

The Syrian crisis: a challenge for philanthropy

Timothy Ogden, Ayesha Saran and Atallah Kuttab

It is a rare event that captures global philanthropy's attention. The stream of refugees from Syria is one of them. There is a serious humanitarian crisis under way, and a rapid response is called for. How is philanthropy responding? And how should it respond? These are the broad questions this issue of *Alliance* aims to address.

Guest editors for this *Alliance* special feature



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The very present and visible nature of the Syrian crisis is commanding attention. But, as always, the attention lavished by the media and the public misses much more than it takes in. The number of refugees reaching Europe is a small fraction of those who have fled Syria, which in turn is a fraction of those who remain trapped in the country under daily threat from violence and deprivation. And Syrians are only a small part of the global population of refugees and internally displaced people.

There is no way we could give a truly comprehensive perspective on migration and refugees. While we do look at the situation of displaced persons in Colombia and those fleeing violence in Central America, we have not touched on the serious and ongoing issues arising from war, violence and conflict in Afghanistan, and in many other countries and regions affected by conflict in the last few years. But we have tried to cover a diverse set of issues, contexts and questions, and we

hope this will prove relevant to other situations that are less visible but no less important.

What can philanthropy do?

A dramatic crisis like this that attracts attention yet overshadows deeper, wider and longer-standing problems is a challenge for philanthropy. It plays to both philanthropy's strengths and its weaknesses.

There are aspects of the crisis that philanthropy should, in theory, excel at: it requires quick action, tolerance for risk, and willingness to take on unpopular tasks. At the same time, the current situation has many aspects that philanthropy has historically struggled with: it requires systemic action in several domains simultaneously, though it's not at all clear what is most likely to have an impact; it requires widespread and ongoing collaboration; it calls into question existing commitments and strategies; and the root causes are outside the reach of philanthropy (even philanthropy's most ardent supporters don't claim that it can stop wars when many of the parties involved have no interest in peace).

One area where philanthropy organizations are well suited to act is helping refugees and migrants adjust to the new societies they are arriving in. Investing in long-term programmes that promote meaningful engagement between migrants, refugees and established residents is one way to do this. In the current crisis, foundations could be well placed to forge partnerships with NGOs in eastern Mediterranean countries (Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Syria) to help ensure that programmes to help Syrians adjust to life in their new countries are sensitive to both refugees and host communities.

Who qualifies for aid?

One thorny issue related to the current crisis is who 'qualifies' for aid. Clearly refugees who are fleeing from imminent violence do qualify, but what about those whose opportunities and prospects have been destroyed by war but who are not in imminent physical danger? Or those who aren't fleeing violence from military groups but from criminal gangs? Where do we draw the line between those whose lives and assets have been upended by war and those who are seeking a better life because they are denied access to opportunity and basic protections? Does philanthropy's responsibility, and therefore response, differ based on these classifications? In light of the uncertain answers to these questions, we decided to include both people fleeing from violence and people fleeing from

poverty, knowing that in many instances the two are closely related.

What the special feature covers

In the first section, we offer some context. Dilip Ratha of the World Bank provides data on refugees and worldwide migration. We also look at the situation in the Middle East, where the majority of Syrian refugees are; the special issues faced by women refugees; and the policy and public response to inflows of refugees in Germany and Central and Eastern Europe.

From there we turn to how foundations are responding to the situation. Ayesha Saran provides an overview of the role of philanthropy, while Andrew Milner and Charles Keidan extract findings from two surveys of European foundations. We also look at the European Programme for Integration and Migration and the efforts of the Bodossaki Foundation in Greece. From there we cast the net wider, both geographically and figuratively.

Marieke Bosman describes her foundation's efforts to engage the Syrian diaspora in channelling aid to Syria, while Atallah Kuttub describes similar efforts to mobilize the Palestinian diaspora, who have been refugees in some cases for more than 50 years. We also look at Canada's unique programme of 'citizen philanthropy', which empowers private citizens to sponsor refugees; and the efforts of Colombian corporate foundations to aid internally displaced people in that country and foster peacebuilding.

Just as the impact of Syrian refugees in Turkey and Lebanon has received less attention than the much smaller numbers arriving in Europe, coverage of the arrival of people from Central America in the US has largely overlooked what happens as they try to cross Mexico. Susan Seijas documents the experiences of Central Americans and how US philanthropic aid seems to be pulling back despite growing need. Finally, Will Somerville analyses long-term philanthropic efforts to change the dynamic of the wider debate about refugees and migrants.

In the third section of the special feature, we consider what more philanthropy could be doing, looking beyond current crises. Timothy Ogden argues that migration is a global good and thus deserves philanthropic support. Michael Clemens and McBride Nkhambala separately make the case that migration is a highly effective anti-poverty strategy and should be part of the toolkit for any foundation fighting poverty. Alexander Berger describes the search for strategies to support more migration and better outcomes for



Children earn a living by transporting goods inside the Zaatari Refugee Camp, Jordan.

migrants. And, befitting the controversial nature of this topic, Ayesha Saran sounds a note of caution about the negative outcomes and unintended consequences of migration.

Finally, Bassma Kodmani of the Arab Reform Initiative provides a powerful endnote, returning us to the current crisis in Syria, and her hopes for the future of the Syrian people at home and abroad. She also eloquently reminds us of the need to involve those affected by the crisis in their own destinies.

How much should foundations do?

This special feature covers a lot of ground; yet there is an overarching question that we have not addressed: how much should foundations do about the current crisis? There is clearly a desperate need, but other issues that foundations were addressing have not gone away. Indeed, the fear that the needs of refugees and migrants will trump those of people already in a country underlies the populist pushback against aid and welcome. The June issue of *Alliance* will focus on climate change, another area that calls out for urgent and massive support from philanthropy.

As we write this, headlines are being written about imminent famine in Ethiopia and Zimbabwe. Households affected in those countries are for the most part too poor and too distant to make their way to Europe or North America and as a result many fear that their need for aid will not be met. The Center for Global Development has already documented European countries reallocating aid dollars away from planned development investment in other parts of the world to fund programmes for refugees.

Our hope is that this special feature will help you to seriously consider the question: how should you respond? @

The migrant and refugee crisis

Dilip Ratha

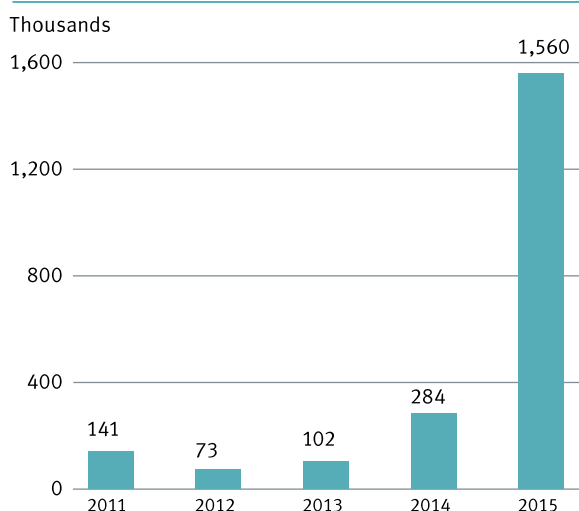
The world is facing a challenge. The number of people forced to leave their home has reached a record high of 60 million. While the spotlight has been on Europe, more than two-thirds of the displaced people are still living in their own country. Of those who have crossed national borders, 86 per cent are hosted by nearby developing countries. In fact, none of the top ten destination countries for refugees is classed as a high-income country; the bulk of Syrian refugees are living in the neighbouring countries of Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. If those countries are to cope, they will need help from the international community with the financial strain migration can place in the short term on a country's social and economic fabric.



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Over 1.5 million people crossed into the EU in 2015, compared to an annual average of 100,000 during 2009–13 (Figure 1). As a result, the stock of refugees and asylum seekers in Europe increased from 1.9 million to 2.5 million during the same period (Figure 2). Germany alone received nearly 1 million asylum applications last year. Most of the migrants are refugees from Syria, although there are refugees and migrants from Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea and Pakistan and other countries as well.

Figure 1 The number of migrants and refugees crossing into the EU rose sharply in 2015



Source Frontex

However, while Europe's migration crisis has been highly visible in the media and public discourse, the biggest burden of hosting refugees is being borne by Syria's neighbouring countries. The number of Syrian registered refugees in Turkey stands at over 2,180,000, while there are 1.1 million in Lebanon, and over 600,000 in Jordan. The refugees in Lebanon represent nearly 25 per cent of the population, and in Jordan, 10 per cent, compared to Germany's 1.3 per cent.¹ According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 86 per cent of refugees worldwide are hosted by developing countries. The top ten host countries are Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Chad, Uganda and China; none of these is a high-income country.

Challenges of hosting refugees

Unlike economic migration, which is largely beneficial to the migrants as well as their countries of origin and destination, forced migration entails considerable suffering for migrants. While, as discussed below, refugees can be economic assets for the host countries in the longer term, they often impose a substantial short-term burden, through increased public spending on schools, hospitals and public infrastructure. Higher demand for food and housing pushes up prices, while refugees competing for lower-skilled jobs pushes down wages.

The large number of Syrian refugees in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan has imposed significant fiscal costs on the respective governments to safeguard the human, social and economic capital of the host countries and the displaced communities. The government of Turkey has reportedly spent \$8 billion already. This year's Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan estimates a funding gap of nearly \$3 billion for Lebanon and Jordan. Host countries need to arrange short-term and long-term financing, since the refugee situation could go on for several years. Since concessional financing is not available for these middle-income countries, the World Bank Group – in partnership with the UN and the Islamic Development Bank Group and other stakeholders – is seeking to mobilize grants and concessional financing to strengthen the capacity of countries and communities hosting refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to absorb the shocks to their economic and social fabric.

The burden of hosting refugees is also high for Europe, although Europe has coped with even larger numbers of refugees in the past, notably in the early 1990s. At a practical level, European countries are finding it



difficult to agree on a formula for burden sharing based on absorptive capacities of nations, and the lack of agreement has prompted many countries to tighten border controls for movement of people within the EU. While it is generally accepted that individuals should not be forcibly returned to areas where they are in danger of injury or persecution, countries are adopting more restrictive rules for who qualifies as a refugee. This has led to new challenges for managing economic migration, the demand for which is large globally, and arguably even larger in the slowing, and ageing, economies of Europe.

Refugees line up at the UNHCR registration centre in Tripoli, Lebanon.

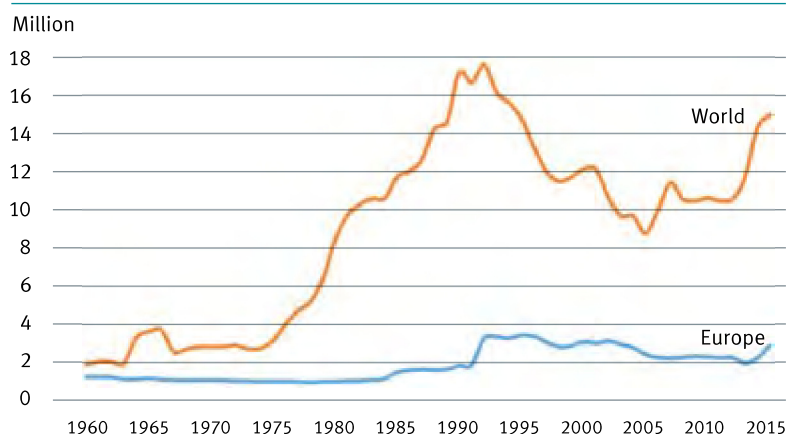
Economic migration vs forced migration: the bigger picture

Economic migration has always been significantly larger than forced migration. Globally there are around 250 million international migrants – persons born in a different country from the country of current residence. Refugees make up less than 8 per cent of that number at just over 15 million (excluding 5.1 million Palestinian refugees).

Migration is an integral component of economic growth. As countries industrialize or transform into service economies, people move to places where the jobs are located. Migration is largely within national borders, but often people cross over to work and live in foreign countries.

Voluntary migration driven by a search for employment is overwhelmingly beneficial to all concerned – the migrants themselves, the countries of origin and the countries of destination. In 2015, worldwide remittance flows are estimated to have exceeded \$600 billion. Of that amount, developing countries are estimated to receive over \$440 billion, nearly three times the amount of official development assistance. These remittances are used for purchasing food, housing and healthcare for the family, education for children, and business investments. Over time, migrants facilitate exports and imports between countries. They also

Figure 2 The current stock of refugees and asylum seekers in Europe and worldwide is still short of the historical high reached in the early 1990s





share their knowledge and expertise with people back home. Some of them return home after years of working abroad, bringing with them skills and savings. In the destination community, migrants provide cheap labour and scarce skills for their employers; over time, many of them invest in real estate, businesses and new enterprises that create employment.

Nowruz Camp, Derik, Mardin Province, Turkey. Photo: Kurdish Organization for the Defence of Human Rights and Public Freedoms in Syria (DAD), AHRF grantee partner.

Many of these observations apply to the victims of forced migration, too. In the longer term, refugees can be economic assets if they are integrated into the host communities. They augment labour supply in economies where the work force is shrinking; they bring new, complementary skills; many come with new sources of financing and create new businesses and employment for native workers; they increase demand, providing stimulus for economic growth; and they can expand international trade through their networks.

A global perspective

Refugees make up under 0.3 per cent of the global population. Viewing the current refugee crisis as a global problem would make it more manageable. And in the long term, the root causes of forced displacement must be addressed through development efforts in the countries afflicted by conflict and fragility. @

1 Figures taken from the 3RP Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan 2016–2017 at www.3rpsyriacrisis.org

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People of Syria between conflict and refuge

Samar Haidar

With an intensifying armed conflict in Syria, a growing number of civilians have been internally displaced or have fled to neighbouring countries. If no political solution is reached, these numbers will continue to rise. But it's not only those fleeing the conflict who are in need of humanitarian aid. Often, people in the countries who receive them need assistance, too.



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The situation within Syria . . .

The humanitarian situation in Syria is deteriorating. The destruction of infrastructure, homes and livelihoods has resulted in 13.5 million of Syria's 22 million population being in need of humanitarian assistance. Moreover, the shifting conflict lines and high levels of insecurity and violence have restricted access to basic humanitarian services in many parts of the country. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continues to be the lead agency in providing essential humanitarian assistance and life-saving health assistance for extremely vulnerable individuals and families, and it remains the main source of information on the status of the 6.5 million internally displaced people (IDPs) within Syria. Local Syrian groups are able to collect data only within their areas of intervention, which makes it difficult to draw a comprehensive picture of the IDP situation.

Nevertheless, and despite a volatile working environment, philanthropic organizations such as the Arab Human Rights Fund (AHRF) are still supporting timely human rights interventions inside Syria, as are many international organizations (often with regional offices in Lebanon), including European foundations such as Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Heinrich Böll Stiftung and Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation. These interventions include documenting, monitoring and reporting human rights violations committed by different parties in the conflict, and those committed by Sharia courts; working with local committees on adopting human rights standards into their agenda; and providing human rights activists with capacity building to enable them to do their work better.

. . . and in neighbouring countries

There are five main countries in the region receiving Syrian refugees – Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and

Turkey. Together they host around 4.3 million refugees from Syria. While all asylum seekers from Syria should be presumed to be in need of international protection, Lebanon and Turkey have recently closed their borders to the majority of refugees from Syria. This has contributed to an increase in people trying to flee Syria into Jordan, which hosts over 633,000 refugees from Syria. Twelve thousand Syrian refugees have been stranded on the Jordan side of the Jordan-Syria border since November 2015, including children, pregnant women and elderly people.

Lebanon and Turkey are the two countries that have received the highest number of Syrian refugees. Turkey hosts over 2,180,000 registered Syrian refugees, spread across urban areas and 22 camps. With over 1 million registered refugees, excluding over 117,000 Palestinians, Lebanon has one of the highest per capita ratios in the world of people registered as refugees.

Impact of the Syrian crisis in Lebanon

In addition to the refugees, Lebanon has an equal number of vulnerable Lebanese who have been greatly affected by the influx from Syria, plus the Palestinian refugees. The incidence of poverty in Lebanon has risen by 6 per cent since 2011, while the number of vulnerable Lebanese families is increasing exponentially. The unemployment rate among the heads of vulnerable Lebanese households has reached 51 per cent, and the return of Lebanese families living in Syria before the crisis has further increased this rate.

The impact of the Syrian crisis – including on the economy, demographics, political stability and security – continues to deepen across Lebanon, whose capacity to withstand it will be severely tested if effective international support is not forthcoming soon. In its Crisis Response Plan for 2015–16, the Lebanese government identifies three priorities:

- ▶ Ensure humanitarian assistance and protection for the most vulnerable among the displaced from Syria and the poorest Lebanese
- ▶ Strengthen the capacity of national and local delivery systems to expand access to and quality of basic public services
- ▶ Reinforce Lebanon's economic, social, institutional and environmental stability

Syrian refugees in Lebanon have access to most basic services through public institutions, with support from civil society actors, who are also actively working to protect their basic rights and to make them aware of their rights under Lebanese law. The Arab Human Rights Fund and many international organizations

are currently supporting these civil society actors.

AHRF's grantee partners include NUON Organization for Peace-Building, which works on monitoring, documenting and reporting on human rights violations against Syrian refugees in Lebanon's Bekaa valley. NUON also provides legal consultations for refugees and raises legal awareness about their rights under Lebanese law. AHRF also supports the Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts (ARCPA), which works with young Syrian refugees and youth from Palestinian camps and from marginalized Lebanese communities to produce short documentary movies exposing human rights violations in their communities.

The incidence of poverty in Lebanon has risen by 6 per cent since 2011, while the number of vulnerable Lebanese families is increasing exponentially.

But with the conflict continuing and needs growing all the time, much more support is needed. Life-saving humanitarian interventions are naturally at the core of aid agencies' strategies, but the protection of human rights is also vital. The international community, including philanthropic actors, could play a valuable role in supporting civil society actors working to protect the rights of all those affected by the conflict and to ensure they are getting much-needed services.

However, all stakeholders should look to longer-term priorities as well as immediate needs, with a view to facilitating Syrian refugees' return to their country while providing the support that will enable them to rebuild a more democratic and sustainable future. @

For more information

Figures in this article are taken from the *3RP Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan 2016–2017* at www.3rpsyriacrisis.org

See also <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

Displacement from Aleppo countryside to Turkey.

DEEPENING AWARENESS AND RESTORING BRIDGING (DARB), AHRF GRANTEE PARTNER



Syrian refugees: the need for a gender perspective

Ebba Augustin

Bearing the brunt of the refugee crisis are Syria's neighbours. In Jordan, a particular set of problems apply because of the large numbers of women and children among the refugees there.



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Syrian refugees have arrived in Jordan since early 2012 and three camps were built to accommodate them near Jordan's capital Amman. However, nearly 80 per cent of the refugees live outside the camps in private housing in cities and villages. The gender composition of Syrian refugees in Jordan contrasts with the situation in Europe. According to UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) data, 78.5 per cent are women and children under 18 years of age as opposed to 42 per cent in Europe. The population breakdown is similar in other host countries in the wider region. According to UNHCR data, 77.3 per cent of refugees in these host countries are women and children under 18. Under these conditions it is crucial to consider gender and age as key criteria when determining the appropriate responses and interventions. A gender lens in analysis of the refugee situation reveals stark differences and major problems.

School participation

A major challenge for every refugee family, UNHCR and host countries is children's education. The statistics are sobering. According to UNICEF figures, there are over 60,000 school-aged children in Jordan either out of school entirely or with very limited access to learning, including 6,000 in Zaatari and Azraq refugee camps alone. For those in school, tough economic conditions, poor curriculum quality and overcrowding all make the situation worse. Among the Syrian refugee community in Jordan, girls are being taken out of school for safety reasons (sexual harassment in school and on the road) and boys because they are looking for work in the informal economy. If the disaster of a 'lost generation' is to be avoided, education for Syrian refugee girls and boys has to be a priority for support.

Early marriage

Linked to the lack of safety is an increase in early marriage for Syrian girls, primarily as a coping mechanism among culturally conservative families. For one thing,

it is assumed that married Syrian men are accepted into the country more readily than single men. Syrian refugee families also believe that early marriage for girls provides greater security for them in an insecure environment. In reality, the reverse is true and in many cases early marriage puts girls at severe risk.

Domestic violence

Gender-based violence by male heads of households against girls and women is becoming increasingly common for a number of reasons: the greater degree of stress within families, the lack of privacy in overcrowded shelters, and the inability of men to fulfil their traditional role as provider. However, domestic violence against boys under 12 is also on the rise.

Households with female heads are especially vulnerable to exploitation by landlords, and are potentially subject to physical and sexual abuse. The large number of Syrian refugees living in private accommodation makes this a particular concern in Jordan.

Antenatal and postnatal care

As with groups of refugees everywhere, there are special health needs – psychosocial and mental health care and care for the chronically ill – but in Jordan, given the high proportion of women refugees, the situation is particularly acute. Reproductive health services suffer from a lack of female doctors and the limited number who can work late shifts. Only half of Syrian refugee women have access to antenatal care and postnatal care provision is even less. The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and local NGOs are currently building the capacity of Syrian volunteers to address these gaps.

Applying a gender lens

The need to take a gendered approach to relief, aid, conflict management and peace negotiations is well established. Many of the issues facing Syrian refugees in Jordan – early marriage, a high level of domestic violence, trauma suffered from torture, and the persistent inability of men to protect their families and fulfil their traditional roles – are common across all refugee groups. They apply with equal force to the millions of internally displaced Syrians and refugees who have found shelter in Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey and across Europe. The solutions will vary, but an appreciation of gender differences in needs and capacities is critical to ensuring that the rights and protections of all are safeguarded. @

Sources

<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>
www.unocha.org/syria

Germany: the receiving nation

Astrid Ziebarth

Despite the influx of migrants into Europe last year, less than 10 per cent of the world's refugee population live in Europe according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Germany registered more than a million in its first registration system called EASY in 2015. It is expected that the eventual total will be less than a million for the year because of double registrations of individuals and onward movement to the Netherlands and Sweden after registration in Germany. However, this is still more than a fivefold increase over the 200,000 people who filed for asylum in 2014. What have been the consequences so far and what are the likely implications?



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The political debate

For now, German Chancellor Angela Merkel has reinforced her open stance towards refugees and asylum seekers and has refrained from introducing any kind of cap or stricter border control, while saying that the numbers of asylum seekers need to go down in 2016.

The question of how many asylum seekers and refugees Germany can cope with is high on the political agenda at a time of severe shortages of social housing and questions about integration into the job market of the less skilled. Merkel puts her hopes for numbers going down mostly on the deal with Turkey: funds and visa liberalization in return for increased border patrol and readmission of those who crossed through Turkey. So far in 2016, it seems the only thing bringing down the numbers is the winter weather.

The other major debate within Germany is about the integration of the asylum seekers. It is clear that a

faster process needs to be adopted and that proper housing, integration into the job market and education are the prime motors for integration.

These discussions get tainted by incidents such as in Cologne over the last New Year when over 500 women filed for sexual assault and mugging by groups of men largely of Arab or Northern African background, with recent asylum

seekers among the suspects. This provides fuel to already heated debates about integration, cultural otherness and respect for 'German values', however one defines them. It remains to be seen whether this will affect Merkel. So far, public opinion polls suggest that trust in government has remained stable and the governing parties are still seen to be the ones who are competent to deal with refugee and migration questions, not the populist party, Alternative für Deutschland (AfD). However, 2016 will be a decisive year for Germany and its future path as a migration country. The background of rising tension and incidents of violence by right-wing extremist groups could have a bearing on state elections in three Länder in spring 2016 and the general elections in September 2017.

The reaction of German philanthropy

The German 'welcoming summer' of last year saw the awakening of a vibrant and active civil society in support of refugees and asylum seekers in Germany – one major area that foundations are supporting and strengthening. Some foundations not only contributed funds but also enabled their employees to volunteer in emergency refugee shelters during working hours.

Foundations are active in other areas too: funding local integration measures, such as language classes or neighbourhood contact groups; funding research to close knowledge gaps about skill levels of refugees; and setting up working groups to think through the political implications and policy actions.

Many have also reviewed their work areas to see where they can apply existing knowledge to help the integration of refugees. At the same time, foundations are reviving projects and programmatic areas that they had stopped funding, such as efforts to counter right-wing extremism and discrimination.

One of the biggest challenges for Germany will be to foster a constructive dialogue between the newcomers and the receiving society about how they will live together and how to prevent the further spreading of extremist ideas, from both Islamist and right-wing groups. It is here that foundations need to come up with a more concerted plan and invest systematically to help shape the Germany of today and tomorrow. @

The German 'welcoming summer' of last year saw the awakening of a vibrant and active civil society in support of refugees and asylum seekers in Germany – one major area that foundations are supporting and strengthening.

Populism and hostility in Poland and Slovakia

Boris Strečanský and Juraj Mesík

The wave of migrants entering the European Union in 2015 has created misunderstandings and tensions within and between European societies. The real danger to Central and Eastern Europe is that the refugee crisis catalyses the development of authoritarian, illiberal and anti-European values.



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One of the splits that has become very apparent and highly politicized is between West European and Central and Eastern European (CEE) politicians and public in rhetoric and attitudes towards migrants. To a great extent this has been fuelled by the media to whom bad news is the news, while the volunteers who have been helping migrants and refugees in Hungary, Serbia or Croatia are largely ignored, as is the fact that up to 400,000 Ukrainians who escaped from the war there into Poland were embraced socially and politically.

CEE politicians are contributing to the tension, too. The migrant question has distracted voters' attention from domestic issues like widespread corruption, and the quality of healthcare and education. Playing on fear works: the Conservatives won a decisive election victory in Poland last October and were able to form a single-party government, which has set in motion legal and political changes that have led to serious concerns across the EU about the quality of democratic process in Poland. The party of Slovakia's Prime Minister Fico looks set to win the elections in March 2016 under its slogan 'We protect Slovakia!'

Ironically, nothing like the numbers taken in by Hungary or Germany have arrived in either Poland or Slovakia.¹ Furthermore, as some economists have pointed out, the CEE region may actually need a certain number of skilled and qualified migrants to counter the ageing of its workforce. In fact, the opening of CEE countries to labour migration is happening, but many of these come from neighbouring countries like Romania, Ukraine and Serbia rather than from non-European countries. It seems to be the lack of experience of migrants from different cultural

backgrounds that is fuelling sentiment and preventing those societies from forming a more mature opinion through direct experience.

There is a further irony in the fact that some feel that the migration crisis is calling into question the future of the free movement of people – which was one of the most highly valued achievements for the CEE peoples after their EU integration. There are worries over the inability of the EU to protect its external borders and unresolved issues over extradition rules which may eventually lead to collapse of Schengen, an agreement that guarantees open borders among participating European countries.

The reason for hostility towards migrants from the Middle East is also partly historical. Central and Eastern Europe was for centuries the frontline between Christianity and Islam and the tension between the two religions in one society lingers. Others feel the achievements of a secular state may be compromised by the influence of migrants for whom their mainly

Muslim religion is a crucial part of their identity.

The slow pace of economic development, especially since the financial crisis, also arouses feelings of bitterness among CEE citizens when they see that the subsidies provided to migrants and asylum seekers in

Germany or Denmark are many times higher than pensions or minimal salaries received by millions of people in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary or Poland.

And there is a more general question of the capacity of Europe to absorb immigrants without compromising its social, educational and other welfare systems. This is a particularly acute issue given the migratory pressures from rapidly growing populations in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. How many people can 'safety boat Europe' take before it sinks itself?

The power of civil society in Central and Eastern Europe to assume responsibility for the challenges that migration is bringing has neither been tapped by governments and political leaders nor captured and presented in the media. Yet, it will be possible to combat the erosion of trust in the EU, and in liberal democratic values more generally, only through an active civil society working with others to navigate the challenges that Slovakia, and Europe, faces. @

¹ Slovakia and Poland have very low densities of asylum seekers per capita (Slovakia, 0.06;

Poland, 0.21) unlike Germany (2.51) or Hungary (4.33). Source: Eurostat, 2014.

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The refugee crisis in Europe: a role for philanthropy?

Ayesha Saran

The 'refugee crisis' of 2015 conjures tragic images and headline-grabbing figures, from the haunting pictures of Alan Kurdi, the three-year-old boy who drowned during the short but treacherous crossing from Turkey to Greece, to discomfiting scenes between baton-wielding border guards and desperate families seeking sanctuary. Philanthropy has been responding and will continue to do so in very constructive ways. However, its greatest opportunity may be in treating the refugee crisis not as a separate event, but as part of a wider effort to create more just and equal societies.



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Over a million refugees, asylum seekers and migrants arrived on Europe's shores during the past 12 months. Latest estimates from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) suggest that at least 3,500 drowned attempting to do so. And, contrary to popular perception, just over 40 per cent were women and children, including thousands of children separated from their families. Europe's refugees are a mere fraction of the tens of millions displaced worldwide, but 2015 did mark one of the continent's biggest population movements since the Second World War.

The challenges posed by ongoing events are undoubtedly daunting. While a large proportion of those arriving in Europe in 2015 were fleeing from the

conflict in Syria, an over-emphasis on this group masks a more complex picture of displacement, simmering global inequality and changing demographics. In addition, many of the durable solutions ultimately lie in resolving seemingly intractable conflicts in the Middle East and further afield.

European foundations' response

Given the scale of human suffering and the fact that the numbers arriving show no signs of abating, how could and should foundations respond? And what are they already doing? According to a survey of UK foundations conducted by Ariadne and Global Dialogue (see p40), a majority of respondents are planning to adjust their long-term strategies to adapt to new realities and some have already provided emergency grants.

In a European context, there is considerable scope for foundations to fund humanitarian aid. This is particularly the case in border states such as Greece, which is bearing the brunt of the crisis while contending with its own domestic woes. As a parallel European Foundation Centre survey highlights (see p40), many foundations recognize the immediate need to improve the living conditions for new arrivals and enable them to access legal advice and education.

However, there is also the perennial concern about philanthropy replacing the role and resources of governments and international organizations, and some may not even have the mandate to countenance this type of emergency funding. On the other hand, doing nothing seems to be an increasingly untenable option for foundations concerned with peace, equality and social justice in Europe. ▽

MAJOR ALLIANCE A 'CATALYST' FOR PARTNERSHIP

A group of Dutch foundations have come together to create Major Alliance, a foundation in the Netherlands to build alliances to address global issues, among which is migration. It will act as 'the catalyst that bring all parties together in a partnership', says Rien van Gendt who, with Steven van Eijck, will lead the migration element. The Alliance will not deal with the immediate relief and care of refugees but will focus on their mid- and long-term settlement, considering four main clusters of problems:

- ▶ Education and the labour market: acknowledgement of diplomas, finishing studies in the Netherlands, assessment of competences, microcredit schemes, voluntary work for refugees
- ▶ Social cohesion: language courses, civic education, buddy systems
- ▶ Trauma and mental health: screening of young children in schools, tools to support teachers, follow-up treatment
- ▶ The narrative: correcting perceptions regarding refugees and immigrants

Major Alliance is a sign that, confronted with large-scale and complex issues like migration, foundations in the Netherlands are prepared to stretch their official mandate to address them, and to work in partnership to do so.

At the moment, those involved include the Augeo, Femi, Noaber and Porticus Foundations. However, discussions with others, both inside and outside the foundation world, are taking place.

For more information

www.maatschappelijkealliantie.org
bureau@maatschappelijkealliantie.org

The refugee crisis in Europe: a role for philanthropy?

Tapping the upsurge of sympathy

One way to navigate some of these issues is to consider where philanthropy might be uniquely suited to intervene. In the short term, in addition to more service-oriented assistance, some foundations have been thinking about how to capitalize on the outpouring of sympathy and compassion for Europe's newest arrivals that reached a crescendo upon the publication of the pictures of Alan Kurdi's body.

In the UK, where the effects of the crisis are much less visible on the ground than elsewhere, refugee charities have been inundated with offers of support and requests to volunteer. Although it is as yet unclear whether these are 'converts' to the cause or people already sympathetic to refugees mobilizing into action, a number of UK-based foundations and their civil society partners have discussed the strategic importance of the heightened focus on refugee protection.

Many foundations recognize the immediate need to improve the living conditions for new arrivals and enable them to access legal advice and education.

For example, there are countless examples of civil society or citizen-led initiatives springing up in support of refugees. Small-scale and timely resources to embed schemes to host and welcome new arrivals could help maximize their impact. To this end, a number of UK-based foundations, including the Barrow Cadbury Trust, have established New Beginnings, a pooled fund to provide catalytic support to frontline organizations and community groups. Grants will be modest and short-term but it is hoped that they will enable groups to respond to the opportunities presented by the current context.

The opportunity for increased advocacy

Another important consideration is that the renewed interest in refugee issues provides invaluable opportunities to ramp up advocacy. For example, linking calls for safe and legal routes to safety, and humane family reunification policies to the current crisis, could provide much-needed impetus and immediacy to existing campaigns at both national and European level.

EPIM: A COLLABORATIVE EUROPEAN RESPONSE

Europe's current challenges in responding to the increase in refugee arrivals have demonstrated the urgent need for coherent EU migration policy and funding in this area. In 2005, European foundations came together to create the European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM). EPIM supports civil society organizations through grants combined with a capacity and network development programme to enable them to advocate for constructive approaches to migration in Europe. This European collaboration has made it possible for the partner foundations to work on a wider scale and with a longer-term impact on migration.

An initiative of the Network of European Foundations (NEF), EPIM involves more than 20 foundations from ten European countries. To date, EPIM has spent €7.2 million and made 56 grants to CSO-led projects. The budget for the next three years (2016–18) is about €10 million.

EPIM has set up a number of subfunds on issues where there are opportunities to add value in relation to Europe's migration policy and practice. While the funding

strategies are aiming towards long-term impact in the field, adjustments have been made to respond to the so-called 'refugee crisis'.

Reforming the Common European Asylum System (CEAS)

EPIM's attention remains on strengthening civil society advocates in transferring policy recommendations from the ground to policymaking processes. In addition to convening a debate on reforming the CEAS, EPIM focuses on issues related to detention and the protection of children, especially those who are unaccompanied and separated from their families. Advocacy for policy change at EU level is supported by work in focus countries such as Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Germany, Cyprus and Belgium, where particular national challenges are addressed. In addition to EPIM's traditional advocacy focus, service-oriented assistance is now being funded when piloting or scaling up approaches promises immediate as well as long-term impact.

Upholding the principles of EU mobility

The question of EU citizens' mobility is becoming ever more sensitive. A dedicated

fund will support CSOs to advocate for access to housing and social benefits for mobile EU citizens and to reverse the recent trend towards restrictive interpretation of the Citizens Directive in several member states.

Supporting CSO voices in the public discourse

There is an increasingly challenging public discourse on migration, which in turn influences policymakers. In this context, EPIM is offering training, convenings and grants to CSOs to help develop their capacities for messaging and strategic communication and enable them to be more vocal in public debates.

There is a lot to do and foundations can only do some of it. Finding those niches, working together and amplifying our efforts with European responses, we can contribute to a thoughtful and sustainable response in a critical time.

For more information

www.epim.info

Contact EPIM programme manager Sarah Sommer at sarah.sommer@epim.info

This is particularly true in cases where non-refugee organizations and unusual allies are impelled to comment on ongoing events. In the UK mainstream charities such as Oxfam, as well as a host of sports stars and celebrities, have spoken up about the crisis. They may be better positioned to reach some sceptical audiences than refugee organizations. In this context, philanthropy is playing a critical role in providing additional capacity for campaigners to push through doors that might be starting to open.

Helping to change the larger debate

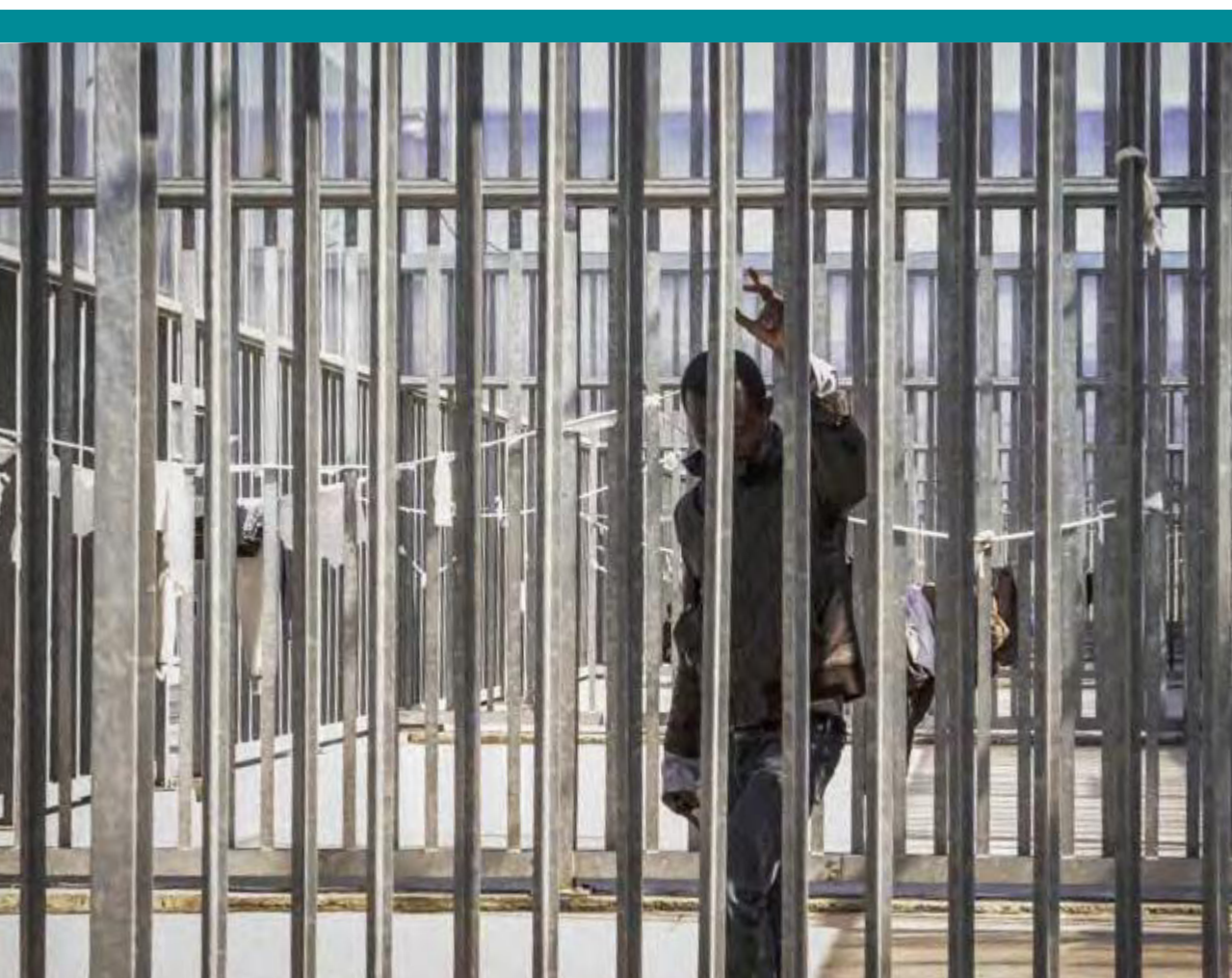
In the longer term, foundations are uniquely placed to connect immediate responses to the crisis to work to understand public attitudes and concerns about migration and refugee issues in Europe. The differential impacts of both the crisis and migration generally throughout the continent, as well as variations in the

Philanthropy is playing a critical role in providing additional capacity for campaigners to push through doors that might be starting to open.

way the debate is conducted from country to country, means that 'one size fits all' approaches are unhelpful. But in countries such as the UK, where migration and refugee issues are highly contested and politicized, a hostile and polarized debate can hinder wider efforts to promote the fair and dignified treatment of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

This is why some foundations have focused on the complex and often overlooked arena of communications around migration (see p48). From our perspective, ignoring the need to change the dynamic of the wider migration debate over time could thwart shorter-term gains in terms of building support for refugees.

Finally, investing to build stronger, more resilient and inclusive communities is another way in which foundations can add significant value in managing the impact of the refugee crisis in Europe. Some governments are providing basic, short-term assistance to refugees to help them adjust to the countries where they have sought sanctuary. However, this still leaves



Ponte Galeria
Detention Centre
(Rome, Italy),
May 2014.

SARA PRESTIANNI

The refugee crisis in Europe: a role for philanthropy?

considerable scope for philanthropy to continue to invest in initiatives that support creative approaches and share expertise on what works within communities affected by rapid change. For example, the Cities of Migration website highlights good ideas in immigrant integration from all over the world.

Questions remaining

There are many compelling reasons for foundations in Europe to respond to the refugee crisis, but there are also potentially harmful consequences to consider. Is there a risk of entrenching unhelpful dichotomies between 'deserving' refugees and supposedly less worthy migrants? What would an increased focus on refugees mean for other vulnerable groups, such as Europe's several million undocumented migrants? What will happen to those arriving who are not given refugee status?

There are no easy answers of course, but a useful starting point could be to situate responses to the current crisis in the wider context of Europe's complex and rapidly shifting demographic realities. If philanthropy is to play a constructive role, the 'refugee issue' should not be seen as a separate problem to be fixed but as part of wider efforts to reduce inequality and achieve inclusive, equal societies. @

SUPPORTED OPTIONS HELPS YOUNG, UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

Launched in 2012, Supported Options aims to help the estimated 120,000 young people in the UK with 'irregular' or 'undocumented' immigration status. It is a joint funding initiative of London-based Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Unbound Philanthropy.

Few foundations in the UK fund work in the migration sector, and even fewer work with this particular group. So one aim of the initiative is to shine a light on the injustices these young people face and help draw more funders to what is becoming a global phenomenon.

Being young and undocumented in the UK brings with it enormous challenges: vulnerability to hardship and destitution; exposure to exploitation and criminality; exclusion from health, welfare and

education services; lack of access advice, information and justice. Young people are unable to plan, prepare for or even imagine a future adult life.

Given the complexity of these challenges, and the ways they intersect with political and media narratives about migration, the solutions often involve wholesale policy and attitudinal change. The initiative is therefore taking a 'creative philanthropy' approach – experimenting with a mix of methods and working closely with grantees.

In the first two years the initiative supported a range of work to understand the barriers faced by young people and practical ways to support them. Now the focus is on two main areas: helping

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The prize and all associated activities are generously funded by Charities Aid Foundation, The Lodestar Foundation, CS Mott Foundation and Vladimir Potanin Foundation.

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young people access quality legal advice and representation to resolve their legal status, and supporting children to regularize their status by registering as British citizens. Our grantees and partners are children's charities, refugee and migration community organizations, advice providers and law centres. Their strategies include linking young people to legal help, increasing the legal skills of caseworkers and creating conditions whereby young people support each other and speak out. Often working together, they are trying to piece together support for young people who may be extremely wary of seeking help.

For more information

www.phf.org.uk/programmes/supported-options-initiative



The Digital Undoc camp was held at the Paul Hamlyn Foundation offices as part of Supported Options to develop ways of using digital technology to support young people with irregular immigration status in the UK.

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Terms of engagement: surveys highlight European foundations

Andrew Milner and Charles Keidan

How are European foundations addressing the refugee crisis? In order to gauge their response, two surveys were undertaken towards the end of last year, one by the European Foundation Centre (EFC), a membership organization representing European institutional philanthropy, and another by Ariadne, a European network of social change and human rights funders. *Alliance* looked at what prompted the surveys, what they found, and the implications for funders concerned with the question of refugees and migrants.



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Charles Keidan is acting editor of *Alliance*. Email charles@alliance-magazine.org

What prompted the surveys?

The sheer scale and intensity of the issues has concentrated minds at foundations across Europe. 'We believe this is an important moment to signpost the added value of philanthropy and the distinct role it can play,' says the EFC in the executive summary of the findings from its survey. 'Our objective was to improve awareness of what's going on, share this with the philanthropy community, make sense of it and stimulate thinking and action on what we can do to move beyond urgent and immediate needs.'

Similarly, Ariadne's survey, conducted in October 2015, set out 'to understand the work of UK funders in this field and to try to share their expertise'.

Who took part in the surveys?

Sixty-five organizations have responded to the EFC survey so far including well-known bodies such as the Open Society Initiative for Europe, Bertelsmann Foundation and the Bodossaki Foundation. Though many respondents have a long history of working on migration and integration, the EFC expects that 'the gravity, depth, and long-term implications of the crisis have prompted a number of foundations that have not previously worked in this area to take action'.

Ariadne's survey focused exclusively on its UK members. It included an in-depth look at 14 foundations including Sigrid Rausing Trust, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Tudor Trust.

Where is the funding going?

For respondents to the Ariadne survey, the main areas of focus for funding include direct support for women and minors; securing international protection for refugees and migrants; specialist legal advice and representation; improving public attitudes to migrants and refugees; and integration initiatives. The EFC survey findings suggest that, in addition to significant interest in funding immediate humanitarian assistance, many foundations plan to continue long-term work on integration into host communities.

Continuity and change

Both surveys asked questions about the ways in which the current crisis is affecting funding and grantmaking priorities. While several respondents are making grants to new organizations, others are increasing the amounts they give to existing grantees. Many agree that in the longer term the implications of the refugee crisis will have to be taken into account in determining future strategies.

Forty-six out of 65 respondents to the EFC survey said they are considering something 'new or specific' in response to the crisis. In the case of the Ariadne survey, in which all 14 respondents actively fund refugee, migration and asylum issues, nine of them agreed that the current crisis has had an impact on their current work or future plans. Many are making emergency grants, and discussing longer-term shifts in their portfolios to include integration and advocacy.

Meeting urgent unmet needs

The focus of many respondents, not surprisingly, is improving living conditions and providing humanitarian aid. The EFC survey noted that those venturing into the field for the first time are drawn to responding to immediate needs and relieving pressure on the ground. Some foundations with existing programmes are seeking to make additional funds available for emergency purposes. Brussels-based King Baudouin Foundation is a case in point. The foundation made available €900,000 in 2015 and plans to release a further €4 million in 2016 and 2017 to finance a programme for the integration of refugees in Belgian society.

The provision of swift and direct emergency assistance is also a top priority for respondents to the Ariadne survey. This assistance is taking various forms including: protecting rights and improving the quality of life in refugee camps; providing support to NGOs in transit countries to assist unaccompanied minors; and funding work in the Arab region that could

help make it possible for Syrians to stay in or near Syria. Ensuring that the voices of migrant-led groups are heard by policymakers is also seen by Ariadne's respondents as a short-term priority.

Beyond the present emergency, Ariadne funders see an important role in facilitating and supporting integration into host communities. For some, this means not only the provision of physical amenities such as housing, medical care, access to the job market and so on, but also providing trauma counselling, language tuition and community activities. This will involve giving continuing support to existing organizations. Significantly, many feel this will be better provided in the form of core grants rather than project funding.

Concerted action is key

While it is perhaps unsurprising that both surveys reveal strong alignment on immediate priorities such as humanitarian assistance, what emerges even more strongly is the sense that concerted action by funders – even if it does not go beyond the sharing of information – would be more effective than a collection of individual responses.

One measure of this willingness to build on the work of others is offered by the surveys themselves – part of the stated aim of the Ariadne survey was to complement that being carried out by the EFC. Moreover, the Ariadne survey itself has been followed by a series of regular tele-briefings which, at the time of writing, are still continuing.

Respondents to both surveys clearly grasp that the solution to a problem of the scale of the refugee issue is beyond the individual efforts of any one body and that some form of common endeavour is called for, both between funders and with other concerned groups.

Several EFC respondents noted that the coordination of efforts between all those involved – NGOs, politicians, researchers, government organizations and others – is among the most urgent immediate priorities.

The great majority of the EFC respondents (52) also said they would be willing to consider working with other foundations. Worryingly, only a minority of EFC survey respondents (18) said

Many agree that in the longer term the implications of the refugee crisis will have to be taken into account in determining future strategies.

What emerges is the sense that concerted action by funders – even if it does not go beyond the sharing of information – would be more effective than a collection of individual responses.

they knew of good projects or initiatives led by other funders that could be replicated. This suggests that more needs to be done to build a stronger evidence base about existing programmes and to highlight successes more effectively.

If that can be done, there appears to be a considerable appetite to pool resources. In the EFC survey, a majority (37) stated that cooperation could extend to a willingness to pool resources.

Responses to EFC survey questions

Numbers are actual responses

Are you considering something specific or new as a result of the refugee crisis?



Would you be willing to pool resources with other foundations to address these issues?



Would you be interested in working with other foundations on these issues?



Do you know of good projects and initiatives led by other funders (in your country or abroad) that could be replicated?



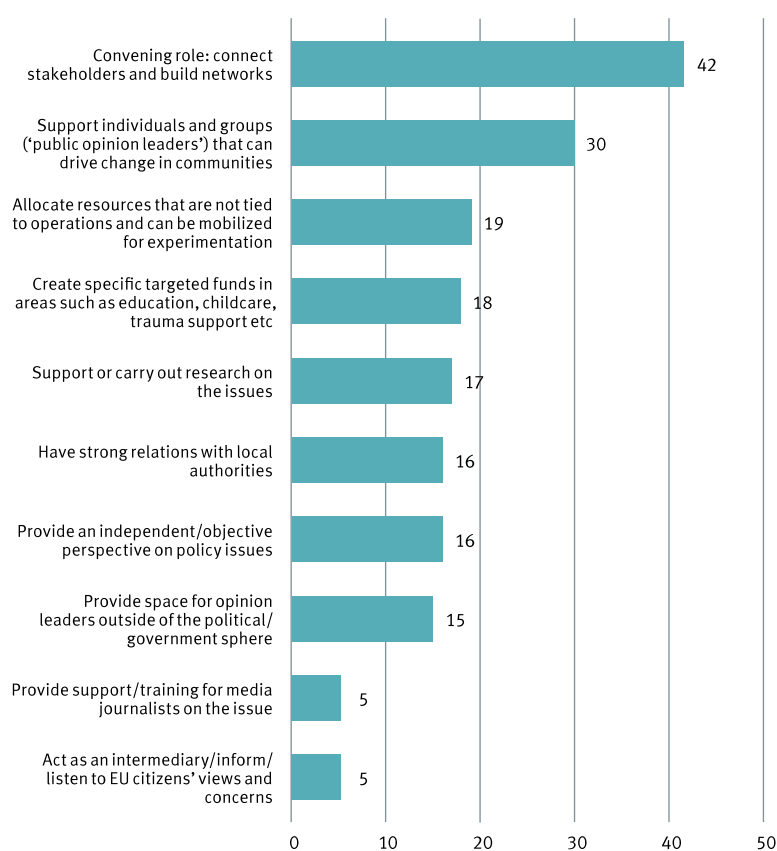
Eight of the 14 funders surveyed by Ariadne said they would be willing to go as far as pooling resources and five more said that they would be at least willing to consider it. As a further index of willingness to join forces to some degree or other, the same number of respondents said they had been approached by other organizations responding or thinking of responding to the crisis.

Convening is also critical

Some of the Ariadne group mentioned that they would also be able to offer contacts, networks and expertise, perhaps more easily and certainly more quickly than

pooling funds. To some extent, this was borne out by the findings of the EFC survey. When asked where they thought their strengths lay in tackling the issue, by far the greatest number (42) cited convening. Likewise, several of the Ariadne funders noted that they are 'in a position to convene key stakeholders, and importantly, are able to bring the voices of grantee organizations and of migrants themselves to policy discussions'. Another substantial number (30) said they could support individuals and groups capable of driving change.

Foundation strengths



The view was also expressed among the EFC cohort that it is not only the magnitude of philanthropic funding that is important but also the flexibility with which it can be deployed.

The promise of collaboration

Both groups were keen to point out that important collaborations are under way. Foremost among these is the European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM) (see p36). Overall, respondents to both surveys see EPIM as a valuable platform for funder collaboration. A notable sign of progress at EPIM is a recent announcement by the Open Society Foundations



SOFIA KOUVELAKI

While the focus of many respondents is improving living conditions and providing immediate humanitarian assistance, for example, to support desperate people arriving

in Greece from Turkey via overloaded boats, around two-thirds of respondents to the EFC survey said they are considering something 'new or specific' in response to the crisis.

of funding for a new appointment to build support for humanitarian aid and human rights organizations in Italy, Greece and the western Balkans.

Respondents also highlighted other special interest groups convened by funders including: Ariadne's Refugee Crisis online portal; the UK Association of Charitable Foundations' Asylum, Refugee & Migration Network; and the EFC's Diversity, Migration and Integration Thematic Network. In the Ariadne survey, a number of other existing initiatives in the UK were cited approvingly by respondents:

- ▶ The Supported Options Initiative (see p38), which provides support and advice to young people (up to 30 years of age) and to children in the UK who do not have regular immigration status or are undocumented
- ▶ The Future Advice Fund, which involves looking at ways to provide free advice services for social welfare law, including immigration and asylum in the wake of cutbacks to legal aid
- ▶ Migration Exchange at Global Dialogue (formerly known as Changing Minds), an initiative of independent funders to ensure accuracy and depth in the debate on national identity, integration and immigration

The long road ahead: the battle for public opinion

Both groups are clear on the importance of public opinion, not least to longer-term efforts at settlement and integration. However, there is some divergence of view between the two on the current state of public opinion. In the UK, the Ariadne survey notes that 'the UK appears to have seen a positive surge in public opinion towards refugees in recent

weeks'. Respondents spoke of the importance of maintaining this by 'supporting communications strategies that result in sustained, measurable improvements in public attitudes to refugees, migrants and asylum seekers'. Tools include 'public opinion research, public fundraising efforts, and online and offline media and campaigning capacity including mobilizing alternative voices in the debate – especially those of refugees and migrants'. By contrast, EFC survey respondents painted a darker picture of the present state of opinion, speaking of the need to change public perceptions towards migrants and to advocate for a fairer migrations policy centred on human rights.

What's next?

The crisis is set to intensify and so too will the philanthropic response. Those European foundations

Both groups are clear on the importance of public opinion, not least to longer-term efforts at settlement and integration.

already involved in refugee and migrant issues are gearing up to increase their efforts and the issues are set to feature prominently at the EFC's annual conference in May. While the surveys have shown a readiness for new forms of cooperation, the effectiveness of philanthropy's response to the crisis may rest on how far that cooperation extends and how it is made to work. The current crisis may prove a key test of European philanthropy's ability to make a difference to one of society's most pressing issues. @

For more information

What are foundations doing in response to the refugee crisis? EFC, 2015.

UK funders respond to the refugee crisis. Ariadne, 2015.

(Quotes in the text are taken from these two reports.)

To find out more or to participate in future surveys, please email Ali Khan at akhan@efc.be or Lori Stanciu at lori.stanciu@ariadne-network.org

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CASE STUDY BODOSSAKI FOUNDATION

Funding for unaccompanied refugee children in Greece

Sofia Kouvelaki

It's been two weeks since I heard from Javad. Last time I spoke to him, he was at a refugee camp in Sweden. Javad is 13 and comes from Afghanistan. He was forced to leave his country because all the males in his family were persecuted by the Taliban after his sister refused to marry one of them.



Sofia Kouvelaki is a programme officer of the Bodossaki Foundation. Email sofia@bodossaki.gr

Javad walked alone all the way through Iran to Ayvalik in Turkey and arrived at the Greek island of Lesbos in a rubber boat together with another 38 people. 'The crossing to Greece was one of the most terrifying things in my life. They were so many babies crying on the boat that I felt I had to be strong, so I didn't cry, I stayed quiet...'

I met Javad at the First Reception Centre in Lesbos during one of the many field trips I have conducted as a programme officer of the Bodossaki Foundation, one of Greece's oldest charitable foundations. He was one of 50 unaccompanied minors hosted in the centre at the time. Children live in detention conditions under police supervision. They live in white containers in a very confined space and are not allowed to exit the

centre. They stay there until their registration procedure is completed, which lasts an average of ten days.

'They say Sweden is very good,' Javad tells me. He uses an e-translator from Farsi and has been sending me messages via Facebook and Whatsapp at each border crossing during his journey from Greece to Sweden. 'Dear Sofia. Please don't worry. I am safe.' He starts all his messages with these words. It is clear that he is in need of support and protection.

Javad is one of thousands of 'invisible children' travelling alone around Europe, facing the threat of sexual or organ trafficking at every step of their way.

Over 910,000 refugees and migrants reached Greece in 2015. Among these are increasing numbers of children and teenagers who arrive in the country alone. Official authorities registered 2,248 unaccompanied minors in Greece in 2015. More than 18,100 unaccompanied minors are reported to have crossed the border with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 2015. Within the first 25 days of January 2016, 336 unaccompanied children arrived in Greece, five times more than in January 2015.

The numbers and the situation in the field indicate that we are dealing with one of the biggest demographic changes since the Second World War. The term 'migrant' or 'refugee' crisis can't explain the complexity of this phenomenon. Unaccompanied minors are the most vulnerable groups of the increasing population of migrants and refugees arriving in Greece. The reasons these children travel alone vary. Many have lost their parents during the journey; others are sent off in order to flee war, poverty or persecution. They are all in search of a better future.

Our team at the Bodossaki Foundation has visited the main national entry points for refugees several times. We have conducted multiple needs assessments on the ground, talking directly with the children involved and engaging in an ongoing dialogue with the NGO staff working with them. We found an alarming gap in terms of identification upon arrival and protection and support for unaccompanied minors. We then realized that, as a foundation, we could act



Javad gave us this picture when we met him in Lesbos. 'Greece, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, we are all friends,' he said.

to find effective solutions and to provide support for these children in cooperation with the strongest and most effective NGOs.

In this context, the Bodossaki Foundation has launched 'Giving for Greece' to pool the resources of all those who share the vision of giving for a better Greece. Our mission is to inspire individuals and businesses to contribute to Greece's wellbeing and to enable them to do so.

In order to support migrant children arriving in Greece alone, we have set up a thematic fund within the context of Giving for Greece, for which we aim to attract donations from around the world. Our aim is to act as an umbrella that will promote and support all reliable and effective NGOs that work with unaccompanied children at the refugee entry points of Lesbos, Samos, Chios, Kos, Leros and Orestiada and the

Volunteers pulling out a boat on the shore after having removed all the passengers safely.

exit point of Idomeni. We will channel all donations gathered to critical needs such as providing guardians for the children; establishing transit structures; and providing food, shelter, clothing, medical provision and psychological support. We will also be flexible and ready to cover additional needs proposed by NGOs working on the field, depending on how the refugee crisis evolves over the next few months.

Bodossaki's Unaccompanied Refugee Children Support Fund aims to give voice to children like Javad. We hope to make their stories known and give them the services, support and protection they need. In so doing, we will help to ensure their current and long-term safety and wellbeing. @

SOPIA KOUVELAKI



RETURN TO CONTENTS

CASE STUDY ASFARI FOUNDATION

Helping Syrians to help Syrians

Marieke Bosman

The Asfari Foundation is a British charity funded by the Asfari family. We provide grants to partners in Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and the UK which help young people become independent, engaged members of society and contribute to building resilient civil societies. In 2015, our expenditure was £3.5 million (86 per cent on grants). Although much of our spending still goes to international NGOs, we increasingly support Syrian civil society.



Marieke Bosman is CEO of the Asfari Foundation. Email marieke.bosman@asfarifoundation.org.uk

When the Syrian revolution broke out in 2011 we initially helped international NGOs and UN organizations to support the first Syrian refugees into Lebanon as well as internally displaced persons (IDPs) inside Syria. As the crisis went on, we also supported host country NGOs working with refugees to encourage appropriate local responses, reduce intercommunal tension and support the local economy.

Perhaps the only positive aspect of the crisis in Syria is the very impressive Syrian civil society that has emerged: young, creative, courageous and innovative, hundreds of these groups and organizations are active inside Syria (in regime, rebel and Daesh-held areas), in neighbouring countries and in the diaspora. They work on a wide range of issues from emergency services to arts and human rights. Often refugees or IDPs themselves, they create cohesion in a society torn apart by conflict and are well placed to assess local needs. Given our remit, they make excellent conduits for Asfari Foundation grants.

We provide some capacity building to Syrian CSOs. Initially we provided tailored staff training and mentoring to six CSOs. Unfortunately the security situation in Syria meant many trained staff fled or could not reach training sessions. There are now Syrian CSO umbrella bodies that provide training, some of which we now support instead. Syrian CSO staff have also

made use of Asfari bursaries, fellowships and scholarships.

Syrians are increasingly portrayed as extremists, regime supporters or passive refugees and not the proactive, moderate Syrians we work with. We therefore support several projects that bring their voices to

a global audience. Examples include championing the White Helmets (who rescue people from bombed buildings in Syria) and civil society delegations to Washington DC. We have commissioned research to help plug gaps in the refugee aid effort (eg a study on the education needs of Syrian young people) and supported networking events between donors and Syrian civil society.

Despite the refugee flow into Europe, we decided to continue to work in Syria, Lebanon and Turkey. These countries carry the largest refugee burden and the Syrians who live here have either chosen to stay or are so vulnerable that they cannot leave and thus need our support most.

The challenges facing Syrian civil society are enormous – growing needs, worsening security, staff turnover due to deaths and arrests, migration, and better international NGO salaries. The biggest challenge for CSOs and donors has been the increasing restrictions imposed by financial institutions, resulting in complicated vetting procedures which use up valuable time and resources. In many cases this has also led to international funding going to international NGOs rather than local CSOs.

CSOs find this hugely frustrating as they know Syria better, speak Arabic, are cheaper in terms of core costs, and do not make inappropriate assumptions about Syria. When funds are channelled through them, CSOs often feel they are treated like contractors for international donors, without being involved in planning, and subject to short-term contracts and time-consuming reporting. Donors are also reluctant to fund core costs and often only fund work in particular regions in Syria, which CSOs say divides Syria further. The foundation has tried to avoid this by having its partners define local needs, keeping its forms simple, paying core costs, having Arabic-speaking staff who know Syria, and allowing partners to set reporting dates.

We will continue to invest in Syrian civil society activists and organizations because we believe that is the best way to deliver aid to Syrians in need. We also see it as an investment in the future of Syria, since these organizations will form the cornerstone of the democratic Syria its citizens hope for. @

Perhaps the only positive aspect of the crisis in Syria is the very impressive Syrian civil society that has emerged: young, creative, courageous and innovative.

CASE STUDY TAAWON

Permanent refugees: mobilizing Palestinian diaspora philanthropy

Atallah Kuttab

Though it is the plight of Syrian refugees that is attracting the world's attention at the moment, there are refugees of much longer duration. Among these are the Palestinians. Around the world, Palestinians number almost 12 million. Three-quarters of them are displaced. Half are still living in historic Palestine (Gaza, Israel and West Bank). Most of the remaining six million live in refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

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Throughout this time, Palestinians have sought to maintain their identity. One organization that has supported them is Taawon (formerly known as the Welfare Association), which works with Palestinians in historic Palestine and in refugee camps in Lebanon. The coping and solidarity mechanisms set up by Palestinians worldwide, and the movement from individual to institutional action, provide a model and some possibilities for today's refugees.

Taawon was formed by business and intellectual leaders mostly from the Palestinian diaspora in 1983. Soon after it was registered as an association in Geneva, Taawon's founders set up an endowment to support its mission of furthering the progress of Palestinians

through preserving their heritage, fostering their living culture and building a vibrant civil society. That endowment, and the willingness of Taawon's supporters (from the Arab region and beyond) to donate, remains to this day the best guarantee that Taawon both maintains its independence and stays responsive to community needs. Part of its success also lies in influencing the types of programme that donors in the international community support in Palestine.

It is imperative that Taawon stays true to its values of respect for democratic practice, human dignity, freedom and social justice, and continues to build international alliances. Such alliances help guarantee that these values inform Taawon's ongoing programmes. These programmes include access to quality education (schools and universities), quality health services (primary and hospital care) and community centres, as well as creating opportunities and employment for the young. Its work, through its affiliates and partners in Arab countries, Europe, Latin America and the US, ensures continued awareness of the Palestinians' rights.

In an important development, the landmark Palestinian Museum near Ramallah opens its doors to the world in May 2016. Pioneered by Taawon and numerous national and international partners, the state-of-the-art museum will provide a new and much-needed spotlight on contemporary Palestinian life, identity and society. [@](#)

The landmark Palestinian Museum near Ramallah opens in May 2016.



Public opinion: where climate change *is* needed

Will Somerville

Donors rarely make building public understanding a priority. Non-profits also tend not to focus on the long-term need to build public will; rather, they see it as a diversion of precious resources from spending on marketing or advocacy. In most cases, where the external environment is benign or the question is not the subject of heated public and political debate, this may not matter much. However, in the case of refugees and migrants, where the issue is of high political importance, very little change can happen – or adverse developments be stopped – without a concerted effort to build public will.



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Philanthropic collaborations on communications in a range of policy areas exist across Europe and North America. Two funder collaborations related to migrants and refugees stand out: the Four Freedoms Fund in the US and the Migration Exchange (run by the charity Global Dialogue) in the UK. From these initiatives, four lessons emerge.

Be clear who you are talking to

The first is the need to clarify who your audience is in order to decide who is the target of philanthropic investment. Research suggests that ‘the public’ can be split into smaller groups. On the issue of migrants and refugees, three groups are common to most countries: *migration supporters*, accounting for around a quarter of most publics; *migration rejectionists*, accounting for a further quarter; and the *anxious middle*, which make up the remaining half, often split between those worried about jobs and services and those worried about cultural change. Unbound Philanthropy commissioned Ipsos MORI to undertake a longitudinal study in the UK during the refugee crisis in the summer of 2015: 23 per cent of people took action (donation, volunteering) and around 30 per cent said that Angela Merkel had responded better than David Cameron and Britain should accept more refugees. At the same time, 30 per cent of the public consistently rejected Britain taking *any* refugees. These two groups map straight on to migration supporters and rejectionists noted above. By investing widely in public opinion research,

funders can make informed strategic decisions about who to target and why.

Be collaborative

The second lesson is the importance of collaboration, not least because the cost of such investments is often high. In our view, collaboration among key funders and at least some of the leading charities in the field is critical. A single foundation taking this on is unlikely to succeed.

Distinguish between public debate and public opinion

Public opinion changes can take a generation or longer, far beyond the horizons of all but a handful of donors. But changing the public debate is a more realistic short-term goal and one that funders can feasibly take on. A more nuanced public debate on migration can lead to more positive long-term opinion change. A key lesson is to invest with a long-term view. Donors in the UK and elsewhere have sought to build new institutions focusing on migration and communications that would survive the exit of individual funders.

Storytellers are more persuasive than statisticians

A final important lesson is to avoid funding communication activity that has *negative* effects. For example, studies in the UK and the US have shown that references to the economic and fiscal benefits of migration may dissuade more people than they persuade. Emotions matter more than facts. Empirical evidence has only a specific and limited niche in communications work.

Harder for funders to face up to is the ineffectiveness of any type of myth busting. Many well-meaning efforts have sought to respond to pernicious myths with factsheets, arguments and leaflets. Not only is it ineffective but evidence has comprehensively shown that the *original myth takes firmer root*. Again, this does not mean that myths should not be challenged, but that this should be done in a way that acknowledges anxieties and ensures that responses are based on emotion. Simply put, in terms of shaping public will, philanthropists should support persuasive storytellers.

The refugee crisis is a long-term humanitarian emergency. Europe is likely to see substantial flows of people over the next two years at least. Public support for immediate responses (refugee resettlement for example) and for medium-term responses (such as the integration needs of refugees) is lacking and needs to be built. To do so will require a focus on effective communications, collaboration and patience. @

Citizen philanthropy in Canada: a race to the top

Ratna Omidvar

In the week following news that drowned Syrian toddler Alan Kurdi had relatives in Canada and with elections only five weeks away, Syrian refugees became a Canadian election issue. In October, the newly elected Liberal government led by Justin Trudeau promised to bring in 25,000 Syrian refugees by the end of 2015 and up to 50,000 by the end of 2016, up from the previous government's pledge of 10,000 over three years. Though these numbers are small compared to what countries in the Middle East and Europe are facing, they are large in resettlement terms. These are not asylum seekers; they will be permanent residents on their way to citizenship. Canada's positive response, at a time when public support for immigration is receding elsewhere, has its roots in an earlier refugee influx.



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A Syrian family in Toronto Pearson Airport where they arrive as permanent residents of Canada.

The PSR programme

In under 18 months in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Canada took 60,000 refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. The instrument that brought the single largest group to Canada in so short a time was the Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR) programme.

The magic of the PSR programme is that Canadians are personally connected to the solution. Citizens or permanent residents enter a contract with the Canadian government committing to financial support, plus living and general wellbeing support, for the refugee's first year in Canada. It's a big commitment to provide reception, lodging, care and settlement assistance involving the minutiae of everyday life, such as school enrolment, health card registration, navigating transit, late night calls and friendship.

Privately sponsored refugees are generally successful immigrants. They perform better in the labour market, earning higher incomes over time than counterparts in other refugee streams. Researchers peg this down to the effects of having personal champions lending their social capital to supporting and networking the newcomers. Sponsors often become good friends if not like family to the refugees they support, and

this has a regenerative effect for an open refugee policy. Refugees are not nameless – they're neighbours, they're the Alkhalaf family.

Two key features of the programme are that sponsors in Canada can *name* the refugee (individual or family) they wish to bring, and privately sponsored refugees are *in addition* to those brought in by other government channels. These principles don't always hold. In that first major intake from Indochina, sponsors really got whoever the overworked Canadian visa officers processed overseas. And some worry that in the response to the Syrian crisis, the government's total pledge will include both privately sponsored refugees and those brought in by government. In other words, the more private sponsors step forward, the fewer refugees the government is obliged to bring.

Lifeline Syria

Good as the PSR programme is, it did not bring 60,000 people to Canada in 18 months on its own. In the late 1970s, a citizen-led group called Operation Lifeline fuelled Canada's response. Beginning in Toronto, some 30,000 sponsoring groups, numbering five or more Canadians each, sprang up across the country in 1980.

The same type of grassroots organizing began in Toronto in early 2015, named Lifeline Syria in a nod to the earlier movement. The citizen-led initiative to bring 1,000 privately sponsored Syrian refugees to the Greater Toronto Area now has close to 300 sponsoring groups, with many more across the country, formed in neighbourhoods, schools, work places, book clubs, congregations and sports teams. My own sponsoring group is an eclectic mix of good friends. This is all happening against a backdrop of donations, city initiatives, provincial funding, new services developed in the private sector, job offers and more.

What number will Canada eventually land on? Will it be 60,000, or higher? Will it be enough, and what is enough? All receiving countries from Germany to Australia are grappling with defining 'enough'. That calculation depends not just on events in Syria, but on the fragile forces of public support and political will in receiving countries. That's why movements like Lifeline Syria emerge, and why the private sponsorship programme is so important. It enables Canadians to act on the natural impulse of compassion. It enables a race to the top. @



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[RETURN TO CONTENTS](#)

Corporate foundations tackle internal displacement in Colombia

Carolina Suárez

In December 2014, for the second consecutive year, Colombia had the unenviable distinction of being a country with one of the highest number of displaced people in the world: 6.5 million out of a total population of nearly 49 million. Following the announcement that a peace deal will be signed between the government and the FARC¹ insurgency movement, after more than three years of talks, there is hope that Colombia can now begin to reduce that figure significantly. But the challenge of addressing the needs of the displaced and restoring land to whole communities will be a formidable one beyond the capabilities of government alone. Corporate foundations, the heart of the country's institutional philanthropy, are braced to play their part.



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The main causes of internal forced displacement in Colombia are the long-running armed conflict between the state and FARC, drug trafficking and urban violence. The government's victims' register shows that the FARC are responsible for the lion's share (41 per cent) of cases of displacement. Unlike in other countries, forced displacement in Colombia is, according to research by Ana Maria Ceballos from the EAFIT University, an 'extensive phenomenon, diluted over time; it is recurring and continuous, involving an exodus of both individuals and groups of people that is silent and invisible'.

Though it has been going on since the 1990s, Colombians became more aware of the issue following

a Constitutional Court ruling in 2004 and the subsequent creation of a Policy of Truth, Justice and Reparation to investigate expropriations. However, few prosecutions have resulted. Falsified title deeds to plots of land from which displaced people were forced make it difficult to verify claims. Add to this that a 2011 study by the Ideas for Peace Foundation and Los Andes University estimates that a quarter of those displaced are totally illiterate and that 5 per cent have some kind of physical or mental disability as a result of the armed conflict.

Corporate foundations: so far and in future

In Colombia corporate foundations represent a large part of institutional philanthropy. In September 2015, the Association of Corporate Foundations (*Asociación de Fundaciones Empresariales* or AFE) published a study highlighting successful projects promoted by corporate foundations that are geared towards peacebuilding. These are in areas as various as education, economic development, creating opportunities and income generation, building decent housing, strengthening institutions, and art and culture. All these projects are marked by an active community participation in their design and implementation in the spirit of encouraging people to have more deeply felt roots in their lands.

The challenge for AFE and its members is to maintain, expand and deepen such initiatives towards effective peacebuilding. Colombia, more than ever, needs all sectors of society to work together to strengthen its institutions, especially in those areas of the country where the presence of the state is weak. Corporate foundations have management capacity, knowledge, a long-term vision, resources; their ability to work in partnership with the state has been shown by successful public-private partnerships in other spheres. They will need to draw on all of these. Moreover, any future initiatives will need to be based on the involvement of communities and they will need to be fully evaluated so that changes can be made and lessons learned and shared. @

¹ Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia).

Children from the neighbourhood of Cali, Potrero Grande, where much of the population is made up of people displaced by the violence.



HAROLD DÍAZ, FANALCA FOUNDATION

Mexico: migration crisis worsens, philanthropic help decreases

Susana Seijas

'The situation faced by foundations and migrant rights organizations responding to the migration crisis is overwhelming,' says Lourdes Sanz of the Mexican Center for Philanthropy (Cemefi), 'yet international non-profits, regional grassroots organizations, migrant movements, networks and church-run shelters are involved in everything from devising transnational solutions to looking for thousands of migrants who are missing or feared dead.'



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Thousands are fleeing gang warfare in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, a region known as the Northern Triangle, at a time when major US foundations involved in the migration effort are restructuring or pulling back.

Migration from Mexico and Central America to the US is nothing new, but now migrants are not just looking for the American Dream but for refuge from an epidemic of violence in their countries of origin. Honduras and El Salvador, two of the countries with the most migrants, have two of the highest homicide rates in the world. But the journey north is full of obstacles. Passing through Mexico – as an estimated 400,000 do each year – they face grave human rights violations at the hands of criminal gangs.

Migrants travel through some of the most dangerous, cartel-ridden regions in order to get to the US. Mexico's unprecedented level of violence, due to its decade-long drug war, has claimed the lives of more than 100,000 civilians according to Mexico's National Institute for Statistics, Geography and Information (INEGI).

One of the root causes of the migration crisis, says Kim Krasevac, who runs the Ford Foundation's migration programme in Mexico and Central America, is 'a very restrictive immigration policy from the US towards impoverished Mexicans and Central Americans . . . Since these migrants can't get authorized entry into the US, they are forced into the arms of human smugglers, and over the years, the human smuggling business has increasingly been taken over by organized criminal organizations'.

Deportation Nation

Mexico is becoming a 'Deportation Nation' says Marco Castillo, director of the Popular Assembly of Migrant Families (APOFAM). As a result of the 2014 'surge' of unaccompanied Central American child migrants fleeing to the US, Mexico introduced its Southern Border Plan, by which it is now deporting more Central Americans than the US, according to the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA).

'The authorities here are making it so hard for migrants that they are seeking alternative routes,' adds Castillo. 'Many are not even jumping on a train known as *La Bestia* or The Beast (so named because it amputates migrants' limbs if they happen to fall under its wheels) because it's been ordered to go faster than ever, forcing the migrants to look for alternative routes, where there are no shelters, and they fall into the hands of organized crime.'

The migrants have been easy prey for Mexico's drug cartels. The Mesoamerican Migrant Movement, an NGO that organizes yearly caravans of Central American mothers looking for their missing children and relatives, estimates that up to 20,000 migrants go missing every year in Mexico. Six out of every 10 Central American women making the trip north are raped or subjected to sexual harassment, according to Amnesty International.

Systematic murder

One of the people helping migrants is Father Alejandro Solalinde, a 70-year-old priest and human rights activist who runs a shelter on the migrant route in Ixtepec in Mexico's southern state of Oaxaca. 'What is happening to the migrants is systematic murder,' says Solalinde. 'The abuse they face is only possible because the criminal gangs are in cahoots with the local, state and federal police, as well as with Mexico's National Institute of Immigration (INM).'

Father Solalinde and other shelters like his have received numerous testimonies from migrants who have suffered theft, extortion and sexual abuse by agents of the INM. The Ford Foundation funded a study that looked at accountability within the INM, and, according to Krasevac, 'the INM is one of the government bodies that most often violates the human rights of migrants'.

The local philanthropic response

Since setting up the Hermanos en el Camino (Brothers on the Road) in 2007, Solalinde's shelter has given refuge (as well as food, medical, legal and psychological

assistance) to some 20,000 migrants per year. He receives no regular funding from the Mexican Catholic Church or foundations but relies on individual philanthropists and the generosity of locals who donate rice, beans and other necessities. He has had death threats and is regularly intimidated. At present he has four bodyguards. Given that in the last three years, 11 priests have been killed at the hands of organized crime in Mexico, he is right to be concerned. 'I know my guards are only a deterrent, I know if they want to kill me, they will.'

The involvement of institutional philanthropy

Despite high concentrations of wealth, Mexico has few endowed foundations, so it is often US foundations like Ford, MacArthur and Open Society Foundations that lead philanthropic efforts to help migrants in Mexico and Central America. The scope of their work in Mexico is as complex as it is ambitious. Sharon Bissell, director of the MacArthur Foundation Mexico office, describes its work, which has supported over 25 organizations in Mexico since it began in 2006, as 'looking at migration from Central America to Mexico, as well as transit migration through Mexico to the US, Mexican migration to the US as well as return migration and deportation from the US'.

Similarly, the Ford Foundation's migration programme in Mexico and Central America for the past eight years has worked with over 70 regional organizations, focusing on the human rights violations of migrants. 'One of our achievements is getting organizations to work together in a more strategic way, otherwise people get overwhelmed by the symptoms and it's hard to look at the causes,' adds Krasevac.

Although the larger amounts of funding come from outside Mexico, one Mexican foundation creating lasting impact is Fundación BBVA Bancomer, which has several programmes supporting the families of migrants who stay behind in Mexico. When the father, or head of household, migrates to the US looking for employment, children and teenagers left behind are often obliged to leave school to supplement the household income. In response, BBVA launched 'scholarships for the integration of those who stay behind'.

'One of our achievements is getting organizations to work together in a more strategic way, otherwise people get overwhelmed by the symptoms and it's hard to look at the causes.'

'The families were told they would have to pay for the transfer of the body and the funeral costs. Many didn't believe the veracity of the identifications being made, as some had been sent the wrong bodies.'

Collaborative action

There has also been action by other foundations. One example is the founding of the Central America and Mexico Migration Alliance (CAMMINA), formed as an urgent response to the massacres of migrants at San Fernando and Cadereyta in northern Mexico in 2010–11. It was launched as a joint fund by the Avina, Ford and Open Society Foundations to develop a collaborative strategy on migration, pooling funds and know-how.

'We knew things were bad,' says Edith Zavala, director of programmes at CAMMINA, 'but after the first massacre of 72 migrants and the discovery of 193 bodies in clandestine graves in San Fernando, followed by the Cadereyta massacre when 49 torsos, also believed to be migrants, were found with their heads, feet and hands cut off, there was an urgent sense that human rights and migration organizations needed to respond differently, the problem transcended borders.'

When news of the massacres reached families in Central America, there was no access to justice for the victims or their families. 'The way the process was handled was terrible from the beginning,' says Zavala. 'The families were told they would have to pay for the transfer of the body and the funeral costs. Many didn't believe the veracity of the identifications being made, as some had been sent the wrong bodies.'

It was after devastating experiences like these that various organizations from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, along with CAMMINA, got together to create a system that victims' families could trust. As a result, they set up a forensic commission working with the Argentine Team of Forensic Anthropology (EEAF). So far 33 bodies have been identified and a protocol to notify families about the massacres has been implemented.

The MacArthur Foundation has also been active in funding forensic work and has supported the work of the EEAF to create a regional framework to locate missing migrants. It has also supported an initiative spearheaded by the Foundation for Justice that allows victims' families to file a criminal complaint – whether it be related to kidnapping, homicide, disappearance, or any other crime committed against a migrant in Mexico.

Children on the run

When the child migrant crisis broke out in 2014, when up to 67,000 unaccompanied minors arrived in the US, CAMMINA was ideally placed to respond as it had already carried out a detailed mapping of the

Father Alejandro Solalinde on The Beast at night.

SANJUANA MARTINEZ



organizations involved in child migration. This information was crucial to represent the critical situation of children in Central America to lawmakers in the US, and what a mass deportation of children to situations of extreme violence would mean.

Similarly, the MacArthur Foundation funded Children on the Run, a UNHCR study on unaccompanied minors that included the testimonies of over 400 children, highlighting the need for international protection, not deportation.

Though the situation remains dire, Krasevac of the Ford Foundation says there have been some advances by civil society: 'Our joint efforts have added to changes in policies and creation of a learning community of people on migration policy who communicate constantly.'

One organization that has benefited from both the Ford and MacArthur Foundations is the Institute for Women in Migration (IMUMI), set up by Gretchen Kuhner, an American living in Mexico, as a response to the deportations. 'Because of the deportations, we came across horrible family separations, parental rights were being lost, kids were being adopted in the US while their parents were sent back to their countries of origin,' Kuhner describes her legal clinic as 'the intersection between Mexican family law and US family law – making a horrible situation less horrible'.

'Because of the deportations, we came across horrible family separations, parental rights were being lost, kids were being adopted in the US while their parents were sent back to their countries of origin.'

Institutional philanthropy pulling back

But the work of the IMUMI, which receives up to 70 per cent of its funding from the Ford and MacArthur Foundations, is in peril as both foundations recently decided to scale back their involvement in some migration-related grantmaking. The Ford Foundation 'is looking to refocus its goals to strengthen the rule of law in the region. Part of the foundation's new global strategy is focused on challenging and disrupting inequality in the region', says Krasevac.

Bissell from MacArthur explains that although the foundation is exiting from the bulk of its migration programme, it is still going to work on the issue of unaccompanied minors and on the implementation of a legalization programme for migrants that may emerge in the US. 'Part of our refocusing is to prepare for this kind of conversation in the US,' she adds.

As for the organizations that still rely on funding from Ford and MacArthur, both foundations say they gave generous exit grants to enable the grantees to figure out how they can sustain their work.

A migration crisis becomes a refugee crisis

As Krasevac notes, despite these changes, the migration wave has now reached crisis proportions and needs to be looked at differently: 'We have been talking about migrants, but we need to talk about refugees. These folks are refugees. Young girls have to leave town because the gangs have come to get them. They can't go back, their lives have been threatened. It's a major refugee crisis.' @

Migration – the oldest and still best tool in the anti-poverty arsenal

Timothy Ogden

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The case for migration as an effective tool to combat poverty is more than 100,000 years old – and has yet to be contradicted. Migration is what early human hunter-gatherers did to survive. Migration took them from Africa into the rest of the world. Migration led them to the river valleys of Mesopotamia and South Asia. Further migration to these fertile valleys generated societies. It is not overstating the case to say that migration created civilization. And when early civilizations collapsed under pressure from war, disease or famine, it was migration to other societies that kept knowledge from being lost and allowed development to continue.

The history of humankind is a history of migration. Being removed from that history by large spans of time makes it easy for us to think of this history as large, coordinated movements of people. But it is better understood as the stories of individuals and families making decisions to move to find a better life.

The dramatic declines in absolute poverty in the last 50 years are primarily the result of families migrating from rural areas to cities, in China especially but also elsewhere. Among economists, rural-to-urban migration is known as the foundation of development: people can be much more productive in urban environments than in rural ones. More productive people means more wealth and less poverty for everyone. It is true that the conditions for the poor in many developing world cities are abysmal. But they were also abysmal in New York, London and Paris when those cities absorbed hundreds of thousands of migrants from rural areas seeking a better life. It was the migrants' increased productivity that created the wealth to improve those cities. Healthy, livable cities don't emerge *despite* migrants but *because* of them.

The wealth generated by migrants to cities also created the fortunes of the owners of the businesses that

Continued opposite bottom

A note of caution: should philanthropy promote migration?

Ayesha Saran

Migration is – as many of the authors featured in this issue contend – an age-old phenomenon that has generated wealth, opportunities and innovation throughout history. However, the suggestion that philanthropy should encourage it as a solution to global poverty should be approached with caution.

Many of the macroeconomic arguments in favour of migration are convincing. Successfully integrated immigrants have, as the articles in this section illustrate, proved to be prominent philanthropists and the source of huge remittance revenue for their countries of origin. There is strong evidence on the productivity of migrants and countless examples of the

contribution they have made to the societies in which they have settled.

But the analogy between free trade and encouraging the free movement of people risks viewing migrants as economic units. Migration provides immense opportunities but may not be cost-free for migrants or for the countries they move to or from. There can be unintended consequences, short trips that become lifetimes and sacrifices for the next generation. Michael Clemens's article highlights the benefits of New Zealand's Recognized Seasonal Employer programme for Tongan migrants. But other schemes may give us grounds for caution. For example, Germany's postwar 'guest-worker' scheme may have helped its economy, but its benefits for those who returned to their countries of origin remain highly contested.

In addition, so much is dependent on context and how migration flows are managed. Are migrants working in less regulated sectors being exploited? Are they being pitted against 'native' workers? Are local services equipped for rapid demographic changes? Are migrants being successfully integrated? From a social justice perspective, the answers to these questions are as important as the bottom line.

Ultimately, philanthropy should recognize that migration is a messy, human business that may not have an intrinsic value. Instead of either encouraging or deterring migration from developing countries, foundations might be better placed to ensure its benefits are maximized for all concerned and that its challenges are addressed thoughtfully and constructively. @

Time for philanthropists to get on board with migration

Michael Clemens

Which aid project has been most effective at creating economic opportunity for the world's poorest families? A strong contender is a remarkable *migration* programme which helps thousands of poor South Pacific islanders get seasonal jobs picking fruit in New Zealand. Migration to pick fruit may not be the first thing you think of when you think of highly effective anti-poverty philanthropy. If that's true, it might be time to think more imaginatively about what philanthropy can achieve.



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The RSE programme

New Zealand started its Recognized Seasonal Employer (RSE) programme in 2006. New Zealand is a rich producer of wine grapes and other fruits, and has trouble finding farm labour. Across the water, Tonga is a country with few good jobs and a third of the population in poverty. Economist Manjula Luthria and colleagues helped the two countries strike a deal, offering Tongan workers the opportunity of a lifetime. The average Tongan household that participated was earning NZ\$1,400 a year before the programme

began. Each Tongan worker who participated typically brought home NZ\$5,500 after just a few months.

Compare that to more traditional anti-poverty projects. A highly successful programme giving productive assets to the ultra-poor in their villages was able to increase per capita consumption by US\$54 (NZ\$80) per year, with support from CGAP and the Ford Foundation. That project is clearly worthwhile and cost-effective. But its livelihood effects are dwarfed by the impact of even short-term migration.

Impact and evidence

The huge bump in income for Tongan families in the RSE programme was just the beginning. Carefully comparing matched participant and non-participant households, World Bank researchers showed that the project caused big increases in subjective and material wellbeing, durable assets, home improvement, financial access and children's schooling. The evaluators' conclusion: the RSE programme was 'among the most effective development policies evaluated to date'.

Were there offsetting negative impacts outside individual participants' households? For example, did workers' absence or unequal access to the programme generate strife in Tongan communities? The evaluation team asked local leaders to assess the programme's overall impact. Two years in, 92 per cent judged it to have a positive effect. ▷

Continued

employed them: Rockefeller, Ford, Wellcome, Nobel, Bosch. In other words, the history of foundations is a history of migrants. And the future of institutional philanthropy is built on migrants as well: the wealth of Ambani and Mittal (owners of factories driven by urban workers), Ibrahim (cellular networks require dense populations to begin), Kamprad (dense housing) and Zuckerberg (dense population of tech talent) is all built on migration.

Despite this, philanthropy has largely ignored – or even worked against – people migrating to escape poverty. It is far more common to find philanthropic programmes aiming to prevent families from leaving their rural farms and migrating to cities than it is to find programmes that enable them to do so. Institutional philanthropy has, unfortunately, not looked to the history of humanity's escape from poverty for lessons on how to enable more to escape it.

Migration is the most successful anti-poverty strategy for families in every era and every region of the world.

If we accept that, a world of possibilities for battling poverty opens up. And yet, for some reason, the idea of allowing people to escape from poverty by moving, particularly if that means moving across national borders, seems to make us afraid.

It is true that migration has sometimes destroyed nations and cultures. But the cases where it has happened have something in common: they are migrations where relatively wealthy people invaded the territory of poorer ones (see colonialism). I can find no examples of migrants from poor countries harming the long-term wellbeing of richer countries since the fall of Rome – even though every wave of global migration from poorer countries to richer ones has been forecast to do so.

Institutional philanthropy around the world needs to acknowledge the central role that migration plays in reducing poverty (and creating philanthropic wealth). Migration is the greatest tool in the anti-poverty arsenal. It's time for philanthropy to put that tool to use. @

Ignoring the power of migration

You might think that with evidence like this, philanthropists and aid agencies would line up to emulate the initiative, and migration would move towards the centre of the global anti-poverty agenda. But nothing like that has happened.

The Millennium Development Goals, set in 2000, mentioned migration exclusively in negative terms: it leads to 'an increase in epidemics', and rural-urban migration tends to 'increase poverty' in urban areas. That was nonsense. Even back in 2000, remittances to developing countries were much larger than all the foreign aid on earth. The framers of the goals simply ignored that.

In late 2015, the UN met to set a new round of global goals. This time they did slightly better. The new Sustainable Development Goals at least mention talk about protecting migrants' rights and making remittances cheaper. But they do not mention any possibility of actually increasing migration – only that migration policies should be 'planned and well managed'. As Harvard's Lant Pritchett has pointed out, the above goal can be met if only a handful of people actually move – or even if no people move at all.

Three reasons why migration isn't higher on the anti-poverty agenda

So why has migration been sidelined in the global anti-poverty agenda, and by development philanthropists? This is not due to any lack of evidence that migration is important and effective. In my experience, global poverty-focused philanthropists are reluctant to get involved with migration for three reasons.

The 'migration undermines development' fallacy

First, they see it as somehow at odds with their other work: if they're trying to generate jobs and livelihoods in Malawi, how does it help to encourage people to leave Malawi? Won't this undermine other efforts? This argument is not supported by evidence. The RSE programme in Tonga doesn't substitute for other development efforts, it complements them. Any programme to develop local enterprise, for example, will benefit from migrants' families having more money to spend on what is produced. Any programme to create jobs for youth will benefit from RSE workers' kids being more likely to stay in school.

Even back in 2000, remittances to developing countries were much larger than all the foreign aid on earth. The framers of the goals simply ignored that.

The 'migration harms poor countries' fallacy

Second, some philanthropists believe that migration somehow harms poor countries, and that for poor countries to develop there must be less migration. The truth is the exact opposite: as poor countries like Malawi develop into middle-income countries like Tunisia, emigration rates typically *rise*. In fact, they *triple*. This is because migration is mostly a tremendously profitable investment, and more people do it – as with any other investment – when they get the means to do so. Migration flows are a sign that development is happening.

Even large-scale emigration supports and complements the development process. Two of the biggest economic successes in Africa, Mauritius and Cape Verde, had emigration of between 10 and 20 per cent of their populations leading up to the 1990s. Migration is part and parcel of the development process, and it is an important way that people accumulate capital and ideas to get the economy moving at home.

Migration is 'too political'

Finally, philanthropists sometimes say that migration is a 'political' issue and best handled by states and international institutions. Yet many foundations are explicitly involved with 'political' issues like equal treatment for women, fighting corruption, encouraging accountability of government and protection of children. Fortunately, some innovative foundations are showing what foundations can do. The Howard G Buffet Foundation has supported a highly effective programme for facilitating safe and legal agricultural labour mobility between the US and Mexico. The MacArthur Foundation has supported the Global Forum on Migration and Development, which is negotiating ways for migration to fight poverty better. The Carnegie Corporation, Kellogg Foundation and Ford Foundation have supported the Migration Policy Institute, which facilitates discussion on policies to make migration work better for development. There are stacks of other examples. These efforts have been catalytic, complementing the political process, which will remain the chief driver of overall migration flows.

More and more philanthropists are experimenting with ways to partner with migrants rather than ignore them, as William MacAskill highlights in his book *Doing Good Better* (see review on p63). Aid agencies cannot afford to ignore migration in a world where remittances dwarf aid flows and nor should philanthropists. Migration, quite simply, is the world's most consistently successful anti-poverty strategy. It's time for foundations around the world to get on board. @

What role for philanthropy in opening up migration?

Alexander Berger

As Michael Clemens argues in this issue (p55), allowing more migration to wealthy countries is one of the most powerful strategies for reducing global poverty. However, immigration policy is a matter over which receiving countries often exercise almost unilateral control, and they have rarely supported larger inflows. What can foundations do to help?



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In the US, while foundations have been supporters of stronger protection for migrants once they arrive, they have rarely supported advocacy to allow more migration. A big part of the problem is that the potential immigrants aren't there to advocate their own interests with either funders or the public.

Another reason foundations have overlooked migration is that it falls between domestically oriented funders and those focused on development abroad. For domestic funders, migrants who haven't arrived yet are obviously outside their scope. For development funders, as Oxfam's Duncan Green has observed, migration is often seen as a failure in sending countries, a problem rather than a solution.

Sometimes, this is made explicit: we support development 'over there' so that 'they' won't show up over here. This is both empirically and morally mistaken: more people, not fewer, are likely to migrate from low-income countries as they become middle-income countries, and we should care about improving the welfare of individuals, not of countries.

The potential gains of remedying the structural lack of funding in this area led the Open Philanthropy Project to prioritize pushing for more open immigration policies. The Project, where I work, is a collaboration between GiveWell, a US non-profit, and Good Ventures, a foundation established by Cari Tuna and her husband Dustin Moskovitz, co-founder of Facebook.

Because there is so little organized support for this aim, a funder looking for advocacy opportunities on this topic faces a lack of obvious grantees. In summer 2015, we worked with the Center for Global Development to convene a number of scholars and advocates to discuss potential strategies and organizations that could help promote global mobility. We posted notes from

the meeting but I wanted to highlight a few ideas that might help other funders:

- ▶ **Immigrants' advocates** Most existing groups focus on protecting the rights of migrants who've already arrived, but promoting the idea that immigrants are a benefit rather than a cost to receiving countries may help create openness to immigration in the long run.
- ▶ **Private refugee sponsorship** Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees programme (see p49) is a good example. Philanthropic support for private resettlement could potentially increase the number of refugees resettled and engage citizens with resettlement in a way that makes them more potent and dedicated advocates.
- ▶ **Ethical job facilitation for potential migrants** Many employers rely on undocumented workers or use labour brokers and recruiters that violate migrants' rights. New exchanges or facilitators committed to ethical recruitment practices could protect migrants and increase the returns to them and their families.
- ▶ **A social innovation and policy 'think and do tank'** Such an institution might pair academic researchers with policy entrepreneurs to promote small changes to immigration policy or practice, such as allowing more visas to a sending country after a natural disaster, or creating a programme to increase take-up of an under-used migration opportunity.
- ▶ **Supporting pro-immigration organizing within other interest groups** Whether this might be helpful, and which groups would matter, would depend on many factors in a given receiving country.

A funder might also start with the idea of supporting domestic, rather than international, migration. There is evidence that domestic migration can lead to better outcomes in some low-income countries, as well as in large high-income countries like the US. Trying to remove barriers to domestic migration might be considerably easier than barriers to international migration, though of course with significantly smaller benefits.

The Open Philanthropy Project is still exploring how best to prioritize our own funding in this space, so I welcome any guidance readers might have to offer. I would also be curious to hear from other funders who are looking for opportunities to allow more immigration to reduce global poverty. @

Diaspora philanthropy: turning migrants into philanthropists

McBride Nkhalamba

As the International Federation of the Red Cross notes, 'migration is certainly not a recent phenomenon . . . on the contrary, it has been part of human history since its very beginning. People have migrated from one continent to the other, from country to country or internally, inside the same country.' It is arguably the single most pertinent factor in creating diversity and advancing civilization. I want to argue that one by-product of the process – diaspora philanthropy – is an important feature of development and has potential economic benefits not only to host countries but also to migrants' countries of origin.



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The economic case for migration has been frequently made. The Center for Citizen Participation in the African Union (CCP-AU) argues that 'just as removing barriers to the free movement of goods enhances trade and economic integration, removing barriers to the free movement of people enhances deeper levels of socio-economic cohesion and integration amongst nations and regions'.¹

The Commission on Growth and Development (2010) estimates that a complete liberalization of labour would result in a doubling of current GDP (a gain of \$65 trillion).

Diaspora philanthropy and development

Apart from the gains made by migrant-receiving countries, remittances are an increasingly important part of development funding. Migrant labour is a large source of cross-border monetary transfers in the African Union, while remittances are critical for the development of families and communities in the sending countries (Africa had 19 million of the estimated

global population of 232 million migrants in 2013). In 2012 the UN Economic Commission for Africa noted that remittance inflows in Africa had quadrupled between 1990 and 2010 to nearly US\$ 40 billion, equivalent to 2.6 per cent of continental GDP in 2009. Similarly, one study of Filipino hometown associations in Canada² calls

diaspora philanthropy a 'migrant-led initiative', an underappreciated but emerging opportunity to convert private wealth to developmental capital which can be used in the country of origin. The case for migrants as future diaspora philanthropists is strong.

The role of indigenous philanthropy

But before migrants can become philanthropists, they need to be settled and in a position to give to their countries of origin. This is where philanthropy in the host country comes in. Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR) notes that 'the successful integration of immigrants in the early twentieth century was shaped significantly by US philanthropy', possibly because some of the major pioneer philanthropists were themselves immigrants. GCIR cites the example of Andrew Carnegie, a Scottish immigrant, who went on to found nearly 1,700 public libraries.

GCIR has also developed an Immigrant Integration Framework, which is among the key philanthropic efforts to support immigrants. This suggests that:

'... foundations can consider a range of grantmaking strategies depending on their funding approaches, issue priorities, geographic focus, and goals. By incorporating immigrants into their grantmaking priorities, they can draw upon myriad strategies for community building and social change that philanthropy has long supported. These strategies include but are not limited to: direct services, capacity building, community outreach and education, leadership development, organizing, advocacy, legal assistance, research, policy analysis, communications, media, and litigation.'

In short, migration is one of the most effective tools for reducing global poverty. To take advantage of the opportunity it offers, migrants need legal status, protection of their rights and the opportunity to prosper. Philanthropists must boldly support this cause. @

¹ E Munyaki (2013) *Continental Report: Freedom of movement of people study*. CCP-AU, South Africa.

² J Silva (2006) 'Engaging Diaspora Communities in Development: An investigation of Filipino hometown associations in Canada', unpublished MA thesis. Burnaby, CA: Simon Fraser University.

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Syrian exodus: from refugees to diaspora

Bassma Kodmani

When I left Syria at the age of ten, I did not realize that I was part of a family of Syrian refugees. It was my father who faced 'political problems' in Syria as we used to say. Every respectable family had some member who had political problems. My father was jailed then fired from his work. It was clear that we had no future in Syria, so we left. At that time, many political refugees like us left with their families but there was no massive movement, no open crisis that the world could not ignore, as is the case today. When the first wave of refugees erupted on to European territory, my personal history seemed to be repeating itself. I identified with the young men and women who were arriving in France, Germany or Hungary, seeking a future for themselves and for their children.



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Since 2011, the war has pushed more than half of the Syrian population out of their homes and millions have crossed the borders and taken refuge outside the country.

A hidden society becomes visible

For the last half century, Syrian society has remained largely opaque to the outside world. Foreign tourists who have visited the country (tourism became possible in the late 1980s) were struck by the hospitality of their Syrian hosts, which contrasted with the image prevalent outside of a rough and unfriendly country. Syrians had no voice in the media; they were absent from the arts and culture scene; few or no Syrian scholars were allowed to interact with the intellectual communities of the region nor could they contribute to international debates without risk. The image of modern Syria was monopolized by the presidential couple, skilfully built by world-class public relations firms.

The whole world discovered the real Syria when peaceful demonstrators took to the streets and were brutally repressed. It became known that this country was ruled by a leader who was ready to kill and preferred to see his people leave the country than relinquish power himself. The refugees piled up in terrible conditions in neighbouring countries, particularly in Jordan and Lebanon, whose infrastructures were literally collapsing under the burden. Four years later, the human tragedy reached Europe, from the sea where boat

people arrived or drowned, and by land, crossing the whole continent.

Refugees looking for their own hope and independence

Today, the refugees are in the hundreds of thousands, masses of people seen as all alike because their needs are the same: shelter, food, healthcare and education. Hope is not considered part of those needs. This refugees must look for on their own, and Syrians do in a variety of ways.

International humanitarian organizations have a limited mandate and are overwhelmed with ever-swelling waves of new refugees. But Syrians, wherever they are, convey the same message. They don't wish to remain dependent on aid. Whether inside or outside Syria, very early on in the conflict their attitude was never to sit and wait for help but rather to find ways to overcome their tragic condition. Philanthropy can build on these positive dynamics by listening to what the Syrian communities suggest in order to offer the relevant responses. The best ideas have almost always emerged from inside those communities. Philanthropy should therefore aim to support those ideas, which often represent a small investment with high returns.

Syrians have never relied on the government to help them earn a living or develop a business. In fact they are used to protecting themselves from regime scrutiny, keeping small in order to escape the focus of a rogue regime. Most importantly, they didn't talk politics as they knew it could only bring trouble.

This attitude is what we see among Syrian refugees wherever they are today. What happened and why appears to be irrelevant to them; they don't have the luxury to lament, to blame anyone or to show anger. They are relieved to arrive in any functioning society and to find safety. What matters to them is what they can do with their lives here and now.

In every European country where they have found refuge, Syrians are eager to find work and earn their living. Their questions are similar: how long will it take me to learn the language? Will I be able to enrol in a university to complete my degree? Can I find work with my professional experience as a nurse, as a carpenter, as an IT expert?

Many of them had tried to settle in neighbouring countries and escape their status as refugees. This has not been possible for many in Jordan or Lebanon, where they continue to live either in extreme poverty

or in refugee camps where they feel imprisoned. In Egypt and Turkey, however, the size of the economies offers better prospects.

Syrians in Egypt...

In Egypt, some 150,000 Syrians have immersed themselves in the human ocean of the Cairene megapolopolis. Many joined the already huge population of beggars and street children. Young girls often pay the price of the vulnerability of their families as they are pushed into early marriage or prostitution. But those who had some savings did not waste time. Within less than a year, some had set up factories and others had opened small shops, food stalls or tiny workshops. An Egyptian civil servant spoke of the Syrians with bewilderment: 'we Egyptians complain constantly about unemployment as a hopeless problem but these Syrians are proving to us every day that there are plenty of work opportunities in our economy.' Where they clustered in some of the new towns in the suburbs of Cairo, Syrians have introduced their own cuisine and are leaving their footprints everywhere. Those who have no resources are finding jobs because they have developed a reputation as hard workers, though their pay is miserable. They navigate legal constraints and lie low when restrictions are toughened.

Exile, despite all its hardships, has brought with it the freedom for Syrians to be who they want and say what they want.

Those who have no resources are finding jobs because they have developed a reputation as hard workers, though their pay is miserable.

... and in Turkey

It is in Turkey that Syrians are proving to be most industrious. Despite the language barrier and increasing legal constraints on their right to work, Syrians have woven themselves into the economy. One out of four foreign businesses is Syrian and one out of 40 newly registered companies has a Syrian partner. Syrian refugees have created an informal economy of small businesses and an informal economic zone across the border with Syria, reminiscent of the Chinese of Hong Kong. They fled China, built their wealth, and came back to invest in their home regions in mainland China at the end of the 20th century, thus contributing to the rapid development of the Chinese economy.

Syrians are also taking up residence intellectually and culturally in the cities of Turkey. Several research groups and think-tanks, and dozens of media outfits, cafés and bookshops, are adding new colour to the cosmopolitan society of Istanbul. No more invisible, no more silent, Syrian society has projected itself outside its borders. Artists, film-makers, writers are exhibited and prized and their books translated. Fifteen thousand doctors have joined the medical communities in all the host countries.

Becoming a diaspora

In less than five years, a growing number of Syrian refugees are showing features of what sociologically and historically can be described as a diaspora – the transformation from a helpless community into a diverse set of individuals who succeed in becoming self-sustaining, like the Jewish, Palestinian or Lebanese diasporas before them.

Exile, despite all its hardships, has brought with it the freedom for Syrians to be who they want and say what they want. They hope they can benefit from their host countries but they aspire to become an asset rather than a burden. A majority say they would like to go back to Syria when the conflict is over, but in the meantime they want to live this chunk of their life, however short or long, in dignity.

Everything must be done to avoid damaging this state of mind and creating communities of dependants on aid. Philanthropy, if it is attuned to the evolution of these communities and hears their aspirations, is potentially the best enabler for Syrians to rebuild an alternative future for themselves. @

Bassma Kodmani
(left) aged six or seven
with her sister Hala,
now a journalist.

