

RESOURCES BRIEF: FAITH ACTORS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES

This targeted resource brief provides a selection of works published by academics, NGOs, and faith actors (FAs)¹ on the role that faith plays in contexts of forced displacement. The resources are grouped into the three main areas in need of support as outlined by the Global Compact on Refugees. Within each area, sub-headings and keywords are meant to facilitate access to resources on specific topics. This resources brief supports the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith and Local Communities' accompanying policy brief on faith actors and the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees.

BURDEN- AND RESPONSIBILITY-SHARING

FAs are crucial partners as they represent several aspects of a multi-stakeholder approach, including local, civil society, and faith-based organizations. Engagement with FAs recognizes the place of religious belief and practice for refugees and host communities. FAs enhance response and are involved in coordination with other actors. FAs often act as intermediaries between international humanitarian actors, and local communities, and between faith and non-faith actors. Partnerships with local FAs are hindered by lack of capacity and fears related to religious motivations (e.g., proselytization, extremism), but research shows that there are ways to mitigate these issues and that FAs' distinctive contribution can be crucial to the mobilization of material and spiritual resources for people who have been displaced.

- Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, "Introduction: Faith-Based Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Displacement," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24, no. 3 (September 1, 2011): 429–39, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fer033> Keywords: *forced displacement, faith actors, challenges and opportunities*
- Kirmani, Nida, and Ajaz Ahmed Khan. "Does Faith Matter: An Examination of Islamic Relief's Work with Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons." *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (January 1, 2008): 41–50. <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdn032>.
- Keywords: *humanitarian standards; impartiality; multi-religious staff; spiritual needs; trust-building in assistance; faith-based/secular partnerships; interfaith partnerships; barriers to partnership*
- Kraft, Kathryn, and Jonathan D. Smith. "Between International Donors and Local Faith Communities: Intermediaries in Humanitarian Assistance to Syrian Refugees in Jordan and Lebanon." *Disasters* (June 12, 2018). <https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12301>.
- Keywords: *local faith communities/international organizations partnerships; intermediaries; localization; humanitarian standards; professionalism; Jordan; Lebanon*
- El Nakib, Shatha, and Alastair Ager. "Local Faith Community and Related Civil Society Engagement in Humanitarian Response with Syrian Refugees in Irbid, Jordan: Report to the Henry Luce Foundation." New

¹ The term "faith actors" is used in this brief as a broad definition of stakeholders including, but not limited to, local faith communities, religious leaders, and local, national and international faith-based organizations.

York: Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health. April 2015. <http://jliflc.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/El-Nakib-Ager-Local-faith-communities-and-humanitarian-response-in-Irbid-.pdf>.

- Keywords: *Islamic traditions; faith-based/secular partnerships; local faith communities/ international organizations partnerships, mobilizations of material, human and spiritual resources; Jordan*

RECEPTION AND ADMISSION

There is evidence that FAs can play an important role in strengthening preparedness, providing immediate reception arrangements, and meeting specific needs (including assessment and referral).

- Feasley, Ashely, and Todd Scribner. “Accompaniment by the Catholic Church,” *Forced Migration Review* 56 (October 2017): 27. <https://www.fmreview.org/latinamerica-caribbean/feasley-scribner>.
- Keywords: *preparedness; immediate reception arrangements; shelter; transit spaces; Northern Triangle of Central America*
- Lauterbach, Karen. “Religion and Displacement in Africa.” *Religion and Theology* 21, no. 3–4 (January 1, 2014): 290–308. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15743012-02103004>.
- Keywords: *referral, immediate reception arrangements, basic services; spiritual and material resources; Uganda*
- Parsitau, Damaris Seleina. “The Role of Faith and Faith-Based Organizations among Internally Displaced Persons in Kenya.” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24, no. 3 (September 1, 2011): 493–512. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fer035>.
- Keywords: *immediate reception arrangements; shelter; IDPs; special needs assessment; spiritual support*

The roles faith can play in experiences of displacement are not always adequately addressed during Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedures. Spiritual support during such stages, as in registration and removal centers, is essential.

- Madziva, Roda. ““Your Name Does not Tick the Box””: the Intertwining of Names, Bodies, Religion and Nationality in the Construction of Identity within the UK Asylum System.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41, no. 5 (2017): 938–957. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1318215>
- Keywords: *challenges in RSD; religious illiteracy; religious stereotypes; faith and belonging; UK*
- Mugnes, Susy, Felicina Prosperio, and Luisa Deponti. “An Ecumenical Organisation for Asylum Seekers in Switzerland.” *Forced Migration Review* 48 (November 2014) <https://www.fmreview.org/faith/mugnes-proserpio-deponti>
- Keywords: *spiritual support; RSD; multi-religious initiatives; registration and procedure centers; Switzerland*
- McGregor, JoAnn. “Rethinking Detention and Deportability: Removal Centers as Spaces of Religious Revival.” *Political Geography* 31, no. 4 (May 2012): 236–46. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2012.03.003>.
- Keywords: *spiritual support; detention and deportation; chaplaincy services; religious spaces; religious*

Arrival and reception stages are not reached by those who perish during their journey. There is evidence that FAs (including faith leaders and faith-motivated refugees) engage in rituals and public initiatives to restore their dignity in/after death.

- Alcalde, Javier, and Martín Portos. “Refugee Solidarity in a Multilevel Political Opportunity Structure: The Case of Spain.” In *Solidarity Mobilizations in the ‘Refugee Crisis,’* 155–82. Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-71752-4_6.
- Keywords: *non-arrival; mourning rituals; local faith communities; dignity in/after death; Spain*
- Catania, Tina R. “Making Immigrants Visible in Lampedusa: Pope Francis, Migration, and the State.” *Italian Studies* 70, no. 4 (October 2015): 465–486. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00751634.2015.1120951>.
- Keywords: *non-arrival; deaths at sea; dignity in/after death; religious leaders; visibility of migrant deaths; mourning rituals; Italy*
- Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Elena and Yousif M. Qasmiyeh, “Refugee-Refugee Solidarity in Death and Dying.” *Refugee Hosts - Local Community Experiences of Displacement from Syria: Views from Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey*, May 23, 2017. <https://refugeehosts.org/2017/05/23/refugee-refugee-solidarity-in-death-and-dying/>.
- Keywords: *dignity in/after death; burial rituals; refugees mourning refugees; refugee camps; Lebanon*

MEETING NEEDS AND SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

Refugees, internally displaced persons, and host communities need the support of a plurality of actors to face challenges such as facilitating access to education and the job market, fostering integration, psychosocial wellbeing, and peaceful coexistence, as well as meeting specific needs related to gender and age. FAs are often providers of education in displacement, both in urban contexts and in camps.

- Lahoud, Suzie, Rachel Stephens and Lucas Shindeldecker. “Empowering Local Faith Communities in Humanitarian Response: Lessons from the Field.” *MERATH and Lebanese Society for Educational & Social Development* (Spring 2017). <https://jliflc.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/MERATH-Case-Study.pdf>.
- Keywords: *non-formal education; localization; religious buildings; safe environment; holistic approach; Lebanon*
- McCarthy, Aslihan Tezel. “Non-State Actors and Education as a Humanitarian Response: Role of Faith-Based Organizations in Education for Syrian Refugees in Turkey.” *Journal of International Humanitarian Action* 2, no. 1 (December 1, 2017). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-017-0028-x>.
- Keywords: *temporary education centers; education as humanitarian response; faith and education; education and political agenda; gender-segregated education; Turkey*
- Naidoo, Loshini, Jane Wilkinson, Misty Adoniou, and Kiprono Langat. “The Role of Communities in Supporting Refugee Youth Transition into Higher Education.” *In Refugee Background Students Transitioning into Higher Education*, Singapore: Springer, 2018. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-0420-0_8.
- Keywords: *higher education; faith-based/secular partnerships; faith-based financial support; university; Australia*

Faith and religious practices are often indicated as major resources to cope with psychological distress and foster resilience in displacement, particularly for children and youth, as well as for women and older refugees.

- Zoma, Maryam. “Respecting Faiths, Avoiding Harm: Psychosocial Assistance in Jordan and the United States.” *Forced Migration Review* 48 (November 2014): 45–47. <https://www.fmreview.org/faith/zoma>
- Keywords: religion as coping; psychosocial assistance; spiritual support; challenges; religious symbols; US; Jordan
- Pieloch, Kerrie A., Mary Beth McCullough, and Amy K. Marks. “Resilience of Children with Refugee Statuses: A Research Review.” *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne* 57, no. 4 (November 2016): 330–39. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/10.1037/cap0000073>.
- Keywords: resilience of refugee children and youth; cultural and religious practices; spirituality; Canada
- Nashwan, Ayat, Sherry M. Cummings, and Kara Gagnon. “Older Female Iraqi Refugees in the United States: Voices of Struggle and Strength.” *International Social Work*, (December 5, 2017). <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872817742699>.
- Keywords: older refugees; women; resettlement; coping; psychological distress; faith as resource for psychosocial wellbeing; US

There is evidence challenging the stereotype that faith and FAs, as opposed to secular humanitarianism, are always reinforcing gender imbalance and patriarchy.

- Petersen, Marie Juul. “Translating Global Gender Norms in Islamic Relief Worldwide.” *Progress in Development Studies* 18, no. 3 (2018): 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464993418766586>.
- Keywords: humanitarian standards; gender imbalance; faith-based/secular partnerships; gender policy; bridging normative environments
- McGuire, Wendy. “The LGBTQI+ refugee digital storytelling project: facilitating inclusion in a queer Canadian Christian community.” *Transnational Social Review* (January 17, 2018). <https://doi.org/10.1080/21931674.2017.1416850>.
- Keywords: : LGBTQI+ refugees, resettlement, social inclusion, belonging in displacement; digital storytelling; Canada
- Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Chloe Lewis, and Georgia Cole, “Faithing’ Gender and Responses to Violence in Refugee Communities: Insights from the Sahrawi Refugee Camps and the Democratic Republic of Congo,” in *Gender, Violence, Refugees*, ed. Susanne Buckley-Zistel and Ulrike Krause, (New York ; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2017), 302, <http://www.berghahnbooks.com/title/Buckley-ZistelGender>.
- Keywords: gender, Sahrawi, DRC, violence, refugees

Thanks to their community networks, FAs are well placed to foster processes of resocialization in the host society, through facilitating access to the job market and home-making processes in displacement.

- Borda Carulla, Susana. “Resocialization of ‘Desplazados’ in Small Pentecostal Congregations in Bogotá, Colombia.” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (January 1, 2007): 36–46. <https://doi.org/10.1093/rsq/hdi0225>.
- Keywords: *resocialization; IDPs; community networks; access to job market; belonging in displacement; Colombia*
- Zaman, Tahir. “Home Sacred Home.” In *Islamic Traditions of Refuge in the Crises of Iraq and Syria*, 135–66. Religion and Global Migrations. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137550064_6.
- Keywords: *home-making in displacement; sacralized home; community and kin networks; religious spaces/domestic spaces; Syria*
- Sturm, Daniel. “Welcoming New Americans through Parish Social Ministry.” December 5, 2017. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Parishes Organized to Welcome Refugees. <https://files.catholiccharitiesusa.org/stories/PSM-and-Welcoming-New-Americans-webinar.pptx.pdf?mtime=20171204165030&ga=2.50588969.1089302985.1512424019-659891619.1486570567>.
- Keywords: *resettlement; community networks; access to job market; access to housing; interfaith encounters; US*

Interfaith encounters and multi-religious initiatives can greatly contribute to building good relations and peaceful coexistence in the host society. However, segments of religious organizations and communities have also taken hostile stances towards refugees.

- Khallouk, Mohammed. “Confronting the Current Refugee Crisis: The Importance of Islamic Citizens’ Initiatives in Germany.” In *Religion in the European Refugee Crisis*, edited by Ulrich Schmiedel and Graeme Smith, 87–103. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-67961-7_5.
- Keywords: *interfaith encounters; religious stereotypes; religious minorities; visibility; Germany*
- Phakhati, Sizwe. “The Response of Churches to the May 2008 Xenophobic Violence.” Gauteng City-Region Observatory. 2008. <https://jiliflc.com/resources/the-response-of-churches-to-the-may-2008-xenophobic-violence/>.
- Keywords: *local faith communities; religious leaders; xenophobic violence; provision of food and clothing; donations; interaction with other organizations; South Africa*
- Narkowicz, Kasia. “‘Refugees Not Welcome Here’: State, Church and Civil Society Responses to the Refugee Crisis in Poland.” *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* (May 22, 2018): 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10767-018-9287-9>.
- Keywords: *hostility; anti-refugee attitudes; religious leaders; othering; divided Church; religious discrimination; Poland*

SOLUTIONS

Voluntary repatriation, resettlement and local integration, along with complementary pathways for admission to third countries, are the main durable solutions identified by the UNHCR. Religious beliefs and faith-related factors (including conversion in displacement) can play an important role in decision-making regarding voluntary repatriation and in processes of reintegration. FAs are also often engaged in activities to foster reconciliation and peacebuilding among different communities in countries or regions of origin.

- Shoeb, Marwa, Harvey M. Weinstein, and Jodi Halpern. “Living in Religious Time and Space: Iraqi Refugees in Dearborn, Michigan.” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 20, no. 3 (September 1, 2007): 441–60. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fem003>.
- Keywords: *return; resettlement; religious traditions; spirituality; US*
- Zink, Jesse. “Lost Boys, Found Church: Dinka Refugees and Religious Change in Sudan’s Second Civil War.” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 68 no. 2 (April 2017): 340-360. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022046916000683>.
- Keywords: *refugee children; proselytization; refugee camps; conversion; return; reintegration; Christian evangelism; Sudan*
- Berkley Centre for Religion, Peace & World Affairs at Georgetown University. “Colombia: Religious Actors Inspiring Reconciliation.” Report. August 2013. <https://s3.amazonaws.com/berkley-center/130801BCColombiaReligiousActorsInspiringReconciliation.pdf>.
- Keywords: *IDPs; peacebuilding; reconciliation; religious leaders; faith communities; interfaith initiatives; Colombia*

FAs are often key to resettlement programs. They provide services to resettled migrants, and can exert their influence on local communities and national migration policies.

- Marshall, Katherine, Shaun Casey, Atallah FitzGibbon, and Azza Karam. “Religious Roles in Refugee Resettlement: Pertinent Experience and Insights, Addressed to G20 Members.” *Economics E-Journal*, Discussion Paper no. 2018-11. <http://www.economics-ejournal.org/economics/discussionpapers/2018-11/file>.
- Keywords: *resettlement; religious ethical teachings; faith-based operational interventions; advocacy; religious leaders*
- Eby, Jessica, Erika Iverson, Jenifer Smyers, and Erol Kekic. “The Faith Community’s Role in Refugee Resettlement in the United States.” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24, no. 3, (June 28, 2011): 586-604. <http://jrs.oxfordjournals.org/content/24/3/586>.
- Keywords: *resettlement; community-based organizations; advocacy; governmental/faith-based partnerships: co-sponsoring; interfaith encounters; US*
- Wilson, Erin. “Much to Be Proud of, Much to Be Done: Faith-Based Organizations and the Politics of Asylum in Australia.” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 24, no. 3 (September 1, 2011): 548–64. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fer037>.
- Keywords: *resettlement; ethics of hospitality; advocacy: challenging policies and narratives; community care model; governmental/faith-based partnerships; Australia*

Complementary pathways for admission to third countries are often promoted and implemented by FAs, as in the case of the long-standing Canadian private sponsorship program, and of some of the more recent humanitarian corridors initiatives.