

Refugee Livelihoods Network (RLN) May 2006

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Final Issue

Hereby, you receive the last issue of UNHCR's Refugee Livelihoods Newsletter; as earlier announced. The newsletter will close down due to internal changes within UNHCR's evaluation function, no interest for a take-over from another institute, limited input from subscribers, and because the need to mainstream livelihoods into academic and policy-work has by now been acknowledged. The Livelihoods Project was started in 2003, and will come to a completion with this newsletter and a special issue of the Refugee Survey Quarterly. This RLN focuses on the links between food security and the livelihoods of the displaced and war affected; livelihoods and migration; and remittances.

The RSQ special issue sheds light on the ways internally displaced, regional refugees, returnees and resettled refugees, aim to rebuild their livelihoods after flight; with or without international assistance. Excellent case study material from all over the world, analysed and written down by practitioners, academics, refugees and locals, illustrates how many refugees manage to become self-reliant; despite the obstacles they face. By analysing continuity and transformations in the livelihoods of those who became refugees, the journal aims to contribute to current debates on what approaches to refugee assistance can guarantee sustainable livelihoods to refugees.

On IDP livelihoods, Karen Jacobsen et al. discuss the impact of a microcredit program in camps for the displaced in Northern Uganda; Richard Hill et al. discuss case studies from Colombia and Sudan on livelihoods and personal security; while Uddipana Goswami presents a critical study of the lack of responsibility towards the livelihoods of the displaced in Western Assam. Regional refugee livelihoods are discussed in an article by Lacey Gale on gendered livelihoods and transnational mobility among Sierra Leoneans; Sarah Dryden-Peterson's work on education of Congolese refugees in Uganda; and Elizabeth Campbell et al.'s piece on Congolese local integration options in Nairobi. Elca Stigter then presents an interesting analysis of Afghan 'sustainable return' in light of regional migratory strategies and the Convention Plus. Finally, the livelihoods of resettled refugees are reflected on by Alex Cunliffe and Darius Bahiraey, who study employment opportunities of refugees and asylumseekers in Plymouth; and Don McMaster, who analyses the effect of temporary protection visa on refugee livelihoods in Australia.

For those interested, this RSQ 25(2) issue will be available from mid-June and can be ordered through OUP (see link below). Finally, as the RLN moderator from October 2004, I have greatly enjoyed researching and putting together relevant material for the newsletters and hope subscribers likewise have found the newsletter of use. For those of you who would wish to contact me personally at any point, my new e-mail address is Cindy@PRIO.NO. I will start working as a senior migration researcher for the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, after summer. Any urgent questions related to the livelihoods project can be addressed to Jeff Crisp at CRISP@unhcr.org. I wish you all the best.

[Click here for information on the RSQ special issue on Refugee Livelihoods](#)

Key publications and reports:

An alternative approach to food aid from the Sudan conflict

In this FAO document, Sara Pantuliano argues that policymakers

are increasingly recognising conflict and displacement as the major causes of food insecurity and famine. Humanitarian responses in Sudan have usually prioritised immediate food aid, shelter and healthcare. The Nuba Mountains Programme Addressing Conflict Transformation (NMPACT) food programme described in the report takes a longer-term approach, addressing the root causes of the crisis. NMPACT concentrated on supporting farmers to develop sustainable agriculture and removing market constraints, alongside conflict transformation and efforts to build peace. The programme emphasised coordination across humanitarian agencies and promoted a set of principles that work with local people, to encourage collective decision-making and advocacy, including: development interventions being part of a single, integrated, conflict transformation programme; interventions creating a situation that enables a peace process led by Nuba people, reinforced through the participation of national representatives; interventions building self-reliance and local economic opportunities, as well as ensuring protection of human rights and livelihoods. The aim was to integrate food aid within a political framework and use humanitarian assistance to contribute to conflict resolution, while also addressing immediate needs.

[The full document can be accessed here:](#)

How does conflict affect food security in Ethiopia and Eritrea?

During the past 40 years, Ethiopia and Eritrea have experienced long periods of famine and food insecurity. Many researchers identify different environmental, social or economic explanations for this. However, the contribution of the political sphere, especially war and conflict, should not be ignored. Though treated as separate issues by the two governments and aid agencies, the war and the food crisis were linked, reflecting a complex web of longer-term interactions between food insecurity and endemic conflict. Philip White argues this by illustrating how both governments diverted material, financial and human resources away from services that support food security and towards the war effort, and have continued to do so. Furthermore, many people displaced from rural conflict zones were farmers, meaning crops were left untended and unharvested. Animals and other household assets were left behind. Also, the border closure between the two countries halted flows of Ethiopian grain into Eritrea and of cash remittances from Ethiopians working in Eritrea, increasing food insecurity on both sides. Finally, conflict prevented people from producing, acquiring, trading and transferring food in the ways they would during non-conflict times.

[More information can be found at:](#)

Afghan returnees from NWFP, Pakistan, to Nangarhar Province

This study by Gulbadan Habibi and Pamela Hunte examines the livelihood strategies of returned refugees who left Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, during the conflict years and settled as refugees in nearby Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), Pakistan, mostly in or near the city of Peshawar. They left Afghanistan as family units at different stages following the Soviet invasion in 1979, lived as refugees in Pakistan in both camp and city, and have returned to their home province in recent years – households largely intact. In both Pakistan and on return, they have been surrounded by relatives and kinspeople who have provided much social support. Their transnational networks have never been extensive, only a minority have

relatives still in Pakistan, and just a few receive intermittent remittances from abroad. The returnees interviewed are generally positive about having returned to their homeland and have reintegrated well, with the economic situation of the majority better now than it was in Pakistan. However, the livelihoods of the poorer returnees are precarious, and the sustainability of their reintegration is questionable. Lack of proper housing is a primary concern, along with lack of suitable employment opportunities. Only a few expressed interest in returning to nearby Pakistan, but this situation could change with the deterioration of their current circumstances.

[Click here to access this AREU report](#)

The Path of Somali Refugees into Exile: A Comparative Analysis of Secondary Movements and Policy Responses

A new study on the movements of Somali refugees carried out by Joëlle Moret, Simone Baglioni and Denise Efionayi-Mäder of the Swiss Forum for Migration, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), highlights the need for a real sharing of responsibility within the international community. Effective, realistic solutions will have to be found, not least in the countries hosting the largest numbers of refugees. The study shows that humanitarian policies have so far failed to provide a satisfactory solution for refugees who have been kept in waiting for more than fifteen years. This is the main reason that pushes these refugees to take matters into their own hands and leave their first country of refuge, more often than not illegally, heading for a country that offers better opportunities. Countries in the North view this kind of movement by refugees, known as secondary movements, with some concern.

[This SFM report can be accessed here](#)

Remittances in Conflict and Crises: How Remittances Sustain Livelihoods in War, Crises and Transitions to Peace

This Policy Paper by Patricia Weiss Fagan & Micah Bump from the Security-Development Nexus Program provides a review of research on remittances in relation to conflict and post-conflict situations. It reinforces three related premises: First, while migration is an obvious consequence of conflict, migrant remittances may help many to avoid further forced displacement. Second, forced migration and immigrant flows tend to merge. Both are important generators of remittances. Third, remedies enacted to address the problem of remittances being used to support conflict and crime should be refined. Furthermore, the paper highlights that researchers on remittances are beginning to call attention to how people survive in countries beset by conflict or facing a lack of government structures. Cases studies in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Somalia exemplify survival strategies based on remittances, the differing remittance practices of refugee diasporas, and the challenges related to transferring funds to crisis countries. Finally, a number of priorities for further research are indicated.

[Click here to read this paper on remittances](#)

Migrant remittances in the context of crisis in Somali society. A case study of Hargeisa

This HPG paper by Anna Lindley integrates available information on remittances, reviewing the role of migration and remittances in Somali society historically and since the collapse of Somalia in 1991, and assessing the scale of, and the significance given in the literature to, remittance flows. The second part is a case study of Hargeisa, establishing the demographic characteristics and socio-economic situation of people receiving remittances, examining remittance patterns, relationships and geography, and exploring the role of remittances in the lives of recipients and the uses to which this money is put. Lastly, evidence on the role of remittances among people coping with crises is explored.

[Click here to access Anna Lindley's paper](#)

Upcoming Events

Empowering Somali Communities: Practice and Research

This conference will be held on July the 7th 2006, 9.30-16.30, at the University of Sheffield, UK. It is jointly hosted by EMAS (Sheffield City Council) and the ESRC research project 'Post-Conflict Identities: Practices and Affiliations of Somali Refugee Children' (Universities of Sheffield and Leeds). The conference seeks to discuss good practice and update on current research on Somali communities in Britain. The day conference combines talks given by invited key note speakers and workshops where delegates get the chance to interactively discuss their experience and ideas with a workshop facilitator. For further information you can contact one of the organisers, Katrine Bang Nielsen, at K.Nielsen@sheffield.ac.uk.

[For further information on the day, please click here](#)

The Refugee Livelihoods Network is an initiative of UNHCR's Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit. (EPAU) The views expressed by contributors to the Network and in documents electronically linked to the Network are not those of UNHCR. For issues other than refugee livelihoods, EPAU can be contacted by e-mail at hqep00@unhcr.org