



Monthly Update of Forced Displacement Literature Review

September 2020

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¹ The compilation of monthly literature reviews can be accessed in a [pdf version](#) or on our [online database](#).

² The JDC Literature Review provides summaries of recently published research to encourage the exchange of ideas on topics related to forced displacement. The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in the literature included in this review are entirely those of their authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Joint Data Center, UNHCR, the World Bank, the Executive Directors of the World Bank or the governments they represent. For convenience, the literature review contains links to websites operated by third parties. The Joint Data Center and its affiliate organizations do not represent or endorse these sites or the content, services and products they may offer, and do not guarantee the accuracy or reliability of any information, data, opinions, advice or statements provided on these sites.

Locked Down and Left Behind: The Impact of COVID-19 on Refugees' Economic Inclusion

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Center for Global Development, Refugees International, International Rescue Committee
Policy Paper 179, July 2020

<https://www.cgdev.org/publication/locked-down-and-left-behind-impact-covid-19-refugees-economic-inclusion>

This paper **examines the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on refugees in low- and middle-income hosting countries**. It highlights the expected disproportionate effect of the pandemic on refugees in terms of employment and wider socio-economic outcomes.

Key points:

- **The economic impact of COVID-19 will have a severe effect on low- and middle-income refugee-hosting countries, as they will continue to grow at a lower rate than other low- and middle-income countries.** Refugee-hosting countries are facing severe economic crises, characterized by declining incomes, increases in poverty and extreme poverty, and declining economic growth, which are leading to decreasing working hours and earnings, and increased informality. Major hosting countries were growing slower than other low- and middle- income countries before the pandemic and are projected to experience almost equal declines in growth in 2020.
- **The economic effects of COVID-19 are expected to have a disproportionate effect on refugees, due to *de jure* and *de facto* restrictions on their economic inclusion.** Restrictive laws and limited economic inclusion frequently push refugees to work in specific industries and in the informal sector. Data from eight hosting countries (Colombia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Peru, Turkey, Uganda) before COVID-19 suggests that refugees are 60 percent more likely than host populations to be working in sectors highly impacted by COVID-19 and the economic downturn—manufacturing, accommodation and food services, wholesale and retail trade, and real estate and business activities. Data from five hosting countries (Colombia, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey) shows that refugees are more likely to work in the informal sector, which is expected to be hit harder by the economic downturn.

- **Refugee women face a double disadvantage in the labor market, due to their gender, and their refugee status.** Women are over-represented in the informal economy and within highly impacted sectors.
- **COVID-19 will cause widespread loss of livelihoods and an increase in poverty among refugees,** affecting their self-reliance and increasing protection concerns. Many refugees may suffer from increased food insecurity, inability to pay rent, debt arising from health care costs, and an inability to cope with shocks.
- **Humanitarian aid will become increasingly important for refugees, however COVID-19 has made it increasingly difficult for international donors and NGOs to deliver assistance,** especially with border closures and social distancing requirements. Consequently, refugees' access to aid and livelihoods support has been threatened, affecting primarily urban refugees.
- **Social protection programs typically do not cover refugees.** In many low-income countries, social safety nets only cover a small proportion of the poor due to fiscal and capacity constraints. Additionally, some safety net programs may not be available to the most vulnerable, particularly those working outside the formal economy. Refugees excluded from government programs are also excluded from the formal economy and are therefore among the hardest hit. Without protections to fall back on and with limited access to aid, refugees have little choice but to risk exposure to the virus or resorting to negative coping strategies to make ends meet including skipping meals, exploitative work, or child labor.
- **The health and economic crises are likely to increase xenophobia and racism.** As COVID-19 increases xenophobia and discrimination, possibilities for refugees to find decent jobs decrease, further increasing their income precarity and undermining their economic inclusion. Negative attitudes towards refugees could also drive policies that further limit the resources available to them as well as their rights. Even if perceptions do not shift policy, they are likely to undermine social cohesion and integration, further marginalizing refugees and reducing their ability to achieve economic inclusion.
- **Host countries can reduce the spread of the pandemic, provide more “essential workers”, and stimulate economic recovery by expanding the economic inclusion of refugees.** Excluding refugees from national health and livelihood response plans increases their risk of contracting the virus and spreading it to others. Expanding refugee's economic inclusion can help to create a more resilient community that is less dependent on aid and better able to cope with future economic shocks. Greater economic inclusion would also enable refugees working in essential industries to exercise their skills. This requires eliminating work restrictions for refugees in essential

industries, and promoting the recognition of their professional credentials. Greater economic inclusion benefits both refugees and host populations, as refugees' economic activity boosts the opportunities for others.

The authors outline several recommendations to ensure and extend economic inclusion for refugees, improve economic outcomes, combat xenophobia, and build an inclusive labor market to support economic recovery. These include:

- **Ensure refugees can access social safety nets and health care:** With the support of donors, host countries should ensure refugees are included in national COVID-19 response plans and expanded social safety nets, and that public health care is accessible to refugees.
- **Ensure refugees can contribute to the response:** Host countries should fast track the credentials of refugees. Refugees should be supported with access to finance to enable them to pivot their skills to essential industries. Governments, donors, and international organizations should enable refugees to support their own communities by allocating resources to refugee-run and -serving NGOs. In the long-term, host countries should explore ways to expand economic inclusion for refugees, including by eliminating work restrictions and promoting credential recognition.
- **Continue ongoing economic inclusion initiatives:** The benefits of the economic inclusion of refugees—raising productivity and wages of refugees and host populations, increasing purchasing power that boosts local businesses, increasing tax revenue, and reducing crowding into the informal sector—represent potential sources of stimulus for host communities during the recovery.
- **Combat misinformation and xenophobia:** For example, by implementing messaging campaigns to demonstrate the added economic, social, and cultural value of refugees.
- **Support multi-year, flexible livelihoods programming,** including through digital livelihoods programming and virtual service delivery.
- **Collect better data and evaluate interventions:** Before allocating funds, donors should require cost-efficiency and -effectiveness analyses based on the expected impacts from the empirical literature where possible. Donors should also require and fund evaluations, including randomized controlled trials that measure the program's effects against a control group and against a cash alternative whenever feasible. Additionally, improved socio-economic data on refugees is critical to improving programming over the long-term. Donors should invest in, and host countries should facilitate, detailed longitudinal datasets on displaced populations.

Considering the benefits of hosting refugees: evidence of refugee camps influencing local labour market activity and economic welfare in Rwanda

Craig Loschmann, Özge Bilgili and Melissa Siegel

IZA Journal of Development and Migration, Volume 9, Issue 5 (2020)

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40176-018-0138-2>

Rwanda hosts more than 80,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the majority in situations of protracted displacement (UNHCR, 2018). This article **examines the impact of Congolese refugee camps on host communities in Rwanda with a focus on labor market activity and economic welfare**. The analysis exploits 2016 household survey data from three Congolese refugee camps and their surrounding areas. The authors study host communities at various distances from the refugee camps, and consequently with varying levels of exposure to the refugees.

Key findings:

- On average, Rwandans living closer to a refugee camp (within 10 km) are significantly more likely to be engaged in wage employment compared with subsistence farming or livestock production. This suggests an overall adjustment within the local labor market, with **Rwandans shifting away from subsistence agricultural activities in the presence of the refugee population**, possibly due to greater non-farm business opportunities and/or the ability to hire low-skilled labor to perform subsistence agricultural work.
- **Females living in proximity to a camp have a higher likelihood of self-employment in business both as a primary and secondary activity**. This result suggests that in the long-term, local population dynamics may influence gender roles due to the inclusion of women in the labor market.
- **Living in close proximity to a camp is associated with greater household asset ownership on average**, benefiting both male- and female-headed households similarly.
- **There is no indication that proximity to a camp influences subjective perceptions of the household's economic situation**.

The authors conclude that the presence of refugees benefited host communities in Rwanda. Even in cases where they do not find a clear positive influence of living near a refugee camp, they do not find any clear negative consequence either. They posit that the integrative approach of the Rwandan government with regard to refugee settlement and the absence of

forced boundaries between refugees and the local community have led to a more unified labor market.

Is the Education of Local Children Influenced by Living Nearby a Refugee Camp? Evidence from Host Communities in Rwanda

Özge Bilgili, Sonja Fransen, Craig Loschmann, and Melissa Siegel

International Migration (2019)

<https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12541>

This paper **examines the effects of Congolese refugees in Rwanda on access to schools and educational outcomes for host community children**. The majority of the nearly 75,000 Congolese refugees in Rwanda (UNHCR, 2017) have been in protracted displacement since the mid-1990s. The Rwandan government's policy is to integrate refugees into local schools (where possible) and strengthen facilities by building classrooms, and providing additional teachers and materials.

The analysis draws on household survey data, community surveys and focus group discussions covering host communities in the vicinity of the three largest refugee camps: Gihembe, Kigeme and Kiziba. The analysis relies on a comparison between host community members residing closer to (less than 10 km) and further away (greater than 20 km) from the camps.

Main findings:

- **Children living within 10 km of a refugee camp are significantly more likely to attend school**, compared with children living further away. 71 percent of all children 18 years or younger residing within 10 km of a camp regularly attend school, compared to 61 percent of the children living further than 20 km from a camp.
- **Children living within 10 km of a refugee camp that has more local integration (Gihembe and Kigeme) are significantly more likely to benefit from school feeding programs**, compared to children living further away. Only about four percent of the children within communities outside 20 km of the nearest refugee camp are provided food assistance at school compared to 23 percent of the children located within 10 km of a camp.
- **Children within 10 km of a refugee camp have better educational outcomes**—on average they have completed more years of schooling and are more likely to have

completed primary school—however other factors may explain these outcomes, e.g. increased investments in public education and/or overall economic development in the country.

- **Locals residing closer to the camps have mostly positive views on the effects of refugees on local education.** Respondents particularly emphasized government's investments in education in areas surrounding the camp.

The authors conclude that **the presence of Congolese refugees has an overall positive impact on the education of children living in areas surrounding the refugee camps.**

These positive effects are attributed to the integrated approach to education pursued by the Rwandan government coupled with increased national spending on education.

Is a Refugee Crisis a Housing Crisis? Only if Housing Supply is Unresponsive

Sandra Rozo and Micaela Sviastchi

Journal of Development Economics (2020)

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2020.102563>

This paper **examines the effects of the sudden arrival of 1.3 million Syrian refugees on housing markets in Jordan.** Approximately 80 percent of Syrian refugees in Jordan live in urban centers close to the three large refugee camps.

The authors employ a difference-in-difference approach comparing individuals located in regions closer and farther away from the three largest refugee camps, before and after the beginning of the Syrian Civil War in 2011. The analysis relies on consumer expenditure data from the Household Expenditure and Income Surveys (HEIS), individual-level panel data from the Jordan Labor Market Panel Survey (JLMPS), data on children health development outcomes from the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), constructed subdistrict-year level data on satellite night light density, and UNHCR data on the location of the refugee camps and the initial settlement locations of Syrian refugees in Jordan.

Key findings:

- **Jordanians living closer to the refugee camps increased their housing expenditures after 2011.** When the distance to refugee camps is reduced by one standard deviation, housing expenditures increase by 3.8 percent. This increase is primarily driven by large increases in housing prices due to the sudden larger demand

for housing units and the unresponsive supply of new dwellings. Housing supply only began to increase in 2016, five years after the beginning of the refugee crisis.

- The overall level of consumption expenditures for the host population remains unchanged. However, **Jordanian nationals with low educational attainment experience reductions in their consumption expenditures**. When the distance to refugee camps is reduced by one standard deviation, overall consumer expenditures for low-educated individuals drops by 1.8 percent.
- **Jordanians accommodate increases in housing expenditures by decreasing their consumption of non-durables (including food), education, health care, and communication**. These effects are concentrated among low-educated individuals.
- **Jordanians living closer to refugee camps have higher property and rental income**. When the distance to camps is reduced by one standard deviation, rental and property income increases by 5.8 percent. Increases in property and rental income are more pronounced for highly educated Jordanians, who are most likely to own properties.
- **Large housing expenditures are accompanied by worse dwelling quality, but only for individuals who are younger or work in the informal sector**.
- **The larger Syrian refugee inflows have had significant and positive effects on housing rental prices in Jordan**.
- No evidence is found that individuals living closer to refugee camps experience lower access to education or health care after the beginning of the Syrian conflict, or that lower food expenditures are having effects on children development indicators.

The authors recommend rapidly increasing the housing supply in response to large sudden migration flows. They argue that a failure to expand the housing supply may hurt both host and refugee populations by increasing prices, reducing consumption, negatively affecting welfare, and possibly increasing tensions between Jordanians and refugees.

The economics of the Syrian refugee crisis in neighbouring countries: The case of Lebanon

Anda David, Mohamed Ali Marouani, Charbel Nahas and Björn Nilsson

Economics of Transition and Institutional Change, Volume 28, Issue 1 (2020), Pages 89-109

<https://doi.org/10.1111/ecot.12230>

This paper **examines the economic and social impact of the Syrian war and refugee flows on Lebanon**. The authors employ a dynamic general equilibrium model to capture

forced displacement, discrimination, and segmented labor markets (distinguishing formal and informal jobs, as well as workers of three skill levels and three origins). The model is used to conduct experiments to simulate: (a) the impact of the Syrian conflict on international trade and tourism in Lebanon, modeled as a 20 percent reduction in Lebanese exports; (b) the impact of the large influx of Syrian refugees, modeled as an expansion of the labor supply in the informal sector; (c) the impact of increased foreign assistance to refugees; (c) the impact of aid in various forms (humanitarian, development); and (d) the long-run impact of refugees' consumption patterns.

Key findings:

- The costs of lower trade and tourism in Lebanon are high given the importance of these sectors for the Lebanese economy.
- **The large influx of refugees has a positive impact on growth, slightly reinforced by humanitarian aid flows.** When aid takes the form of investment subsidies, significantly better growth and labor market prospects arise, although it fails to completely make up for the loss in exports.
- **Inflows of refugees increase unemployment and reduce Lebanese labor income, for low- and medium-skilled workers.** High-skilled workers are unaffected (or even slightly positively affected) by the inflow of refugees. This heterogeneity arises from the skill composition of refugees, and the fact that workers of different origins are substitutable and workers of different skill groups complementary in production. In addition, low- and medium-skilled workers have more limited emigration opportunities than high-skilled workers, and so they are less able to escape deteriorating employment conditions. Foreign workers, paid less than Lebanese workers, are the main competitors of refugees in the labor market
- **Influxes of refugees also affect structural change in Lebanon.** The two channels are the skill composition of refugee population (mainly unskilled informal workers), which create a labor supply shock beneficial to sectors that are intensive in informal low-skilled labor, and the different consumption patterns of the refugees.

Targeting humanitarian aid using administrative data: model design and validation

Onur Altindag, Stephen D. O'Connell, Aytug Sasmaz, Zeynep Balcioglu, Paola Cadoni, Matilda Jerneck, and Aimee Kunze Foong

Journal of Development Economics (forthcoming)

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3444974

This paper **presents the design and validation of an econometric targeting model that uses routinely collected administrative data to target over US\$380 million per annum of unconditional cash and in-kind assistance to Syrian refugees in Lebanon.** The authors compare the prediction accuracy of the proposed model to a traditional short-form survey Proxy Means Test (PMT) approach. A PMT approach relies on representative household expenditure survey data to determine the relative importance of predictors of household consumption, which are then used to generate a metric for program eligibility, as well as a short-form survey (scorecard) of the entire potentially eligible population.

The analysis relies on: (1) nationally representative survey data from the 2018 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR); (2) UNHCR administrative data; and (3) the Refugee Assistance Information System (RAIS), which includes information on all refugee families who receive assistance in Lebanon from any of the major international organizations or their partners

Key findings:

- **The use of basic demographic information from typical administrative records held by aid organizations and governments is approximately as accurate in targeting the poor compared to a short-form PMT, which requires a household survey for the entire population.** There is no substantive difference in the capacity of administrative data—which does not include any information on assets—to predict poverty, relative to traditional survey-based methods. While the survey-based approach yields decreases in inclusion and exclusion error of about two percentage points, these differences are not statistically significant.
- **A small number of fields in the survey data provide additional predictive power.** A small number of basic household furniture questions provide modest improvements. Adding a single type of housing question to the administrative database would improve the targeting accuracy by around two percentage points in overall error.

The authors conclude that **routinely collected administrative data can potentially offer an equally reliable and less costly alternative to existing PMT approaches to targeting social or aid programs.**

The impacts of refugee repatriation on receiving communities

Isabel Ruiz and Carlos Vargas-Silva

Journal of Economic Geography (2020)

<https://doi.org/10.1093/jeg/lbaa004>

Between 2000 and 2016 around 600,000 Burundian refugees returned from Tanzania, the majority before 2010, with most settling in their communities of origin. This paper **examines the consequences of refugee repatriation for communities of return in Burundi**, in a context in which refugees faced restrictions on economic activities and mobility while living in refugee camps abroad. The authors analyze the impact of repatriation on 'stayee' households (in terms of livestock levels, land access, subjective wellbeing, food security, health, and crime) and adjustments they make in response to returning refugees (e.g. out migration, and redistribution of workers across economic activities).

The analysis is based on longitudinal data collected between 2011 and 2015. The authors use an instrumental variable approach (constructing an instrumental variable based on geographical features of communities, such as altitude and proximity to the border) to address the potential source of endogeneity due to wealthier communities being more likely to seek asylum abroad.

Main results:

- **A greater share of returnees in a community is associated with less livestock ownership for stayee households; the negative effect becomes stronger over time.** A one percentage point increase in the local share of the population accounted for by returnees leads to a reduction in the livestock of stayee households which is equivalent to one fowl per adult member or about 5 percent with respect to the mean.
- **Refugee repatriation has a negative impact on land access; the negative effect becomes stronger over time.** A one percentage point increase in the share of returnees in the population leads on average to a 0.05 hectare reduction in the land holding of stayee households, which is close to a 4 percent reduction with respect to the mean land holding.
- **Repatriation has a negative impact on subjective wellbeing for stayees; the negative effect dissipates over time.** Communities with more returnees report lower subjective wellbeing. This impact largely disappears in the five years between the two rounds of the survey.

- **Repatriation has a negative impact on the food security of stayees; the negative effect dissipates over time.** A one percentage point increase in the share of returnees in the community leads to a one percentage point increase in the likelihood of experiencing food difficulties on a daily basis. This impact largely disappears in the five years between the two rounds of the survey.
- **The presence of returnees has no statistically significant effect on health outcomes or the likelihood of being a victim of theft.**
- **Households adjust to the presence of returnees by changing income generating activities and relying less on land harvesting to produce food for household consumption.** These adjustments are likely to account for the dissipation of adverse effects on subjective wellbeing and food security.
- **The presence of returnees had no impact on out-migration of stayees.**

Overall, these results suggest that while the negative consequences of the presence of returnees on objective measures such as livestock and land access persist and worsen in the longer term, this is not the case for more subjective measures (i.e. subjective well-being and food insecurity). The authors conclude that **refugee return can lead to hardship for communities experiencing return**. They argue that “promoting (or forcing) large-scale repatriation at times may not provide a sustainable solution to the ‘problem’, but may simply relocate it.”

Keeping the promise: The role of bilateral development partners in responding to forced displacement

Niels Harild

Evaluation, Learning and Quality Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Danida, Denmark, May 2020

https://um.dk/en/danida-en/results/eval/eval_reports/publicationdisplaypage/?publicationID=7F885929-F4D6-4007-83ED-13FD5CE49BA6

This study **presents recommendations for operationalizing a ‘humanitarian-development nexus approach’ to displacement situations, as envisaged by the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)**. The analysis is based on consultations with bilateral development agencies and a literature review of international approaches to displacement situations.

Key findings include:

- The GCR provides a common framework for an effective nexus approach.
- The World Bank and EU have put in place policies, tools and financial resources for development operations to address displacement situations.
- The OECD has developed Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus guidelines, a policy note on financing refugee situations, and an OECD/DAC common position for the Global Refugee Forum against which development partners will be measured.
- A limited but growing number of host countries are mainstreaming displacement into national development plans.
- Some bilateral development partners have put in place policies and operations to support a nexus approach.
- UNHCR has begun its internal adaptation from leadership and control of the international refugee response towards an approach focused more on facilitation.
- The fundamental challenge is to find workable mechanisms to achieve burden and responsibility in order to effectively operationalize the GCR.
- Policy and strategy, operational procedures and systems, and organizational and incentive structures must be changed to overcome internal barriers to mainstream displacement in development partner and national development institutions.

Recommendations for displacement-affected states and development partners include:

- At a policy level, displacement-affected states should consider: (a) taking a development approach to displacement at the outset, based on an inclusive refugee policy; (b) as part of the established national development planning structure, crystalizing self-interest concerns and other perspectives of the social, political, economic and security implications of the refugee situation; (c) taking the lead on engaging development partners in a dialogue focused on fair and efficient burden and responsibility sharing; (d) mainstreaming displacement into national development plans.
- At an operational level, displacement-affected states should consider: (a) enhancing or adapting sector approaches to ensure sufficient delivery capacity; and (b) involving development partners up front in political economy and context analyses, as well as sector planning and costing.
- At the policy level, development partners should consider: (a) making displacement a priority in bilateral development cooperation with displacement-affected states; (b) committing to promoting development cooperation in future approaches to displacement situations; (c) developing a clear and efficient nexus approach for responding to displacement and fragility; (d) committing to work with host states and other

development partners on situation-specific mechanisms to achieve trust, understanding and agreement on burden and responsibility sharing; (e) committing to applying the full gamut of political, diplomatic, and trade tools to operationalize the GCR at the country and regional level through collaboration with other development partners as well as at development, foreign policy and security fora at the global level.

- At an operational level, development partners should consider: (a) adapting internal structures, processes, tools, human resources and incentives to ensure a coherent approach across development cooperation and humanitarian assistance; (b) developing guidelines for how to inspire, facilitate, be part of or lead context specific sector approaches in order to deliver on the GCR vision; (c) promoting context-specific partnership platforms among development partners leading to joint political economy and context analyses as a basis for a common framework for action; and (d) promoting relevant GCR-inspired institutional changes in multilateral development and humanitarian institutions. Additionally development partners can advocate in: (i) the World Bank's governing board for the Bank to be more proactive in leading a coherent social and economic response to displacement among development partners in displacement-affected countries; and (ii) EU member state consultations on the need for continued political, policy and operational commitment towards a long-term development response by DG DEVCO and DG NEAR in the European Commission.

Coping with the Influx: Service Delivery to Syrian Refugees and Hosts in Jordan, Lebanon and Kurdistan, Iraq

Nandini Krishnan, Flavio Russo Riva, Dhiraj Sharma, and Tara Vishwanath

World Bank Policy Research Working Paper Series, No. 9326 (2020)

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/585111595352295241/coping-with-the-influx-service-delivery-to-syrian-refugees-and-hosts-in-jordan-lebanon-and-kurdistan-iraq>

This paper **characterizes rates of access to infrastructure and social services among host communities and refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), and related perceptions of quality of service delivery.** In all three contexts, public service delivery systems have played a key role in addressing the needs of Syrian refugees in education, health and infrastructure (electricity, water and sanitation, solid waste management).

The empirical approach involved examining how outcomes are influenced by district-level estimates of Syrian refugee density (and IDP density in KRI) while accounting for time-invariant governorate (or province) characteristics, individual characteristics, and location characteristics. The analysis relies on data from the Syrian Refugees and Host Communities Survey (SRHCS), conducted in 2015-16, which includes detailed questions on demographics, employment, access to public services, health, migration, and perceptions. Estimates from nationally representative surveys, where available, were also used to establish baseline or benchmark conditions.

Key findings:

- **Refugees/IDPs have more limited access to infrastructure compared to hosts.** Access to infrastructure services (water, electricity and sanitation) is worse for refugees/IDPs in camps than for those outside camps. Refugees/IDPs in camps reported lower satisfaction with access to services (compared with their situation in 2010, before they were displaced) than those outside camps.
- Although service provision in high-refugee-influx areas has not deteriorated since 2010, **substantial shares of the host populations reported that access to services has worsened.** However, **there is no significant association between the local density of refugees/IDPs and the proportion of host households who reported deteriorating access to services since 2010.**
- Refugees/IDPs and the host community rely on public and private service providers for health care, with the relative reliance on private or public health services varying across countries, as well as between refugees/IDPs within camps and those living outside of camps. **Despite the large overlap in the use of private and public health providers, the authors find no evidence that the influx of refugees negatively affected perceptions about health services in 2015 compared to 2010.**
- Refugee children living inside camps primarily attend schools run by the UN, NGOs, or charitable groups, whereas refugee children living outside camps attend mostly public or private schools. Many school-age children are currently out of school in the three host countries due to economic hardship. Even though rates of enrollment for refugee/IDP children are uniformly lower than enrollment rates for host children, the influx likely has placed a burden on the preexisting stock of inputs in schools. Nevertheless, the authors find **no evidence that perceptions about education services among hosts have worsened in 2015 compared to 2010.**

The authors conclude that the extent of competition between refugees and host communities depends on the degree to which the hosts relied on publicly provided services. However, **the large and rapid inflow of refugees has unequivocally strained the public service delivery systems of host countries, and there is a need for more investment to expand the supply of services and delivery personnel.**

The Lives and Livelihoods of Syrian Refugees in the Middle East: Evidence from the 2015-16 Surveys of Syrian Refugees and Host Communities in Jordan, Lebanon, and Kurdistan, Iraq

Nandini Krishnan, Flavio Russo Riva, Dhiraj Sharma, and Tara Vishwanath

World Bank Policy Research Working Paper Series, No. 9327 (2020)

<https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/361071595353473781/the-lives-and-livelihoods-of-syrian-refugees-in-the-middle-east-evidence-from-the-2015-16-surveys-of-syrian-refugees-and-host-communities-in-jordan-lebanon-and-kurdistan-iraq>

This paper **characterizes the displacement and welfare of Syrian refugees living in Jordan (Amman governorate, Za’atari and Azraq camps, and areas surrounding these camps in Mafraq and Zarqa governorates), the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), and Lebanon.** The analysis is based on refugee registration data from UNHCR, quantitative data from the 2015–16 Syrian Refugees and Host Communities Surveys (SRHCS), and qualitative data from focus groups and in-depth interviews.

Key findings:

- **Violence preceded decisions to migrate.** The data shows that the emigration of Syrians is clearly associated with the level of violence experienced in the current and previous month. In the regression analysis, death-related variables predict roughly half of the variation of migration flows within a given month in a Syrian governorate of origin.
- **Refugees had little time to prepare for departure.** More than 75 percent of refugees in KRI and Jordan had a week or less to prepare, while half the refugees in KRI and 36 percent of refugees in Jordan had at most a day to prepare.
- **Most refugees abandon assets such as homes and vehicles.** Among homeowners, only a small fraction—1 percent in Lebanon and 4 percent in KRI—were able to sell their homes prior to migrating. Among owners of vehicles, between 15 percent of refugees in Jordan and almost 50 percent in KRI sold their vehicles prior to leaving Syria.

- **The distance traveled to the first destination is determined mostly by factors outside refugees' control**, including location of origin, timing of displacement, and the direct effect of the conflict on household assets and the ability to capitalize them. Home destruction is negatively related to distance traveled, while households that sold assets traveled further. Refugees in Jordan and KRI who had no time to prepare traveled a shorter distance. In KRI, economic opportunities at destination (measured by expected monthly income) had a statistically significant but small influence on distance traveled.
- **Refugees eventually migrate to places with better economic opportunities—those with more assets travel further.** Larger households make fewer moves within the country (costlier to move). Households with social networks in the host country move more often than households without social networks. In Lebanon, families with higher educational attainment move more frequently than families with lower educational attainment.
- **Refugees have very low levels of educational attainment.** Less than 1 percent of refugees have completed university, and only about 10 percent have completed high school. Compared to refugees, Syrians active in the labor market prior to the crisis were almost twice as likely to have attained (or attended, in the case of Lebanon) secondary and post-secondary education. Refugees were less likely than the typical employed Syrian to be working in high-skill jobs (public administration, health, and education industries) or in professional services (financial or legal services). Refugees were more likely to have experience in low-skill jobs in construction and other service services (ranging from repair and installation of equipment to transportation/storage and communication).
- **For most refugees, forced displacement meant a change from living in houses and apartments to living in non-standard facilities** (collective centers, worksites, abandoned buildings, and dwellings not built human habitation, e.g. garages and storage rooms). Refugees living outside camps in 2015 and 2016 have experienced an improvement in housing since then. **Refugees tend to live in crowded conditions in absolute terms, especially in camps.** More than 95 percent of Syrian refugees living outside camps rent their dwelling, and the vast majority report difficulty in doing so.
- **Irrespective of policies governing refugees' rights to work, Syrian refugees in all three samples are seeking work.** A little less than half of the working-age population (age 20 to 60) is actively seeking work.
- **Success in finding employment has been more limited.** In KRI, one-third of refugees of working age were employed (70 percent of those in the labor force). In Lebanon, 44 percent of refugees of working age worked in the last week (almost 90 percent of those

in the labor force). Among out-of-camp refugees in Jordan, 69 percent of the labor force was employed (one-fifth of the working-age population). Most employment for refugees comes from wage work (rather than self-employment). Refugees employed in the wage sector largely do not have a written contract. Most refugees who have found work are employed in service sector jobs (construction, wholesale and retail trade, including household work).

- **A large proportion of refugees reported having faced shocks related to their incomes and cost of living** over the past year. While subjective poverty rates are high for all refugees, data suggest improved financial wellbeing among refugee households in KRI relative to Jordan.

The analysis demonstrates that the migration decisions of Syrian refugees can be characterized as forced displacement, with little scope for economic decision making. The largest migration flows come right after peaks in violence, refugees had little time to prepare for their departure, are unable to capitalize on their assets, and have little control over the distance that they travel. The study also documents vulnerability along several dimensions, such as housing access and quality, labor market attachment, and financial security.

The Labor Market Effects of Venezuelan Migration in Ecuador

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Over 470,000 Venezuelan migrants and displaced abroad have settled in Ecuador, over half choosing to live in four (out of 221) regions (cantons). This paper **analyzes the determinants of the location choices of Venezuelan migrants in Ecuador and how they might affect host labor markets**. The authors employ a difference-in-difference methodology and exploit data from Ecuador's household labor force survey and novel data from mobile phone records to measure the geographic distribution of Venezuelan migrants.

Key findings:

- **Venezuelans' location choices have been fundamentally driven by the size of regional economies**, measured by the wage bill at the canton level. The point of entry into Ecuador has very little explanatory power.
- **Overall, regions with the largest inflows of Venezuelans have not seen any effects on labor market participation or employment**, compared to regions with fewer inflows, even when restricting the analysis to female workers.
- **Young, low-educated Ecuadorian workers in high-inflow regions have been adversely affected in terms of quality of employment and earnings**. Compared to similar workers in regions with a small inflow of Venezuelans (relative to population), young, low-educated Ecuadorian workers in high-migration regions have experienced a 6 percentage-point drop in the rate of adequate employment, a 5-percentage point increase in the rate of informality, and a 13 percent reduction in hourly earnings.

The authors conclude that newly arrived Venezuelan migrants have found employment mainly in informal jobs, placing the burden of the adjustment disproportionately on the more vulnerable workers in the main host regions. These effects are highly localized in a few regions, suggesting the use of targeted interventions to alleviate the economic burden for vulnerable groups of workers in those regions.