

Forum: Youth Assembly

Issue of: Food Security in Refugee Camps

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INTRODUCTION

The world has not witnessed such great numbers of refugees since World War II. 70.8 million individuals have been forcibly displaced so far. To visualize these numbers, it is as if the entire population of the United Kingdom were to flee their homes. Half of those 70.8 million are children and women, 55% of those refugees originate from either Syria, South Sudan, or Afghanistan. These overwhelming numbers of people settle in so-called refugee camps. In those, they are supplied with accommodation, clothing and food by specialized organizations. However, as the numbers rise, shortages in those utterly essential supplies become an ever-occurring phenomenon, which affects those individuals both mentally and physically. It is, therefore, vital that the refugees' basic humanitarian needs are covered. An average adult needs at least 2.000 kcal daily for physical performance, whereas prepubescent children need 1,500. Especially for developing organisms, enough energy provided by food is vital. 10-12% of the total energy the inhabitants of the camps consume must be protein, 17% of the diet must consist of fat and micronutrients must also be provided, according to the UNHCR. It is also favorable, that the food served is already familiar to the organisms of the consumers, so that proper metabolism takes place. Food commodities must always remain culturally acceptable to the beliefs of the migrants. By improving livelihood and food security the vicious cycle of poverty, weak nutritional status, risk of disease and risky coping strategies, such as children as young as five years old dropping out of school to work. The issue, however, does not find its roots in the refugee camps themselves, but in the refugees' country of origin.

DEFINITION OF KEY-TERMS

Refugee

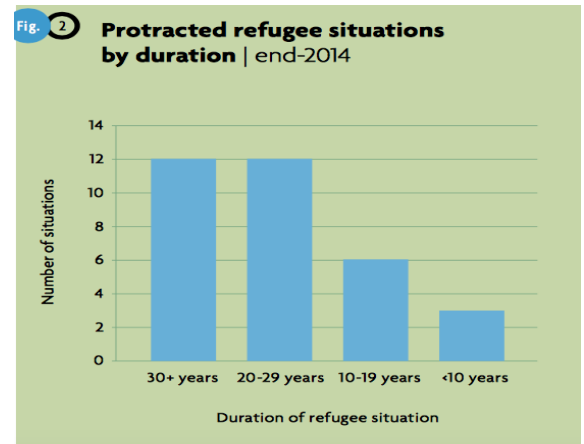
A refugee is considered a person, who has fled from their country of origin due to circumstances that have disturbed his/her public well-being (e.g. feared prosecution, general violence, etc.) and seeks international protection and security in other states.

Immigrant

A person who willingly changes their place of residence, independently from their legal situation and/or reason for migration.

Refugee Camp

A campsite created to provide temporary and emergency accommodation for people who have been forced to flee their home countries. Fifty-nine such camps are currently recognized by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees on the Near East (UNRWA).



The average duration of the 33 protracted refugee situations,

Food Distribution Points

A process in which groups of people are supplied with food. Specialised organizations exist to prevent total collapses in food distribution, assist in developing food systems in underdeveloped areas, and respond to food distribution crises both nationally and internationally.

A protracted refugee situation

The occurrence, in which at least 25.000 refugees of the same nationality have been in deportation or exile for the minimum time frame of 5 consecutive years. The UNHCR estimates that 78% of all refugees are experiencing such protracted refugee situations.

Host Country

A country which, in this case, holds a number of refugees on its ground.

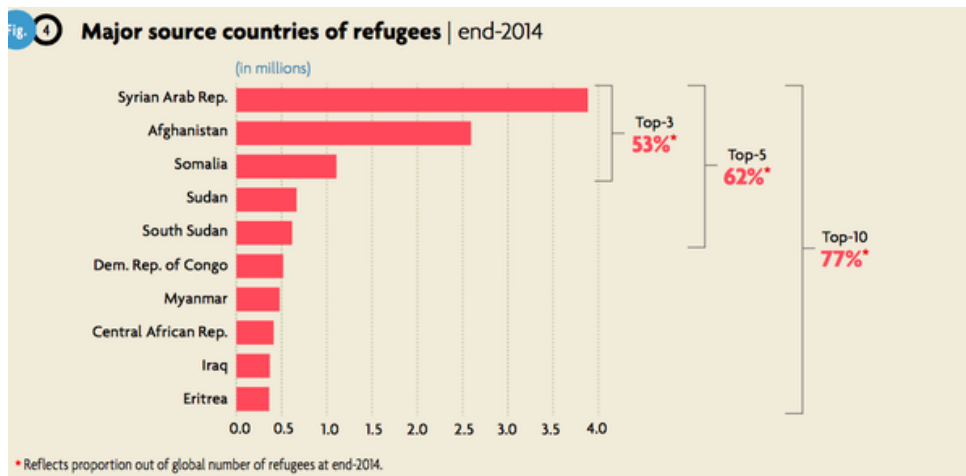
Malnutrition

A physical state in which the individual has received minimal amount of food over a long period of time. Malnutrition results in vitamin deficiency, as well as other medical complications.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As already mentioned, there are 70.8 million internally displaced persons, half of which are women and children, and more than half of which have emigrated from Syria, South Sudan, and Afghanistan. These refugees are accommodated in camps, in which humanitarian assistance is vital. The inhabitants are supplied with nourishment in Food Distribution Points. The World Food Program (WFP) is recognized as the most critical food source in said campsites internationally. Recently, many organizations, as such have faced problems with sufficient funding, which not only affects the ensuring of health, shelter, meals, but also water. The WFP, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) raised the alarm over the lack of funding towards food supplies in June 2015. In just November of 2016, stocks were depleted only to cover the essential products of vegetable oil, wheat flour and rice, which quickly ran out. WFP representative, Romain Sirois stated: 'If new funding is not made available in the following months, the WFP would have no other choice but to reduce food rations.'

The effects of which would be that the nutritional and health status of all refugees, including children's as young as infants, would be at stake.'



53% of all refugees in 2014 came from Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia.

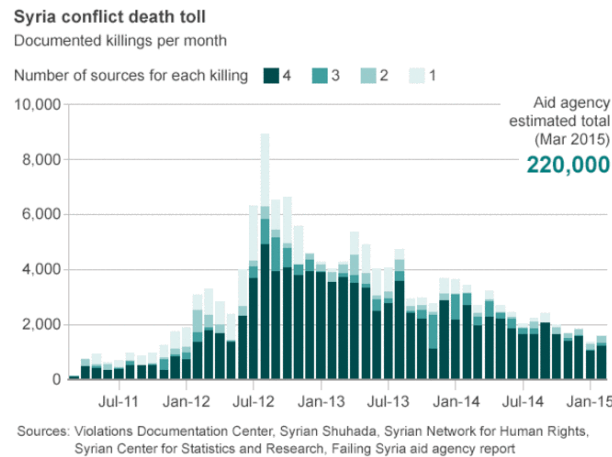
The Syrian Crisis

The Crisis in Syria is known to be the world's largest refugee population under the United Nations' mandate. Over half of the country's pre-war population — around 12 million people — have been either killed or forced to flee their homes. Every year of the conflict has seen exponential growth in refugees. In July 2012, there were 100,000 refugees, whereas one year later, there were 1.5 million. The 1.5 million tripled by the end of 2015; resulting in roughly 4.5 million. In accordance with the U.N., \$3.29 billion was required to meet the urgent needs of the most vulnerable Syrians in 2019. Unfortunately, only about half of that has been received. They often decide to flee after witnessing neighborhood attacks or murders of family members and acquaintances. According to the U.N., almost half of all Syrian refugees — roughly 2.7 million — are minors and should be attending school. Most, however, have been out of school for months, if not years.

When and how the Syrian crisis began

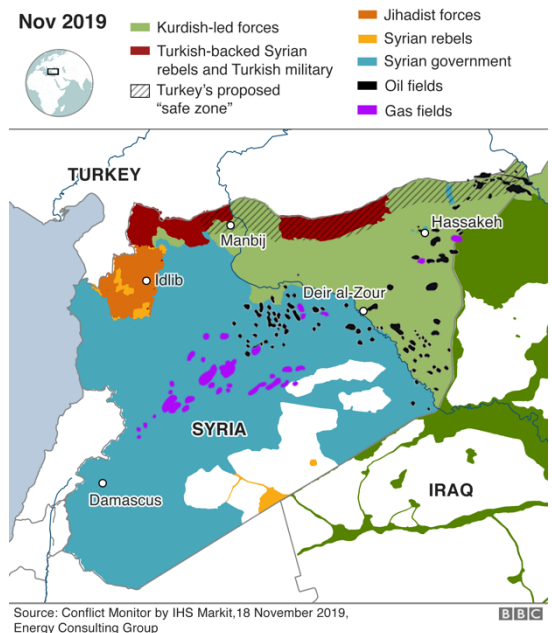
Anti-government demonstrations first took place in March of 2011, as part of the Arab Spring and were strongly influenced by uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain and Yemen. The peaceful protests, however, quickly escalated after the government's violent responses, and armed opposition groups began using violence. Divisions between secular and religious fighters, and between ethnic groups, continue to complicate the politics of the conflict to this day. In August of the year 2013, rockets which were filled with the nerve gas Sarin landed in the suburbs of the town Damascus, resulting in many deaths. The government was blamed; however the state denied accountability and held rebel forces responsible instead. By June 2013, the UN reported that 90,000 civilians had been killed in the duration of the conflict. By August 2015, the numbers had risen to an upsetting 250,000, according to both activists and the UN. There have nevertheless been peace efforts. Neither of the parties being able to declare official defeat to the other, the international community has concluded that the only way of solving the conflict in Syria would be by a political solution. Therefore, the UN Security Council decided upon the implementation of the '2012 Geneva Communique', a declaration

which visualizes a transitional administrative body with full lawmaking control as long as there reigns mutual consensus. Geneva II broke down after solemnly two rounds in early 2014, as Lakhdar Brahimi – UN special envoy – accused the Syrian government of refusal to discuss opposition demands.



Current state

A notable rise in violence in Idlib and western Aleppo provinces has caused close to a million Syrians to flee, according to the United Nations. Nearly 180,000 families, 195,000 women, and more than 560,000 children are headed towards the Turkish border, where there are often camps, however, offering no shelter, and minimum food or clean water. Many international NGOs and their international staff have been forced to depart the area or halt operations because of the deteriorating situation. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic has evidence that war crimes have been committed by all parties involved in the conflict. Included are murder, torture, rape and enforced disappearances. There have also been accusations of other human rights violations, such as preventing access to food, water and health utilities.



The Afghan crisis

Geological issues --- such as droughts ---, as well as political instability, economic disarray and conflict that has lasted up to numerous decades, make Afghanistan count as one of the world's poorest and erratic nations. It has been documented that nearly 2.7 million people have been forced to leave the country to Iran, Pakistan or Europe. An average of 1,100 people a day — mostly women and children — were forcibly displaced by violence in 2017, as estimated by the United Nations. Although it must be taken into account that many are not even listed, such numbers may be a lot higher. At present times, over half of the people forced to flee due to conflict in Afghanistan have been displaced at least twice, in comparison to just 7 per cent five years ago.

The origin of the conflict

The current conflict effectively began in the late 1970s, when one political group overthrew another. Ever since, different political groups have tried to claim power, with different rates of success. The country has witnessed not only the rise and fall of communism, but also a strict interpretation of Islam that did not tolerate women leaving their homes. Terrorist groups have also used the country to recruit and operate in, which contributed to the start of the current war in Afghanistan, which has been recorded as the longest war in US history, recently surpassing the Vietnam war.

Current state

Afghanistan is currently in its eighteenth year of war with the United States and has been a part of the conflict for even longer. Suicide attacks, airstrikes and other threats of violence continue to impose great risk on people's lives, security and well-being. The humanitarian situation remains, therefore, urgent. About two-thirds of Afghans live in areas directly affected by the aforementioned conflict. The geological factor also plays a great role in the hardships Afghanistan is going through. Drought has also plagued the country for several years. 3.9 million people in rural parts of the country have urgent food needs as they are financially dependent on agriculture.

The Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh

The Rohingya refugee crisis has been labelled as one of the fastest growing to occur. The Rohingya are a stateless Muslim minority, consisting of 1.3 million people. They are formerly listed as inhabitants of Myanmar (northern Rakhine State), where citizens often look down upon them. Because of the oppression they are facing in Myanmar, the Rohingya have forcibly fled to Bangladesh. There, camps in the city of Cox's Bazar have been set up, the biggest of these Kutupalong and Nayapara, in which an estimate of 919.000 have found shelter. These filled up quickly, as the number of Rohingya refugees rose after 1992, and the refugees had to set up smaller, more clipboard camps in nearby areas. There are roughly 30 unregistered camps.

Main Issues

Apart from overcrowded camps, the refugees in Bangladesh battle against deplorable living conditions. Women and young girls are in constant risk, and children as young as six months to five years have been deeply traumatized by their harsh experiences. The geological factor is also troubling the refugees in Bangladesh, as the quickly approaching Monsoon Season, which usually lasts from June to October, often wipes out the land and contaminates the much-needed water throughout all areas it affects. Lack of clean water and malnourishment is possibly the most significant obstacle the Rohingyas face.

Causes of the Rohingya migration crisis

After years, if not decades of severe violence, discrimination and general unequal treatment, uprisings on the part of the Rohingya have launched. It must be noted that Rohingyas have not willingly fled. Numerous of their villages and neighborhoods have been deliberately set on fire in the Rakhine state, forcing the Rohingya population to leave their homes along with their possessions. The main reason behind the severe social discrimination the Rohingya tribe faces is the religious and ethnic differences there are between them and the local citizens of Myanmar. Throughout World War II, the Muslims were on the side of Britain, whereas Buddhists favored the Japanese government. In the year 1948, after the war, Myanmar was no longer ruled by Britain. The Muslim community protested in order to gain equality and autonomy, which however resulted in negative prejudice against the Rohingyas.

The crisis in South Sudan

Although after nearly eight years of gaining independence, South Sudan is in great need of humanitarian support. The crisis in South Sudan counts as the largest in the African continent. 2.3 million people have been forced to cross into neighboring countries; the majority of them are women and children. There are massive needs for clean water, health care, sanitation, food, shelter, and protection across the country. Not only the numbers of refugees originating from Sudan are shocking, but also the demand for food, even by those not displaced. Ongoing violence still manages to keep people away from their homes, drastic market losses and confound planting detains citizens from Sudan from getting the food they need to survive.

The Somali crisis

In the last three decades over 750.000 Somalis have exiled to neighbouring states such as Kenya, Yemen or Ethiopia, whereas 2,6 million remain internally displaced in Somalia. When civil war broke out in 1990, refugee numbers from Somalia rose quickly. Because of the long time frame, the refugee issue in Somalia has existed, many Somalis have spent most, if not the entirety, of their lifetimes in refugee camps. By the end of the year 2013, the United Nations documented over 970.000 Somali refugees due to political instability. This number is ,fortunately, decreasing, as ,with the help of the UNHCR, 90.000 returned to Somalia and rebuilt their lives. Although Somalia has become more welcoming and safer, life in Somalia is still challenging. Due to dry conditions in the North and East, food insecurity has occurred, whereas flooding in the South and central regions have been caused by abnormal and irregular rainfall.

Food Insecurity

It is concluded that vast numbers of refugees need humanitarian assistance, mainly the provision of food and water. As stated by UNHCR Representative Hamdi Bukhari in November 2016, chronic underfunding has majorly affected food, water, shelter and food supply in all refugee camps worldwide. There has been a need for replacement of the three staple products, namely wheat flour, vegetable oil and rice, along with many other commodities, have needed to be replaced by cheaper

ones. Food rations have also been reduced. In this way, the nutritional status of the refugees is hurt, as they do not receive the necessary vitamins or the amount of food to fulfil their caloric needs. 450,000 migrants in the areas of the Central African Republic, Chad and South Sudan have been deprived of 50% of their supplies. Whereas another 338.000 in Liberia, Burkina Faso and Mozambique have been reduced their rations by 43%. This threatens to worsen already unacceptable levels of severe malnourishment, chronic hunger, anemia and hypothyroidism. In the most tragic cases, there have been reports of deaths caused by starvation, consumption of rotten food, severely injured people and harmful infections, especially in pregnant women due to a shortage of medical supplies.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The UNCHR is an UN-powered organization, which focuses on the protection of not only refugees, but also forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. It was established 1950, after WWII, and has been a member of the United Nations Development Group ever since. The UNHCR is best known for offering assistance in their voluntary repatriation, local integration or even resettlement to a third country.

World Food Program (WFP)

WFP represents the most important source of food in the camps. It provides assistance to 91.4 million people in need in 83 different countries annually. The WFP is a member of the United Nations Development Group. Its goals are achieving zero hunger by the year 2030, battling malnourishment, the protection of livelihoods, and enabling communities to eventually cater for their own nutrition needs by environmental and financial stability but also agricultural production.

World Health Organization (WHO)

Although WHO's current priorities include communicable diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS, Ebola, malaria and tuberculosis; non-communicable diseases such as heart disease and cancer; healthy diet, nutrition, and food security is also one of the main topics of interest. Concerning nutrition, WHO constantly searches for methods to combat both undernutrition and severe metabolic insufficiency as well as obesity, especially in low-income and developing countries. They are also dedicated to raising awareness of various forms of malnutrition.

UN Human Rights Council (OHCHR)

The OHCHR is an intergovernmental association within the confines of the United Nations. It is strictly focused on the protection and promotion of human rights as well as addressing and battling against human rights violations internationally. States and International Agencies can organize public exhibitions and special events at the UN premises in Geneva, Switzerland. These should be instead of cultural nature than political. In 2018, OHCHR involvements in

humanitarian action included missions to Bangladesh to surveil and keep records of the situation of the Rohingya population in Myanmar, as well as establishing numerous Emergency Response Teams.

UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

The UNRWA is mandated by the General Assembly of the UN to provide the Palestine refugees (individuals in Palestinian refugee camps across Syria included) with security. The agency is in cooperation with Syrian authorities. Their common goal is to supply the thousands of refugees in need with so-called quantities of relief (food, water, warm clothes, sleeping bags, etc.)

Singapore

Under the Global Food Security Index, Singapore is a nation with the most food security worldwide. Its core strategies for achieving this are diversion in import sources, accompanied by strategies counterbalancing restricting diversifications, investments abroad, constant industrial development, local production and stockpiling. Singapore also works towards improving local food production, which means demand for Singaporean products is being raised due to high quality. Last but not least, Singapore has established a food security plan in case of an emergency.

Ireland

Ireland is the second-ranked nation with the most secure food sources, according to the Global Food Security Index. Ireland's main sources of income in the sector of nutrition are through trade in dairy, beef and fish to targeted markets internationally, especially in growing Asian economies, but also certain African ones as well. The country's main objective is to grow and take over in existing markets, as well as branch out to new ones with high-value goods.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
1800 (British Colonial period)	Muslim minorities (Rohingya) are brought to Myanmar for labor
1948 (After WWII)	Myanmar gains independence, Muslims protest for equality, however without result
1962	Rohingyas start emigrating to Bangladesh due to being overpowered by militants and a Buddhist majority
1980	The Soviet invasion in Afghanistan causes many to flee to Pakistan
Early 1990s	Another wave (approx.200,000) of Rohingya refugees
1990s	Civil war breaks out in Somalia

1992	Rohingya refugee numbers in Bangladesh rise, they are from now on viewed as unregistered refugees, smaller camps start getting built
2008	Recognition of the Panian refugee camp in Pakistan, houses a majority of Afghan refugees
March 2011	War breaks out in Syria
2011	Famine is officially declared in Somalia
2012	Yida refugee camp (houses 70,331) in South Sudan is established
June and October 2012	Targeted religious violence affects the Rohingya (200 killed, 150,000 left homeless)
2013	Civil war in South Sudan starts humanitarian crisis
2013	First ration reductions in meals in African states
By the end of 2013	An estimate of over 970,000 Somali refugees worldwide
July 2014	Food shortages hit 800,000 individuals in Africa
November 2015	Rohingya are excluded from participating in the first democratic elections in Myanmar by any means
2016	Establishment of the New York Declaration
9 th October, 2016	87,000 Rohingya flee due to armed conflict
November 2016	UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR declare funding insufficiency for refugees' food provision
By 2017	1,100 Afghans daily displaced by violence
August 2017	Beginning of violence outbreaks in Myanmar's northern Rakhine State, 700,000 flee to Bangladesh
2018	Establishment of the Global Compact on Refugees
Between 2014-2019	90,000 return to Somalia

RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Immigrants

This document was created to express the political intention of world leaders to protect human rights, cater towards the lives at stake and share responsibility on the matter. The declaration commits to the protection of the refugees' and immigrants' human rights, an example given, women's and girls' rights, all children being offered education, as well as their participation in solving the issue. Sexual and gender-based violence is another aspect that is being committed to. Host countries will be greatly supported, and global campaigns are created to discourage xenophobia against the migrants. Since the declaration passed in the year 2016, a comprehensive refugee response has

been implemented in all states affected by large numbers of refugees, in addition to seeking permanent housing for all migrants identified by UNHCR as well as expanding decent labor opportunities and education schemes. The global governance of migration is planned on getting strengthened by the embodiment of the International Organization for Migration into the UN system. Last but not least, by closing all funding gaps and innovative financial solutions, the New York declaration works towards the improvement of humanitarian aid delivery.

The Global Compact on Refugees

The Global Compact on Refugees acts as a follow-up to the New York Declaration. It was proposed by the High Commissioner for Refugees to the General Assembly in 2018. The document has been described as an ideal opportunity to strengthen the response to movements of refugees and immigrant crises. It seeks a definition of cooperation between member states to share responsibility and building international standards. Its key objectives include moderating the pressures on host countries, promoting refugees' self-reliance and autonomy, supporting and working towards improving living standards in countries of origin, and branching out access to third-country resolutions and proposals.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

First and foremost, the key to solving the problem is by establishing safe as well as responsible migration. To do that, specific guidelines on both migration and areas of international relation but also the treatment of refugees should be developed and respected at all times by all states. However, it should be underlined, that the vast number of unaccompanied children are most at stake and shall be catered for most.

Immediate action

Moreover, the instant response to great waves of refugees must be strengthened on an international level. In addition to that, member states should collaborate and share the responsibility of hosting and providing the refugees, following the example of the European Union in September of 2019, which proposed relocating up to 160.000 refugees from Greece and Italy throughout Europe. Therefore, an established global compact would also be profitable.

Reintegration into society

Improving reception and reintegration services is a valuable long-term investment for both host and origin countries. Services that help to return migrants find their footing in local communities and obtain better livelihoods, in the long run, hold the potential to reduce repeated illegal and risky methods of migration, while enabling countries of origin to benefit from the skills and assets migrants have acquired from their countries of origin. Not only keeping the immigrants safe but also helping them revert into society by the provision of jobs is what ought to be done. An alternative to accommodate them in host countries would be to support the conditions in the countries of origin towards safety and dignity, a solution most beneficial for the future.

Raising awareness

It is not a rare phenomenon for immigrants in all countries to experience social stigmatization and/or employment discrimination. This occurrence hinders the integration into the community and dooms the individuals to be viewed as outcasts and misfits their entire lifetime. To prevent that from supervening, the most effective combat would be raising awareness by educating the general public through articles, events, festivals, radio/television coverage, as well as other forms of mass media.

Food security

Of course, not only immigrants but all humans must have access to adequate food sources at all times and therefore ensuring food provision is vital to solving the current issue. Harvest methods shall be improved and enforced as well as trade and commerce being used as a source of income.

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