even before the Paris attacks took place, acceptance of Syrian refugees was under meticulous control. This geographical and procedural difference gives the U.S. more leverage to manage security concerns posed by refugees.

Other factors help put the security threat of refugees into context. First, the historical incidence of terrorist charges by U.S. refugees is extremely low. U.S. refugees charged with terrorism have either involved in inspiring locals to conduct attacks via magazines propagated by ISIL and Al-Qaida or they themselves conduct attacks on U.S. communities⁷⁷⁷. Between 2009-2015, there have only been 12 refugees arrested on terrorist-related charges in the United States. The arrested refugees consisted of Somali, Bosnian, Uzbek, Chechen, Iraqi, and Afghan descent.⁷⁷⁸ With none of the arrested refugees being Syrian, Syrian refugees accepted before the Paris Attacks of November 2015 have all proven to be nonviolent individuals. Second, the U.S. vetting procedures are effective. As Anne C. Richard, the assistant secretary of state for population, refugees and migration, claims “we don’t leave holes, and we don’t take chances. If there’s any doubt about someone, they don’t come.” Indeed, the stringent nature of these security measures is explained by León Rodríguez, director of USCIS., who recently testified in Congress that the United States has barred 30 individuals from entering “based on their showing up in the databases”.⁷⁷⁹ The two former U.S. secretaries of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano and Michael Chertoff, have also voiced their trust in the thorough nature of the screening process.⁷⁸⁰ Finally, the probability of a refugee being a terrorist is low. Foreign born terrorists tend to enter via student visas, tourists visas, business visas, or as lawful permanent residents.⁷⁸¹ In 2015, the U.S. accepted 1682 Syrian refugees or 0.042% out of the 4,045,650 registered Syrian refugees.⁷⁸² In order for an ISIL soldier to have successfully entered the U.S. in 2015, then he or she would have been required to “out-compete” 4,043,968 refugees who are all prospective resettlement candidates. Therefore, based on the lack of terrorist charges against Syrian refugees, the extensive nature of the vetting procedures, and the low likelihood of refugees being disguised as terrorists, the U.S. should be confident of the efficacy of their refugee screening process.

Moral and Geopolitical Interests

Grounded on the principle of human rights and the notion that the United States is a nation formed by immigrants, there remains a moral obligation toward assisting refugees. Furthermore, admittance of refugees advances U.S. geopolitical interests.

The earliest U.S. resettlement programs date back to post-World War II, where the 1948 Displaced Persons Act, the 1953 Refugee Relief Act, and the 1957 Refugee-Escapee Act gave particular assistance to refugees who were escapees from Communist-dominated countries.⁷⁸³ President Eisenhower stressed that such focus was motivated by the need to maintain favorable Western Europe and U.S. relations, the need to prevent the spread of communist ideology, and the need to demonstrate the moral backbone of the United States.⁷⁸⁴ Unlike the Cold War, acceptance of Syrian refugees offers no political incentive of demonstrating Western life’s superiority to a rivaling political ideology.⁷⁸⁵ However, similar to the moral reasoning of Eisenhower, President Obama has made clear that “slamming the door in their faces would be a betrayal of our values. . . . That’s not American. That’s not who we are. We don’t have religious tests to our compassion.”⁷⁸⁶ The inability to resettle Syrian refugees means many will be continually persecuted by their government, and as such, opposition to the FY2016 quota would be an attack on the UN Declaration of Human Rights Article 3, “everyone...has the right to security of person”, and Article 14, “everyone has the right to seek... in other countries asylum from

persecution”.⁷⁸⁷ If the U.S. is to stand for human rights and abide by its moral standards of every human being entitled to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”, Syrian refugee resettlement must continue.

Also, considering that U.S. intervention in the Middle East since 2001 has inadvertently helped bring ISIL and other terrorist groups to power, the U.S. must take responsibility for its direct part in bringing instability to the Middle East and the resulting exacerbation of the Syrian refugee crisis. Similar motivations behind increased refugee acceptance are not without precedent. In 1975, an Indochinese Refugee Resettlement program was established under the recognition that U.S. evacuation from the region had left many—especially Vietnamese and Cambodian citizens who had assisted with military operations in Vietnam and Cambodia—at risk.⁷⁸⁸ Specifically, when the U.S. left Vietnam in 1975, the South Indochinese population was in danger of retaliation by the North Vietnamese government, and in due process, millions of Indo-Chinese citizens were displaced.⁷⁸⁹ Similarly, as Noam Chomsky, institute professor emeritus at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has argued, U.S. involvement in Iraq exacerbated sectarian conflict that helped give rise to ISIL, whose present engagement in the Syrian civil war has displaced more Syrians.⁷⁹⁰ This resemblance should compel the U.S. to learn from the Indochinese Resettlement program that resettled refugees from areas where U.S. military engagement contributed to displacement. Therefore, like 1975, Syrian refugee resettlement provides a tangible means to express U.S. engagement and concern with populations negatively affected by U.S. international policy.⁷⁹¹

Strategic objectives for resettlement exist as well. As Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey continue to take in the majority of Syrian refugees, these host countries require more accommodation assistance. Resettlement offers another option for the U.S. to alleviate the burden experienced by host countries. Albeit U.S. funding towards humanitarian aid to the refugee crisis, the UNHCR covered only 58% of its funding for 2015 and WFP has been forced to cut its food assistance by fifty percent.⁷⁹² Failure to act risks exacerbating the political, security, and economic tensions within these countries, and as the Syrian civil war prolongs, the refugee crisis has the potential to become increasingly chaotic and threaten the regional stability of an already volatile region.

In the context of Syrian refugees, deteriorating refugee camps are often potential recruitment grounds for armed groups. These armed groups include the Free Syrian Army (FSA), but do not preclude groups with extremist ideologies such as ISIL.⁷⁹³ Militant groups attract refugees with promises of financial compensation, improved housing conditions, and better food security.⁷⁹⁴ These same conditions that attract Syrian refugees are conditions replicable by U.S. resettlement. While the U.S. security process may prevent terrorists from entering the U.S., they do not prevent the recruitment of ISIL soldiers and the resulting increase in the military capacity of ISIL. Therefore, U.S. resettlement offers the opportunity to provide much needed regional stability to refugee host countries and a combative tool to prevent ISIL armament.

Furthermore, the acceptance of Syrian refugees caters towards U.S. geopolitical interests of maintaining alliances and the unity of Western Europe. Europe has been America’s strategic ally since 1946 and a major trading partner. Beginning with the Marshall Plan, American support and engagement has allowed for European prosperity and consolidation. At the current rate of refugee migration, Europe will be unable to keep accepting refugees and indeed, not only are there European voices who oppose the international asylum system, but countries that were initially welcoming of refugees (i.e. Germany and Sweden) have already begun to limit their acceptance.⁷⁹⁵⁷⁹⁶ If Europe closes its doors to refugees, there is drastically less hope for refugees who strive for a better life, which in turn, further increases the risk of refugees being lured to join

militant groups. If the refugee burden on Europe continues to mount and the U.S. is not perceived as an active participant in the refugee crisis, Euro-American unity will be undermined, which is key for addressing other U.S. geopolitical interests (i.e. stopping Russia's encroachment on Ukraine). Indeed, the U.S.'s current Syrian refugee quota of 10,000 pales in comparison to Germany's proposed 800,000. By easing Western Europe's share of the refugee crisis with U.S. resettlement, Western Europe will be better positioned to address the refugee crisis and aid other U.S. geopolitical interests.

Plan of Action

Addressing the World Economic Forum in Davos, Secretary Kerry called for "at least double the number of refugees resettled or afforded safe and legal channels to admission."⁷⁹⁷ The international community's response to the above call of action will largely depend on the U.S.'s share of Syrian refugee resettlement. The U.S. must demonstrate its commitment to resolving the refugee crisis and accrue credibility when facilitating international policies toward Syria.⁷⁹⁸ Indeed, Robert Cary, Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, claims other nations observe the U.S. resettlement quota and adjust accordingly. If the U.S. is to convince other international members to fulfill Secretary Kerry's resettlement goal, it must lead by example and raise the present refugee quota of 10,000 refugees. Moreover, the U.S. must raise the quota if it aims to acquire the geopolitical benefits associated with resettlement and stay true to its moral values. In 2014, the UNHCR designated 130,000 Syrians in need of resettlement in 2016 and the U.S. has traditionally taken half of this number. The U.S. should aim for resettling 65,000 Syrian refugees between FY2016-FY2017.⁷⁹⁹

In September 2015, Secretary Kerry commented on the U.S. refugee quota by stating, "10,000 is not a ceiling. It is a floor".⁸⁰⁰ Indeed, although there is a consultation process, the president has executive authority on establishing the refugee quota in October of 2017.⁸⁰¹ Raising the refugee quota is a step legitimized on both a legal and executive basis.

Initially, the U.S. should look to increase its resettlement numbers in the next six months by 23,000. Public Law 96-212 (1980) allows the president to authorize immediate and increased refugee admissions by arguing that the refugee crisis is an emergency situation.⁸⁰² This temporary surge will help clear the backlog of refugees over the past year and inform the international community of the U.S.'s serious commitment to resolving the refugee crisis. The proposed temporary surge is not without precedent, as evidenced by Operative Provide Refuge 1999, where the U.S. granted admission to 13,989 Kosovo refugees over the course of three months.⁸⁰³ To ensure that those included in the temporary surge present the minimum security threat, all will have underwent UNHCR screening, be registered in the backlog of potential Syrian refugee candidates, and either be victims of torture, orphans, children, and/or mothers.

To reach the 65,000-person quota, the U.S. vetting system must be modified. The U.S. vetting system is extremely effective at maintaining security, but there exists time-consuming procedures that are inconsequential to the security goals of the refugee admission process. Refugees currently wait 18-24 months due to the inefficiencies within the vetting system and the decentralized state of the refugee resettlement process.⁸⁰⁴ A security screening judges the security threat of the refugee at the time of screening. If a refugee receives security clearance but as in many cases, is not resettled for another year, he or she has potential of being radicalized in refugee camps. In some cases, security checks may be repeated if the backlog causes the refugee to wait longer after the initial security check.⁸⁰⁵ Considering that the refugee was already cleared

under the world's most robust refugee security procedures, this is a waste of resources. An expedited vetting procedure is more safe and efficient.

To this end, similar to Operation Provide Refuge, all medical and security screening will be centralized to Fort Dix, a U.S. Army and Air Force base in New Jersey that processed, screened, and admitted 4,000 Kosovar refugees during the month of May 1999.⁸⁰⁶ Each department that participates in security screening will send delegations to Fort Dix under the leadership of the DHS. Other mechanisms to expedite the security screening process include a “whole government approach” for refugee visas, where all agencies (i.e. DHS, DOS, USCIS) comply with expedited procedures once one agency determines a refugee to be eligible for expedited processing, implementation of digital tools to facilitate adjudication process, which would digitize the visa application and adjudication process, and use of platforms such as USCIS, which helps refugees navigate the application process.⁸⁰⁷

To further expedite the resettlement process, the U.S. should look into private sponsorship programs that serve the dual purpose of altering the unfavorable climate towards refugees and expediting the refugee process. Private sponsorship programs are not without precedent, since the U.S. did so for Canadians and Soviet Jews⁸⁰⁸. The private sponsorship programs may be a means to fulfill the government quota. Mobilization of civil society in favor of private sponsorship may also help generate political will to institute and expand government resettlement for the United States. Indeed, Canadian public opinion of refugee resettlement has continued to increase since the inception of its private sponsorship program in the 1970s.⁸⁰⁹ Security concerns are thwarted by only allowing sponsorship of refugees recognized by UNHCR and the state. Increased outlets for refugee integration will support the surge in Syrian refugee admissions.

Conclusion

Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and the EU are increasingly taxed by the inflow of refugees. Humanitarian aid and diplomatic efforts to end the Syrian civil war are ongoing. However, with no foreseeable end to the Syrian civil war in the near future, these efforts, albeit important, are not sufficient to address the growing refugee crisis. Establishment of safe zones, an alternative to resettlement, would require ground troops and is opposed by both political parties. Resettlement offers a long term solution for refugees, which provides them with a quality of life that fulfills their basic human rights. Resettlement increases U.S. political power on the international stage, which in turn, serves U.S. geopolitical interests. The U.S. can and must do more. For both refugees and U.S. interests, Syrian refugee resettlement must increase.

Policy Recommendations

- Increase Fiscal Year 2016 Syrian Refugee Quota to 23,000 by enacting Public Law 96-212.
- Facilitate the increased resettlement and expedite the resettlement process via private sponsorship, more efficient vetting procedures, and localization of screening procedures at Fort Dix.
- Increase Fiscal Year 2017 Syrian Refugee Quota to 42,000.

The United States and Germany: Cultural and Social Integration of Refugees

Ayaz Talantuli

The Syrian refugees seeking asylum in third countries of resettlement will live in a society and environment different from their country of origin. In the United States and Europe there is an increase of “Islamophobia” regarding domestic security amid the growing Islamic State (ISIL) movement and attacks on Western soil such as the Paris and San Bernardino shootings. Consequently, there is opposition to the acceptance of Syrian refugees, most of whom are Muslim, leading to further complications in refugee integration. This chapter analyzes the United States and Germany, with a focus on the need to provide sustainable long-term refugee integration. The United States has an important role in the refugee crisis due to the possible resources and aid it can provide, as well as its political leadership within the international community. Germany will be looked at as a case study for Europe, due to its integral role in the EU and influence in policy regarding refugees. A historical commitment to human rights, democracy, gender equality, freedom of speech, freedom of religion and the right to asylum are beliefs that both the United States and Germany share. Accepting refugees as a response to the Syrian civil war should remain a priority because it aligns with the integrity of American values, as more refugees have found permanent homes in the United States than another country since World War II.⁸¹⁰

As a member of the EU, Germany has an obligation to accept refugees and grant asylum for those who qualify. At first Germany abided by the Dublin Regulations that mandated refugees’ remain in the country of first asylum, but due to the urgent nature of the crisis, it has since overlooked European asylum laws and opened its doors to any asylum seekers who could get there. However, due to public and political pressure, German Chancellor Angela Merkel has recently reversed this decision and put forth the motion to close borders and send back refugees to the first European Union country they entered.⁸¹¹ A previously leading force in refugee resettlement within the EU, the German population and their representatives in government have set the nation in a new direction. The refugee populations in third countries of resettlement face the need of housing, employment and other resources as well as the adaptation and cooperation of local populations.⁸¹² This portion of the task force will examine the issues of long-term economic and social refugee integration within the United States and Germany, first by outlining economic and moral incentives for each nation to resettle and integrate refugees. This will be followed by a description of the cultural barriers in each state, specifically Islamophobia, then by an examination of the processes of social integration. Finally, this chapter will conclude with policy recommendations designed to facilitate successful refugee integration.

American and German Interests in Refugee Integration

Economic Aspects

Welcoming and integrating Syrian refugees is first and foremost a gesture of goodwill and solidarity that provides a direly needed solution for many people fleeing from persecution. However, resettling refugees offers an economic incentive to third countries of resettlement because those who become successfully resettled and integrated will also generate an economic

return. The White House Task Force on New Americans reports the potential economic benefits of integrating immigrants into the population, citing that “Immigrants increase the size of the population and thus of the labor force and customer base, making an important contribution to economic growth.”⁸¹³ Different figures also provide insight to more specific positive impacts immigrants contribute as a part of the national makeup. “Immigrants, for example, are more likely than native-born individuals to start businesses”⁸¹⁴ Furthermore, a study by the Partnership for a New American Economy found that more than 40% of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or the children of immigrants.⁸¹⁵ In 2005, more than half of new tech startups in Silicon Valley had at least one immigrant founder.⁸¹⁶ These statistics indicate the economic success that follows a smooth integration of immigrants and refugees into new communities.

On the other hand, in Europe, Germany’s labor force is shrinking, and with an aging population, there is concern that the skills deficit will hold back the country’s economic growth. The demographics of Syrian refugees offer a unique opportunity to this situation; half of all Syrian refugees are under the age of 18⁸¹⁷. If equipped with the tools to succeed, they will benefit from the safety Germany offers while contributing positively to the labor force. Although barriers do exist, “new immigrants to Germany enjoy considerable improvements in their access to the labor market during the first few years after arrival.”⁸¹⁸ Highlighting the diversity and skills of refugees provides new ideas and perspectives and will help the U.S. and Germany to “reap the economic benefits of this vitality and creativity”⁸¹⁹.

Moral Aspects

Europe and The United States are fundamentally built on the beliefs of individual freedom and liberty; a commitment to human rights, democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of religion and the right to asylum. Both nations are signatories to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UNHCR Refugee Convention, therefore action towards solving and aiding the Syrian refugee crisis should be a priority for the United States. Maintaining its historical precedent, the United States should continue resettling high numbers of refugees. As a nation built by immigrants, the importance of diversity and acceptance of people from all cultures is in line with American values. For example, President Obama announced on World Refugee Day in 2014, “This country was built by people who fled oppression and war, leapt at opportunity, and worked day and night to remake themselves in this new land.” As the largest global donor of humanitarian aid, the United States is also a leader in its commitment to human rights.

Germany has a different historical precedent, internalizing its role in the Holocaust very seriously. “German citizens know that the regulations of the Geneva Refugee Convention stem from the historical experience with Jewish refugees fleeing the Holocaust,” says Petra Bendel of the Central Institute for Regional Research at Erlangen, in Bavaria.⁸²⁰ Through education on the circumstances that led to the rise of the Nationalist Socialist party, commemoration of the Holocaust’s victims, and being a strong advocate of the acceptance of refugees, Germany seeks to prevent such an atrocity from ever occurring again and has taken their role in human rights commitments very seriously. As a prominent member of the European Union, Germany has represented a strong voice for refugee resettlement in the past few decades.

Cultural Barriers to Integration: Islamophobia

United States

Muslims in America face discrimination in several areas of life because of perceptions or attitudes some Americans hold about their religion or ethnic origin. Discrimination has a negative impact on their lives and affects their exercise of many human rights. It damages identity, opportunities, and self-esteem and can result in isolation, exclusion and stigmatization.⁸²¹ A poll conducted by the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) survey titled "*Anxiety, Nostalgia, and Mistrust*" in 2015 indicated that Americans' positive perception of Islam has decreased 9 percent since 2011.⁸²² In 2016 a new American president will be elected into office. On December 7th, 2015, the leading Republican Candidate Donald J. Trump called for "a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what is going on."⁸²³ Republicans lead the negative attitude toward Muslims: 76% claim Islam's values are "at odds" with American values and way of life. Meanwhile 73% of white evangelicals and 67% of white working-class Americans were among other groups that showed high animosity toward Muslims.⁸²⁴ Around 57% of political independents and 42% of Democrats agreed with the "at odds" prompt, with the overall rate at 56%.⁸²⁵ This survey was conducted prior to both the San Bernardino and Paris attacks, and it is feasible to assume a higher percentage of public disdain now exists toward Muslims. Many state governors who have tried to reject Muslim refugees in their respective states have articulated this viewpoint.⁸²⁶

Vague policies with ill-defined parameters can exacerbate Islamophobia by collectively subjecting Muslims to arbitrary security monitoring. The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) criticized the DHS's Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) program for its poor management and role in permitting the objectification and unnecessary surveillance of Muslims in America in efforts to deter terrorism. Ostensibly, the aim of CVE is "the use of non-coercive means to dissuade individuals or groups from mobilizing toward violence and to mitigate recruitment, support, facilitation or engagement in ideologically motivated terrorism by non-state actors in furtherance of political objectives."⁸²⁷ Yet, CVE uses discriminatory tactics in its profiling of Muslims which have been found to be ineffective, making it an inefficient use of public resources.⁸²⁸ Allowing a program like CVE to discriminate against the American Muslim population challenges the values of freedom and diversity that define American national character. The CAIR recommends an alternative in the efforts to combat extremist inspired violence, stating "a key to diminishing the appeal of extremist inspired violence, which preys on the hopelessness and helplessness and perceived injustices of the disenfranchised, is to empower communities with means of expressing their dissent and criticism in healthy ways."⁸²⁹ While security will realistically continue to remain a priority in the American agenda, policies such as the CVE Act that supersede individual freedom due to one's identity as a Muslim only create fear and polarity in the American public rather than effectively combatting terrorism. Furthermore, a nation with policy that subjects Muslims to unique surveillance or treatment is not conducive to the potential integration of Syrian refugees.

Local initiatives and programs designed to create a more informed understanding between Muslims and the rest of the general population will help establish familiarity and promote diversity in the United States. Interfaith dialogue between community churches, mosques and other religious groups can progressively affect the public perception of Islam and people coming from Muslim communities. A greater understanding of different religions can have a positive impact on the public's perception and sentiment towards Muslims.⁸³⁰ Interfaith dialogue,

increased communication, and meeting people from various faiths can help build more understanding between different followers; for example, “of the 43% of Americans in the 2007 Pew study with a favorable view of Muslims, 56% had a personal relationship with Muslims; of the 35% with an unfavorable view, only 29% had a personal relationship with a Muslim.”⁸³¹ Most importantly, “communities play a vital role in welcoming immigrants by celebrating and valuing their diverse linguistic and cultural assets, connecting new residents to long-time residents, and building support networks to assist in integration and community cohesion.”⁸³² Thus, the acceptance and cooperation of local communities is essential to successful long-term integration.

Germany

The issue that prevails in public and political opinion is Islamophobia. Many members of the German public and their policy makers do not want to welcome the Muslim migrants who comprise most of the Syrian asylum seekers.⁸³³ Due to the inevitability of more migrants, a growing societal polarity in European nations creates a hostile atmosphere, reminiscent of a not so distant past during which the German National Socialist Party persecuted citizens on the basis of racial and religious identities. For instance in Cardiff, England, an implicitly discriminatory policy has forced asylum seekers to wear red wristbands at all times, otherwise they will not be fed⁸³⁴ - a policy with harrowing historical parallels.⁸³⁵ Germany in particular, with strong conservative parties and a Christian Democratic government, has experienced increased public anxiety about Islam and possible security threats.⁸³⁶ Politicians have created policies that oppose fundamental liberal values; for example, there is a policy mandating collective punishment of all adult male refugees in Bornheim, Germany that have been banned from public swimming pools.⁸³⁷ Statistics show that refugees are not any more likely to participate in crime and terrorism than native populations.⁸³⁸ In an extensive study of data provided by the UN on refugee populations and civil outbreaks in host nations, Andrew Shaver and Yang-Yang Zhou “[found] no evidence that refugee communities tend to increase conflict likelihood in those areas in which they seek safety.”⁸³⁹

Europe’s population of 500 million received approximately one million irregular migrants and asylum seekers in 2015.⁸⁴⁰ There is discord among European governments in reaction to the situation: many are individually closing borders and tightening asylum rules despite the fact that the Dublin Regulations still hold legal precedence. Europe and Germany are seeing a rise in conservative populist parties as well as a surge in anti-immigrant violence.⁸⁴¹ German Chancellor Angela Merkel faces pressure within her own party to mitigate the flow of refugees into the country. Although Germany previously planned to set the cap at around one million asylum seekers, a series of incidents including the Paris attacks and sexual assaults in Cologne have amplified the instability in Germany as well as other countries in the EU, putting into question the likelihood of the suggested cap. In the incident in Cologne on New Year's Day of 2016, there were 653 reports of sexual assault or theft recorded and tied to men of alleged “North African or Arabic” appearance.⁸⁴² Such events involving the Muslim community in Europe help the rise of anti-Muslim populist parties in Germany as well as other European nations. Merkel has shifted her plans from setting the cap from one million to closing the borders to refugees due to pressure from the public as well as her cabinet. Whether Muslims and people from Muslim communities can assimilate and co-exist among the rest of the population is a common discussion within the European Union, but the cause of Islamophobia may be more socio-economic in nature rather than derived from anti-Islamic attitudes.⁸⁴³ As sociologist Christian Joppke states, “Poverty and

exclusion above all fuel the politicization of cultural differences - and should be the core of integration policy solutions - yet identity remains paramount in public debates.”

Political parties’ messages and the portrayal of Muslims in the media can stigmatize the population. Public officials and those seeking political office have a responsibility not to promote or strengthen stereotypical views, which may stimulate intolerance and discrimination. Portraying Islam, as a system of values, which denies gender equality, or as a violent ideology, will help foster a climate of hostility and suspicion against people perceived as Muslim, which can lead to discrimination.⁸⁴⁴ The Islamic Human Rights Commission suggests that “the negative impact of the media which influences the public overlaps into a political discourse and has resulted in the creation of government policies which specifically target Muslims... thus enforcing the legitimacy of structural racism.”⁸⁴⁵ Classifying people within racial or ethnic categories perpetuates ideas and perceptions of these groups collectively, even those that are law-abiding, productive members in society.

A society that isolates Muslims through judgment and fear does not bode well for the Syrian refugees seeking asylum in European territory. The troubling perception of Muslims as security threats only further complicates the European response to the Syrian refugee crisis. The United Nations has accused the Syrian government of “inhumane actions” on a scale that “amounts to extermination” which briefly describes the current state of the situation leading to migration.⁸⁴⁶ Thus due to the severity of the situation, more Syrian refugees will attempt to make the journey to Europe which is inevitable with such conditions imposed on them. Not just Germany but the entire EU must maintain its integrity in granting asylum to those who meet the requirements as there is no likely end to the civil war in the near future. Avoiding further polarization and social conflict upon the arrival of more refugees will take cooperation by both sides, beginning at the community-based level, in an attempt to establish more solidarity between contrasting cultures, rather than creating separation.

Social Integration

United States

Providing appropriate services and protecting rights, which ensure personal freedom and opportunity for economic advancement, will help create a stronger affiliation between refugees and American citizens. Having a safe environment along with opportunities in the labor force will aid in providing a stable social foundation where refugees can obtain personal independence, economic security, and progress in their lives. According to the New York Times, the town of Utica, New York is unique in that refugee families make up a quarter of its population of 62,000.⁸⁴⁷ In Utica, the immigrants have been “an economic engine for the city, starting small businesses, buying and renovating down-at-the-heels houses and injecting a sense of vitality to forlorn city streets”.⁸⁴⁸ This depiction highlights the success of a well-integrated community, which has “revitalized the once fading town”.⁸⁴⁹ The U.S. has the capacity to take in refugees who pass the screening process, then combined with the proper procedures of integration, diverse, thriving, working communities, such as Utica are possible.

Along with initiatives in local American communities to promote cross-cultural relations there must be a push to provide opportunities and services for refugees to produce for themselves and the respective economy. The widely accepted notion that areas stricken with poverty are more prone to crime can be used as a rationale for the next step in refugee integration.⁸⁵⁰ According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, “persons in poor households at or below the Federal Poverty

Level (FPL) (39.8 per 1,000) had more than double the rate of violent victimization as persons in high-income households (16.9 per 1,000).⁸⁵¹ Refugees need policies, which provide opportunities that include resources, education, and training to be able to achieve financial stability. It is important for each member of a society to have the opportunity to create and sustain viable living conditions. The “American Dream” attracts many, offering the ability to achieve independence, autonomy, and financial success through hard work and determination. The factors that minimize a person’s likelihood of committing a crime are ensuring capital growth, establishing security, and understanding the increased responsibility that comes with acquiring more assets.⁸⁵² If refugees have access to these services, then they would not only succeed personally but also contribute to the wellbeing of society as a whole.

The process of refugee resettlement in the U.S. features services for newly arrived persons such as a brief adjustment period that includes an orientation explaining what will be provided along with responsibilities.⁸⁵³ The initial process is facilitated by the Department of State with sponsorship agencies from both public and private non-profit organizations. Upon reception, sponsorship agencies provide initial services that include housing with furnishings and supplies, food, and clothing for a period of no less than 30 days, which may be extended up to 90 days.⁸⁵⁴ A community orientation includes information regarding public and personal safety, public transportation, standards of personal hygiene, the importance of learning English, legal status, citizenship, etc.⁸⁵⁵ Eventually refugees will be introduced into employment guidance and language training, two of the essential components of successful integration.

The U.S. resettlement program is impressive by any international standard due to the scale and volume of refugees the program accepts.⁸⁵⁶ However, there are some key issues, which need to be addressed in order to accommodate the needs and growing size of resettled populations, especially considering a potential influx of Syrian refugees. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) funding for services to refugee populations has been stagnant for almost 25 years.⁸⁵⁷ Along with funding, another critical issue is the focus on immediate employment at the expense of obtaining better jobs. “Service providers, for example have expressed frustration that funding does not allow them to prioritize training or skills development programs that might help refugees find higher-skilled and better-paid work in the longer term”.⁸⁵⁸ A restructuring of the U.S. resettlement program in order to aid and provide more training and development of skills will allow refugees more opportunity for economic success.

Within the services provided, linguistic training and the ability to communicate in English is the most important factor in determining how well a refugee can achieve economic self-sufficiency.⁸⁵⁹ There is concern for refugees who do not learn English well as “refugees and immigrants without sufficient English skills are among the least likely to be employed.”⁸⁶⁰ Providing translation services is required by law for programs that resettle refugees; “any agency or organization that receives federal funds to assist refugees is legally mandated to take steps to ensure meaningful access to its programs and services for clients with limited English proficiency.”⁸⁶¹ Finding qualified staff to train refugees in English provides a challenge for some languages; however, there is a strong base of Arabic speakers able to accommodate Syrians’ language needs.⁸⁶² A direct correlation between native language ability and literacy serves as proxy in learning new levels of education and language training.⁸⁶³ The importance of learning English may be the only priority to some but providing supplemental educational services is necessary for refugees who are not literate in their first language. This may “impede refugees’ integration, as it indicates a lack of basic educational attainment – a needed foundation for building English language skills.”⁸⁶⁴ Installing more programs of instruction in Arabic to aid the

Syrian refugees in basic education will be conducive to building foundational literacy skills that will allow them to eventually participate in English-language instruction classes. This issue is critical to the integration process as literacy and learning ability are the essential elements of refugees' self sufficiency: in becoming a functional member of society and in terms of finding jobs with stable wages.⁸⁶⁵

Germany

Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s West Germany began welcoming guest workers from many different countries in order to stimulate its economy. Guest workers (many coming from Muslim backgrounds)⁸⁶⁶ were invited temporarily, but would eventually stay permanently, later followed by spouses and family members, setting a precedent for accepting and integrating immigrants of Muslim background. The German government first passed comprehensive migration and integration legislation in 2005,⁸⁶⁷ aiming to transform Germany into a country open and attractive to immigrants of all religious and ethnic backgrounds. Although the current climate towards accepting and integrating refugees has shifted, Germany still has a historical culture of refugee integration. Policy measures should be taken to address changing public sentiment and to adequately integrate refugees into the existing social climate.

A significant issue regarding Muslims in Europe that heavily influences domestic opinion is the fact that second generations are more likely to feel marginalized and thus more prone to engage in crimes and acts of terrorism. However, data on economic status of Muslims suggest other factors that lead to crime. A new Danish statistical study finds that “Muslims [are] 218 percent more criminal in the second generation than the first.”⁸⁶⁸ This alarming statistic suggests that second generation Muslims may suffer religious and cultural stigmatization living in European countries. However, most research suggests that crime is more directly related to the socioeconomic conditions than to social, cultural or demographic factors, thus it can be inferred that unemployment and poverty are “a more potent source of tension between Muslims and wider European and U.S. society than religious differences.”⁸⁶⁹ Ensuring that Muslims and all minorities have the opportunity to achieve better socioeconomic conditions can serve as a preventative measure to crime, particularly with second generation Muslims.

With over one million asylum seekers arriving across the Mediterranean Sea, Europe is dealing with a very difficult influx of refugees. Domestically, Germany is dealing with labor shortages and has the capacity to incorporate refugees into its work force. If Germany accepts and integrates refugees it will benefit both the host country and desperate migrants. This would provide a safe environment for refugees fleeing the violence of a civil war, and fill the need for workers in European countries due to the declining labor force. The program *Arbeitsmarktlichen Unterstutzung fur Bleibeberechtigte und Fluchtlinge mit Zugang zum Arbeitsmarkt (AUBFZA)* seeks to create networks between the local and regional actors in Germany that helps refugees attain stable long-term employment through counseling and training sessions in collaboration with employers.⁸⁷⁰ More funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) to expand these services to a larger population will help refugees find better employment opportunities and integrate into society.⁸⁷¹

The AUBFZA pilot program is intended to help refugees become more familiar with the German labor market and to improve their prospects while also encouraging German employers to hire refugees.⁸⁷² By providing incentives such as tax breaks to companies and organizations that hire refugees, the German economy can further tap into the potential of refugee economic input. However, funding for the AUBFZA by the ESF ended in 2013, mitigating the quality of

services provided for refugees in Germany.⁸⁷³ Having a concrete understanding of the German labor force is essential for a refugee in a new country to achieve economic stability and success. Seeking funding for more programs such as the AUBFZA to ensure economic security is crucial in the integration of refugees.

Conclusion

Long-term integration for Syrian refugees in the United States and Germany is not only necessary for refugees' well being, but also has strong incentives for each of the host countries. Resettling and integrating refugees into their communities will not only improve these nations' economies and reaffirm their moral principles, but also reaffirm their roles as international leaders in responding effectively to the refugee crisis. Resettlement programs in the U.S. and Germany exist but have the potential to be expanded through re-education, vocational training and language training. Although public resistance due to Islamophobic sentiments represent an obstacle to successful integration efforts, this barrier can be overcome through initiatives involving civil society such as community outreach programs and interfaith dialogues. Furthermore, ensuring that refugees, especially the second generation, are well adjusted in their new communities will deter potential radicalization. An increase in refugees needing resettlement in third countries such as the U.S. and Europe is inevitable considering the continuing conflict in Syria. Both the U.S. and Germany have the capacity to resettle and integrate more refugees into their communities; they simply need the political willpower to do so.

Policy Recommendations

- Encourage the U.S. and German governments to create community initiatives such as interfaith dialogues through local outreach programs to establish intercultural understanding and create an environment conducive to integration for potential Syrian refugees as well as following generations.
- Expand the existing German and U.S. integration services offered to refugees, including education, re-training, employment assistance and language instruction.

The Systemic Failures of the International Refugee Regime and Its Impact on Refugee Crisis Response

Carly Kurtz

It has been widely acknowledged that the international response to the Syrian refugee crisis has been incoherent and inadequate from virtually every angle. This chapter will examine where the current international refugee regime is failing, touching on the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, as well as the Geneva Convention and international humanitarian law. The ultimate goal of this chapter is to merge the reality of complicated displacement situations with the human rights outlined in international policies and humanitarian law through specific recommendations.

This chapter will begin with a brief but important discussion about the needs of displaced peoples with ideas from refugees themselves. Unfortunately, the refugee crisis, which is impacting the EU as well as Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon, and consists of horrifying conditions for Syrian refugees, has sparked much political debate and discussion but has also left out the extremely important voices of Syrians. However, it is important to note that Syrians care about their homeland and some wish to come forward to provide the international community with a better understanding of what refugees need. Thus, a short outline of recommendations from Syrians fleeing the civil war will also be discussed within this chapter. Additionally, the standing definition of a refugee will be analyzed in addition to the systemic failures of the specific regulations that constitute the International Refugee Regime (IRR). Current asylum systems revolve around which international regulations sovereign nations choose to ratify into their individual constitutions, regardless of most countries being signatories of the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and its Protocol. The current refugee crisis in Syria, neighboring countries, and at the borders of the EU reflects the detrimental impacts of the flawed implementation of these legislative measures on an entire refugee population, as well as the world of international politics. As a result, the history of international humanitarian law in light of the Geneva Convention of 1949 and the Protection of War Victims 1977 Protocol, and how these statutes could protect refugees, will also be examined.

Finally, there will be an examination of how the dynamics of the international community's response to the Syrian refugee crisis and how the IRR has impacted the large population of displaced Syrians which will conclude this chapter. The United States' complicated role in responding and aiding refugees displaced by the Syrian civil war will be examined as well as other key players, such as the EU, the Gulf States, and local countries of integration.

Solutions from the Inside: the Refugee Voice

Samira, a widowed Syrian refugee who moved her remaining family to Lebanon in 2013, discusses her perilous situation, stating,

It is very difficult for a woman, my father is dead, my mother is dead, my husband is dead...the only person I have is my children's uncle but his situation is worse than ours so

he cannot really help me to feed my children or to protect them. I cannot get any sort of sleep at night. I just can't stop thinking about how to feed my children and how to protect them. Sometimes I try and sell things that I have in order to get some money for food for the children.⁸⁷⁴

Here, Samira is talking about the daily needs to survive that she does not have because of her displacement. However, she is also alluding to larger issues at hand, including the gender-based difficulty she faces, lack of employment, and the massive hole in her life left by the deaths of her family members as a result of the Syrian civil war.

The Danish Refugee Council provides seven succinct recommendations from Syrians after “informal discussions” with refugees in local countries of integration.⁸⁷⁵ First and foremost, the Syrians interviewed for this report wished for a “safe and dignified return to a Syria that is free of conflict.” It is acknowledged in the report that this is not an immediate solution because of the ongoing and complicated armed conflict in Syria. Another point that comes through clearly from this report is that Syrians flee to Europe because of the inadequate conditions in the local countries of integration, Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. The report states, “the pursuit of viable livelihoods (accompanied by the legal right to work), education, medical care, and increased aid are all motivations for the journey to Europe.” Which leads to the obvious conclusion that if local countries of integration could provide these elements of basic support more adequately, Europe would be responsible for less Syrian refugees.⁸⁷⁶ Also emphasized in the report by the Danish Refugee Council, is that while the risks of traveling to Europe are fairly well known by Syrians, the rewards are not. It explains, “Syrian refugees have varied and sometimes idealized expectations of life in Europe. Information is passed primarily by word-of-mouth through community connections and is not always reliable.” Syrians may not know about the rise of the far right in Europe or about increasing anti-immigrant groups in high refugee-receiving countries such as Pegida in Germany. Without a realistic outlook of life in Europe, of course the perilous journey appears to be worth it; however, perhaps if all Syrians had accurate information about life in Europe, they would have more agency to make different decisions or at least know what awaits them once they arrive.

A concluding point that this report revealed is that “cultural differences in Europe and its distance from Syria” make the journey an unattractive choice, but yet, Syrians still pay thousands and thousands of dollars to make the trip. Comparatively, for someone with the ability to travel legally, a commercial sea trip from the Turkish coast to the Greek coast costs around \$20, while a refugee will pay around \$1,000⁸⁷⁷. The dramatic increase of price for refugees, while immoral for refugees to be exploited as such, is still paid by thousands of refugees who leave Turkey every week in fear of being returned to Syria.

Current Refugee Protection and the Implementation of Those Documents

In the UNHCR’s 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees, a refugee is defined as “someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.”⁸⁷⁸ The primary goals of the convention were to define what a

refugee is and to outline the rights afforded to those who are granted asylum. The 1967 protocol removed restrictions surrounding refugees including length of time since the event occurred which led them to flee, in addition to removing geographical restrictions for refugees. These geographical restrictions included the notion that 1951 Convention only applied to post-World War II refugees from Europe. Consequently, the Protocol extended the scope of people who were covered by the Convention. Despite the allowances of the 1967 Protocol, the definition of a refugee given by the 1951 Convention is extremely narrow, as there are only five reasons given by the UNHCR under which one can apply for asylum⁸⁷⁹, and does not serve as a perfect categorization standard for refugees. Often in the case of asylum seekers, causes for fleeing overlap and are a combination of geopolitical, economic, and other concerns. Another problematic component of this convention is that it does not cover IDPs. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, the Syrian civil war has internally displaced 7.6 million people⁸⁸⁰.

In addition to the lack of protection for IDPs and refugees who do not fall into one of the five specific categories, the 1951 Convention also establishes a system for a small trickle of asylum seekers instead of a mass influx, even for nations who do ratify it. The complicated asylum systems of both the U.S. and the EU, which were developed after World War II, are not equipped to handle the processing of thousands of Syrian migrants per day, as have been seen arriving on the Greek islands⁸⁸¹. For example, thousands of refugees arrive each day on the Greek island of Lesbos only to face unsanitary and generally deplorable conditions in a refugee camp. These refugees also could not necessarily apply for asylum despite having survived the journey to Europe because seeking asylum in Greece is virtually impossible due to a minimal number of refugees who are granted asylum each year. Human Rights Watch reports that,

Authorities in Athens are struggling to find facilities to temporarily host thousands of people. Many asylum seekers, including children, are left unassisted, destitute, homeless, or living in substandard conditions. According to the UNHCR...the total reception capacity for those who have applied for asylum in Greece is 2,109 places.⁸⁸²

Furthermore, along with these inhumane conditions, refugees travelling from Syria to northern European countries such as Germany and Sweden will likely be travelling undocumented. They can be taken advantage of and charged at every turn of their journey by people they rely on for transportation, while also being deprived of their basic human rights to food, water, healthcare, and citizenship. The Missing Migrants Project reported that the number of migrant deaths had increased from 3,279 in all of 2014 to 3,722 in only the first ten months of 2015⁸⁸³. With numbers in the thousands, it is easy for the media to dehumanize refugees and group them all into one category, which strips them of a personal portrayal of individual experience and creates a harmful discourse of dehumanization. For instance, when Alan Kurdi, a Syrian refugee who was not even three years old, was photographed dead on a Turkish beach after attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea with his family to get to Europe, it “woke the west to the urgency of the Syrian refugee crisis.”⁸⁸⁴ It has become difficult for people watching the refugee crisis through media to separate refugees as individuals, unless faced directly with the poignant death of a toddler.

The UNHCR's role in responding to the refugee crisis revolves around refugee applicant registration and management of refugee camps around the world. However, the organization is severely underfunded as illustrated in the UNHCR article "Funding Shortage Leaves Syrian Refugees in Danger of Missing Vital Support," which states, "A report...by more than 200 partners in the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in response to the Syria crisis said programmes implemented by the UN and NGOs under the plan faced a current funding gap of a staggering \$3.47 billion."⁸⁸⁵ A legal question raised by the 1951 Convention, is as follows: are sovereign nations not abiding by this legislation by letting the UNHCR become so grossly underfunded? Article 35(1) of the 1951 Convention states,

The Contracting States undertake to co-operate with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees...in the exercise of its functions, and shall in particular facilitate its duty of supervising the application of the provisions of this Convention.⁸⁸⁶

Given this clause, it is evident that signatories of this Convention are obliged to financially support the UNHCR because the 'application of the provisions of this Convention' cannot be executed without monetary resources. A clear demonstration to the welfare of refugees is not exemplified only through state programs, but also by state contributions to international organizations such as the UNHCR which aid refugees directly. World signatories are not complying with the principles they committed to, which were set forth by the 1951 Convention and Protocol, by not financially supporting the UNHCR.

Violations to the 1951 Convention and Protocol occur in other areas of implementation and international cooperation as well. For example, the principle of non-refoulement is extremely clear in the UNHCR's "Note on the Principle of Non-Refoulement." It states,

The principle of non-refoulement is the cornerstone of asylum and of international refugee law. Following from the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution, as set forth in Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this principle reflects the commitment of the international community to ensure all person the enjoyment of human rights...⁸⁸⁷

Sending a refugee back to a perilous situation is an immense violation of the Convention. However, other situations fall into the grey area and are not as easily identifiable as violating both the 1951 Convention and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For example, when migrants and their children are allowed to drown at sea during the journey from Turkey to Greece, the entirety of Europe as well as Turkey are outwardly violating the treaty, not by committing something as obviously violating as non-refoulement, but by letting refugees die nonetheless. Unfortunately, unlawful refoulement of Syrian refugees to unsafe conditions still occurs today, especially between Greece and Turkey. In August of 2015, Euronews published an article regarding Amnesty International's condemnation of Greek border practices, specifically illegal "pushbacks" which deprive migrants of the human right to seek asylum⁸⁸⁸. Greece has been accused of nearly capsizing migrant boats in an effort to push the asylum seekers back to Turkey on a fairly regular basis. This means that not only are the Greek and Turkish coast guard violating

the 1951 Convention by standing idly by as migrant boats capsize on their own, but the Greek Coast Guard is contributing to the deaths in the Mediterranean, either directly or by making asylum seekers attempt the dangerous journey more than once.

Additionally, another widely criticized element of the international refugee regime is the Dublin Regulations which make the first country of entry responsible for asylum examination⁸⁸⁹. This places disproportionate responsibility of asylum processing on the Mediterranean states because of their geographic location and proximity to Syrian neighbor countries. Aside from being ineffective because of the lack of financial resources in the Mediterranean states, the humanitarian issue of the Dublin Regulations is that conditions for asylum seekers within Greece is inadequate. Human Rights Watch reports, “Almost all EU countries stopped returning asylum seekers to Greece under the Dublin rules after a 2011 ruling by the European Court of Human Rights found conditions in Greece to be inhuman and degrading.”⁸⁹⁰ Analysis of the Dublin agreements lead to questions of international responsibility sharing and cooperation as well as the deplorable conditions for refugees when they arrive in Mediterranean states.

The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protection of War Victims 1977 Protocols: Implementation of International Humanitarian Law

The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Protection of War Victims 1977 Protocols serve to protect against inhumane treatment of prisoners of war as well as civilians in and around war zones. These conventions were established after World War II and remain the cornerstones of international humanitarian law. The problem, similar to the 1951 Conventions and Protocols, is that these standards are not being met on the ground. Because of the complicated military, economic, and other reasons for the flight of enormous numbers of Syrian refugees to neighboring countries and Europe, their protection should fall under international humanitarian laws, especially considering the huge number of IDPs still displaced in and around war zones in Syria. However, many Syrians are still suffering from cruel and unusual punishment whether it be from the Syrian government, rebel groups, or even the governments of surrounding nations and local countries of integration. For example, Syrians in detention centers and those experiencing deplorable conditions of refugee camps experience inhumane and unsanitary conditions as well as a lack of access to proper food or healthcare. With the 2011 European Court of Human Rights decision deeming conditions of refugee camps in Greece “inhuman and degrading”, there should be no question as to whether Syrian refugees are protected by the Geneva Conventions. Although they are not civilians in a warzone as they were in Syria, they are still subject to such inhumane treatment to a point that the European Court of Human Rights used the same famous diction used to describe unethical, often torturous situations.

Similar to the questions raised about the legal responsibilities of signatories to the 1951 Convention, it would be considered breaching the overarching standards of International Humanitarian Law to turn away Syrian refugees who have fled a war torn country. Forced Migrations Online Review illustrates the disparities between what is written in the Geneva Conventions and what actually happens as Syrians cross borders undocumented, as well as offering solutions. It states that, “socioeconomic factors and the lack of legal status increase

refugees' susceptibility to a range of human rights abuses and vulnerabilities whether in camps or urban settings." The article also describes how forced early marriages, domestic violence, gender-based violence, and violence against children have all increased among the refugee population⁸⁹¹. Addressing needs for highly mobile populations is a difficult task that has challenged the international community, which has not responded effectively in the case of the Syrian refugee crisis. Implementation of treaties and policies that are already in place is an integral part of their effectiveness, as is holding states responsible that violate treaties to which they are signatories. All members of the EU are signatories of the Geneva Convention, therefore no inhuman or degrading conditions should be found for refugees anywhere in the EU, or local countries of resettlement such as Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon, which are also signatories.

Another international legal question that often takes on a domestic role is regarding the treatment of refugees is the placement of refugees in detention centers and the quality of refugee camps. There are countless accounts of the squalid and unsanitary nature of refugee camps, and these conditions cannot be considered legal under international humanitarian law, which protects those who have been in war zones from inhumane and degrading treatment. For example, the conditions of the refugee camp Kara Tepe on the Greek island of Lesbos are described by a worker setting up shelter for refugees. She states,

Trash covers the fields and streets and the smell of human excrement fills the air. A handful of inadequate toilets and showers serve thousands, and tarps used as makeshift shelters and dilapidated tents set up in haste by the municipality flap in the breeze. There is no one in charge of Kara Tepe.⁸⁹²

The deplorable conditions at Kara Tepe, similar to the ones the European Court of Human Rights ruled on in 2011, reflect the legal violations committed by sovereign nations in response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Refugee camps vary in quality, but at the bare minimum they cannot constitute inhuman and degrading conditions, which unfortunately many do because of host nation violations.

Additionally, holding refugees in detention centers violates human rights, specifically Article 5 of the Universal Declaration, being that every person has the right not to be treated inhumanely or degradingly. Fleeing is not illegal, it is specifically outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that, "everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution"⁸⁹³, and yet they are treated as if it is. In December 2015, Amnesty International denounced EU and Turkish detention practices, stating:

The European Union is in danger of being complicit in serious human rights violations against refugees and asylum-seekers...Turkish authorities have been unlawfully apprehending, detaining, and pressuring refugees and asylum-seekers to return to war zones.⁸⁹⁴

Not only does this violate the principle of non-refoulement as it is stated in the 1951 Convention, but it also constitutes detention of refugees who are given no legal option of crossing international borders. With the current asylum system in place there is no mechanism for the refugees fleeing

Syria to receive documentation with which to enter Europe legally. Consequently, sovereign states may claim that entering their country without documentation is illegal and can constitute being held in a detention center if the refugee has not yet applied for asylum. There must be a legal system of migration in order for refugees to lawfully enter safe nations in order to minimize the human rights abuses. A solution to this is the funding and implementation of a humanitarian scheme and expanded resettlement program. The EU, United States, local countries of integration, and UNHCR must coordinate with one another to ensure the safe passage and long-term resettlement of refugees. There is precedent for such a structure, as a similar system was developed after World War I. This was the Nansen passport system, which provided stateless persons and refugees a legal mode of transit.⁸⁹⁵ After World War I and under the League of Nations, Fridtjof Nansen created the Nansen passport as a way for stateless persons to travel legally. Syrian refugees could apply for documentation such as this at UNHCR tents in local countries of integration including Turkey, Lebanon, and Jordan. The idea of a Nansen passport does not only provide safer transportation for refugees, but also illustrates a combination of private and public sector funding, as the Nansen office was financed by both. The implementation of a humanitarian scheme combined with long-term resettlement in countries within the EU, local countries of integration, and the U.S. will prevent violations of refugee rights and encompass a powerful convergence of the public and private sector in order to help those in need and reduce some of the exploitation that refugees experience during their journey.

Dynamics of the International Refugee Response

Implementation of policies that are already outlined within international treaties is essential to the success of refugees, but it also has an underlying positive impact as well. There has been significant international disagreement, especially among EU member states, as to how to address the border crisis. For example, Germany has granted refugee status to hundreds of thousands of Syrians, while virtually no Syrian refugees have any documentation in Greece. The geopolitical situation and relationships between EU countries, as well as the U.S., have negatively affected the ability of these states to implement policies effectively and coordinate with one another. This has even reached the extent of the Schengen system of free movement in Europe coming into question. The World Economic Forum illustrates this phenomenon, stating, “The majority [of refugees] have been heading to Germany. The country expects to take in 1 million asylum seekers by the end of the year...it is in response to these huge numbers that Germany decided to re-impose its internal border controls.”⁸⁹⁶ Essentially, even one European state’s attempt at response to the Syrian refugee crisis has threatened the entire internal movement system under which Europe functions. International refugee response must be reconstructed to aid refugees in a way that does not call established and efficient governance into question. This can be achieved through the international cooperation and burden sharing among responding countries.

Refugee crises have not been effectively responded to by the international community, especially in times of political turmoil. Political consequences of wars and other conflicts can result in ineffective refugee response of the international community. Refugee studies expert Gil Loescher writes on this issue, stating, “International institutions traditionally have had difficulty

addressing refugee problems, particularly during times of great disorder and structural change within world politics - for example, during the First World War when multinational states and empires disintegrated and after the Second World War when the global structure shifted from a multipolar to a bipolar system⁸⁹⁷. The inability of the international community to respond appropriately to refugee crises over time stems not only from the instability of world politics, but also from the unwillingness of sovereign nations to extend their resettlement programs and make a full commitment to the welfare of refugees. Loescher goes on to discuss how individual states must have incentives to help end a refugee crisis; for example, the perceived threat to national security or the political instability and friction caused by mass influx of refugees. However, this is problematic for both the EU and the U.S. because the U.S. is geographically removed from the border crisis and it is extremely complicated to implement incentives for each individual European state because each state is sovereign, even though in some arenas the EU acts as a single political entity. Although the United States has agreed to accept 10,000 more Syrian refugees, more than half of U.S. governors have said that they will refuse to resettle Syrian refugees in their states.⁸⁹⁸ The United States should resettle more Syrian refugees and should also take advantage of its leadership role in world politics by conducting a dynamic response to this issue. The U.S.'s role in the Syrian civil war is extremely convoluted because of Iran and Russia's geopolitical interests in keeping the Assad regime in power and therefore the civil war continuing.⁸⁹⁹ Therefore, where the U.S. can thrive in response to the Syrian refugee crisis is in its political leadership. If the U.S. displays international cooperation combined with an external devotion to resettling more Syrian refugees and providing monetary aid to NGOs and international bodies such as the UNHCR, it will create a precedent for other countries to do the same.

The issues facing effective international cooperation begin to become more convoluted when the role and actions of signatories to the 1951 Convention and Protocol are analyzed. Greece, Germany, Sweden, the U.S., and Turkey are all signatories to both the Convention and Protocol. However, their responses and upholding of what is outlined in these documents have ranged from the physical rescuing of migrants at sea to the integration of thousands of refugees into society. This is partially because of geographical location and partially because of resource availability and willingness to implement policies to aid refugees. Although Jordan and Lebanon hold a massive number of Syrian refugees because of their proximity to the conflict, they are not signatories of the 1951 Convention and therefore have less legal incentive to provide state assistance to refugees. In a way, these sovereign nations have stepped up to the plate of refugee resettlement in the way they have taken in hundreds of thousands of people. However, the treatment of Syrian refugees in these countries is still inherently flawed because of the lack of ratification of the 1951 Convention and lack of incentives for host countries. Similarly, the Gulf States such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia have not signed the Convention. Qatar and Saudi Arabia's involvement in the Syrian civil war revolves around their monetary contributions to religious groups who, in turn, assist Syrian rebel groups.⁹⁰⁰ The absence of the Gulf States in this crisis reflects the lack of international cooperation and improper allocation of resources, possibly even forcing more people to flee Syria by allowing rebel groups to confront the state more heavily armed. The Gulf States, of course, are not the only source of monetary resources being

misallocated. However, they provide an example of extreme wealth being put into the hands of militants instead of toward the welfare of refugees.

Conclusion

The failures of the IRR have unfortunately left holes for Syrian refugees to experience human rights violations during their journey. Among signatories and non-signatories of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the Geneva Convention, there is a glaring disparity between what is outlined in these documents and what rights Syrian refugees are actually being provided. These gaps are described by Alexander Betts, who writes,

Although survival migrants have rights under international human rights law, the institutional framework to ensure their application remains inadequate. In situations in which the regime has not stretched beyond its original scope and purpose, it has left gaps that have significant human consequences.⁹⁰¹

Betts suggests that the international refugee regime must be stretched; meaning interpreted in a flexible way that capitalizes on the jurisdiction of the international treaties, in order to prevent human rights abuses which refugee's experience. This must happen; however, sovereign nations must also become signatories to these conventions if they are not already and also implement what is *already written* in the conventions. Regime stretching can only be successful if combined with improving the implementation of rights already allocated to refugees.

There also must be several types of cooperation executed in order for Syrian refugees to have safer, less complicated journeys and experiences. First, the international community, specifically the U.S., EU, and local countries of integration, must cooperate in a way that is effective and will not destroy international agreements. All of the UN General Assembly member states must be pressured into complying with international human rights agreements in order to prevent systemic human rights abuses committed against refugees. The EU states must also take steps in order to cooperate amongst themselves, as this will lead to an essential foundation for larger international cooperation, such as with the U.S. and local countries of integration. This includes equal sharing of refugee protection and distributing refugees equitably, with respect to population and economies. For example, the U.S. has a huge economy in respect to the economy of Greece, and therefore can handle the integration of more refugees. A unified international humanitarian response is necessary in order for refugees to reach third countries of resettlement safely and legally.

Policy Recommendations

- Pressure states who are non-signatories to human rights agreements such as the 1951 Refugee Convention, the 1967 Protocol, and the Geneva Conventions to become signatories in order to advance their state's commitment to human rights
- Facilitate international cooperation among EU Member States, the U.S., and local countries of integration in order to provide fair refugee status determination that occurs swiftly and justly.

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

- Advance UN action to pressure General Assembly member states to comply with International Refugee Regime components through international political and economic pressure, to prevent systemic human rights abuses committed against refugees.

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