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EDITORIAL: EVALUATION IN THE AREA OF FORCED MIGRATION: A SPECIAL ISSUE OF EVALUATION CONNECTIONS

Tom Ling, Joanna Hofman and Ben Baruch

Forced displacement worldwide is at its highest in decades (UNHCR, 2017). People escape atrocities, often leaving everything behind, and risking all they have, including their lives. Countries have struggled and while responses vary, they rarely include long-term and sustainable solutions. Evaluation can inform this debate. Contributions presented in this issue shed light on relevant evaluation evidence and identify challenges in framing evaluations, collecting data, and translating information into knowledge and decision-making.

We need better evidence and sense-making

Past research on forced migration was often based on unsound methodology and led to dubious policy conclusions (Jacobsen & Landau, 2003). Problems included selection bias, unfamiliar contexts, language barriers, and ethical dilemmas. These issues are emphasised in Foster's contribution, which discusses data collection methods and analytical tools to improve access to migrant voices.

Decision-makers need better evidence to inform interventions, whether qualitative, quantitative, or both. A number of this issue's contributions consider to what extent current evaluations generate the knowledge needed. In their contribution, Benton & Papademetriou draw on relationships with a wider evidence movement and explore ways to improve evidence-based decision-making in refugee integration. The authors encourage measuring social integration and self-sufficiency (Ott & Montgomery, 2015). The issue of self-reliance is further explored in Slaughter's contribution, which discusses the challenges of measuring it.

Honeyball reminds us of the risk that the lack of a coherent evidence base might (and indeed does) fuel populist narratives. There is diversity both of the type of available evidence and of studies' methodology and quality, but perhaps the time is ripe for consolidating and making sense of this knowledge.

We need evaluation frameworks that reflect the needs of all groups

Evaluations of migration work operate in multifaceted environments, and Parusel's contribution provides an insight into different perspectives that can be taken into account in evaluation design: of the countries of origin, of the hosting countries, and of the migrants

themselves. Indeed, making migrants' voices heard is a recurring theme in this issue and vulnerability is pertinent to evaluation methodology in migration contexts. However, Clark-Kazak (2014) has suggested that identifying entire groups of migrants as 'vulnerable' could be patronising and undermine their means of exerting power. More attention is needed to the vulnerabilities of refugees and asylum seekers in the dynamic contexts of both migration and the research process.

Another, often repeated, call is to frame an evaluation of forced migration through a gender lens (Foster and Honeyball in this issue). Whether we need gender lenses in all evaluations, or only in specific and focused studies that aim to understand gender is a pertinent question. In our view, a gender lens should always at least be considered when designing an evaluation.

Chaplowe and colleagues explain in their contribution how different dimensions of an evaluation (e.g. the intervention, stakeholders, or causality) and their interplay can be effectively addressed in a real-time evaluation. They show there is no one-size-fits-all response to addressing complexity in evaluating interventions in this area.

Finally, this special issue includes a piece by Hans Lundgren and Susanna Morrison-Metois from the OECD on a timely new report on refugees and evaluation.

We need a more mature knowledge base

Drawing on this issue's contributions, three themes emerge where progress can be made.

First, a migrant-centred approach to designing and conducting evaluations should be more widely used. We call for engaging migrants more systematically in the evaluation process, including them in co-production of recommendations for an effective delivery of services.

Second, we support initiatives that facilitate the use of data and evidence to make sense of the situation on the ground, such as the new European knowledge-management centre on migration and demography (EC, 2017). We encourage the use of evaluation evidence in these initiatives, borrowing from a range of strategies to generate learning – from conferences, through to other knowledge exchange initiatives, so-called clearinghouses, innovation and improvement labs.

Finally, it is debatable if it is for evaluators to address any perceived gap in the extent to which decision-makers appropriately use evidence. We see the role of evaluators as providing evidence and options for decision-makers; it may even be appropriate to engage decision-makers with a view to exploring implementation issues. However, hard as it may be, evaluators should accept that they

have an important contribution to make but that other factors are also relevant.

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ACCESSING MARGINAL VOICES AND INTEGRATING GENDER FOR EVALUATION AND RESEARCH IN DISPLACEMENT SETTINGS

Jillian J. Foster

Research with displaced populations – refugees, economic migrants, and internally displaced people (IDPs) – is challenging at best. Displacement itself creates unforeseen emotional and physical barriers which inhibit data collection. Chaotic security environments constrain access to the field and unpredictable funding cycles often shrink research timelines. Without careful attention to contextual nuances, a commitment to rigorous methods, and creative study design, evaluators and researchers risk unintentionally reduced sample sizes, selection bias, and weakened quality of work. To avoid such problems, there are two key elements to working in displacement environments that merit highlighting:

(1) integration of gender as a foundational element of study design, data collection, and analysis, and

(2) data collection methods that intentionally access marginal voices.

Understanding forced migration and displacement

The current nature of much of the world's conflict is that it simply does not start and suddenly stop again; rather, the threat of violence remains ever-present as the communities grapple with differences in ideology and identity that directly affect economic opportunity or lack thereof. Refugees and migrants sit at the nexus of these factors, often uprooting their lives multiple times as they move from their "home" to informal settlement, to camp, to eventual resettlement. UNHCR estimates over 65.6 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide at present, with 22.5 million of those being refugees and 10 million stateless people (UNHCR, 2017). On average, refugees remain in camps for 17 years, many staying for much longer (UNDP, 2017). Displacement is a dynamic activity. Most families move multiple times before they find stable housing, are granted official resettlement, or return to their country of origin.

Integrating gender

Full integration of gender – from study design to tool development through to data collection, and then finally to analysis – is the first step to evaluation in these contexts. Our history with gender is one of confusion and afterthought. At present, gender is a thematic addition to supplement, or simply add texture to, already formed research. Much of the evaluation and research community speaks of "adapting" evaluation approaches for gender-focused programmes, "mainstreaming" gender within previously developed study designs, and informing "gender indicators"[1]; rather than employing feminist principles – which call for a deconstruction of gendered effects, while also lifting marginal voices (Podems, 2010) – that utilise gender as a building block of study design, data collection, and analysis[2]. Moreover, approaches that do address gender overwhelmingly conflate "gender" with "women", which neglects men's relationship to gender. Research designed with gender at the foundation increases the breadth and depth of findings, offers a more diverse sample and dataset, and provides more complete stories of programmatic impact (Foster, 2016).

Accessing marginal voices

Refugees, internally displaced people, and forced migrants are marginalised by the very nature of their displacement. The breakdown of communities and the frequent movement of individuals and families create substantial access challenges. Additionally, the combination of social stigma, poverty, language barriers, and legal ambiguity exacerbates the vulnerability of displaced people, creating silence where there otherwise might not be. Working with refugees and forced migrants requires creativity to capture their voices.

Critical steps forward

Location is everything

Location can be the least discussed logistical element of data collection in this field (USAID, 2011). However, location is of utmost importance for displaced communities, given security concerns and constrained mobility. The presumed benefits of hosting focus group discussions and interviews in partner organisation or government offices is outweighed by the cost of convincing participants to reschedule other commitments, including childcare, and covering the cost of transportation for those that may need to travel several hours to and from the location. Moreover, in conflict settings the threat of gender-based violence can dramatically restrict women's and girls' mobility (UN Women, 2013) and undocumented men may face similar confines with the risk of deportation[3].

Rather than bringing participants to data collection activities, interviews and focus groups should be brought to them. Focus group discussions can easily be held in the privacy of homes, which dramatically reduces the risk

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1 Examples include: World Bank Group, Gender Issues in Monitoring and Evaluation. Retrieved 7 September 2017 from: http://siteresources. worldbank.org/INTGENAGRLIVSOUBOOK/Resources/Module16.pdf; GiZ, Guidelines on designing a gender-sensitive results-based monitoring (RBM) system. Retrieved 7 September 2017 from: https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/31736413.pdf.

2 Paradoxically humanitarian and development programming has moved beyond gender mainstreaming in many respects and is now experiencing an increase in overt references to gender – or women and girls specifically.

3 Anecdotal evidence from 2015 study of debt and cash assistance in Tripoli and Beirut, Lebanon.

of violence and deportation. Funds spent on transportation can instead cover the cost of refreshments prepared by a willing host in the community.

Who's asking?

Put simply, it matters who asks the questions, especially around sensitive topics such as household decision-making, gender-based violence, and legal status. It is imperative that both male and female data collectors are selected and able to travel to and from field sites. Working in mixed-gender pairs, female data collectors should lead with female respondents and male data collectors with men. Local young adults, eager yet often precariously employed, make excellent data collectors. Their uptake of data collection technologies is remarkably fast, they have a keen understanding of local cultural, religious, and gender dynamics, and their involvement can foster greater community buy-in around the research topic or programme being evaluated.

Beyond disaggregation

Gender analysis is more than sex disaggregated data. Evaluators and researchers should be encouraged to explore data for gendered decision-making, behaviour, and language patterns. Data should be examined for evidence of women's increased decision-making power in cases where they are newly heads of households. Evidence of men's decreased and women's increased mobility should be explored. Finally, language patterns, especially those related to emotions, are highly gendered and should be studied.

Conclusion

Working with refugees, internally displaced populations, and forced migrants demands a level of creativity not found in more traditional evaluation and research settings. One must exercise patience to maintain analytical rigour while overcoming the physical, emotional, security, and budget challenges of working in these environments. Bringing data collection to participants and working with local groups of mixed-gender data collectors enables greater access to marginal voices. Exploring women's as well as men's experiences applies a more complete gender analysis. Finally, examining decision-making, behaviour, and language patterns as gendered elements adds depth to findings and often produces unanticipated outcomes.

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INVESTMENT STRATEGIES FOR REFUGEE INTEGRATION: IMPROVING EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION-MAKING

Meghan Benton and Demetrios G. Papademetriou

Social policy has undergone an evidence revolution. Greater emphasis on high quality evidence, such as randomised controlled trials and natural experiments, has unleashed a host of clearing houses that rank the quality of evidence in fields such as education, employment and health. Policymakers are demanding more from the services they fund, for instance through 'payment-by-results', the practice of paying service providers on the basis of outcomes. In addition, a number of universities, think tanks, and consultancies have pioneered innovative impact evaluation and cost benefit analysis methods.

This 'evidence turn' has not reached forced migration studies. Only a handful of refugee integration policy interventions have been evaluated with a control group, and there is no 'what works centre' for refugee integration. Instead, sharing platforms are dominated by examples of promising, but as-yet-untested practice.[1] Moreover, the evaluations that do exist rarely capture long-term or broader social impact, while evidence on immediate, economic outcomes is often (prematurely) interpreted as a sign of failure. Frequent policy reforms have further muddied the picture, as have mixed flows and

the shift away from targeted services, which make it hard to unpack impact on different groups.

This paper examines the dynamics behind this evidence gap – many of which extend beyond problems of evaluation – and suggests five principles for improving both the collection and use of evidence in refugee integration policymaking. It is based on extensive conversations with policymakers, and a forthcoming scoping study on opportunities for assessing the social returns on labour market integration investments for refugees.[2]

A tricky relationship with evidence

It is not lack of evidence alone that undermines decision-making in refugee integration. Metrics for defining and measuring success are intrinsically bound up with public expectations. Lurking beneath any discussion of what works, for instance, is the tension between *selecting* people for their vulnerability (as is the case for refugee resettlement, and to some extent, asylum adjudication) and *evaluating* people for how well they settle in (namely, how they perform in the labour market). Publics are sometimes led to believe that newcomers will easily slot into existing skills gaps – or even 'solve' looming demographic crises, as was the framing of the public debate in Germany. Failing to meet these expectations can then erode public trust in the asylum and protection system.

Moreover, decisions about where to invest are not made in a vacuum. Interventions in the name of smoother integration – such as allowing asylum seekers to work – can create a pull factor for further irregular flows, so something that is proven to work may come at a cost (Papademetriou and Benton, 2016). Policy trade-offs are rife in refugee integration decisions. For instance, to decide who among recent cohorts of asylum seekers to invest in, policymakers could consider whether the costs of training programmes are outweighed by the number of working years ahead. But such decisions are contingent on both a moral judgement about who should be allowed to stay and a pragmatic judgement about who is *likely* to stay, as well as on what terms, given the difficulties of returning failed asylum seekers.

Improving evidence-based decision-making in refugee integration

Improving evidence-based decision-making therefore requires both better quality evidence and greater transparency over metrics. Five principles could help policymakers accomplish this goal:

1. **Strengthen the evidence on policy interventions through greater use of natural experiments.** Many countries run large-scale introduction programmes that both standardise what new arrivals are taught and package together several interventions, making it difficult to construct a counterfactual or work out what elements make the difference. But national governments could work with subnational governments to exploit differences in the implementation of policies to examine how small changes affect outcomes, while conducting more robust trials and experiments of stand-alone interventions. Evaluation costs money and takes time, and policymakers may not see results within one policy cycle. But with Germany estimating it will spend 93.6 billion euros on refugees by the end of 2020, we argue policymakers must make rigorous evaluation the core of future integration programming.

2. **Investigate methods that measure social integration.** Narrowly defined economic metrics – such as employment rates – may not capture successful integration for refugees who are traumatised, caring for family members, or towards the end of their working lives. Equally, economic self-sufficiency does not guarantee social integration: people in low-skilled shift work may become socially isolated. Social integration should therefore be a much more prominent pillar of evaluation and decision-making. Measuring social integration, for instance through social network analysis, could examine how refugees build social connections over time – both with their communities (bonding capital) and with people from different backgrounds (bridging capital). It could also estimate the financial impact of other ways refugees contribute, for instance through volunteering or providing care to family members and neighbours.

3. **Examine long-term integration dynamics.** Tracking refugees over longer periods of time (both back-casting and forward-casting) could help address a central policy question: whether it is better for newcomers to enter work quickly (even at the risk of getting stuck in low-skilled, precarious work) or train for skilled jobs (which can delay access to the social networks and on-the-job language training that work brings). Another unknown is how refugees make strategic decisions and sacrifices (including to their time, and further education) to ensure their children can succeed. More longitudinal studies of families, measuring both long-term success and intergenerational mobility, could illuminate how decisions made by and for first generation refugees affect the outcomes for their children.

4. **Nurture a culture of evaluation among other actors.** The migration crisis in Europe triggered an outpouring of volunteering movements, new non-profits, and social enterprises to support refugees. However, such a plethora of promising innovations can be a headache for evaluators trying to disaggregate what helps refugees succeed, while for initiatives which are small-scale and oversubscribed, evaluation is often an afterthought (Benton and Glennie, 2016). Governments could provide greater resources to help service providers and charities understand and share what works about their approach. Policymakers and evaluation commissioners could also pursue a collaborative approach to evaluation, working with academics and other experts to design natural experiments, and make their data more open.

5. **Managing expectations, both within and outside government.** Labour market integration is often the priority for policymakers, but the suggestion that only economic factors merit consideration can backfire if they lead to expectations that cannot be met. We need a new language

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1 For instance, the European Commission's Migration and Integration Platform records 'good practices' which measure outputs (e.g. number of people served) rather than outcomes. See https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/integration-practices.

2 The MPI Europe project 'Social Returns on Labour Market Investments in Refugee Integration', funded by the Bertelsmann Foundation and led by Meghan Benton (report anticipated in October 2017).

of measuring and communicating success for the most vulnerable groups, which draws on storytelling and people's sense of moral responsibility and empathy. Understanding better the relative importance receiving communities place on social, versus economic integration, would help.

Integration is often treated as a binary outcome (successful/unsuccessful), with employment the principal proxy for success.

Given that many newly arrived refugees will take time to enter the labour market (or not find work at all), the narrow focus on labour market integration gives us little scope to measure and improve progress in helping newcomers become full, active members of society. This approach can backfire if we only see the social costs of not prioritising other outcomes a generation later. As such, a more nuanced perspective is called for in both designing and evaluating programme outcomes.

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THE CASE FOR MEASURING REFUGEE SELF-RELIANCE

Amy Slaughter

> "Self-reliance is the social and economic ability of an individual, a household or a community to meet its essential needs in a sustainable manner."

Given the proliferation of conflicts in the world over the past decade, refugee repatriation has plummeted. Yet the eventual return home of a majority of refugees is the premise of the refugee protection regime. Humanitarian aid is designed to provide refugees with temporary support until conditions allow for their return. With the protraction of conflicts comes the renewal of aid programmes, even when the refugee outflows occurred decades earlier. Alongside repatriation, the other "durable solutions" as defined by the UN Refugee Agency[1] – resettlement to a third country and local integration in one's country of first asylum – are similarly scarce. Even prior to recent restrictions by the U.S. and other countries, resettlement benefitted fewer than 1% of the world's refugees annually. Local integration is thought to be the rarest of all solutions; it is difficult to monitor and statistics around it are not tracked. This contribution highlights the importance of appropriate integration indicators when evaluating work in this area.

In 2016, barely 3% of refugees globally achieved any of the durable solutions, with 2.5% repatriated and 0.8% resettled through formal resettlement programmes, or 552,200 and 189,300 respectively of 22.5 million (UNHCR, 2017). The other 97% face indefinite exile in host countries. Humanitarian budgets cannot keep pace with the scale and duration of displacement today. These realities have spurred aid agencies to better support the self-reliance ambitions of refugees. While short of "local integration" with the permanent residency and legal rights that entails, self-reliance is expected to yield a better quality of life than is achieved through aid dependence. Through preserving productive assets and building skills, it is thought that refugees will better capitalise on any eventual long-term solution. Most importantly, self-reliance is what many refugees say they want.

In this context, the humanitarian community is coalescing around pragmatic approaches to self-reliance in the absence of enabling host environments (e.g. even where work authorisation is absent). Refugee livelihoods programmes are proliferating, including vocational training, business development, micro-credit, agricultural inputs, employer matching, market linkages, and the "graduation approach"[2]. The attention that this issue is receiving is encouraging and the variety of models being tested is likely to bring innovation.

Defining and measuring self-reliance

What is lacking, however, is evaluation. Specifically, the humanitarian community lacks a common understanding of whether an individual household has achieved self-reliance. Traditionally, the humanitarian community has not excelled at measuring the impact of its work (Hofman et al, 2004). Perhaps due to short-term budgets and planning horizons, accountability is often limited to reporting outputs, e.g. the number of food parcels distributed. What is more, individual agencies tend only to measure the results of each intervention separately, in keeping with donor expectations.

Measuring self-reliance is challenging as it cuts across sectors and agencies. It attempts to gauge the total impact on a household of various inputs, regardless of their source. And it attempts to do so longitudinally, measuring change from the baseline assessment to the achievement of self-reliance, and beyond to ensure sustainability.

A group of fifteen agencies[3] formed a community of practice in 2016 to tackle these challenges. A global mapping exercise of

self-reliance measurement tools turned up excellent tools for targeting assistance to refugees in need, including the Vulnerability Assessment Framework created by UN agencies and the World Bank for Syrian refugees in Jordan. It also turned up excellent tools for measuring integration among refugees accepted permanently for resettlement or local integration (e.g. UNHCR's Integration Index for Colombian refugees in Ecuador) and in situations of reintegration following repatriation (e.g. the Multi-Dimensional Integration Index used in Afghanistan). The mapping failed to uncover examples of self-reliance indices in contexts where refugees lack permanent residency, other than those created by RefugePoint and Women's Refugee Commission, the joint convenors of the community. Also lacking were attempts at universalising measurements begun as a localised effort. Broad recognition emerged from the community, however, of the need for such universal measurements in today's refugee context.

In March 2017, the fifteen agencies convened in Nairobi to grapple with the definition and indicators of self-reliance. The group coalesced around the definition cited in the epigraph, which for refugees importantly goes beyond economic indicators to broader concepts of human welfare without which financial independence would be meaningless. That is, if a refugee household earns its own income and receives no aid but lacks safety and basic necessities, then financial independence cannot be considered a positive outcome.

Other principles emerging from the workshop were: 1) self-reliance should be understood as independence from humanitarian aid rather than from one's community; 2) self-reliance efforts should support the ambitions and best interests of refugees; and 3) self-reliance is not the highest bar desired for or by refugees. From being able to meet their own basic needs, it is expected that refugees will achieve increasing prosperity, security, rights and freedoms, though those are beyond the scope of these indicators.

While the results of the group's deliberations are being compiled, it is certain that more work will be needed to refine, validate and pilot the indicators. From among 22 assessment domains gleaned from related survey tools, there was consensus that these six are critical for inclusion: income & employment, shelter, food, physical & mental health, education, and safety. There was less agreement around domains of community involvement/ social capital, documentation, and access to information. In elaborating how each domain will be measured, the group references existing standards, where applicable, such as the Sphere Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response and the Minimum Economic Recovery Standards, as well as drawing on elements of the tools mentioned above, plus other established sources.

Conclusion

The indicators emerging from this process ideally will focus the refugee response field on programme strategies that facilitate self-reliance. Without this critical evaluation piece, it is impossible to set targets for achieving self-reliance. UNHCR's targets around repatriation and resettlement are clear and binary. The refugees have either left the host country or they have not. But for the vast majority of refugees remaining in their host countries, it is difficult to gauge when thresholds on the continuum towards local integration have been reached.

This collaborative effort is a step towards establishing norms and standards around self-reliance. It remains to be seen whether the field can align around common indicators, but doing so would bring many benefits. It would enable better targeting of resources and assessment of the impact of cash-based assistance, which is inherently cross-sectorial. It would allow for the identification and replication of effective programme models. And most importantly, it would lead to improved living standards for millions of refugees facing indefinite exile.

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REFUGEE RIGHTS OR MEMBER STATES' SECURITY: TACKLING CHALLENGES WITH A COHERENT EVIDENCE BASE

Mary Honeyball

Asserting a narrative frame is often central to issue-based advocacy work of an elected representative, It was a crucial element to progressing the report on the situation of women refugees and asylum seekers in the EU through the European Parliament's Women's Rights and Gender Equality committee. The report's recommendations were subsequently endorsed in a European Parliament resolution on International Women's Day, 8th March 2016. It represents an example of how a coherent evidence base can help mitigate the risks of populist narratives. This paper provides a brief background to the issues and considers how evaluation can help with next steps.

The 2016 resolution calls for reforms of EU migration and asylum policies and procedures that take account of the gendered nature of every stage of the asylum process. The violence that so many women refugees are subjected to – in their countries of origin, transit and on arrival in the EU – requires gender-sensitive measures that will ensure the safety of women seeking asylum, many of whom travel with young children and other dependents.

Shifting demographics among asylum seekers: are policies sensitive to new needs?

Reports from UNHCR in January 2016 showed a shift in who is likely to become an asylum seeker, with increased numbers of women and children arriving in Greece. Women and children constituted 55% whereas in June of the previous year they accounted for 27% (UNHCR, UNFPA and Women's Refugee Commission, Protection Risks for Women and Girls in the European Refugee and Migrant Crisis, 2016). The resolution, passed in March, responded to this evident need to reframe the narrative on forced migration to reflect the experiences of those involved. It acknowledged that women and girls seeking asylum have different concerns from men and recognised that LGBTI (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender

and Intersex) people are subject to specific forms of gender-based persecution.

Placing this issue on the European Parliament's agenda for International Women's Day was a highly conscious act of political symbolism. This strategic timing was instrumental in securing the Parliament's approval at its plenary session, shoring up support across political groups, in order to deliver robust guidelines and take account of gender-differentiated experiences that had been previously ignored.

A value-based approach, on a macro level, was central to the issue's framing. The Parliament's subsequent areas of focus demonstrate the normative impact of the resolution. The progressive scope of the report's provisions can be seen in reports on, for example, EU funds for gender equality and annual assessments of progress in gender equality across EU member states. Thus, by inputting into the European Parliament's established position on this issue, guidelines have been embedded in the European Parliament's policy framework.

Political narratives: helping or hindering the interests of women refugees?

In the case of the Parliament's report on women refugees, the call for gender-based provisions was justified by a rights-based narrative. However, in spite of the palpable sense of urgency that preceded the European Parliament's resolution on women refugees, it is clear that a contradictory conceptual framing of the issue was operating in parallel. In March 2016, within days of the European Parliament's vote to affirm the rights of women refugees, the EU-Turkey deal was finalised. This change in policy, increasingly moving towards the securitisation of borders, seriously undermines refugees' legal protections while externalising the issue at one – very distanced – remove. It is clear that (as well as providing the collective will and consensus at parliamentary level) politically-

charged, value-based judgements have also conversely contributed to the delegitimising of the humanitarian basis of refugees' rights.

Gender-responsive evaluation methods at EU level: how to address the gap?

The direction of travel that can now be seen in the EU–Turkey deal has worrying implications for the framing of a rights narrative regarding refugees and offers no clarity on the overriding responsibility of member states. This narrative framing restricts member states' due diligence obligation to protect refugee women and girls and to provide information on how to properly access the rights and support to which they are entitled. One way to improve the balance is to use evaluations to develop a coherent evidence base on implementation of the resolution. The rest of this paper offers some approaches to doing this.

Political rhetoric has dominated the discussion on the status of refugees, prioritising 'border security' over member states' obligations to safeguard women's physical safety in refugee camps and improve living standards. Instead, gaps in provision are widespread and extreme threats to personal safety are common.

The Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee's programme is dominated by own-initiative reports that are not legislatively binding and instead offer up guidelines, constituted by exhortative recommendations informed by international human rights obligations to the European Commission and European Council. However, parliamentary reporting is different from an evaluation judgement which should systematically follow evaluation criteria to frame conclusions and use robust evaluation methodologies to gather and analyse data. As such it is clear that rigorous and comprehensive, equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluations are needed to assess the impact of resolutions that are approved by the European Parliament. The participation-model is uniquely

situated to allow on-the-ground evaluations that find solutions for enhancing a rights-based approach, sufficiently amplifying the voices and experiences of women themselves and effectively formulating transformative and comprehensive policy that meaningfully addresses their needs.

Now, as the resolution on women refugees is adopted, Members of the European Parliament must hold the European Commission to account. Drawing on evaluation evidence and using its democratic mandate and various levers the Parliament can and should monitor the Commission's response. The evaluation evidence and participative basis of this method must be strengthened to ensure that robust methodologies are used to capture on-the-ground experiences of women and to inform the representative elements of the European Parliament; both through the texts that it produces and the

subsequent parliamentary levers that are deployed to ensure that the Commission and member states act on the recommendations that have been made.

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EVALUATING FORCED MIGRATION: THREE PERSPECTIVES FOR STATE AND MIGRANTS CENTRED APPROACHES

Bernd Parusel

The extraordinary, emergency-like refugee situation in Europe in 2015–2016 has prompted much public debate about how to deal with mass arrivals of asylum seekers in the EU, and policy-makers have struggled between conflicting objectives; on the one hand to reduce the flows, and on the other hand to continue to provide protection to those who need it. The so-called "refugee crisis" also triggered a surge in analyses and evaluations regarding, for example, the reasons behind it, the adequacy of existing (national, European and international) laws to resolve it, policies and practices regarding admission and protection, and the search for model solutions to similar situations in the future.

Evaluating responses to the "refugee crisis"

Much of the evaluative work that has been done focused on emergency solutions in refugee receiving states in Europe and on

ad-hoc EU responses to the problem. This tended to eclipse underlying dilemmas, views from outside the receiving states, as well as connections between forced migration and other policy areas. Taking evaluations in Sweden as a starting point, this paper argues that evaluations should also address the fundamental problems of state responses to forced migration, such as legal access to asylum procedures. In addition to problems formulated by destination countries, the perspectives of countries and regions of origin and of the migrants themselves should not be ignored.

Sweden, which amidst the recent refugee crisis was one of the main receiving states within the EU, has a long tradition regarding government-commissioned evaluation. This tradition was invoked to make sense of the migratory events in autumn 2015, when 75,000 asylum seekers came to Sweden in just two months (October and November) – a mass influx that led to chaotic situations

and uncoordinated emergency responses at various levels of public administration (Parusel, 2016). A government-appointed committee was tasked to conduct a comprehensive, ex-post evaluation of the reaction of public authorities, government ministries and civil society to the crisis, pointing out weaknesses regarding preparedness and emergency problem solving (Utredningen om migrationsmottagandet 2015, 2017). Evaluations are also underway regarding other aspects of forced migration, such as the Swedish reception arrangements for asylum seekers and the operations of the Swedish Migration Agency, which is responsible for almost the entire administrative chain regarding asylum seekers.

In due course, there will also be a need to study the effects of the legislative and ad-hoc measures that Sweden implemented in 2016 to curb the quickly growing influx of asylum seekers during the year before. As these measures were manifold, reach-

ing from temporary intra-Schengen border controls to the introduction of temporary residence permits (instead of permanent ones) for beneficiaries of protection and restrictions to their right to family reunification, one of the most discussed questions is which measure ultimately reduced the arrival of asylum seekers.

From specific issues to fundamental problems – the receiving countries' perspective

While it is important to evaluate specific issues, situations and policy changes such as the ones mentioned above, it is also crucial to avoid narrowing down evaluation to selective, fragmented questions. Policies regarding forced migration are exposed to longstanding fundamental dilemmas as well, which still need to be addressed. Most importantly perhaps, EU policies on forced migration suffer from the predicament that protection seekers can only access asylum systems when they are already in the destination country or at its border, while at the same time, there are very few legal possibilities to get there. This also blurs the distinction between irregular migrants on the one hand and refugees on the other. Both groups often use the same migration routes, but while it may be legitimate for states to try to keep irregular migrants out, people with protection needs must be received in accordance with international human rights laws. An important task for evaluators can in this context be to scrutinise states' admission and border practices, and contribute to the search for policies that would help to disentangle mixed migration flows and open legal pathways to protection. Equally, evaluators should not forget that forced migration has repercussions on other policy areas, such as housing, the functioning of labour markets, education, welfare, and public health. The arrival of forced migrants is a crosscutting theme; it should not be owned by security and home affairs experts exclusively.

The perspective of sending countries and regions of origin

Evaluating receiving states' policies and practices concerning forced migrants is an important task, but it should not overshadow the perspective of sending and transit countries and forced migrants' regions of origin. Forced emigration can alleviate humanitarian or conflict-related emergencies in countries of origin – but what happens once there is peace again and a country needs rebuilding and recovery? While earlier mass departures can mean a permanent loss of manpower and talent, forced migrants can also help their countries of origin by sending remittances and expertise, making investments, or engaging in circular migration. It is therefore relevant to study remittances, what enables them and what effect they can have – which is already being done to a certain degree (World Bank Group, 2017) but seldom focused on post-conflict situations. On other ways of adjusting migration policies to the benefit of countries of origin, e.g. through circular migration arrangements, there is even less evidence, but the agency of refugees to help their home regions recover could certainly be encouraged and better supported.

The forced migrants' perspectives

This brings us, briefly, to the last dimension, the perspective of the forced migrants themselves. There is literature on the emotional and psychological consequences of forced migration (Ullmann et al., 2015), but little is known about how refugees feel about their forced migration trajectories or their integration into a new host society. What factors determine if a forced migration trajectory is experienced as successful? How do forced mi-

grants perceive the processes they have to undergo to receive protection and to integrate?

In 2015, the Swedish Migration Studies Delegation published a report on Syrian refugees. Based on interviews with 22 newly arrived Syrian immigrants, it showed how the interviewees had managed to reach Sweden, why they chose Sweden as their destination, what expectations they had before their arrival, and how they viewed their situation afterwards (Lundgren Jörum, 2015). While this is certainly not the only study of its kind conducted in Europe in recent years, it seems that forced migrants are much more often spoken about than given a chance to speak for themselves. When state policies or measures are evaluated, we should whenever possible include the views of those who are most affected and encourage participatory approaches.

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LESSONS FROM EVALUATING THE RED CROSS RED CRESCENT EUROPEAN MIGRATION RESPONSE

Scott Chaplowe, Josse Gillijns and Tiziana Bonzon

In 2016, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) conducted a real-time evaluation (RTE) of its European migration response. The RTE identified key findings to inform immediate and longer-term migration services, and underscored the importance of a complexity perspective to the evaluation of migration interventions. This paper will focus on these two lessons, after first providing a little background.

Brief background

Since 2015, Europe has experienced population movements on a scale unprecedented since World War II, with over 1 million migrants arriving, predominately from Africa and the Middle East. The IFRC Network[1] has a long-standing commitment to addressing the humanitarian needs of vulnerable migrants, and Red Cross National Societies in Europe, with IFRC support, implemented a range of programmes for migrants.

Since 2010, the IFRC adopted RTEs to assess its emergency operations. A RTE is an evaluation in which, "the primary objective is to provide feedback in a participatory way in real time (i.e. during the evaluation fieldwork) to those executing and managing the humanitarian response," (Cosgrave et al., 2009). In the summer of 2016, the IFRC commissioned a team to assess the overall effectiveness of its 2015–2016 European Migration Response. The RTE team conducted over 190 in-person and remote interviews, with field visits to Finland, Austria, Serbia and Greece.

Key findings

As intended, the RTE highlighted immediate issues to inform ongoing migration programming. For example, protection was a core pillar of the IFRC migration work that needed much more attention. The safety and protection situation in camps in Greece was described as alarming, with people living in overcrowded situations, openly defecating and using unsanitary wash practices, using make-shift cooking areas that presented fire hazards, and with incidents of sexual assault, as well as violence due to ethnic, cultural and religious differences exacerbated by over-crowding.

While camp oversight and management to address protection and security concerns were the responsibility of agencies other than the IFRC network, the RTE highlighted the importance of high level advocacy and a multilateral operational response to ensure the safety of vulnerable migrants. Recommendations also included very practical measures to improve the safety of migrants (e.g. distribution of whistles for women and girls, and proper communal cooking facilities), as well as guidance for Red Cross staff and volunteers to better work and communicate with migrants.

RTE findings also underscored the importance of longer-term planning, especially for social integration and inclusion. Despite initial reception and support for migrants in host countries such as Austria and Finland, sentiment shifted due to the longevity and political nature of migration. Recommendations included early planning and support for transitioning from short-term emergency response to longer-term de-stigmatisation and integration programming, involving the host and migrant communities to reinforce local understanding and ownership.

Complexity and systems thinking

The concepts of complexity and systems thinking has had a growing influence on the understanding and practice of evaluation (Bamberger et al., 2015; Hargreaves, 2010; Morell, 2010; Patton, 2011; Ramalingam et al., 2008; and Williams & Hummelbrunner, 2009). This RTE highlighted the relevance of this discourse because the European migration context is complex, with a multiplicity of interdependent factors and nonlinear change, resulting in considerable ambiguity and uncertainty. This required the RTE team to adopt a systems perspective to best encompass the diversity of interconnected factors and actors affecting the European migration context and response.

In their book, *Dealing with Complexity in Development Evaluation – A Practical Approach*, Bamberger et al. (2015) identify five interrelated dimensions to consider when evaluating complex interventions, which we will briefly use to illustrate how the complex context of the European migration operation affected this RTE:

1. **The Nature of the intervention.** The RTE needed to analyse a broad geographical, demographic and programmatic scope. This included reviewing data on people of Middle Eastern and African origin with different ethnic, cultural, social, and economic backgrounds, as well as an assortment of interrelated programme areas, ranging from shelter, water/sanitation and community health to protection, advocacy and social integration.

2. **Institutions and stakeholders.** From different funding agencies to implementing civic organisations and public agencies, the migration response involved an array of actors. For instance, just within the IFRC network, cross-border collaboration and coordination has been challenged by institutional (and linguistic) differences among the 25 countries and respective National Societies along the main migratory routes.

3. **Causality and change.** Nonlinear causal change processes challenged plan-

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1 Comprised of 190 current National Societies and the IFRC.

ning for the migration response, and assessment of pre-determined outcomes and theories of change. For example, the March 2016 EU-Turkey Deal resulted in over 50,000 people being stranded in Greece, so that countries initially identified as *transit* became *destination* countries. Similarly, changes in government policy, such as when borders or migrant camps would be opened or closed, made migratory routes and migrant location highly unpredictable and difficult for planning and delivering services.

4. **Embeddedness and the nature of the system.** Migration does not exist in a political vacuum, and assessment of the response needed to analyse the configuration of economic, political, and social factors at the regional as well as national levels. This included divergent and changing beliefs and opinions in host countries, especially as migration became politicised and xenophobia intensified by vocal nationalist and anti-immigrant parties, and accentuated by economic hardship following the 2008 recession.

5. **The evaluation process.** This RTE underscored how the interplay of the above dimensions affects the opportunity space for evaluation. The evaluation team needed to invest considerable time upfront reviewing secondary data sources, and conducting remote key informant interviews. This helped frame complexities and better prepare for field visits, identifying key issues to probe, and stakeholder sensitivities and tension points to navigate. Having a gender-balanced evaluation team, and utilising local partners (National Society personnel) while in the field also helped with data collection.

A final, critical lesson from this RTE is that it was not only important for the evaluation team to adopt a systems perspective – this perspective was also helpful for the stakeholders to understand the inherently complex context of migration. This helped stakeholders respond rather than react to critical findings, and "distinguish between processes they can control or influence and those they cannot" (Bamberger et al., 2015, p. 17).

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OECD: RESPONDING TO REFUGEE CRISES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM EVALUATIONS?

Hans Lundgren and Susanna Morrison-Metois

The DAC Network on Development Evaluation has conducted an exploratory synthesis of OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members' evaluations covering issues related to forced displacement and refugee programming. The findings, published as a working paper – **Responding to Refugee Crises in Developing Countries: What Can We Learn from Evaluations?** – suggest that evaluation systems have generated important lessons for improving response to refugee situations, but also identified gaps in the evaluation literature.

Six Key Takeaways

1. Humanitarian needs in refugee countries of origin often remain high for years or even decades, as has been the case in countries such as Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. This implies that the international community should start with realistic assumptions about the likelihood of protracted crisis and not expect quick improvements to refugee crises, as the crises that provoke large-scale forced displacement are often protracted. Evaluations suggest that in Syria some countries failed to anticipate the likelihood that the crisis would led to large-scale, protracted displacement.

2. Humanitarian, development, diplomatic and military actors face difficulties to effectively align because of divergent principles, mandates and interests. Evaluations looking at different whole-of-government approaches OECD countries have tried in fragile contexts reveal both potential risks and emerging good practice. Whole-of-government approaches used in contexts as varied as Afghanistan where the model was first tested to South Sudan and Syria, where some donor are considering pursuing similar approaches, show that there are many different understandings and models. Challenges related to these approaches include: institutional differences; conflicts over funding and resources; competing priorities; and differ-ent approaches towards work with local institutions, authorities and government actors. Evaluations suggest that stabilisation efforts are resource-intensive and that donors have tended to focus on visible, short-term objectives, frequently underestimating the timescales necessary to see results. Evaluations suggest that creating safeguards for development and humanitarian work within integrated approaches may help.

3. Funding shortfalls limit the coherence and overall effectiveness of donor efforts to address refugee contexts in a holistic manner. Funding for development and humanitarian responses to forced displacement has not kept pace with needs, leading to competition between immediate humanitarian response and longer term programming. In refugee countries of origin such as South Sudan, the needs of people who are now fleeing the country compete with: the needs of people displaced within South Sudan; the needs of the local communities impacted by ongoing fighting and malnutrition; and the needs of people from previous refugee waves who have settled in surrounding countries. Limited funding forces donors to choose among responses, and often leaves them unable to address all aspects of the crisis. In response to the Syrian crisis, for example, large funding shortfalls have led to programme disruptions.

4. The lack of experienced field staff with regional expertise hampered the ability of some countries to organise timely assistance for refugees fleeing Syria. Donors faced new challenges in the region as many did not have an existing field presence or on-going programmes, while the urbanisation of the refugee population in the region required closer co-operation with local actors and authorities. New modalities of financing to support middle income countries, such as Lebanon and Jordan, had to be put in place. Evaluations suggest that having experienced humanitar-ian staff in the country and in the region, improving the forecasting and anticipation of population movements, and adapting administrative structures and processes to enable nimble, flexible responses may help. Evaluations also found that multi-year, flexible funding is important.

5. Livelihoods and formal jobs are crucial for the forcibly displaced, as is education. Evaluations suggest that diplomatic efforts to improve refugees' access to jobs and ability to become self-reliant are needed. Host communities also require support as refugees often settle in areas where the host community may also be vulnerable. Positively, job creation compacts have been put in place in Jordan, Lebanon and Ethiopia and look promising, though it is too early to measure their impact. Cash-based programmes have generally been successful in urban and middle income environments and could be scaled up. On education, evaluations found that including education for refugees in national development planning and viewing education as part of a holistic child protection framework may help.

6. Evaluations demonstrate the significant challenges and obstacles faced in conflict contexts, with efforts at addressing root causes not leading to obvious short term success. Changing the factors leading to conflict and forced displacement in countries such as Afghanistan, Syria, South Sudan, Iraq and Somalia cannot be achieved in a short time spans. To date, there is a lack of robust evidence to suggest that short-term programming intended to address root causes has been successful in preventing population movements (although most programming has not been undertaken with the goal of preventing population movements as its main objective).

Gaps in the evaluation literature

Often DAC member countries have looked at refugee response and forced displace-

ment within evaluations of humanitarian strategy, but there appears to be a lack of policy or strategy level evaluations that look at forced displacement or refugee response as standalone issues. The review of evaluation literature showed that there are a large number of evaluations that deal with issues related to the coherence of development and humanitarian aid, but few specifically address issues related to forced displacement, even though forced displacement resulting from protracted crises is at the centre of the humanitarian-development nexus. Evaluations demonstrate that decades of efforts to achieve greater coherence between humanitarian and development approaches have not led to substantial change and suggest that many practical barriers remain.

The synthesis of evaluations by the DAC Network on Development Evaluation highlighted that programmes implemented in areas where there may be significant numbers of forcibly displaced populations do not necessary include IDPs and refugees. In Ethiopia, for instance, donors have often implemented development programmes for agriculture and livelihoods separate from humanitarian programmes focused on delivering assistance to camps and food aid for refugees. However, in many cases, efforts to help ensure that refugees have access to quality education, decent work and sustainable livelihood opportunities can be included in country strategies. There is an opportunity for development evaluations to include

forced displacement as a cross-cutting issue. Programme managers and evaluation commissioners should consider including questions and topics related to forced displacement in the Terms of Reference for evaluations, including in evaluations of country level strategies and programmes that are not designed with the primary purpose of addressing refugees and IDPs needs, but that are undertaken in contexts where there are sizable displaced communities.

Despite assumptions that development assistance will limit secondary displacement, there have not been many efforts to capture information and build a strong evidence base to support or potentially question this hypothesis. There is also a gap in evaluation literature on the possible impact of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and state building on population movements. Given the political importance and attention to displacement, there is a need to use evaluation strategically to fill these apparent gaps.

The synthesis of DAC members' evaluations and working paper was undertaken to help inform guidance on forced displacement that is being developed by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee. In this way, the DAC Network on Development Evaluation hopes to feed lessons from evaluations into policy guidance, global policy debates, and strengthen the evidence base for improved response to future situations of forced displacement.

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