

Reducing Refugee Vulnerability

Olli Session 6



Course Takeaways (so far)

- An unprecedented era of global forced displacement and vulnerable people
- All forced migrants are completely vulnerable, no matter what forces them from their homes: citizenship does not provide rights
- Causes of forced migration are growing and deepening; things will get worse
- Forced migration is nothing new
- But refuge and protection has always been inadequate
- **Refugees are the most vulnerable people in the world**
- They need immediate help to survive outside their home country
- And most live outside of camps—often for decades--, increasing their vulnerability
- Many die seeking refuge
- Countries who have promised asylum are building walls
- Refugees often languish in limbo once they reach safety
- Host country natives are often hostile
- Global conflict --- in particular in Syria—is creating the current crisis

Main Takeaway: Refugees are the most politically, socially, and economically vulnerable people in the world

- All Governments promise citizen protection
 - They are the only political institution which does: citizens have rights
 - “Statelessness” means no protection
 - Governments who persecute and kill their citizens break that promise
 - Citizens must flee
 - The Geneva convention should provide *international* protection
 - But that protection is fragile and short-term
 - citizenship in a safe country is a person’s only real protection
 - This is the heart of the refugee crisis
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- **“Refugees do not change places, they lose their place on earth,”**



Today's menu: reducing vulnerability

- Immediate humanitarian response
 - Health
 - Shelter
 - Food
 - children
- Protracted displacement
 - Uganda, Jordan
- Livelihood, resettlement
- Reducing fear in host populations
 - Language and culture training
 - Evidence of employment effects on native populations
- Conflict mitigation, reconciliation, prevention

The Humanitarian Crisis

- <http://www.dw.com/en/amnesty-decries-precarious-situation-of-refugees-in-greece/a-19194888>



Immediate Response:

- Medical Care
- Shelter
- Food
- Children
- IDPs

INEE



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



Problems of Long-Term Displacement

- 60% of all refugees dispersed outside camps
- They are invisible; difficult to assist
- Many (80%) are there for decades, children are stateless
- Often in countries with weak and fragile governments
 - Who are not able or willing to extend social services



Refugees living in Turkey



Solutions to Protracted Displacement

- Technology is needed to map where people are living
- Need for shift away from aid-centric view of livelihood to support for self-reliance
- Need to shift from immediate humanitarian goals to development
- Need for interventions that are positive for both refugees and for their communities
 - Work permits and freedom of movement
 - Vocational training
 - Education in and outside Refugee camps (Kiron University, Rebootcamp)
 - Grants and loans for income-generating projects

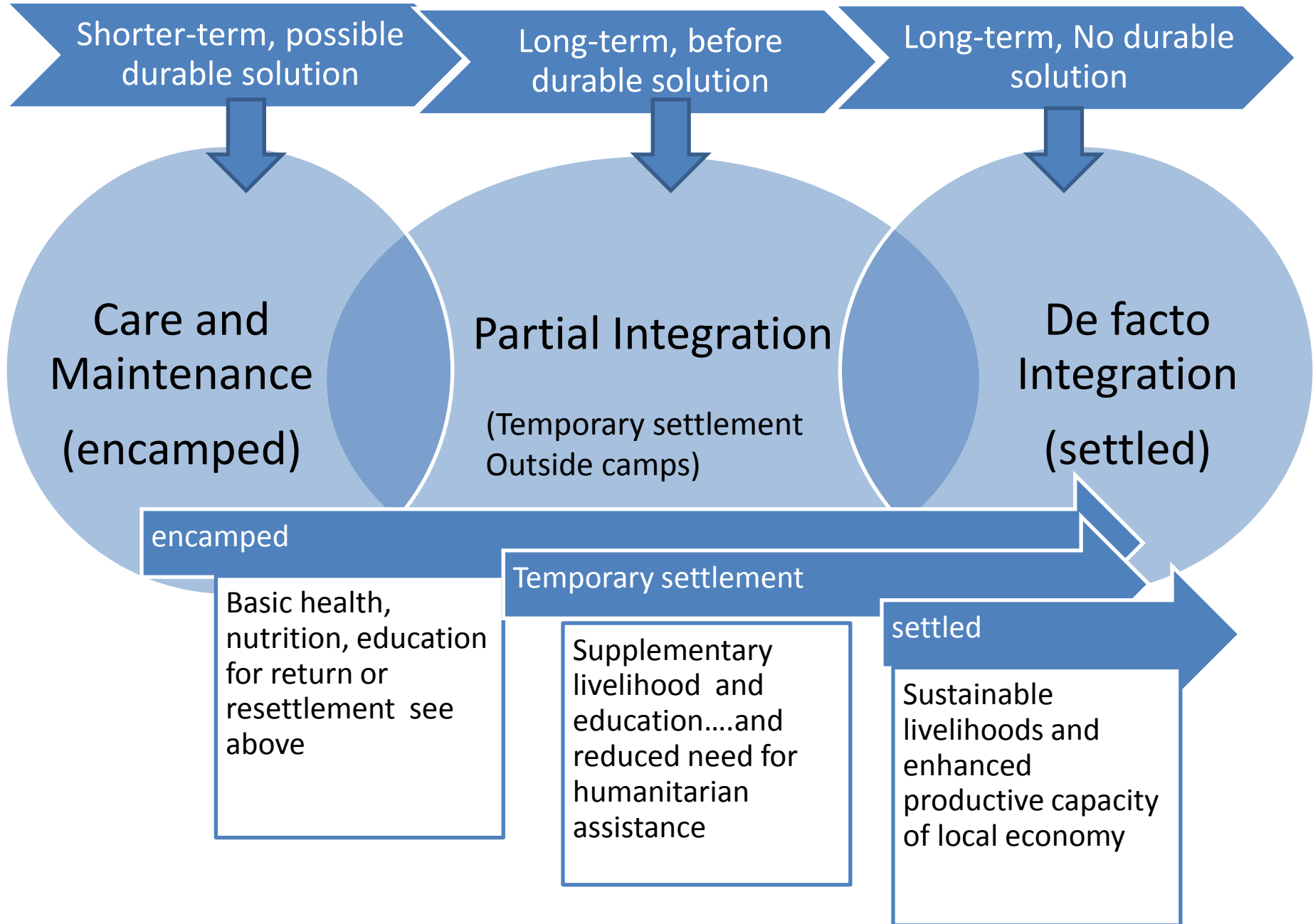
- RebootKamp (RBK)



- Kiron University



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



A real solution: Women's Microenterprise Development



Some mixed and possible solutions....

- Uganda (mixed success)
- Jordan (new pilot industry program)



A far-out idea



REFUGEE CITIES

- refugee settlements should be fundamentally reconceived –
 - as hubs of education, enterprise, and equal rights that can anchor networks of relatives and friends that extend back home and around the world.
- Egyptian billionaire Naguib Sawaris [is currently negotiating](#) with the owners of two Greek islands a plan to resettle hundreds of thousands of refugees and put them to work building homes and infrastructure.
- cities that would be valuable centers of commerce and education for their own people.
- You could see them as special development zones which are actually used as a trigger for an otherwise [impoverished neglected area.](#)”
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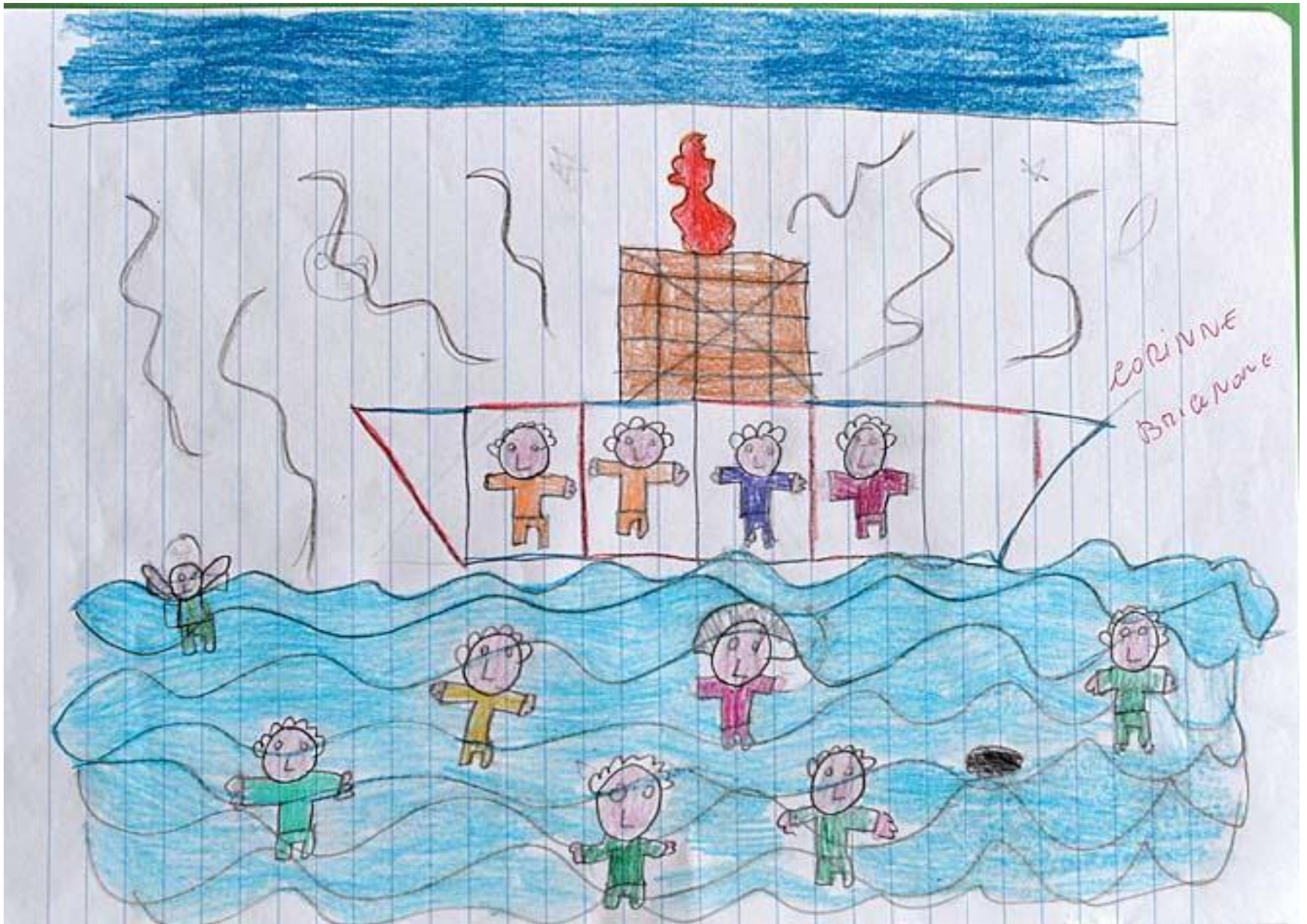
The Perilous Journey: A Catch 22

- Refugees are legal immigrants but not allowed to enter an asylum-granting country without a visa
- There are no visas granted to refugees for refugee status
- They cannot apply for visas outside asylum-granting countries
- Therefore those seeking refuge must find “irregular” ways to enter asylum-granting countries
- They can apply for asylum once they are INSIDE the country
- Therefore, despite walls around asylum-granting countries, refugees continue to find ways to enter
- These ways are dangerous



US-Mexican border





“no one puts their child in a boat unless the water is safer than land”

Prison-like detention



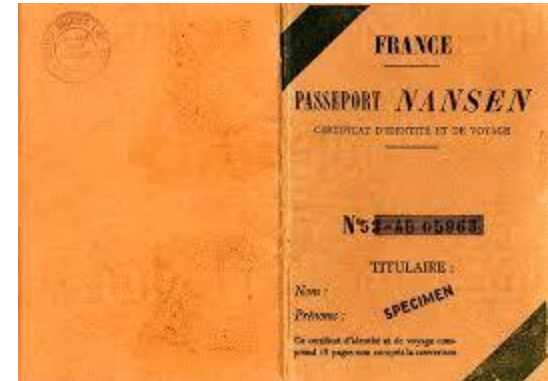
Arguments for Safe routes to sanctuary

- Asylum is a human right
- Building walls only forces refugees to take a more dangerous route
- Refugees crossing borders should be allowed to cross without a visa



Expand the definition of “refugee”and More categories needed for Legal migration

- Family unification
- Education,
- Skill and training visas
- New “Nansen Passports”
- Priority for “distress migrants”
 - A category which should replace the distinction between “legal” refugee and “forced migrant”



But short of that: Groups who speak out for Refugee Rights as they now exist



- Speak out for refugee rights: Amnesty International, IRC, SPLC, IJRC
- Advocate for Refugee visas

IIBA



SPLC
Southern Poverty
Law Center



Resettlement and Integration: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

- The Good
 - The fiscal impact is positive
 - Cities usually remain welcoming
 - Millions of people willing to help refugees, especially in meeting basic needs
 - European countries have excellent resettlement programs
- The Bad
 - Housing is still a challenge
 - Waiting for the asylum process: refugees are idle
 - Refugees may be unwilling to integrate
- The Ugly
 - Population Fears in host countries
 - If refugees do not integrate and remain in the asylum process too long, the fiscal impact will be negative
 - The Rise of Right Wing xenophobic parties

Resettlement and Integration: What is needed

- Help with family reunification
- Help with citizenship applications
- Help with housing
- Language education
- Development of “cultural capital” –cultural awareness
- Vocational Education
- Higher education

Some groups who are helping

- Some Groups who help
 - Church World Service (CWS)
 - Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC)
 - Episcopal Migration Ministries
 - Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS)
 - **International Rescue Committee (IRC)**
US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) - **the International Institute(s)** are local affiliates
 - **Refugee Transitions**
 - Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS)
 - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)
 - World Relief Corporation
 - East Bay Sanctuary Covenant
 - American Friends Service Committee
 - Project Hope



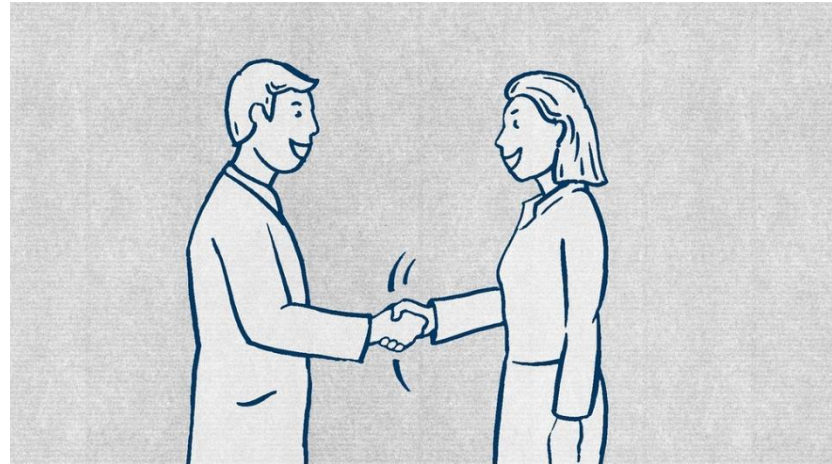
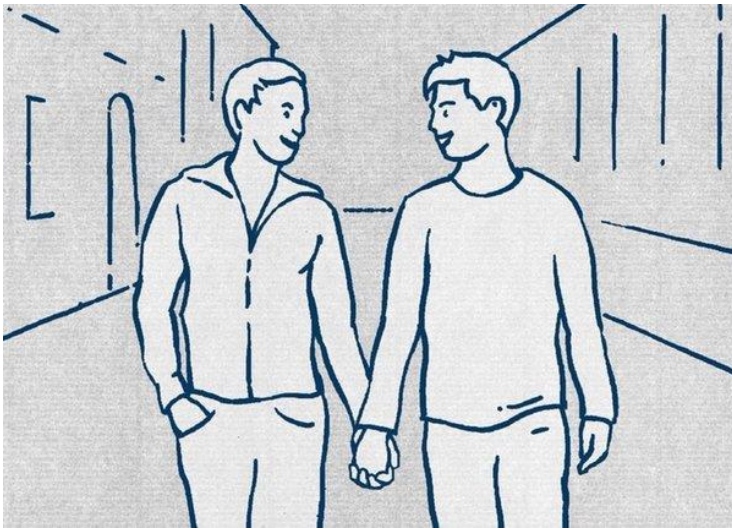
Shelter for refugees in an airplane hangar in Tempelhof



Solutions: Canada's private sponsorship of refugees



Awkward attempt to raise cultural awareness (Germany)



Livelihood

- Downsides
 - Immigrants integrate slowly into the workforce
 - Downside for immigrants, they earn less than natives
 - Downside for natives, they earn less and threaten native jobs (IMF says this impact is small)
- The Upsides
 - Europe needs an influx of labor
 - Adult Syrians are generally well educated
 - Immigrants sustain social welfare benefits

Livelihood solutions

- Structural solutions necessary
 - Drop obligation to hire natives first?
 - Grant exceptions from minimum wage?
 - Or wage subsidies to employers?
 - Tailored introductory work programs
 - Prevent “inactivity traps”
 - Lower barriers to entrepreneurship

- Work

- Entrepreneurs without boundaries

<http://www.slideshare.net/PhilippeDrouillon/entrepreneurs-without-boundaries-hack-with-refugeescbrussels-24jan2016/1>

- Refugees revive a rust belt town

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2VTM7_Fvs0



Hack
Your
Future

Technology

- Technology Innovation for Innovative solutions to refugee problems
 - Hakathons <http://techfugees.com/>
 - Networking “Migration Hub Network”
<http://www.startupaid.io/#!migration-hub/ncnm>
- Apps to help refugees
 - General information <http://www.w2eu.info/>
 - Medical
 - To help find family <https://refunite.org/>
 - To find housing www.refugeehero.com
 - Find lost family and friends <http://lostrefugees.com/>
- Apps for Donors
 - UNHCR “Share the meal” <https://sharethemeal.org/en/index.html>
 - Smart phones <http://www.geecycle.org/>



And Getting to the Root of the Refugee Problem.....Climate and Conflict....

- Don't Global Problems Require Global solutions?



The Problems are global, but the solution probably cannot be.....

- “Environmental” and Climate Refugees:
 - Disasters are possible everywhere and Climate change is a global problem
 - But countries in the world focus on their own problems and cannot agree on a global solution to stop climate change
 - And there is no world government with the “power to mandate necessary change”
 - And global consensus and cooperation remain illusive
 - Unless, perhaps, there is an immediate crisis affecting the entire globe
- Conflict Refugees
 - Political entrepreneurs whip up ethnic and religious hatreds all over the globe.
 - But, as in environmental problems, there is no world power to stop this
 - And great powers helped to cause conflict and use it to their advantage
 - Histories of imperialism have led to conflict
 - And Great Powers use conflict to their advantage
 - They take advantage of conflicts to expand their influence
 - They create conflicts as “proxy” wars

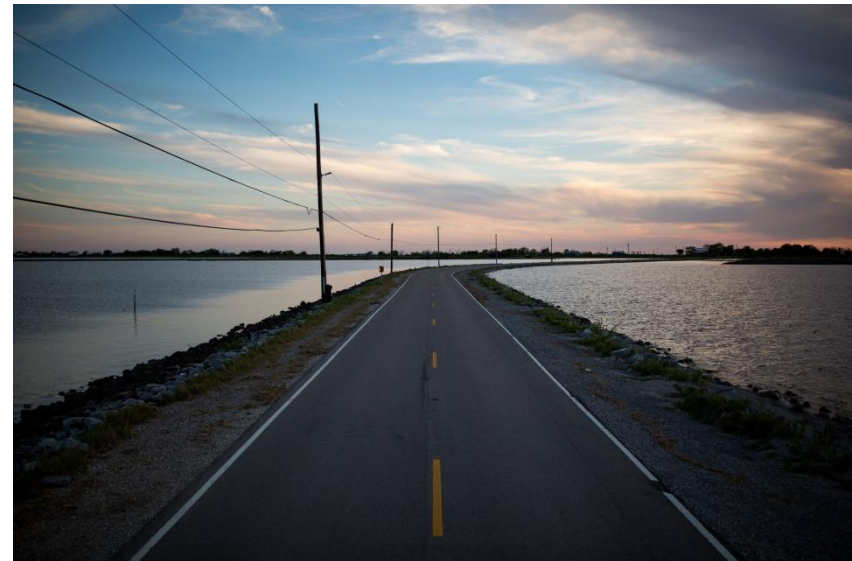
Environmental Refugees: some solutions for immediate relief

- Global Networks for Disaster Relief
- Resettling “Climate Refugees”



THE
NANSEN
INITIATIVE

DISASTER-INDUCED CROSS-BORDER DISPLACEMENT



Tackling the causes of conflict

- If Conflicts are Constructed, they can be Mitigated
- Focus on the Necessary and Sufficient Conditions for Conflict



- Necessary Conditions: Weak States/ Failed States/foreign intervention
- Sufficient Conditions
 - Political Entrepreneurs who stimulate ethnic and religious hatred to garner support
 - Grievances, real and imagined
 - Religious beliefs in their exclusive “right order” creating sense of superiority
 - Hate Speech, stereotypes
 - Discrimination and Exclusion of “the other”

Tackling Necessary Conditions

- **Foreign Intervention**

- **Stop the Arms flow**

- *So Europe sends weapons and supports fighting sides in Syria and then blames us for seeking refuge...we do not want to come to your countries, we are forced to do so. If you have seen the destruction and the death I have seen, if you have lived in constant fear for your life and the lives of your loved ones, then you will understand and know why we are stranded here in the worst of circumstances. If you do not want refugees, then stop supporting wars. Give me my country back and I will leave yours."*

Refugee, Idomeni camp in Greece

- **Weak and Failed States**

- Temptation to impose Western “liberal democratic” institutions
 - Viewed as imperialism by elites and society
 - Needs of each society are different
 - Better: Promotion of “Good Governance”
 - What is it?
 - How is Good governance best Promoted?

Tackling Sufficient Conditions: The fuel for Political Entrepreneurs

- The Problem

 - Grievances, real and imagined

 - Religious beliefs in their exclusive “right order” creating sense of superiority

 - Hate Speech, stereotypes

 - Discrimination and Exclusion of “the other”

- Some solutions

Peacebuilding

- Interfaith Dialogue
<http://folk.uio.no/leirvik/Chrismusint.html>
- Democratic councils in Syria (Burning Country)
- Alliance for Peacebuilding
<http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/our-members/directory/?org=organizational-members>
- Mediators Beyond Borders
- <http://mediatorsbeyondborders.org/who-we-are/vision-mission-partners/>
- All I really know I learned in Kindergarden
<http://www.peace.ca/kindergarten.htm>

Hope!

