



JLI & KAICIID Joint Webinar Series:
**Role of Local Faith Actors in Response to
Refugees & Forced Migration**

Tuesday, November 20th



JOINT LEARNING INITIATIVE on
FAITH & LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Agenda

- Introduction: Dr Olivia Wilkinson, JLI
- Faith Action for Children on the Move Learning Briefs,
Dr Olivia Wilkinson
- Faith Action for Children on the Move, **Amanda Rives Argeñal, World Vision International**
- Role of LFCs Eastern Europe, **KAICIID Fellow, Dr. Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović**
- Discussion moderated by Olivia Wilkinson

Dr Olivia Wilkinson

Director of Research
**Joint Learning Initiative on Faith
& Local Communities**



BACKGROUND

A growing number of churches, religious and faith-based organizations, in partnership with variety of global institutions and academic organizations, are actively collaborating to **end violence against children** around the world.

In 2018 during negotiations for the Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees, much of this collaboration and energy focused on migration, refugees, and displacement and the violence children face in these circumstances.

As faith actors we are in a unique position to address the needs of these Children on the Move and their families. Faith institutions represent a safe haven for many and are often the first place a migrant will seek refuge. Across different faith backgrounds exists the call to welcome the stranger in our midst and protect children.

This call compels us to come together and respond.



BACKGROUND – Forum Objectives

1. Compile and analyse current response, program approaches, best practices, policy frameworks, advocacy efforts and gaps through a literature review and series of briefs
2. Discern, dialogue, and build consensus amongst religious and faith-based organizations, decision-makers, communities and children on issues related to violence, migration, displacement, and trafficking
3. High-level action plan to increase awareness, strengthen partnerships and deepen collaboration, improve delivery and scale up interventions, and influence decision-making
4. Seminal publication capturing the essence of the process, key issues and action plan to inform, inspire, and equip others into the future



Amanda Rives Argeñal

**External Engagement Sr.
Advisor, Child Protection &
Participation**

World Vision International



Outcomes from the Faith Action for Children on the Move Global Partners Forum, Rome October 16-18th 2018



FAITH ACTION
for Children on the Move

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PARTNERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

- **International Organizing Committee:** ACT Alliance, Adventist Relief Agency, Anglican Alliance, Arigatou International, Islamic Relief, Joint Learning Initiative, Mennonite World Conference, Micah Global, PaRD, Salvation Army, Seventh Day Adventists, World Evangelical Alliance, World Council of Churches, and World Vision International
- **International Advisory Committee:** Azza Karam, United Nations Interagency Task Force on Religion; Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs); Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General on Violence against Children; UNICEF; UNHCR



PARTNERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

- **Host Committee:** ADRA Italia, Unione Superiori Generali, Associazione Papa Giovanni XXIII, Casa Scalabrinii 634, Caritas Internationalis, Caritas Italiana, Caritas Roma, Centro per la Protezione dei Minori della Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Centro Astalli, Chiesa Cristiana Avventista del Settimo Giorno, Comunità di Sant'Egidio, CO.RE.IS – Comunità Religiosa Islamica Italiana, Don Bosco 2000, Esercito della Salvezza -Comando Italia & Grecia Quartiere Generale del Comando Roma, FCEI- Federazione delle Chiese Evangeliche in Italia/Mediterranean Hope, FMSI - Fondazione Marista per la Solidarietà Italiana, Islamic Relief Italia, IIMA – Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice, Salesiani di Don Bosco, Salesiani per il Sociale, Scholas Occurrentes, VIS – Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo, World Vision Italia



PARTNERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

- Over 185 leaders originating from 38 countries and representing 85 organizations
- 91 different plenary, breakout, and panel speakers who shared perspectives, programme and emergency response experiences as well as reflections and recommendations on the draft action plan
- The draft action plan was stewarded and refined by an Action Plan Committee



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EVIDENCE-BASE

The forum was designed to share learning around three key evidence-based themes for effective faith engagement to support Children on the Move and to refine and finalize the Action Plan document

The **three specific themes** that developed as result of the literature review and preliminary work with partners were:

- (1) Spiritual support to children and caregivers as a source of healing and resilience,
- (2) Strengthening the continuum of protection for children on the move, and
- (3) Building peaceful societies and combatting xenophobia.



ACTION PLAN

Principles

- Shared beliefs and affirmations
- Rights-based
- Commitments particular to our sector and context
- Religious respect and diversity
- Building on key processes and frameworks

Acknowledgements

- Protection and safeguarding
- Child Participation

(1) Providing spiritual support to children, families and caregivers as a source of healing and resilience

- Recognition of the support as effective and promotion of it in faith based efforts
- Connections with psychosocial, mental health, and resilience programmes
- Faith-sensitive guidance and resources
- Safe spaces for worship

ACTION PLAN

(2) Strengthening the continuum of care for child protection

- Role of faith actors child protection system and services, including the areas of psychosocial support, mental health, resilience, spiritual nurture, and referral mechanisms
- Healthcare, early child development and quality education services
- Phases/stages of journey
- Connections to broader systems and systems reform

(3) Building peaceful societies and opposing xenophobia, racism and discrimination

- Role of faith actors in sensitization, awareness raising, building bridges
- Protection and promotion
- Listening & Children as agents
- Awareness raising, moral compass on impacts of violence against children on the move

REFLECTIONS

- Learning briefs, pre-workshops and calls, breakout and small group discussions were key to building a process
- Action-oriented concept was highly valued by partners and advisory committee members
- Action plan is a platform to further engage with and connect to more partners, local actors and smaller networks, influence decision makers
- Planning for In-reach *and* Out-reach
- More needs to be done to create conditions for effective child participation in the initiative



Next Steps

- Focus on the Action Plan, taking the three areas further in evidence and resources, likely groupings of organizations around the themes
- Working together as fourth pillar
- Committees established on:
 - Advocacy and high-level engagement – many events and processes to engage in this year and next
 - Outreach to congregations and local level faith actors
 - Development of communications materials and programmatic guides
 - Resource development
- Creation of a TOR and resource site for the initiative



RESOURCES

globalpartnersforum@wvi.org

- [Forum Programme](#)
- [Forum Brochure](#)
- [Speaker Bios](#)
- [Theological Foundation and Framework](#)
- [Learning briefs and resource library](#)
- [Action Plan](#)



BACKGROUND - Evidence

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Evidence as the Foundation

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The evidence work explores **faith response to children on the move**; this means response by faith institutions and their official charities or parachurch organizations to support children on the move and their families.

Of the 25.4 million refugees in 2017, UNHCR estimates that 52% are under 18. In 2016, UNICEF reported that one in eight children in the world is a migrant.

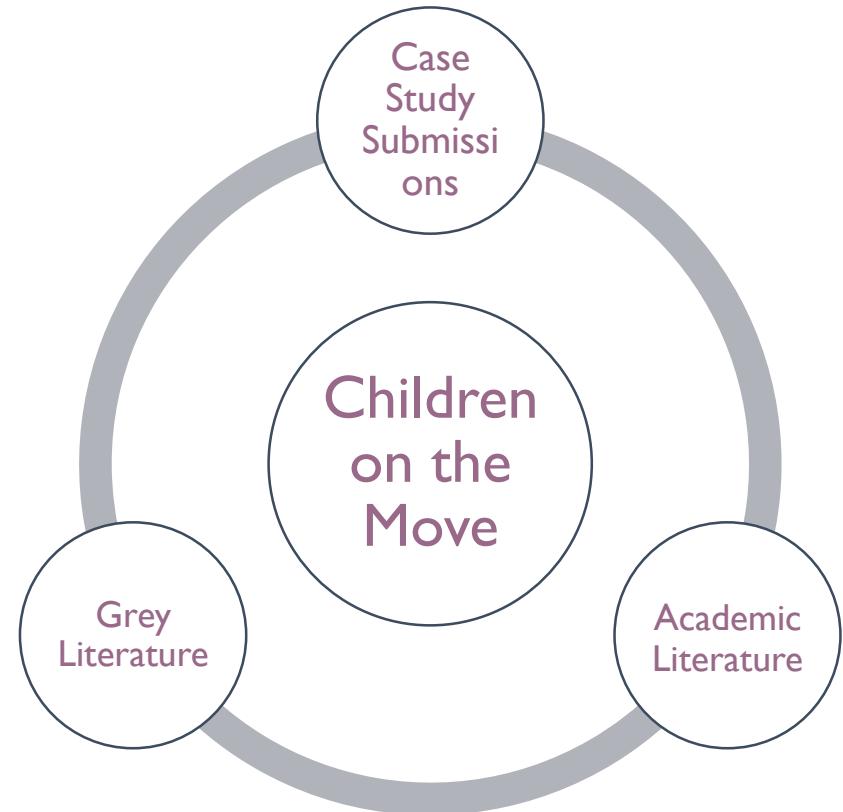
For the purposes of this research, children on the move includes all children who have migrated across borders or been forcibly displaced across borders or within the borders of their own country.



Review Method

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- Systematic searches to include academic and grey literature, including NGO reports, briefs, evaluations, etc.
- 222 resources reviewed in total
- Online case study submission open for all
- 33 submissions in total of which 21 were used



Learning Brief: Spiritual Support

- Spirituality supports children's resilience during experiences of displacement
- Spiritual support and psychosocial support are mutually beneficial to contribute to children's resilience
- Faith community connection provides community, meaning, and identity for children on the move
- Physical space and faith-sensitive resources to recover from trauma
- Creative expression for recovery
- Spiritual support for the whole family



Practice Example: Trauma healing with children displaced by violence in Northeastern Nigeria

The Church of the Brethren has been running the Healing Hearts Curriculum with children affected by the violence of Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria. This trauma-healing curriculum for children was developed for use by local women in communities affected by the violence of Boko Haram.

Activities

- A two-day training of trainers responding to the needs of the community. A second training of trainers presenting the interfaith curriculum (for Christian-Muslim settings)
- By the end of 2016, these trainers had trained over 100 people and were working directly with children in their churches and communities, with an estimated reach of 10,000 children.

Lessons

- Empowering trainers in local communities to take ownership of the curriculum and adapt it to their own needs is important.
- The original curriculum used a Bible-based curriculum with Bible stories to illustrate the main points of each session. Trainers working with Christian and Muslim communities requested an interfaith version, so the curriculum was adapted to use a variety of traditional stories instead.

Learning Brief: Continuum of Child Protection

The presence of faith actors and associated networks around the world allows for continued protection of children as they move

Prevention

- *Faith actors can influence social and cultural beliefs and practices to improve protection*
- Interfaith initiatives for cooperation and collaboration can positively change attitudes and behaviours toward children on the move

Response

- Faith actors' long-term presence and access in communities allow for continued protection as children are displaced as part of community-based child protection mechanisms
- Faith actors can:
 - Have a role in reporting and referral mechanisms
 - Be key local stakeholders in refugee camps, filling gaps in response mechanisms
 - Support caregivers
 - Support non-formal education environments
 - Help integrate (or reintegrate) children who been on the move into host communities

Practice example: Connecting accompaniment, awareness-building and advocacy to provide a continuum of safe spaces for children on the move in the Northern Triangle, Mexico and the United States



The Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO) project, from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), was envisioned after witnessing the plight of children who are forced to flee their communities because of complex and interrelated reasons, including chronic violence, poverty, environmental displacement and lack of opportunities in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala.

Activities

Accompaniment, including

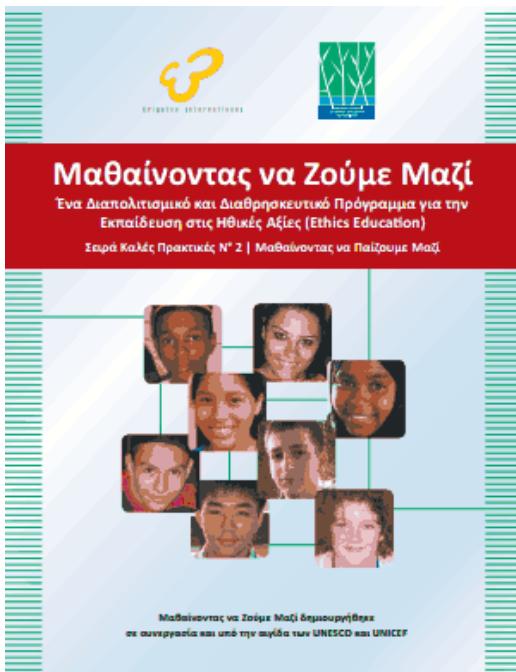
- mobilising and enhancing the participation and alliance-building capacity of churches in the Northern Triangle of Central America
- helping to ensure that children and families in the United States will have appropriate legal representation and assisting children who do not have sponsors
- urging congregations to become ‘safe places’/“gathering places” for migrants and volunteers and encouraging congregations to develop service centres that focus on needed social services, including ‘wrap-around services’ such as education, life skills, legal assistance, and so forth).

Awareness-building, including working with all ministries in the church to raise awareness for implementation of protocols and conducting immersion programmes and tours for ELCA members.

Lessons: Transnational religious networks are among the few institutional relationships that can work across countries while still reaching grassroots initiatives in each country. Thus, holistic strategies that address root causes of migration through advocacy for immigrants can be combined in origin, transit and destination countries.

Learning Brief: Peaceful Societies and Combatting Xenophobia

- Faith actors influence attitudes and behaviours
- Faith groups raise awareness and advocate:
 - Religious leaders speaking out
 - Awareness-raising campaigns for the general public by faith groups
 - Awareness-raising to protect children on the move within faith networks
 - Faith actors advocate to policymakers on child protection issues
- Combatting Xenophobia
 - Combatting discrimination towards religious minorities
 - Faith actors protecting against xenophobic attacks
 - Educating to prevent xenophobia in the next generation



Practice example: Playful methods for children to overcome their differences in school environments

- The Learning to Play Together programme in Greece aims to promote ethical values and intercultural learning through physical education classes. It is based on 'Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Program for Ethics Education' developed by Arigatou International.
- It has been implemented with fifth-grade students from the Elementary School of Intercultural Education in Athens since 2011. The programme provides alternatives to the use of competitive games and sports in physical education and helps to promote mutual understanding and respect among children and youth living in multicultural societies to help tackle the xenophobia and racism present in the country from anti-immigrant feelings.

Activities

- Students (migrants and refugees) were from 10 different countries and did not have a common spoken and written language or similar socioeconomic background.
- Methods used included cooperation-based and problem-solving-based learning, discussion-based learning and experience-based learning. The children played multicultural and cooperative games together.

Lessons

- It was found that play can be a common language for children even if they do not share a spoken language, that the programme can be creatively adapted even in resource-poor environments, and that there needs to be special consideration for children who have experienced the extremes of violence and war so that they feel 'safe, protected, reassured, and included.'

Dr. Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović

**Anthropologist and Research
Fellow at the Institute for Balkan
Studies, Serbian Academy of
Sciences and Arts**

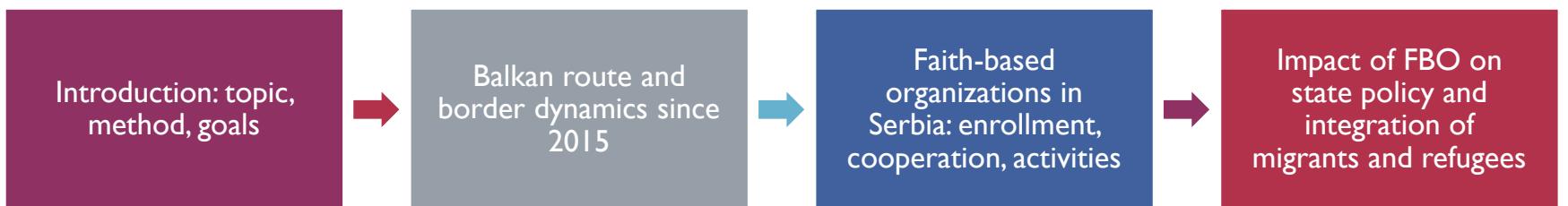
KAICIID Fellow 2018



A RESPONSE OF THE FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS TO THE MIGRATION CRISIS: THE CASE OF SERBIA

Dr. Aleksandra Djurić Milovanović
Institute for Balkan Studies, Serbian Academy of
Sciences and Arts, Belgrade, Serbia
KAICIID International Fellow 2018





INTRODUCTION TOPIC, METHOD AND GOAL

- **Topic:** the role of humanitarian faith-based organization in migrant support in the Balkans.
- **Organizations included:** in the research are associated with churches and religious communities that have active base of believers in Serbia and a network of churches across its territory.
- **The goal of this presentation:** to highlight the role of faith-based humanitarian organizations in migration support in Serbia and to display specific perspective on their work.

Method: five qualitative semi-structured interviews with the representatives of five faith-based organizations conducted in autumn 2017

(Dr. Marta Stojić Mitrović,
Dr. Aleksandra Djurić
Milovanović)

For the description of the migratory as well as socio-political context we used the reports on migration in Serbia published by relevant international and national organizations and authors

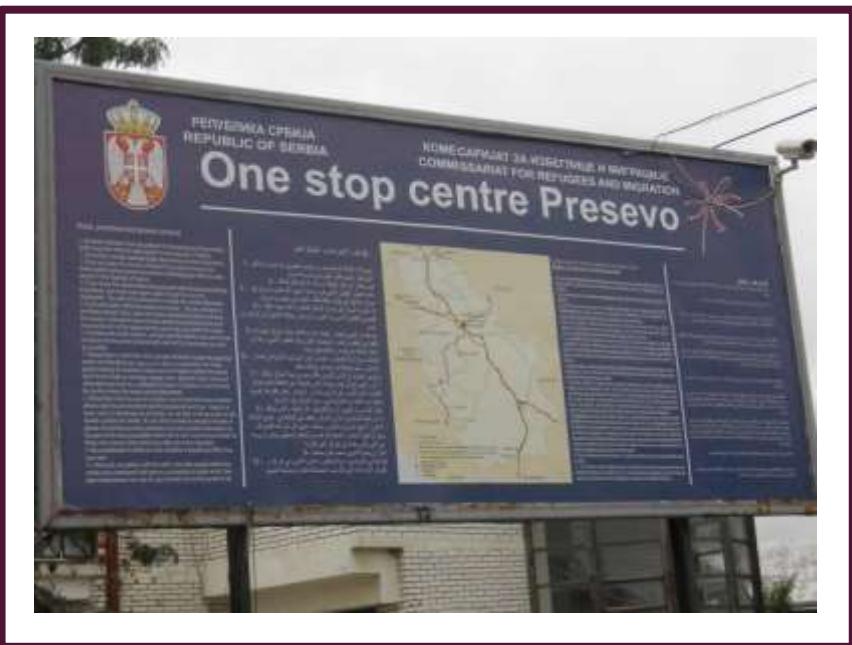
MAJOR ROUTES IN THE BALKANS IN 2015

Dynamics along the Western Balkan route

Figure 1 – The Western Balkan route







Summer 2015, up to 8000 entering in just one day.

March 2016 / closure of the corridor, 2000 persons stuck initially.

Autumn 2016, 10000 persons.

January 2017, 2000 persons sleeping rough in Belgrade city center only.

June 2018, just above 3000 persons are accommodated in Serbian official camps.

Closed borders influenced increased length of stay in Serbia



CHILDREN PLAYING IN
FRONT OF THE ENTRANCE
TO THE SO CALLED
TRANSIT ZONE AT
KELEBIJA-TOMPA BORDER
CROSSING BETWEEN
HUNGARY AND SERBIA,
JUNE 2016.

ACTIVITIES – ENROLLMENT, ORGANIZATION, COOPERATION

Faith-based organizations got involved in transit migration mainly in 2015.

Distribution of food, clothes, medicines and hygiene items, cash-cards and later education, entertainment, legal and medical aid, psycho-social support in the camps.

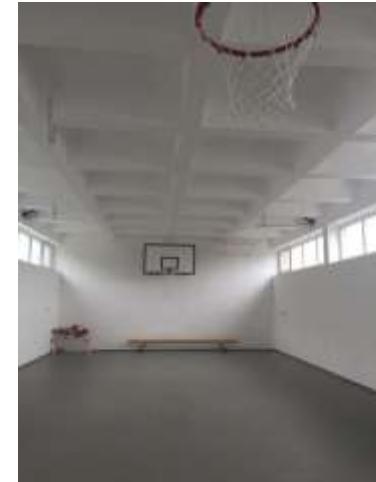
Cooperation with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migrations; creating more organized response.

Role of the faith based organizations in supporting the state (collaboration with local governments and local organizations of the civil sector).

THE EMERGENCE OF FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN SERBIA

- *Čovekoljublje* (Philanthropy) - established in 1991 charity foundation of the Serbian Orthodox Church





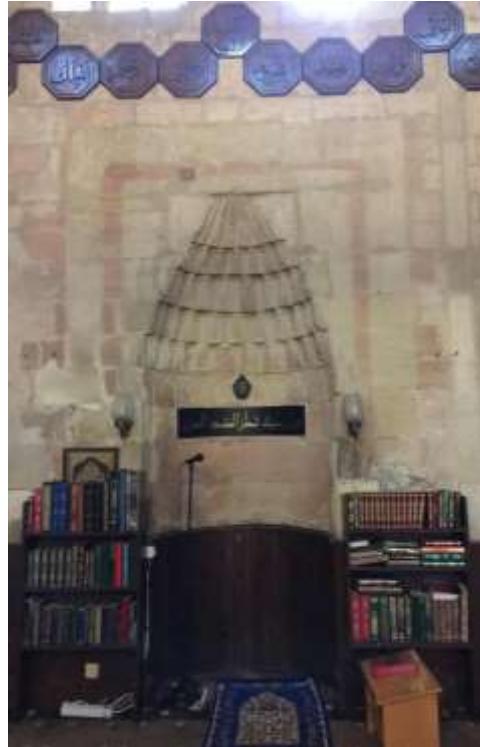
MAJOR SUCCESS OF FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS LIES IN LINKING LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND MIGRANTS THROUGH JOINT ACTIVITIES OR MEDIATION IN SITUATIONS OF SOCIAL CONFLICTS

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CRS IN SERBIA

Serbia is one of the countries to emerge from the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. It has the highest number of internally displaced people in Europe, over 200 thousand. The unemployment rate hovered around 15% at the end of 2016.

CRS works to meet the emergency needs of vulnerable refugees from the Middle East – Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan – and refugees from Asia and Africa transiting or sheltered in Serbia. The country program also provides protection and livelihoods for displaced persons and addresses issues of human trafficking, access to services, forced violence, child marriage, child labor, children and



ISLAMIC COMMUNITY
OF SERBIA
ORGANIZATION
GAJRET

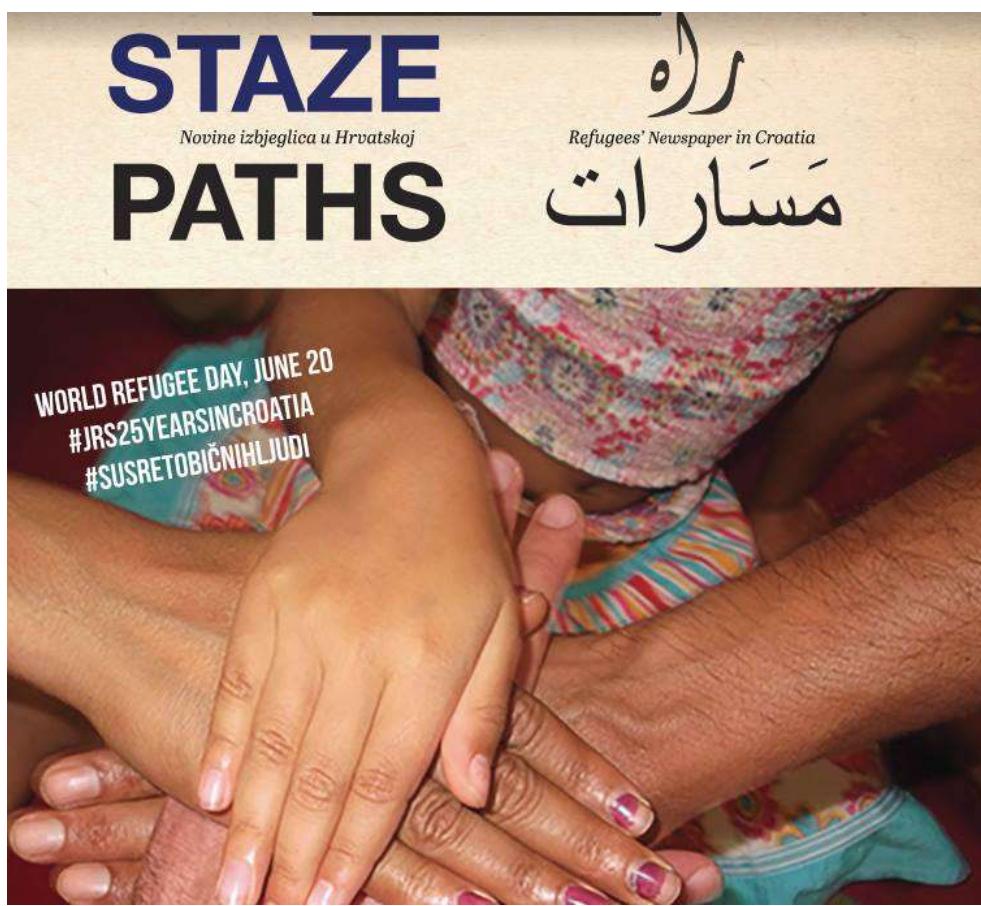


ADRA COMMUNITY CENTRE ESTABLISHED IN
MARCH 2017 IN BORČA (BELGRADE) FOR
MIGRANTS IN SERBIA



- World Refugee Sabbath has been set aside to raise awareness of the needs of the more than 20 million people who have been displaced from their homes due to civil unrest and persecution.
<https://adra.eu/refugees>





REFUGEES' NEWSPAPER
CROATIA – JESUIT
REFUGEE SERVICES



- In relation to the other organizations involved in migration response, the special role of faith-based organizations is seen in:
- 1. opportunities for action where other organizations encounter obstacles, which is related to special social position of these organizations within wider society.
- 2. treating the migrants as a part of the existing society, not as something foreign or external.
- 3. possibility of joint collaboration between FBO in creating more effective responses and possible inclusion of migrants and refugees.



Principovac refugee camp border between Serbia and Croatia



Thank you !

Response and Questions?

Childrenonthemove.jliflc.com