

Forum:	Economic and Social Council
Issue:	The question of Social and Economic inclusion of refugees
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Introduction

Today, we are experiencing the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War. 2016 was believed to be the deadliest year on record with thousands of asylum seekers drowning in Mediterranean. It is widely known that with this refugee crisis, both refugees and the host nations are affected

Poor, benefit-dependent, social and economic threat are words that are used to describe refugees by many political parties and the news media. Thus, these descriptions are influencing the local communities receiving refugees. Additionally, refugees are subjected to many discriminations and stereotypes from the host nations. Thus, it is also obstructing refugees' social and economic inclusion of the receiving nation as many political parties and the news media are describing them in many negative ways.

Refugees are groups of people fleeing conflict or persecution. Despite being protected by international laws such as the 1951 Refugee Convention, that states the basic rights of refugees, they experience problems as they arrive. In addition to negative perspective manifested to the local communities, many refugees experience barriers to integrate to their condition when they arrive. These include poor housing, lack of opportunity when accessing education and job employment, insecure legal status and negative stereotypes.

Definition of Key Terms

Refugee

Refugees are group of people fleeing conflict or persecution. Protected in international law, they should not be expelled or returned to places where they will be at risk.

Asylum-Seekers

An asylum-seeker is someone whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed. Every year, there are around one million people who seek asylum.

European migrant crisis

In 2015, increased number of immigration of unauthorized foreign migrants arrived in the European Union, through Mediterranean Sea or through Southeast Europe. These unauthorized foreign migrants come from Islamic world of Western Asia, South Asia, Africa and Balkan Peninsula.

Palestine Refugee

Palestine Refugees are defined as people whose normal place of residence was Palestine during 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict.

1948 Palestine war

The 1948 Palestine War is the war that occurred in the former Mandatory Palestine in 1947 and the official end of the first Arab-Israeli war in 1949.

1967 Palestine exodus

The 1967 Palestine exodus refers to the flight of around 280,000 and 325,000 Palestinians during and the aftermath of the Six-Day War.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948 in Paris. The UDHR states that if people need to be treated with dignity, they require both social and economic rights. These include education, rights to cultural and political participation and civil liberty.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966. This commits its parties to respect the political and civil rights of people. These rights include freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion and right to life.

Background Information

1951 Refugee Convention

After the World War II, as there were large numbers of people fleeing Eastern Europe, the 1951 Refugee Convention were implemented. Ratified by 145 State parties, this convention defines the term of

refugee, states the rights of the refugees and shows the legal rights of States to protect them. This convention is today's international regime in protecting the refugees. After this convention was implemented in 1954, this is by far, the most widely ratified refugee treaty and with the protection activities by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), it remains central.

Convention's 1967 Protocol

The Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees is a key treaty of the international refugee law that was implemented on 4th October, 1967. The Convention relating to the Status of Refugees in 1951 covers only those people who became refugees as a result of an event that occurred before 1 January 1951. The 1967 Protocol removed the time limits and was applicable to refugees "without any geographic limitation". The 1967 Protocol that removed both the temporal and geographic restrictions have 146 parties by July 2013.

Right of asylum

Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted in 1948 states that everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy asylums in foreign countries to avoid persecution. Furthermore, 1951 Refugee Convention and Convention's 1967 Protocol guides national legislation regarding on political asylum.

European Union

The European Nation implemented a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) to unify minimum standards related to asylum. Between 1999 and 2005, several legislative measures were adopted. By the creation of European Refugee Fund, the European Union was able to strengthen the financial solidarity.

United States

The United States accepts the right of asylum of people as stated in the international law. The United States Refugee Act of 1980 allowed to expand the commitment. Besides restating the definitions of the previous law, they created the Office of Refugee Resettlement which provides fund and administer federal programs for domestic resettlement and assistance of refugees.

The United States also implements refugee quotas. Every year, the President of the United States sends a proposal to the Congress stating the maximum number of refugees the country would accept for the upcoming year. This is known as the "refugee ceiling" and once it is proposed, it is normally accepted without further Congressional debate. According to the White House, office of the press secretary, the admission of 110,000 refugees during year 2017 is justified.

Right to non-refoulement

The 1951 Refugee Convention states in article 33 that “No Contracting State shall expel or return a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.”. In recognition of the right to asylum, states are not allowed to deport refugees.

Right of Return

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the right of return is a concept that allows people to return to their country of origin. However, according to the 1951 Refugee Convention, the core principle is non-refoulement, meaning refugees should not return to a country where they face treacherous and deadly threats. The right of return has not been passed into customary international law; thus international laws allow each country the right to decide whom the citizenship will be granted for.

Palestinian right of return

The Palestinian right of return is the concept where Palestinian refugees, including the first generation and their descendants have the right to return. The UN General Assembly issued the Resolution 194 on December 1948, calling for *Return of all expelled Palestinians*, in article 11. The UN General Assembly Resolution 3236, also passed on November 1974, declares the right of return to be an “inalienable right”.

Law of Return

The Law of Return is Israeli legislation that passed on 1950. This Law gives the right of Jews to come to Israel. This was modified in 1970 to enlarge the right of return to non-Jewish with a Jewish grandparent, and their spouses.

Key Issues

Refugee crisis

The refugee crisis is referred to the movement large groups of displaced people. It also refers to large problems that this movement could lead to while they move or even after the arrival. There are innumerable number of reasons behind the refugee crisis.

Palestinian refugees

The Palestinian refugees are Arabs and Jews who used to live in Palestine but were displaced as a result of the 1948 Palestine war and 1967 Palestinian exodus resulted from the Six-Day War. In 1949, the United Nations Conciliation Commission (UNCC) estimated that the number of Palestinian refugees are around 726,000 and after a year in 1950, the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA) presented that the total number of refugees are around 957,000. The number of UNRWA registered Palestine refugees are distributed to different territories such as Jordan, Gaza Strip, West Bank, Syria and Lebanon.

European migrant crisis

This refugee crisis began in 2015, when increased number of unauthorized foreign migrants arrived at the European Union. These migrants mainly come from the Middle East, South Asia, Africa and Western Balkans. More than a million migrants and refugees crossed over into Europe in 2015 through Mediterranean Sea or overland through Southeast Europe.

There have been several incidents including accidents and deaths that have occurred in Europe as migrants were fleeing. They are due to capsizing of crowded migrant vessels and due to the use of cargo trucks.

Health Problems

Besides experiencing physical pains including injuries and starvation, a huge percentage of refugees are experiencing a certain symptom called the *post-traumatic stress disorder*. This mental disorder may hinder people's functionality. PTSD is a disorder that develops in people who experienced shocking or dangerous events. Many refugees suffer from PTSD have high risk for suicide.

Refugee camps are often filled with many refugees with poor sanitation. Removal of natural habitats while building this site led to surged contact between humans and mosquitoes. This may increase the risk of illnesses from malaria and other insect-related diseases.

These health problems are solved through providing health care services to refugees. To support the Syrian refugees, In Iraq, there are four clinics inside the camps including the mental health care center that offer medical consultations, education and psychological support to the refugees. Additionally, the World Health Organization (WTO) along with other partners supported the Ministry of Health to increase the understanding of health conditions and services provided and needed for Syrian refugees.

Social and Economic Problems

Since the beginning of the Syrian Crisis, over 6.5 million of the country's people have been internally displaced and over 4.4 million people are now registered as refugees. This Syrian Crisis is

considered as the largest humanitarian crises of our time. For those who have migrated to Europe, there are mostly anecdotal information regarding on these people. However, a recent report by the World Bank Group and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have researched information on refugees who fled to Jordan and Lebanon. This report focus on the poverty, vulnerability of refugees and the socio-economic status of these refugees.

Before becoming refugees, many of them suffered frequent shocks within Syria, thus leaving their assets, property, and capital to flee safely to their neighboring countries. The research states that the Syrian Refugees living in Jordan and Lebanon is younger with 81 percent of the refugee population under age 35 and contain a high share of children. This indicates how they have low level of education. Thus, young Syrian refugees are at risk of receiving proper education. Many refugees of school age face many challenges in enrolling in educational institutions. Some reasons are due to scarce supply, financial constraints, crowding, psychological distress and other issues that normal children would not have to experience. Only half of Syrian refugee children in Jordan attend school despite the fact that Jordan provides free education to refugees.

The report states that seven in ten refugees are poor based on the threshold used by the UNHCR for targeting its cash assistance program. Syrian Refugees are highly vulnerable. 55 percent of refugees are vulnerable to monetary poverty and about half of refugees are vulnerable to food shocks. The report stated that only 12 percent of refugees are neither poor today nor vulnerable in the near future. These are the group that are not considered to be at risk.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

United Nations (UN)

The United Nations dealt with this issue after the end of the Second World War. The United Nations founded a program called the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) endorsed to support refugees at the request of a government or the United Nations.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is the UN Refugee Agency, dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and promoting better future for refugees. Since 1950, UNHCR provided key assistance to refugees, internally displaced, stateless people and asylum-seekers.

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

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East was established following the 1948 Arab-Israeli War by United Nations General Assembly resolution in

1949. This agency originally focused on providing jobs for Arab Palestine who fled from their homes. Today, they provide education, healthcare services, and other social services to Palestine refugees from the 1948 and 1967 wars. There are total of 5 million registered Palestine refugees and this number includes all of their descendants. This is the only agency that is dedicated to help the refugees in a specific region.

European Commission (EC)

The European Commission funded €83 million worth of humanitarian funding for emergency support projects to assist refugees in Greece. They provided shelter, child friendly spaces, education, family reunification assistance and protection. This project addressed the most urgent humanitarian needs for 50,000 refugees and migrants hosted in over 30 sites around Greece.

Timeline of Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

Date	Description of event
1920	An Intergovernmental organization founded on 1920.
1921	The first international co-ordination of refugee affairs
1923	Population exchange between Greece and Turkey
1924	The Immigration Act of 1924, a law that limited the annual number of immigrants that could be admitted.
1930	The Nansen International Office for Refugees was established.
1950	The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was established.
1967	The Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees.
1974	United Nations Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict.

2004	EU's Council Directive on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals and stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and content of the protection granted.
2015	European Migrant Crisis

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

World Refugee Day

World Refugee Day is an international anniversary that observe issue of international concern. This day is dedicated to increase awareness of the refugee situation around the world. In 2000, the United Nations General Assembly in Resolution 55/76 decided that 2001, 20 June would be the celebrated as World Refugee Day as 2001 would be the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

This commemoration is celebrated in more than 100 countries and it involves government officials, humanitarian aid workers, celebrities, civilians and the refugees themselves. Each year, UNHCR announces different theme for the World Refugee Day campaign. This year, the UN Refugee Agency will launch its *#WithRefugees* petition. This petition asks government to ensure every refugee child gets an education, ensure every refugee family has somewhere safe to live and ensure every refugee can work or learn new skills to make a positive contribution to their community. These campaigns raise awareness of the situation of refugees around the world.

Solutions by UNHCR

Resettlement

Many refugees are not able to return to their home due to continued conflict, wars and persecution. In these circumstances, UNHCR helps refugees to resettle to a third country. Resettlement is the movement of refugees from an asylum country to another State that agreed to admit them and grant them permanent settlement. At the end of 2015, there were 16.1 million refugees around the world but less than 1 percent were resettled.

However, only a small number of States take part in UNHCR's resettlement program. Resettlement States provide legal and physical protections. These include access to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

Voluntary Repatriation

Millions of refugees hope to return to their home. Thus, UNHCR promote enabling conditions for voluntary repatriation. They ensure the exercise of a free and informed choice, and mobilize support for returnees. UNHCR promotes this action in various ways. These include organizing “go-and-see” visits for refugees, engaging in peace and reconciliation activities and providing return assistance and legal aid to returnees. This action needs continuous support of the international community.

UNHCR cash assistance program and World Food Programme (WFP) food voucher program

If these assistance programs are registered to all refugees, they can cut poverty experienced by refugees by half. These refugee assistance programs are considered very effective in reducing poverty. However, these programs are not sustainable. Since these rely on voluntary contributions, if funding declines, fewer refugees are able to benefit.

Possible Solutions

Front line states including Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey take a huge amount of burden in managing the refugee burden. Lebanon hosts more Syrian refugees than the whole Europe. Although they implemented an open-door policy, the scale of this refugee crisis is increasing rapidly. Thus, refugees have limitations in access to labor, education and other economic and social problems. The international donor community should provide more financial support for these states. Front-line states getting more support from the United Nations and other agencies, can be benefited from work authorization, better education and good health care services provided for refugees.

As mentioned above, in the introduction, refugees tend to suffer from negative perspectives of the host nation. If governments start to fight all kinds of discriminations toward refugees and stop blaming refugees for economic and social problems, this situation would improve. This will promote easier social and economic inclusion of refugees.

There are thousands of refugees drowning in Mediterranean to seek for safer place to live. Opening up safe routes to sanctuary would possibly reduce these kinds of tragic events. Allowing refugees to reunite with their family members and giving them visas would allow them not to spend their savings and risk drowning while moving to safer place. Additionally, as mentioned above in previous attempts to solve this issue, allowing refugees to resettle could be a crucial solution for vulnerable refugees.

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