



Forced Displacement Literature Review

Statelessness

April 2023

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Forced Displacement and the Crisis of Citizenship in Africa’s Great Lakes Region: Rethinking Refugee Protection and Durable Solutions | 2 |
| Statelessness in Protracted Refugee Situations: Former Angolan and Rwandan Refugees in Zambia | 4 |
| Status of the stateless population in Thailand: How does stigma matter in their life? . | 5 |
| Improving official statistics on stateless people: Challenges, solutions, and the road ahead..... | 6 |
| Development level of hosting areas and the impact of refugees on natives’ labor market outcomes in Turkey | 9 |
| Habit Formation and the Misallocation of Labor: Evidence from Forced Migrations .. | 11 |
| Refugee migration and the labour market: lessons from 40 years of post-arrival policies in Denmark | 13 |
| What is the impact of forced displacement on health? A scoping review | 15 |
| Prevalence and factors associated with post-traumatic stress disorder among internally displaced people in camps at Debre Berhan, Amhara Region, Ethiopia: a cross-sectional study | 17 |
| Social-capital-based mental health interventions for refugees: A systematic review . | 18 |
| The Dynamics of Refugee Return: Syrian Refugees and Their Migration Intentions... | 20 |

Forced Displacement and the Crisis of Citizenship in Africa's Great Lakes Region: Rethinking Refugee Protection and Durable Solutions

Lucy Hovil and Zachary A. Lomo

Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees, Volume 31, Issue 2 (2015)

<https://doi.org/10.25071/1920-7336.40308>

This summary is part of a series of summaries of articles on statelessness. The quantitative literature on stateless population is very limited. We include these summaries in our Literature Review Updates and Database to highlight research on statelessness and the need to collect more data to facilitate analytical studies on the related issues.

This article **discusses the relationship between citizenship, belonging and displacement in Africa's Great Lakes region**, and how citizenship and exclusion affect the creation, experience, and resolution of displacement. Apart from Tanzania, all countries in the region have generated large numbers of refugees and IDPs since independence, and all have hosted refugees.

The authors define citizenship as “a status, legal or otherwise, that designates full membership in a state or community with concomitant rights or entitlements and duties, including the right and duty to challenge inequality in that state or community.” They define “empirical citizenship” as “a status of being accepted into a given community as a member, even if not originally from there, and being able to exercise citizenship rights such as social and economic rights and fulfill civic duties, including paying local taxes.”

The analysis is based on a desk review and interviews with refugees, IDPs, returnees, civil society, and officials in each of the seven countries where fieldwork was undertaken.

Main arguments:

- **The inability to realize the benefit of citizenship is a root cause of both conflict and displacement in the region and the ongoing failure to find solutions to displacement.** Many causes of conflict and forced displacement, such as human rights violations, struggle over control of political and economic power, ethnic conflict and civil war, are symptoms of deeper, interconnected problems. Post-independence leaders failed to reform the colonial state and reorganize political power to address discrimination, inequality, and politicized identities that were legally embedded within the colonial state. This has led to the exclusion, at least politically, of those considered outsiders, rather than to make efforts to encourage their integration. Instead of being perceived as a potential asset, refugees have been viewed as a threat or burden,

ensuring that their status as outsiders is embedded in the humanitarian response to refugees.

- **The way in which repatriation takes place can either destabilize a fragile situation or contribute to breaking cycles of violence and displacement.** Successful repatriation of refugees reasserts the bond of citizenship between citizen and state, enabling the state to provide protection and the citizen to renegotiate the nature of the protection required (relating to governmental and societal discrimination, restrictions on freedom of movement, denial of property rights, access to justice, and exclusion from governance). Without the opportunity to realize their full rights as citizens, refugees are likely to resist return. Refugees are usually best placed to assess whether this bond can be re-established and to decide when and how to return home (possibly involving many movements back and forth, or the splitting of families across locations). The relationship between repatriation and citizenship may be complicated by local politics of belonging (e.g., localized ethnic forms of belonging and citizenship, and notions of indigeneity). Citizenship, local belonging, and repatriation are also intertwined with land ownership.
- **Most states in the region restrict access to their citizenship for refugees.** In most of the Great Lakes region, citizenship by birth is accessible only based on inheritance (*jus sanguinis*) and not based on birth in the country (*jus soli*), so citizenship cannot be extended automatically to the children of refugees, even if several generations are born in exile. While this leaves open the possibility of accessing citizenship through either registration or naturalization, in practice this rarely happens. Policymakers generally view naturalization as the end point of integration, while refugees perceive it as distinct from their “empirical citizenship”. Critically important for establishing empirical citizenship is freedom of movement and residence.
- **Inclusion within a society needs to take account of local and regional factors, including the arbitrariness and fluidity of colonial borders, increasing forced displacement, migration and mobility, and the ability of citizens to exercise citizenship rights and duties beyond the state of origin.** Refugee policies need to view refugees as citizens and rational actors who are best placed to determine what their interests are and how to protect them. Refugee and citizenship policies can be reformed by adopting inclusive criteria already in existence within community value systems or international law and international human rights instruments.

Statelessness in Protracted Refugee Situations: Former Angolan and Rwandan Refugees in Zambia

Mazuba Muchindu

African Human Mobility Review, Volume 8, Issue 3 (2022)

<https://doi.org/10.14426/ahmr.v8i3.1155>

This summary is part of a series of summaries of articles on statelessness. The quantitative literature on stateless population is very limited. We include these summaries in our Literature Review Updates and Database to highlight research on statelessness and the need to collect more data to facilitate studies on the related issues.

This article **discusses the risk of statelessness in protracted refugee situations, focusing on the case of former Angolan and Rwandan refugees in Zambia**. The author argues that once refugee status is withdrawn through a cessation agreement, former refugees may find themselves at risk of statelessness if they are unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin or they are required meet onerous requirements to acquire citizenship in a host country.

In Zambia, former refugees from Rwanda and Angola, whose refugee status has ceased, are effectively stateless and face multiple barriers to accessing livelihood opportunities and services. Former refugees are required to have a national registration card and passport when they apply for residence, employment, or business permits, and only after ten years of being an ordinary resident in Zambia can they apply for citizenship. The requirement to have national identification documents has been an impediment for many former refugees, especially Rwandans, who must apply for a passport in Rwanda; many former Rwandan refugees fear returning to their home country to apply for a passport and application fees are unaffordable for many refugees. For former Angolan refugees, the Zambian government has offered to integrate those who arrived between 1966 and 1986, but most of those who arrived after 1986 do not have any form of identification. Risk of statelessness extends to children born to refugees because Zambian laws do not automatically grant citizenship to children born to foreign parents on Zambian territory.

The author argues for the definition of statelessness to be extended to include de facto statelessness. If a person is unwilling or unable to avail themselves of the protection of their country of origin and are unable to acquire citizenship of the host country, they should be considered and treated as stateless persons. An extended definition should also include children born to refugee parents who are unwilling, or unable to avail themselves of the protection of their country of origin, and unable to acquire citizenship of the host country, in a country of asylum that does not automatically grant citizenship by birth.

The author highlights several policy implications for the case of former refugees in Zambia, including: (1) broadening the definition of statelessness to include de facto statelessness; (2) granting nationality to children born in Zambia who would otherwise be at risk of becoming stateless; and (3) waiving requirements that are difficult for refugees to meet in order to become permanent residents and naturalized citizens. The author also calls for increased attention to the risk of statelessness in protracted refugee situations by both academics and practitioners.

Status of the stateless population in Thailand: How does stigma matter in their life?

Siwarak Kitchanapaibul, Tawatchai Apidechkul, Peeradone Srichan, Thanatchaporn Mulikaburt, Onnalin Singkhorn, Anusorn Udplong, Panupong Upala, Chalitar Chomchoei, Fartima Yeemard, Ratipark Tamornpark, and Pilasinee Wongnuch

PLoS ONE, Volume 17, Issue 3, Article e0264959

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0264959>

This summary is part of a series of summaries of articles on statelessness. The quantitative literature on stateless population is very limited. We include these summaries in our Literature Review Updates and Database to highlight research on statelessness and the need to collect more data to facilitate analytical studies on the related issues.

This article **examines the experience of stateless people in Thailand and how they overcome the problem of stigma**. In 2020, there were 480,000 people in Thailand classified as stateless. They are individuals who migrated from neighboring countries and who settled mainly along the border with Myanmar. They are mostly members of hill tribes (such as the Akha, Lahu, Hmong, Lisu, Yao) with distinct languages and culture. They do not have Thai identification cards (IDs), which are required to access public services, including health care and higher levels of education, apply for professional jobs, and sell property.

The authors define stigma as “a negative social attitude attached to a characteristic of an individual who may be regarded as having a mental, physical, or social deficiency.” The authors employ the framework integrating normative influence on stigma (FINIS), which has three layers: a microlayer focusing on individual characteristics; a mesolayer focusing on family and community contexts; and a macrolayer focusing on the stigma embedded in a larger national cultural context.

The analysis is based on data from qualitative and in-depth interviews with 51 stateless individuals living in five remote hill tribe villages along the border with Myanmar. Sixty-nine

percent of the participants were female, 67 percent had no education, 57 percent were farmers, and the participants had a median monthly income of US\$93.

Main findings:

- **There are various ways in which stigma affects the lives of stateless people.** They find it difficult to request assistance and assert themselves (e.g. in a healthcare setting) because they fear mistreatment or drawing attention to themselves. They experience unequal treatment and are treated more poorly than Thai citizens and other hill tribe people who have acquired Thai IDs. They feel that they have limited options for improving their lives.
- **Avoidance, trying to get a Thai ID, and practicing speaking Thai are ways in which stateless people cope with stigma.** The stateless population reported several approaches to handling stigma, mainly by avoidance, for example not traveling outside their village, not talking with people with whom they are not familiar and keeping track of events that could result in exposure. Trying to get a Thai ID and practicing speaking Thai were other strategies employed to cope with stigma.
- **Participants expressed their single goal of obtaining a Thai ID to help them overcome problems of stigma.**

Improving official statistics on stateless people: Challenges, solutions, and the road ahead

Marya Strode and Melanie Khanna

Statistical Journal of the IAOS, Volume 37, Issue 4 (2021), Pages 1087-1101

<https://content.iospress.com/articles/statistical-journal-of-the-iaos/sji210878>

This summary is part of a series of summaries of articles on statelessness. The quantitative literature on stateless population is very limited. We include these summaries in our Literature Review Updates and Database to highlight research on statelessness and the need to collect more data to facilitate analytical studies on the related issues.

This article **discusses the statistical challenges associated with improving data on statelessness and** proposes a path towards the adoption of the International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS) in 2023.¹ Work on the IROSS was included under the umbrella of the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS) in November 2020.

¹ More information on IROSS can be found [here](#).

Article 1 of the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons defines a stateless person as “a person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law”. Most stateless people lack access to basic socio-economic rights enjoyed by citizens (e.g., education, healthcare, the right to work, the right to own property) as well as to civil and political rights such as the right to vote. The stateless are often trapped in intergenerational cycles of poverty and vulnerability. When statelessness affects entire ethnic or religious groups within a society, it can contribute to instability, conflict, and displacement.

UN Statelessness Conventions establish international standards to protect stateless people and to prevent and reduce statelessness. In most cases, statelessness is caused by nationality laws that are inconsistent with international standards, such as: laws that discriminate against certain ethnic or religious groups, preventing them from acquiring or conferring nationality; laws that limit a woman’s ability to pass her nationality to her children; and laws that provide for loss or deprivation of nationality without safeguards against statelessness. State succession can also cause statelessness if an individual’s previous State of nationality ceases to exist, or if the territory on which they live comes under the control of another State and they are not entitled to citizenship under the new citizenship law. Weak birth registration systems can also put people at risk of statelessness. While some stateless people lack citizenship because of displacement, many are stateless due to historical migration, often forced, of their parents, grandparents or earlier generations.

Main messages:

- **There are no robust estimates of the global number of stateless people.** UNHCR’s estimate of 4.2 million stateless people is based on data from 94 countries, most of which do not meet standards for official statistics. Additionally, many countries known to have substantial numbers of stateless people that do not report their statelessness situation to UNHCR.
- **There are three categories of stateless people defined for the purposes of official statistics.** These include: (1) ‘Stateless persons’ who do not have citizenship of any country, and may be classified as stateless either through self-declaration, or through recognition by competent government authorities, on an individual or group basis; (2) ‘Persons of Undetermined Nationality’ who lack proof of citizenship but who may be entitled to nationality, and if so, could be assisted to obtain proof of citizenship by the relevant authorities; and (3) “Stateless-related people” impacted by statelessness, including formerly stateless people, children of at least one stateless parent, or people

living in a household with a stateless members. The framework for the IROSS also distinguishes between people who are native-born and those who are not.

- **There are several challenges associated with collecting data about stateless people.** These include: (a) reluctance of stateless people to make themselves known to authorities; (b) individuals may be unaware of their own status as a stateless person and so may not self-identify in surveys and censuses; (c) potential adverse effects on survey response rates when collecting data on citizenship; (d) national laws and bureaucratic obstacles that prevent those without proof of nationality, or with foreign documentation from appearing on population registers, or from registering their children's births and other vital events; (e) attempts to include the stateless in the of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) may present risks to stateless people unless they are protected from immigration enforcement; and (f) data collection may lead to large estimates of those potentially at risk of statelessness due to broader definitions of statelessness being applied. **Notwithstanding these problems, there is broad recognition that finding ways to collect better data has significant potential benefits for stateless people and for the prevention and reduction of statelessness.**
- **There are several potential sources of data on stateless people, including administrative data, household surveys, population and housing censuses and modelled data, including data linking techniques.** Population registers and administrative data can help to identify stateless people and those with undetermined nationality if data contain accurate information about citizenship, birthplace, ethnicity, and parentage. Data collected through household surveys under national statistics laws may offer more data protection to the individuals identified, however respondents must be knowledgeable and willing to report their status accurately, surveys require a sample of sufficient size for analytical purposes, and such specialist surveys are expensive. The population and housing census is a useful source of data for estimating statelessness; questions which ask directly about citizenship and statelessness can be combined with other variables which might be used as statelessness proxies to correct for under-reporting. Censuses are particularly useful for modelling and data linkage techniques where additional characteristics are collected that are relevant to the characteristics of stateless people in the national context.

The authors conclude that the IROSS, when adopted, will help to contribute to the production of better quality, harmonized, and comparable statistics. However, there also needs to be a significant increase in the number of countries producing statistics on their stateless populations. Moreover, the improvement in birth registration and vital statistics

is needed to help prevent future statelessness and facilitate better data on those already at risk of statelessness.

Development level of hosting areas and the impact of refugees on natives' labor market outcomes in Turkey

Doğu Tan Aracı, Murat Demirci, Murat Güray Kırdar

European Economic Review, Volume 145 (2022), Article 104132

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2022.104132>

This article **examines how the impact of large inflows of Syrian refugees on natives' labor market outcomes varies with the development level of hosting regions in Türkiye.**

Türkiye is the largest host of Syrian refugees, who number 3.6 million and account for 4.4 percent of Türkiye's population. On average, Syrian refugees are younger and less educated than Turkish natives, and almost all employed refugees are working in the informal sector. Five regions bordering or close to Syria host large numbers of Syrian refugees relative to their populations; these are Gaziantep Region, Hatay Region, Sanliurfa Region, Adana Region, and Mardin Region. There is significant variation in development levels across refugee hosting regions.

The analysis is based on three main sources of data: (a) demographic and labor market data for natives from the 2004–2015 Turkish Household Labor Force Surveys; (b) regional refugee numbers from the Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (2012 and 2013), Erdogan (2014), and the Turkish Directorate General of Migration Management (2015); and (c) estimates of regional development from the socioeconomic Development Index for 2011 (prior to the arrival of refugees), prepared by the Turkish Ministry of Development.

The authors first compare the actual labor market outcomes after the arrival of refugees to a region with the counterfactual outcomes that would have been observed in the absence of refugees in that region. The counterfactual outcomes are inferred from “synthetic control” regions, i.e., artificial regions constructed by the authors based on data from regions hosting few refugees. The authors use a regression analysis to estimate the relationship between the impact of refugees and the development level of host regions.

Main results:

- **At the mean level of development there are heterogeneous effects of refugee inflows on labor market outcomes, when comparing men and women, the formal and informal labor markets, and wage versus non-wage employment.** For native men, refugee inflows increase formal employment and decrease informal employment, but have no effect on overall employment. Refugee inflows also increase non-wage employment at the expense of wage employment, reduce both wages and wage employment in the informal sector, and increase wage employment in the formal sector. For native women, refugee inflows reduce total employment and labor force participation, reduce non-wage employment, and reduce wages in the informal sector.
- **For both native men and women, the impact of refugee inflows on total employment and formal employment becomes more positive as regional development rises.** For native men, the refugee impact on men's employment and formal employment becomes more positive as regional development rises. For native women, adverse effects of refugee inflows on employment and labor force participation emerge only at the mean or lower levels of development, and these adverse effects diminish as regional development rises.
- **Inflows of refugees increase the unemployment rates only at low levels of development, for both native men and women (i.e., below the mean level).**
- **The transition of native workers from informal to formal employment because of the arrival of refugees is stronger in more developed regions.** The impact of the refugee shock on non-wage workers among men, wage workers among women (both in terms of employment and wages), and wage workers among men (in terms of wages only) becomes more positive as regional development rises. Additionally, the transition from the informal to the formal sector (particularly in the manufacturing and service sectors) accelerates both for male and female wage workers as regional development increases.

The authors conclude that, **overall, the impact of the refugees on both men's and women's labor market outcomes becomes more positive as the development level of hosting regions rises.** They offer a few possible explanations for these results. First, the refugee impact on native employment is more adverse in less developed regions because young and less-educated refugees are closer substitutes for natives in these regions. Second, job opportunities in the formal service and manufacturing sectors are more common in developed regions. And third, there have been more numerous new firm openings in more

developed regions, which are likely to have increased the demand for labor and diminished the adverse effects of refugees on native employment.

The authors suggest three policy implications of these results: (1) restrictions on the movement of refugees to more developed regions of host countries are negative for natives' labor market outcomes; (2) locating refugee camps in more developed regions could aid the absorption of refugees and benefit natives; and (3) the labor market cost of hosting refugees is lower for natives of more developed countries.

Habit Formation and the Misallocation of Labor: Evidence from Forced Migrations

Matti Sarvimäki, Roope Uusitalo, and Markus Jäntti

Journal of the European Economic Association, Volume 20, Issue 6 (2022), Pages 2497–2539

<https://doi.org/10.1093/jeea/jvac037>

This paper **examines the long-term effects of large-scale forced displacement in Finland in the mid-20th century**. The authors exploit the large-scale population resettlement of 430,000 people (11 percent of the population) following the cession of Finland's eastern parts to the Soviet Union during and after World War II. Approximately half of the displaced population were farmers, who were allocated farmland in comparable resettlement areas (matching soil and temperatures to the extent possible) and close to former neighbors. The resettlement policy aimed to keep rural communities together and give displaced farmers land and assistance to establish farms comparable to the ones they had lost. Resettled farmers were permitted to sell/buy land and move across locations.

The authors estimate the impact of forced migration by comparing the outcomes of: (1) displaced individuals to those who were not displaced; (2) individuals who lived just east of the post-war border (and were therefore displaced) and people who lived slightly more to the west (and were not displaced); and (3) displaced persons and the local population of their resettlement areas.

The analysis is based on individual longitudinal data covering over 78,000 individuals born between 1907 and 1925, of whom approximately 7,800 were displaced. The individual data combine information from two population censuses (1950 and 1970) and 1971 tax records. The 1950 census includes data on the pre-war municipality of residence, occupational

status, and industry codes. The authors also draw on municipality-level data on the pre-war income distribution and industry structure.

Main results:

- **A quarter-century after being displaced, displaced farmers earned more than other men who worked in agriculture before the war.** Forced migration increased the long-term income of the displaced male farmers by 16 to 30 percent.
- **Displaced farmers were more likely to move from agriculture to other sectors between 1939 and 1970.** Forced migration increased the likelihood of leaving agriculture by 12–17 percentage points from a baseline of 28 percent.
- **Forced migration increased the likelihood of moving to a city and completing secondary education among the displaced farmers.** In contrast, being displaced decreased income and increased the likelihood of moving to rural locations among the urban population. In either scenario, the average 1971 income of displaced persons was close to that of similarly educated non-displaced persons working in the same industries and living in the same locations in 1970.

The authors conclude that **forced migration increased farmers' income because it increased the likelihood of leaving agriculture.** Furthermore, the results imply that the returns to leaving agriculture were large in post-WWII Finland.

The authors investigate the possible reasons why most farmers stayed in agriculture when they could have earned substantially more in the modern sector. They do not find any evidence to suggest that these effects arise because forced migration affected farm quality, education, networks, learning, cultural differences, and discrimination. Instead, they **propose a theory of “habit formation” whereby people derive utility both from income and from their residential location, and utility from a location increases with the time the person has already lived there.** Put simply, “people are willing to forgo even large monetary gains to stay at home”. They argue that a person who has grown up on a farm may choose to remain in agriculture to enjoy their location capital even if they could earn more elsewhere. However, if they are forced to move, then they lose location capital tied to their old home and hence choose the location providing them with the highest income after the displacement.

Refugee migration and the labour market: lessons from 40 years of post-arrival policies in Denmark

Jacob Nielsen Arendt, Christian Dustmann, and Hyejin Ku

Oxford Review of Economic Policy, Volume 38, Issue 3 (2022), Pages 531–556

<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxrep/grac021>

This paper **examines the long-term effects of immigration and integration policies on refugees' labor market outcomes in Denmark**. The analysis is based on a review of 17 empirical studies.

More than 155,000 individuals were granted protection in Denmark between 1984 and 2019, with numbers peaking in 1992–93 and 2014–16. This inflow was due to conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and Syria, respectively. On average, the employment rate for refugees increases rapidly during the first seven years of residency in Denmark, after which it increases only gradually and then plateaus. The employment rate for refugees is substantially lower than the corresponding rate for natives and other immigrants, especially in the initial years of residency in Denmark. While this gap narrows over time, even after 30 years the employment rate for refugees remains about 10 percentage points lower than the rate for other immigrants and about 25 percentage points lower than the rate for natives. There are substantial differences in the evolution of employment for different arrival cohorts, depending on the refugee policies at the time of their arrival in Denmark.

The authors consider the effects of five types of policies: (i) dispersal policies for newly admitted refugees aimed at spreading the burden of accommodating refugees evenly across the country, exposing refugees to different local conditions; (ii) employment support policies; (iii) integration and language programs; (iv) reductions in welfare benefit transfers, with the objective of incentivizing the labor market participation of refugees; and (v) policies that set out conditions for permanent residency.

Main conclusions:

- **Settlement of refugees oriented according to economic opportunity is preferable to quasi-random dispersal policies.** Refugees benefit from being allocated to municipalities that provides them with large ethnic networks and better labor market conditions. Refugees' earnings are higher in the long term if they can settle in bigger cities which offer employment opportunities in high-wage industries. Quasi-random dispersal may induce inefficiencies, by preventing refugees from settling in areas where

their skills are most employable and obtain the highest reward. Policies that allocate refugees according to the availability of cheap housing—often correlated with local disadvantage—may lead to long-term disadvantages for refugees.

- **Employment support, particularly in the form of subsidized employment, can be beneficial to refugees.** Settlement according to economic conditions can enhance the efficiency of policies aimed at incentivizing refugees' labor market performance.
- **Programs aimed at enhancing the skills of refugees and adapting existing skill sets to the needs of the labor market are effective and important.** On-the-job training raises employment of refugees, and job training administered early on can speed up entry into the labor market. Language programs enhance employment probabilities, although effects are found to materialize only in the long term. However, there is some evidence of a trade-off between job training programs and language programs, where early job training crowds out enrolment in language training and therefore language proficiency. This in turn may have detrimental effects in the longer run.
- **Reductions in welfare transfers are unlikely to achieve the objective of better longer-term integration of refugees into the labor market.** In the short-term, reductions in welfare benefits cause a short-term increase in employment probabilities, mainly for male refugees. However, short-term responses do not carry over into the longer run and cease after 5 years. Moreover, the dramatic reduction in disposable income for affected households has many undesirable side effects, including increases in criminal activity.
- **Policies that increase conditions for permanent residency should be carefully crafted and take account of the heterogeneous responses of individuals.** More demanding permanent residency requirements (e.g., language tests and employment experience) can potentially provide incentives to integrate, motivating refugees to invest in their skills to qualify for permanent residency. However, this requires that individuals believe they can fulfil the new requirements without incurring large costs. Otherwise, more onerous requirements can lead to poorer labor market outcomes.

Overall, of the five types of refugee policies evaluated in this study, only two produce effects that on average seem to outweigh costs: allowing refugees to choose where to settle, and active labor market programs that raise language skill investments. By contrast, policies that emphasize early job-training and policies that regulate access to welfare benefit or use permanence of residence to incentivize skill investment, while beneficial for some, create disadvantage for others.

What is the impact of forced displacement on health? A scoping review

Cristóbal Cuadrado, Matías Libuy, and Rodrigo Moreno-Serra

Health Policy and Planning, Volume 38, Issue 3 (2023), Pages 394–408

<https://doi.org/10.1093/heapol/czad002>

This paper **reviews the main challenges faced by applied researchers to produce unbiased causal estimates of the effects of forced displacement on health**. The authors sought to answer the following question: “What are the analytical challenges faced by current quantitative research examining the relationship between forced displacement and health, as well as the main methodological approaches employed to address those challenges?”

The review initially identified 1,454 studies from the health and social sciences disciplines published up to May 2021, of which 56 studies met the inclusion criteria. African countries were the most frequent origin of the forcibly displaced populations studied, while European countries were the most frequent destination, followed by African countries. The most frequent health outcomes reported in the relevant literature include: all-cause and cause-specific mortality; infant mortality; maternal and perinatal outcomes; child morbidity; and child growth. Less frequent are studies on: maternal mortality; self-perceived health; unmet health needs; access to services; mental health; fertility; and health-related behaviors. The most frequently used comparison group was the native population from the host community.

The authors classified the quality of the evidence according to a four-level categorization (very strongly credible, strongly credible, somewhat credible, and less credible) based on the capacity of the paper’s methodological (identification) strategy to produce a valid comparison group and to mitigate endogeneity concerns.

The authors discuss **several analytical challenges associated with studies on the causal health impacts of forced displacement**. These include:

- **Non-random allocation.** In most situations of war, conflict or natural disasters, there is some degree of agency in the decision to migrate and, therefore, no randomness in exposure to displacement. Also, the intensity of conflict violence can disproportionately affect certain individuals within a community (e.g., specific ethnic groups). Even in “natural experiments” where the entire population in a particular territory is homogeneously exposed to an exogenous displacement event at the same time, it is

nevertheless important to account for the influence of potential observable and unobservable differences between populations in the specific context.

- **Limited comparability between displacement contexts.** For example, the nature of the displacement shock (acute or protracted), income levels at origin, and the involvement of governments in forced resettlement schemes all vary across contexts. Contextual factors also affect individual characteristics that enable individuals to migrate, the selection of a migration destination, and experiences during the relocation process. Additionally, host territory characteristics can influence long-term outcomes in different ways.
- **Disentangling the effects of violence from the impact of forced displacement.** Displaced populations may have experiences that directly lead to, or compound, the impacts of forced displacement, e.g., direct exposure to human rights violations, violence, or disasters. To isolate the effect of forced displacement, researchers usually need to compare individuals with similar exposure to a conflict or emergency event, some of whom remained in their home territory while others migrated. However, duration/intensity of exposure to violence influences the probability of displacement, as well as health outcomes. The probability of displacement is also determined by often unobserved factors such as health status, wealth, and social connections.
- **Data limitations.** Due to the difficulty of predicting displacement events and constraints on collecting data in humanitarian crises, most studies use surveys or administrative data, covering short periods of time, for a few population groups, usually with no longitudinal follow-up allowing for panel data analyses.
- **Difficulties of identifying control groups.** In most studies, comparisons to the host population do not represent a valid control group for robust inference about the causal effect of forced displacement on health. Younger, healthier, and wealthier individuals are more likely to migrate, or migrate sooner, and host communities tend to be better off in many ways that influence health status. These contextual differences introduce endogeneity and have often confounded the reported links between forced displacement and health outcomes.

Main findings and recommendations:

- **High-quality causal inference methods were rarely found** in the literature analyzing the health effects of forced displacement.
- **Most of the available empirical evidence for a wide range of health outcomes is prone to substantial bias, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions.** This is due to

issues around selection of valid control groups and the application of credible causal inference methods in several studies.

- **Current research practice in the field could be strengthened through selection of valid control groups and application of more appropriate causal inference methods.** In settings of internal displacement or displacement to neighboring countries, valid control groups may be found in geographically close communities with similar baseline characteristics and who were unaffected by the exogenous event that triggered displacement. In international displacement settings, comparisons with international (voluntary) migrants from a similar ethnic background (ideally from the same location), who relocated to the same host country as the displaced communities, is likely to be the best approach. More robust findings will require a wider/judicious use of non-experimental methods better suited for causal inference, such as instrumental variables, difference-in-differences, regression discontinuity and interrupted time series analyses.

Prevalence and factors associated with post-traumatic stress disorder among internally displaced people in camps at Debre Berhan, Amhara Region, Ethiopia: a cross-sectional study

Belay Makango, Zewdie Aderaw Alemu, Tesfaye Solomon, Nigussie Lemma, Tewodros Girma, Tijani Mohammednur, Mikias Alayu, and Yaregal Fufa

BMC Psychiatry, Volume 23, (2023), Article number 81

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-023-04570-w>

This paper **estimates the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among internally displaced people in camps at Debre Berhan, Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia.** At the time this research was undertaken, there were three IDP camps in Debre Berhan: Sunflower camp (2956 IDPs), Teacher's College (1340 IDPs), and China (568 IDPs).

PTSD is defined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th Edition (DSM5), as being composed of four groups of symptoms that include intrusive and recurring memories of trauma, avoidance of trauma-related stimuli, numbness, and/or negative mood or changes in perception related to trauma and changes in reactivity and arousal. Estimates of PTSD using the DSM5 criteria are based on a survey of 406 IDPs (above age 18) carried out in December 2021. Respondents were selected by random systematic sampling from registration data.

Main results

- **There is a very high prevalence of PTSD among IDPs.** Sixty-eight percent of respondents met the criteria for PTSD, of whom more than half (53 percent) were women. Individuals aged 45-64 years were the most affected age group, with a prevalence rate of 71 percent.
- **Being a farmer, witnessing the destruction of property, experiencing trauma during displacement, frequency of displacement, being distressed, and being unemployed were associated with PTSD.** Merchants were 59 percent less likely to have developed PTSD compared to farmers. IDP who witnessed the destruction of property were 1.67 times more likely to have PTSD compared to those who hadn't witnessed the destruction of property. IDPs who experienced any type of trauma during displacement were six times more likely to have PTSD compared to those who did not experience trauma. Counterintuitively, individuals who were internally displaced three or more times were 69 percent less likely to have developed PTSD than first-time IDPs. Individuals feeling distressed were more than five times more likely to have PTSD than those without feelings of distress. IDP who were unemployed were twice as likely to have PTSD compared to those who were employed. Sex, age, and marital status had no statistically significant association with PTSD.

The authors call for effective mental health services that combine medical treatment, psychological and social welfare programs for the IDP population in Ethiopia.

Social-capital-based mental health interventions for refugees: A systematic review

E. Villalonga-Olives, T.R. Wind, A.O. Armand, M. Yirefu, R. Smith, and D.P. Aldrich

Social Science & Medicine, Volume 301 (2022), Article 114787

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2022.114787>

Social capital can be defined as the “networks, norms and trust that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit”. Social capital can provide a range of benefits, including: an exchange of favors and assistance, maintenance of group norms, stocks of trust, exercise of sanctions, diffusion of information, voluntary organization within a social structure, and participation in social organizations. Social ties within groups (bonding social capital), between groups (bridging social capital), or across levels of authority and hierarchy (linking

social capital) can provide assistance and useful information, help overcome barriers to collective action, and afford mutual aid during crises. Social capital can also protect against mental health problems such as depression and posttraumatic stress.

This systematic review **analyzes the literature to better understand how social-capital-based interventions can improve the mental health of refugees**. From nearly 400 identified articles, only 7 met the inclusion criteria and were included in the systematic review. Refugees studied in these articles came from Bhutan, Nigeria and Kurdish regions, Sudan and Somalia, Syria and other non-specified locations in the Caribbean, Africa, and the Middle East. Most of the studies were conducted in high income resettlement countries (Canada, United States, United Kingdom, and Australia). Only one study focused on refugees in their first country of asylum (Syrians in Lebanon).

The authors classified three types of interventions that target mental health of refugees using social capital: individual, community and multilevel interventions. **The most common interventions were community-based and most of them involved periodical group meetings.**

Main findings:

- **The reinforcement or creation of social capital**, especially bridging and linking types, **are an effective way to achieve a positive change in mental health outcomes in populations who have been displaced.**
- **Giving refugees access to resources along with periodic group-meetings**– to help coping, build connections, understand the new resettlement country or helping to build healthier habits – **positively impacted different mental health outcomes**. Group meetings built social capital in several ways: they built new relationships and involved access to resources and opportunities in the place of asylum or re-settlement; provided opportunities to connect with the new culture; helped to build cohesion and offered social support, as well as a sense of belonging; and provided an opportunity for social integration and to increase social networks.
- The reviewed studies suffered from important methodological problems, including the absence of a clear definition of the target population, the absence of validated instruments to evaluate social capital and mental health outcomes, and the use of cross-sectional rather than longitudinal data.

The Dynamics of Refugee Return: Syrian Refugees and Their Migration Intentions

Ala' Alrababa'h, Daniel Masterson, Marine Casalis, Dominik Hangartner, and Jeremy Weinstein

British Journal of Political Science (2023), Pages 1 - 24

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123422000667>

This paper **examines the factors that shape aspirations to return home for Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan**. Syrian refugees in Lebanon are subject to a range of hardships, restrictions, and barriers to integration, including difficulties associated with obtaining a residence permit, which is required to access health and education services, and restrictions on the right to work.

Building on the “push” and “pull” framework for international migration, the authors hypothesized that refugees' decisions about return are shaped by four main factors: (1) conditions in the host country; (2) conditions in the country of origin; (3) the costs of movement; and (4) the quality of information about the costs and benefits of return.

The analysis is based on several sources of data gathered in 2019, including: (a) cross-sectional survey data from a nationally representative sample of about 3,000 Syrian refugee households in Lebanon, covering return intentions and preparations to return in the short and long term; (b) a conjoint experiment to isolate the causal effect of conditions in Syria and Lebanon on return intentions (respondents are presented several hypothetical vignettes and asked whether, under these conditions, they would return to Syria); (c) semi-structured interviews with Syrians living in Lebanon; and (d) a survey of almost 1,300 Syrian refugees in Jordan.

Main results:

- **Conditions in a refugee's home country are the main drivers of return intentions.** Safety in Syria, economic prospects in Syria, the availability of public services in one's hometown, and respondents' family and friend networks in Syria are positively and significantly associated with return intentions. Even in the face of hostility and poor living conditions in host countries, refugees are unlikely to return unless the situation at home improves significantly. Despite their protracted displacement and limited prospects to return in the short term, refugees generally want to return home when the situation improves in their home country.

- **Conditions in the host country have little effect on refugees' aspirations to return.** Conditions in Lebanon do not substantially shape return intentions, even though many Syrians experience extremely challenging living situations. Social wellbeing is the only variable that has a statistically significant association with return intentions. Higher levels of economic wellbeing, networks, and social wellbeing in Lebanon has a positive correlation with taking steps to prepare to return to Syria, suggesting that migration capacity plays a role in return decisions.
- No relationship is found between mobility costs and return intentions.
- **Confidence in information about one's hometown is positively associated with both intentions and preparations.** The relationship between conditions in Syria and return intentions and preparations is shaped by respondents' confidence in their information sources.
- **The main findings from the conjoint experiment are consistent with the analysis of observational data;** on average, conditions in Syria play a more important role in shaping people's return intentions than conditions in Lebanon. Safety is the strongest driver of return intentions—security in one's hometown increases return intentions by 35 percentage points and nationwide security increases return intentions by 42 percentage points. An end to military conscription increases the likelihood of return by 18 percentage points. The availability of jobs and public services in Syria both increase return intentions by 8 percentage points. The presence of family and friends in Syria increases return intentions by 5 percentage points. Access to a good job in Lebanon reduces return intentions by 2 percent and access to public services in Lebanon reduces return intentions by 3 percent.
- The drivers of return intentions in Jordan are similar to Lebanon. Conditions in respondents' place of origin in Syria (safety, economic prospects, and public services) and the presence of family and friends in Syria are positively correlated with return intentions. Conditions in Jordan and information quality do not appear to shape return intentions.

These results challenge the conventional view that refugees make return decisions by evaluating whether they can do better at home than in their host country. **The authors propose an alternative model of threshold-based decision making; only once a basic threshold of safety at home is met do refugees compare other factors in the host and home country.** Qualitative data from structured interviews with a separate sample of Syrian refugees in Lebanon support the proposition that people are waiting for the security and safety situation in Syria to improve before returning.