MIGRATION POLICY PRACTICE

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Introduction

Solon Ardittis and Frank Laczko[1]

Welcome to the latest edition of *Migration Policy Practice*. This issue focuses on four relatively diverse migration policy areas: (a) the possible establishment of a European Union framework for the provision of humanitarian visas; (b) the need for participatory resettlement policies involving municipalities and international organizations; (c) key findings of an independent end-term review of the United Kingdom's Modern Slavery Innovation Fund (MSIF); and (d) new approaches to evaluating online migration campaigns.

The first article, by Andreas Backhaus, Mikkel Barslund and Augusta Nannerini of the Centre for European Policy Studies, discusses the implications of a resolution by the European Parliament in December 2018 asking the European Commission to present a proposal for a common European Union framework on the provision of humanitarian visas. The article argues that a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework building on both voluntary pledges and mutual financial support would constitute a feasible instrument for the broader protection of third-country nationals in fear of persecution. This would take account of the current fragmentation of European Union Member States around the issue of migration and humanitarian protection and address the political challenge of achieving full and European Union-wide cooperation and advocating for a compulsory scheme.

The second article, by Janina Stürner of Friedrich-Alexander-Universität of Erlangen-Nürnberg, discusses the limitations of current resettlement programmes which, apart from private sponsorship initiatives, are normally designed at State level and thus exclude hosting municipalities, which provide local protection in practice. The article argues that more cooperative resettlement processes, matching systems and greater local ownership could contribute to empowering refugees and hosting municipalities by providing them with a better understanding of the sociopolitical context, informational resources and ways of adding their expertise, potentials and needs to decision-making processes.

The third article, by Sasha Jesperson and Saskia Marsh, discusses the findings of an independent evaluation of the MSIF, which was recently conducted on behalf of the Home Office. The MSIF was launched by the Government of the United Kingdom in October 2016 to support innovative projects tackling modern slavery around the world. The fund aimed to tackle the root causes of modern slavery, strengthen efforts to combat slavery and reduce vulnerability, and build an evidence base to better understand what works in the future. The evaluation has identified a number of best practices for the future, including on the need for projects to be embedded in a deep contextual understanding and engage in a variety of activities. Research and evidence generation is also important but needs to be linked to tangible policy or programmatic outcomes.

The final article, by Gustavo López of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC), discusses the weaknesses of existing impact evaluations of online migration campaigns, particularly those aiming to raise awareness about the risks of irregular migration. While such campaigns have been used by governments and international organizations for decades, little evidence exists of their efficacy. The article shows that there are many key structural challenges that make traditional impact evaluations over the Internet difficult to conduct. For example, many campaigns rely on targeted Facebook ads, while in some regions such as West Africa, Internet access and Facebook usage are still limited. While online migration campaigns hold many promises, there is now a pressing need to invest in more research to identify new evaluation methodologies.

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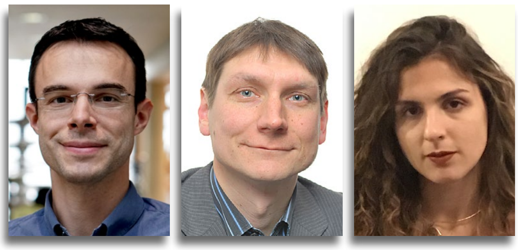

A Union Humanitarian Visa Framework

Andreas Backhaus, Mikkel Barslund and Augusta Nannerini[1]

Humanitarian visas in the context of European Union humanitarian protection

Can the European Union do more in support of third-country nationals in fear of persecution? The European Parliament believes so, adopting a resolution in December 2018 (European Parliament, 2018) asking the European Commission to present a proposal for a common European Union framework on the provision of humanitarian visas.

The intention of humanitarian visas is to provide third-country nationals in fear of persecution with a safe and legal pathway to European Union territory for the sole purpose of lodging an asylum application upon arrival. Applications for humanitarian visas will be processed at selected Member State embassies or consulates outside the European Union territory. Successful applicants will then use the visa to travel legally and safely to the territory of the issuing Member State, which will then process their subsequent asylum application (European Parliament, 2018). A main argument in favour of humanitarian visas is that 90 per cent of people who have obtained refugee status in European Union Member States arrived in Europe via irregular means, undergoing a journey with risks of severe hardship, with particularly pronounced dangers for women and vulnerable groups.

Currently, Member States are free to issue visas for humanitarian reasons for the purpose of granting access to their own territory,[2] but until now, this "negative liberty" has not led to a substantial number of visas having been issued.[3] Other initiatives for protected-entry procedures (PEPs) – administered by individual Member States – have delivered more concrete results. For example, in 2016, the Government of the United Kingdom initiated the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) and the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS), which respectively aim at resettling 20,000 refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict and 3,000 children from the Middle East and North Africa region by 2020. Civil society organizations in countries, such as Germany, Ireland, Poland, Slovakia and the United Kingdom, have adopted the Canadian model of private sponsorship schemes, according to which the sponsors offer financial and logistical assistance for the resettlement of refugees into the sponsors' communities and families. According to a recent assessment study (European Commission, 2018c), such sponsorship schemes only offer limited potential for harmonization at the European level.

On the European Union side, the European Commission has proposed a Union Resettlement Framework to establish "common Union rules on admission of third-country nationals through resettlement, including the rules on eligibility criteria and exclusion grounds, the standard procedures governing all stages of the resettlement process, the status to be accorded to resettled persons, the decision-making procedures to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of the Framework, and the financial support to the Member States' resettlement efforts" (European Commission, 2016:9). In December 2018, it

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1 Andreas Backhaus and Mikkel Barslund are Research Fellows at the Centre for European Policy Studies and members of the Mercator Dialogue on Asylum and Migration (MEDAM). Augusta Nannerini is a researcher at the Luigi Einaudi Foundation. The authors thank Sergio Carrera, Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen, Camilla Wismer Hagen, Anna Lübbe and Martin Ruhs for their valuable comments.

2 X. and X. v. Belgian State, ECLI:EU:C:2017:173; C-638/16, Council of Europe: European Court of Human Rights, 7 March 2017. Available at www.refworld.org/cases,ECHR,58de42b54.html.

3 At the time of writing, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) is in the process of ruling over a similar case: The Court will establish if the refusal of Belgium to grant humanitarian visas requested by a Syrian family at the Embassy of Belgium in Beirut is, among others, a violation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (International Federation for Human Rights, 2019). While the final decision of the Court will further develop the jurisprudence on humanitarian visas, it will not interfere with the proposal put forward in this paper, as the concept suggested here would neither touch on the competence of Member States to operate national-level schemes for humanitarian visas, nor would it exempt Member States from providing humanitarian visas at the national level if the Court ruled as such.

indicated broad agreement among the co-legislators, such that the adoption of the framework would be possible in 2019 (European Commission, 2018b). To ensure that resettlement to the European Union continues while the Union Resettlement Framework is finalized, Member States have pledged around 50,000 resettlement places under a new resettlement scheme to be completed by 31 October 2019 (European Commission, 2017).

This article highlights that participation in the Union Resettlement Framework is voluntary for Member States. This provision is likely to increase the political feasibility of the initiative. By contrast, recent initiatives in the context of the reform of the Common European Asylum System have effectively come to a political deadlock due to some Member States raising objection against a mandatory relocation of asylum seekers across the European Union (Radjenovic, 2019).[4]

In the following, it is argued that a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework built on both voluntary pledges and mutual financial support would constitute a feasible instrument for the broader protection of third-country nationals in fear of persecution. After highlighting the difference between humanitarian visas and other PEPs, the added value provided by a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework is laid out. Other assessments of the potential benefits of such a framework are further reviewed. Finally, the authors suggest how a European Commission proposal for a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework could be designed in line with the resolution adopted by the European Parliament, taking into account both efficiency and political feasibility.

Potential benefits of a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework

In contrast to the other PEP programmes, humanitarian visas are granted to individuals who seek to apply for asylum in a European Union Member State, but who currently reside in countries outside the European Union territory and who have not been (or not yet) legally recognized as refugees (such as by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)). Hence, humanitarian visas per se will already provide an added value by targeting a different group of third-country nationals in need of humanitarian protection. Given that the proposal of the European Parliament envisages applications for humanitarian visas being processed considerably faster than, for example, applications for resettlement, humanitarian visas will further provide a suitable instrument for responding to situations of humanitarian emergency.

From the perspective of third-country nationals seeking humanitarian protection, a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework would therefore provide a harmonized and transparent possibility for the admission to the territory of a Member State in order to file applications for asylum. Further, the possibility to apply for humanitarian visas directly from a crisis- or war-afflicted country would enable applications from third-country nationals seeking protection who, for various reasons, cannot migrate into the European Union by other means to file their asylum claims.

The main European Union added value of a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework is the potential that Member States jointly provide a higher number of humanitarian visas within a European Union framework than they would be willing to provide if they acted in isolation from each other. The fact that several Member States have already been providing humanitarian visas on a national level implies that there exists a shared interest in providing this instrument for protection. Consequently, issuing humanitarian visas not only fulfils the interest of the issuing State but also of the other Member States sharing that interest. In economic terms, an individual Member State that releases a humanitarian visa exerts a positive externality on other Member States that share the same interest. However, under the status quo, each Member State only takes its own benefits into account when deciding on the number of visas to be issued. The current absence of a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework prevents the internalization of the positive externality and thereby a greater commitment from every Member State. From a European Union-wide perspective, the level of protection is therefore lower than it could be if all European Union-wide benefits from additional humanitarian visas were taken into account by Member States. For Member States

[4] The Temporary Protection Directive represents an early but equally unsuccessful attempt at handling large and sudden inflows of displaced persons at the European Union level. Following its adoption, the directive was never called into action, partly because it requires a qualified majority in the Council of the European Union to be triggered (Beirens et al., 2016).

sharing a common understanding of the desirability of humanitarian protection for third-country nationals, it is then welfare-improving to provide this form of protection jointly as if it was a European Union-wide public good rather than a good exclusively enjoyed by each individual Member State.

Others have argued that a European Union initiative on humanitarian visas would reduce irregular migration to the European Union, as those seeking humanitarian protection could then travel directly from their countries of origin to a European Union Member State instead of having to cross European Union external borders irregularly (Moreno-Lax, 2018; Fernandes and Geny, 2018). The reduction in irregular migration would mean fewer lives being put at risk, such as by attempting to cross the Mediterranean, that migrant smugglers and human traffickers would be deprived of a part of their revenues, and that the European Union could free up funds currently allocated to the protection of its external borders. While the desirability of these effects is agreed upon and all initiatives related to humanitarian visas are acknowledged to represent steps in the right direction, it is expected that they will have only a minor impact on the irregular migration towards the European Union for two reasons.

First, Frontex (2019) reported a total of 150,114 irregular border crossings into the European Union in 2018. Based on the experience of the European Union resettlement scheme and political constraints, it is expected that not nearly the same number of humanitarian visas will be issued in the foreseeable future. Hence, irregular migration will likely remain a means of reaching the European Union for a substantial number of third-country nationals seeking humanitarian protection. Second, the EU+[5] recognition rate fell to 34 per cent of all first-instance decisions made on either refugee status or subsidiary protection in 2018 (European Asylum Support Office, 2019). If this decline indicated that irregular migration increasingly occurred for mainly economic reasons, then opening new legal pathways of labour migration would be a more promising means for reducing irregular migration. In the absence of such additional pathways, it is consequently expected that substantial migration pressure on the European Union external borders is sustained with or without a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework (Mercator Dialogue on Asylum and Migration, 2018).

A European Union initiative may also allow for economies of scale in the provision of humanitarian visas that could be achieved at the European Union level and hence provide another form of added value (Moreno-Lax, 2018; Fernandes and Geny, 2018). For example, harmonized admission criteria and procedures for European Union humanitarian visas would reduce uncertainty about eligibility and access on the part of the applicants. It is expected that such a thorough harmonization could only occur among a subset of European Union Member States (cf. below). To a certain extent, a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework would therefore coexist with national schemes for humanitarian visas.

Following the recommendations of UNHCR (2016) on the Union Resettlement Framework, the role of humanitarian visas for providing protection, not managing migration flows, is emphasized while affirming that a mechanism for humanitarian visas should not interfere with the possibility of lodging spontaneous asylum applications and respecting the principle of non-refoulement at European Union external borders. This article further agrees with the Parliament’s position that humanitarian visas should be complements, not substitutes, to the existing national entry procedures for humanitarian protection, resettlement procedures and spontaneous applications under international refugee law, and that the decision to issue humanitarian visas within any European Union framework should remain exclusively with the Member States (European Parliament, 2018).

What a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework could look like

The positive impact of a European Union humanitarian visa system on those seeking humanitarian protection would be maximized if all European Union Member States jointly agreed and provided such visas according to common European Union conditions and procedures. However, given the fragmentation of Member State preferences around the issue of migration and humanitarian protection, it is politically challenging to achieve full and European Union-wide cooperation on the issuance of humanitarian visas and to advocate for a compulsory scheme. Instead, a voluntary approach would still be able to reap some of the benefits argued in the previous section. The

[5] European Union Member States plus Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

aforementioned proposal for a Union Resettlement Framework offers a viable blueprint for a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework.

It is worth noting that the current European Union resettlement scheme that foresees the adoption of the Union Resettlement Framework will likely resettle a higher number of third-country nationals than individual Member State schemes. These resettlement schemes have resulted in the resettlement of 27,800 persons between 2015 and 2017. The current European Union resettlement scheme already resettled 15,900 persons between December 2017 and December 2018 (European Commission, 2018a), with a total of 50,000 resettlement places having been pledged by Member States up until the end of October 2019. Even if it is not sure yet whether the speed of the scheme will be sufficient to meet this target, the pledges and the commitment made to launch this initiative represented a significant expression of political will. The case of the European Union resettlement scheme is therefore taken as suggestive but encouraging evidence of the existence of positive externalities in the provision of humanitarian protection at the European Union level. A common Union Humanitarian Visa Framework may consequently lead to a jointly determined level of humanitarian visa provision that is likely to exceed the sum of previous national efforts.

In light of this, replicating the principle of the proposed Union Resettlement Framework for a Union Humanitarian Visa Framework is suggested, basing the latter on voluntary pledges and financial compensation.[6] In the case of the Union Resettlement Framework, the European Commission envisages that for each resettled person, Member States will receive compensation of EUR 10,000 from the European Union budget.[7]

The eventual application process for humanitarian visas will have to balance the intention of helping individuals under the threat of persecution and serious harm, the necessity of minimizing security risks to the citizens of participating Member States, and the desire to reach decisions on the provision of humanitarian visas faster than if an applicant underwent the rather lengthy procedures of Member State asylum systems.

These trade-offs are also expressed in the recommendations provided in the resolution adopted by the European Parliament: while it ought not to be complicated to initiate an application for a humanitarian visa in any consulate or embassy of participating Member States, the applicant is required to provide evidence of the fear of persecution or serious harm, to undergo an interview and pass a security screening. At the same time, these procedures should not amount to a full status determination process, so they can be completed within 15 calendar days. Noll and Gammeltoft-Hansen (2016) point out that a fast and fair process would provide an incentive for asylum seekers to reach out to the authorities of the destination countries instead of turning to human smuggling.

However, it is emphasized that screening procedures prior to granting a humanitarian visa must be sufficiently comprehensive to ensure that a successful applicant for a humanitarian visa is also likely to be granted asylum in the respective Member State following arrival.[8] Otherwise, both the purpose and legitimation of the humanitarian visas would quickly be undermined: Member States already experience significant difficulties in returning rejected asylum seekers to their home countries; the return of unsuccessful asylum applicants having entered a Member State on the basis of a humanitarian visa would equally be the responsibility of the Member State that had issued the visa and processed the application for asylum.

6 In line with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recommendations regarding the Union Resettlement Framework, pledges to grant humanitarian visas should not be made conditional on, for example, the implementation of return or readmission agreements by first countries of asylum (UNHCR, 2016).

7 As per Regulation (European Union) No. 516/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council of 16 April 2014 establishing the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. The maximum total number of persons to be resettled to the Union each year "will be determined through Council implementing acts establishing annual Union resettlement plans" (European Commission, 2016).

8 UNHCR (2018) provides recommendations regarding the early stages of accelerated and simplified procedures for asylum in the European Union. Some of these recommendations can also be relevant to the context of humanitarian visas. Defining and adopting the notion of "manifestly well-founded claims" (UNHCR, 2018:5), for example, appears particularly expedient to accelerate the application process.

A Union Humanitarian Visa Framework based on voluntary pledges and mutual financial support is a feasible and straightforward proposal for the European Union to support the victims of forced displacement and third-country nationals in need of humanitarian protection. ■

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Tailored to whom? – Envisaging refugees and host municipalities as central actors for sustainable resettlement

Janina Stürner[1]

With the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees, signatory States declare that "[r]esponses are most effective when they actively and meaningfully engage those they are intended to protect and assist" (United Nations, 2018:7). Conventional resettlement programmes, however, leave little to no space for refugees and hosting municipalities to contribute to sustainable processes. While the European Migration Network (EMN) describes European resettlement programmes as "tailor-made" solutions (EMN, 2016:49), recent national resettlement debates have focused more on politics of receiving countries than coherent responses to refugee situations. Furthermore, apart from private sponsorship initiatives, programmes are normally designed at the State level, thus excluding hosting municipalities, which provide local protection in practice. Therefore, the question arises as to whom these programmes are actually tailored. Can resettlement tools sustainably address the needs of refugees and hosting municipalities without offering them options to actively engage in shaping the process?

This article identifies limited transparency, exclusionary decision-making and narrow spaces for local ownership as the focal challenges in conventional resettlement programmes. Good practice examples in different European countries demonstrate, however, that municipalities, refugees, States and international organizations can cooperate to increase transparency, match individual potentials and needs with local offers and strengthen the democratic bases of resettlement through local community ownership. Consequently, this article does not want to claim that hosting municipalities and refugees should be left alone with the freedom of making decisions nor with the burden this places upon them. Instead, they should play an active role in contributing to sustainable resettlement in collaboration with international organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as with host States.

Increasing transparency as a precondition for cooperation

Of the current 28 European Union Member States, 20 are reported to be engaged in resettlement activities in 2017 (Eurostat, 2019). The increasing engagement for resettlement at both European Union and national levels over the last decade is, in principle, a very positive development. However, available places remain insufficient, and the enormous variety between the programmes clearly limits the transparency as regards resettlement to the European Union. Neither the proposal for a Joint European Resettlement Programme launched by the European Commission in 2009 and its adoption in 2012 nor the Commission's proposal for a Union Resettlement Framework have so far lead to a European Union-wide resettlement scheme with joint standards and criteria. For refugees and hosting municipalities, this complex system of programmes and schemes is more than difficult to access or even merely to grasp. This is problematic since research shows that refugees form strong preferences for certain destinations based on the scarce information available to them. As the Syrian founder of the refugee Support Group Network in Sweden once said, "Rumours rule refugee world". Excluding discussions on refugees' preferences and information needs in decision-making processes may thus increase the probability of secondary migration post-resettlement.

Not only refugees but also hosting municipalities could profit from more transparency in resettlement programmes. Interviews with researchers and German practitioners reveal that, in some instances, local caseworkers were not aware of the resettlement status of refugees, which led to unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles impeding fast integration.

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Even though most Member States have adopted procedures to inform hosting municipalities in advance, the latter criticize that they are frequently informed about placements of refugees and asylum seekers at very short notice, often receiving very little information about the persons who are going to form part of their communities. Nevertheless, there are also a number of good practice examples. At the European level, the SHARE Network was established in 2012. Headed by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) Europe, this network serves as a platform connecting local authorities interested or engaged in resettlement, fostering peer learning and advocating for more and better resettlement (SHARE Network, 2018:1). At the national level, the Swedish project Strengthening the Reception of Resettled Refugees (SMAK) was launched in 2013 to enhance communication between the national and the local levels. The programme contributed to clarifying roles and responsibilities and fostered improved planning of resettlement procedures (EMN, 2016:45). Providing hosting municipalities with better information on resettlement in general and on specific arrivals in particular is essential. Going even further, Finland shows the possibility of an inclusive decision-making process: resettlement interviews abroad are jointly conducted by officials of the Finnish Immigration Office and integration experts from municipalities and administrative districts (UNHCR, 2018:5).

Once refugees have been accepted for resettlement, pre-departure and post-arrival orientation are important instruments of information and expectation management. These can support refugees in taking proactive decisions and preparing for their future integration. Research shows that the better informed refugees and hosting communities are about each other's expectations, the better the chance for refugees to maintain their sense of agency post-arrival. Refugee pre-departure orientation offered by European Union Member States takes between two hours and one week. In the interest of refugees, resettlement processes should not be unnecessarily prolonged. It is therefore important that pre-departure orientation is highly transparent and tailored to refugees' information needs as much as possible. Good practice includes cultural orientation based on peer-support: by way of Skype sessions, former refugees living in the Netherlands contribute to preparing their compatriots for arrival. Including refugee voices in the evaluation of information services is equally important. In the framework of the transnational Modelling of Orientation, Services and Training related to the Resettlement and Reception of Refugees (MOST) Project, Sweden focused on ways to enhance refugee agency in resettlement by consulting refugee communities on pre-departure, post-arrival and integration tools (MOST Project, 2008:20–21). Sweden provides, furthermore, an example of good practice regarding the inclusion of municipal representatives in cultural orientation programmes. This is in line with the SHARE Network's recommendation that pre-departure cultural orientation should be tailored to the receiving locality as much as possible.

While most European Union Member States organize some form of pre-departure orientation for refugees, tailored pre-arrival orientation for hosting communities is less common and often formulated in a broad and general manner. Host countries could learn from the Norwegian Cultural Orientation Programme (NORCO): organized by IOM, it not only provides pre-departure orientation for refugees but also offers country information seminars and country profiles to inform Norwegian municipalities about arriving refugees and their situation (EMN, 2016:28). If the idea of rethinking resettlement as a participatory strategy is to be taken seriously, transparency is a crucial precondition for refugees and hosting municipalities to form realistic expectations. Only then can they contribute to supporting host States and international organizations when it comes to rendering the resettlement process more sustainable by voicing needs, potentials and offers.

Matching local offers with individual needs and potentials

Based on the exchange of good practices between European municipalities, the SHARE Network establishes that post-resettlement placement taking into account the needs and potentials of refugees and hosting municipalities can positively influence future integration. But how can refugees' potentials and needs and hosting municipalities' integration offers be included into placement decisions? At the intra-national level, the debate on dispersal is mainly centred around proportionality, focusing more strongly on how many persons a certain hosting municipality can receive instead of asking what kind of persons would thrive in which municipality. Certainly, aspiring to meet such high standards would require resettlement actors to evaluate a wide range of criteria and match a high number of cases. Over the past few years, IOM piloted the European Union skills profile tool as a way to assess third-country nationals' skills, qualifications and experience (European Commission, n.d.). In addition, information on vulnerabilities, as well as family and diaspora ties plays a crucial role in drawing up a comprehensive picture of refugees' needs and potentials.

Regarding the actual matching, cooperation between refugee studies, economic theory and artificial intelligence-based (AI) technology is currently striving to find answers. An algorithm-based matching tool has already been applied by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in the later phase of the 2015–2017 intra-European Union relocation programme. The aim of this matching process was to facilitate the integration of asylum seekers and reduce onward movements, thus addressing interests of both applicants and Member States. The EASO highlights that the matching tool increased the transparency of the process and could thus enhance the trust of Member States (EASO, n.d.). Evaluating the emergency relocation scheme, IOM states:

> **A matching tool to determine which Member State a beneficiary should preferentially be transferred to – based on factors such as language, professional skills, family links or other personal connections – needs to be an essential component of a future permanent solidarity mechanism. (IOM, 2018:4)**

However, the Organization also highlights the need to further fine-tune the EASO matching tool and criticizes that Member States' diverse preferences complicated and delayed the relocation process. For hosting municipalities, the focus therefore should not be on their own needs, such as attracting highly skilled professionals, which should be met through other migration channels, but rather on their capacities and strengths in different areas of integration. A proposal for bringing together asylum seekers and hosting municipalities on a voluntary basis within a European relocation system has been presented by Heinrich Böll Stiftung in early 2019 (Bendel et al., 2019).

Moreover, various research institutions have engaged in the development of AI matching tools to connect hosting communities and refugees after their arrival in a resettlement country. Of particular interest is a data-driven algorithm developed by the Immigration Policy Lab (IPL) at Stanford University and ETH Zurich in conjunction with Dartmouth College (IPL, n.d.), as well as the AI-powered software Annie MOORE developed by the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom, the Lund University in Sweden and the Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the United States. Annie MOORE is part of the Refugees' Say project introduced at the University of Oxford. The project makes use of machine learning, integer optimization and matching theory to operationalize the assumption that refugee resettlement is more effective when it is based on refugees' preferences, as well as the priorities and capacities of hosting communities (Refugees' Say, n.d.). Oxford University highlights that technological solutions allow resettlement staff to keep control of the process by providing recommendations instead of decisions and enabling professionals to focus special attention on particularly vulnerable persons. While Annie MOORE currently evaluates successful matching based on labour market integration, researchers recognize that successful integration has different meanings to different individuals. The next challenge for the AI-powered software is therefore to take refugees' own preferences into account.

Making use of local knowledge and strengthening local ownership

Ideally, resettlement programmes are flexible structures, incorporating lessons learned from the national as well as the local level. As European municipalities become increasingly aware of their own expertise in the integration of migrants and refugees, city networks such as EUROCITIES are demanding active participation in the planning and design of European Union resettlement processes:

> **City authorities should be directly consulted by the European Commission and the UNHCR as frontline operators and places where resettled refugees will need to integrate. City authorities should also be involved in decision making regarding resettlement quotas, financial assistance, integration models and resources. No resettlement scheme can be successful if a reception place is not available at local level, if local civil society organisations are not involved and if awareness-raising and consensus building amongst the local population are not properly managed. (EUROCITIES, 2015:3)**

Local authorities and civil society have a point, given that private sponsorship schemes in Canada show more successful medium-term integration outcomes than those financed by the Government. Experience gathered from private sponsorships in Europe and Northern America furthermore demonstrates that active local agency for resettlement can create a local sense of ownership and increase societal acceptance of resettlement not only by establishing close connections between resettled refugees and private sponsors but also through information provided to the wider community. Moreover, as local authorities work in closer proximity to the population than national governments, including them more strongly in the design of resettlement programmes could contribute to empowering refugees, migrants and civil society in a structural way: (former) refugees can supply valuable information and first-hand experience regarding the fit between resettlement and integration programmes on the one hand and refugees' needs and potentials on the other hand. Communities should tap into these resources. This could, for instance, take the form of consultative municipal resettlement and integration bodies including members with resettlement experience and civil society actors. Additionally, planning and implementation of support programmes for newcomers can be rendered more effective through an active participation of (former) refugees and migrants. Peer support by persons from the same ethnic or national group was generally identified as a good practice by European Union Member States in post-resettlement integration. The testimony of a former Eritrean refugee, now a resettlement ambassador of the SHARE Network in Antwerp, illustrates this point:

> **Cities such as Antwerp play a really important role in welcoming and supporting newcomers, and those of us who were once newcomers are a crucial part of that. For example I now work for ATLAS, the central integration agency in Antwerp, where I teach the mandatory 2-month integration course that is provided for all refugees and migrants who are new to the city.**
>
> **…**
>
> **Newcomers also trust me, because I am one of them and I'm speaking from experience.**
>
> **…**
>
> **I help them understand that they themselves are the biggest resource they have. … At the same time, I can help my Belgian colleagues to manage their expectations about their clients' integration progress. (SHARE Network, 2018:11)**

Finally, local support for resettlement can also play an important role in encouraging national decision makers to engage in or broaden existing resettlement programmes. The German Save Me Campaign is a case in point: in 2008, a coalition of civil society actors requested the City Council of Munich to adopt a formal resolution offering the reception of 850 refugees for which civil society would provide 850 private integration supporters. Not only did the City Council adopt this resolution, but the Lord Mayor of Munich went even one step further, calling upon the Government of Germany to engage in the UNHCR resettlement programmes. In the following years, more than 40 German cities passed similar resolutions, and in 2011, the Conference of the 16 Länder Ministers of the Interior decided that Germany would start working with UNHCR to offer resettlement places (Save Me, 2016). Similar strategies to engage municipalities in better refugee resettlement are currently developed by the civil society movement SEEBRÜCKE (sea bridge), founded in Germany in 2018 (SEEBRÜCKE, 2018).

Conclusion

Over the past few years, the number of people in need of resettlement has considerably risen worldwide. Nevertheless, States in the Northern Hemisphere are increasingly reluctant to expand or even continue resettlement programmes due to public concerns about growing numbers of arrivals of migrants and asylum seekers. Resettlement, however, is the one channel that offers a win-win situation to hosting countries and refugees alike. While the former get the chance to establish secured knowledge about who is going to live in their country and prepare for their integration, the latter can reach safety and a place to build a new future without having to endure perilous journeys. In order to increase public support for resettlement, awareness of this win-win situation needs to be strengthened through good practice examples. These, however, depend on well-prepared placement, which is crucial for the success of refugee resettlement. Integration occurs at the local level, involving refugees, local authorities and members of the hosting communities. Transparent resettlement processes, matching systems and spaces for local ownership could contribute to empowering refugees and hosting municipalities by providing them with a better understanding of the sociopolitical context, informational resources and ways to add their expertise, potentials and needs to decision-making processes. It therefore appears essential for current national and European debates about the future of resettlement to ascribe a more central role to active cooperation between refugees, hosting municipalities and States, as well as international organizations. ■

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Responding to modern slavery: The contours of an effective approach

Sasha Jesperson and Saskia Marsh[1]

The GBP 11 million Modern Slavery Innovation Fund (MSIF) was launched by the Government of United Kingdom in October 2016 to support innovative projects tackling modern slavery around the world. The fund aimed to tackle the root causes of modern slavery, strengthen efforts to combat slavery and reduce vulnerability, and build an evidence base to better understand what works in the future. Ten projects were funded in the first round of the MSIF, running from March 2017 to March 2019. The fund supported seven intervention projects and three research projects.

This article outlines the key findings of an independent end-term review commissioned by the United Kingdom Home Office. Deep dives were conducted on the seven implementation projects in Asia (India, the Philippines and Viet Nam) and Africa (Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa).

Alongside detailed project-level findings, the review also identified broader lessons that begin to outline the contours of an effective approach to modern slavery programming. It is these lessons that are discussed here, with a view to providing food for thought for the broader community of practitioners and policymakers working on modern slavery issues.

Case studies of programming innovations

As a starting point, it is useful to discuss specific examples of innovations within the projects that were funded, and the best practice takeaways they reveal, before turning to other best practice examples and lessons learned.

The MSIF was genuinely an innovation fund, supporting original thinking on modern slavery. Allowing for a more experimental "start-up phase" (as the initial phase of the MSIF could be considered) has the potential to generate important insights into new methodologies and allow newer entrants to a thematic area and opportunity to demonstrate their "value add" – whether on modern slavery or other issues.

In India, **GoodWeave's** Sourcing Freedom project expanded the organization's supply chain assurance model from the rug sector to other high-risk industries in India including apparel, fashion jewellery and home textiles. The online platform associated with the model offers near real-time access to supply chain map and inspection data, from the factory floor down to the outsourced homeworker. In doing so, it provides an unprecedented level of transparency at the "bottom" of the supply chain and supports companies to improve conditions for otherwise hidden workers. However, other examples of innovation were also identified: GoodWeave's programmes are an excellent example of a multi-stakeholder approach that engages businesses, communities and the government, as well as, more unusually, "middlemen" who are facilitating bonded/child labour. In addition, its suite of interventions works across the spectrum – in the preventative space (working with broader communities vulnerable to child or bonded labour), with at-risk individuals and then with individuals who find themselves as child or bonded labourers. This approach demonstrates a nuanced understanding of how to identify/engage with at-risk individuals and is testament to a rigorous, in-depth and holistic set of interventions – buzzwords that are often used, but not very often applied, by implementers.

Also operating in India, the **Freedom Fund** used a "hotspot" approach that is premised upon a multi-stakeholder approach that seeks to achieve behavioural change at multiple levels: Freedom Fund works with broader vulnerable communities, at-risk individuals and individuals who have already been placed in bonded/child labour or sex trafficking work, as well as with key government counterparts.

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In addition, the project sought to achieve systemic behavioural change through its highly strategic approach to identifying and addressing key systemic gaps that contribute to or enable modern slavery. Another key element of innovation is the action research methodology Freedom Fund and its partners use. This approach trains local facilitators (sourced from target at-risk communities) to help communities identify their issues that have resulted in them being drawn into bonded/child labour and trafficking. Communities then determine concrete ways of collectively tackling the issues. This focus on getting communities to realize their rights, and communities in effect empowering themselves, is truly transformative.

The **National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)** implemented a project in Ghana and Viet Nam focused on child trafficking, placing child victims at the forefront of helping to shape appropriate and impactful policy/practitioner responses. The NSPCC developed a toolkit, including the views of child trafficking victims, and used interactive forms of awareness-raising, such as interactive theatre. The project also went beyond the "usual suspects"; in Ghana, the NSPCC and its local partner Afrikids' engagement with transport workers and the Ghana Private Road Transport Union is a pioneering approach that has started to show real impact. In this context, child trafficking arises because families send their children to a relative or children decide to travel to earn money, in both cases unaware of the potential of exploitation. To travel, children find transport at the lorry park and may need to work along the way to pay their fares. As a result of the project's activities, long-distance drivers now question children travelling alone, or with an adult that does not appear to be a family member and will refuse them travel if they suspect they are at risk of exploitation.

Pacific Links Foundation has been highly creative in its use of Vietnamese celebrities in its trafficking prevention/awareness campaigns, which, together with the use of advertising partners, has meant it has been able to reach large audiences. This use of influential individuals to help spread key messages to target audiences is an example of innovation in action.

The **Retrak/Hope for Justice** project in Ethiopia adapted an existing approach used for street children and tailored it specifically to girls – many of whom had been domestic workers – an area of modern slavery that is often considered difficult to address because it occurs in the home. As part of a multifaceted project, Retrak engaged domestic workers, employers and brokers in "community conversations" to recognize the rights of domestic workers and the responsibilities of employers and brokers. Engaging across the supply chain is an effective way to transform the sector. Moreover, this approach recognizes that employment as domestic workers is an important revenue source for unskilled women and girls, and the Ethiopian economic climate ensures that in the middle-class families, both men and women need to work full time, creating a need for cheap domestic workers. Accordingly, as an industry, domestic work is important to both employers and employees, and initiatives that undermine the industry would alienate all stakeholders, including brokers who profit from managing the recruitment process. As a result, the aim is to make the industry less exploitative. By taking a soft approach that seeks to bring all three groups on board to change how the industry functions, the project resulted in contracts being drawn up between brokers, employers and domestic workers setting out rights and responsibilities, including family visits, education, pay and hours.

In Nigeria and the Philippines, **The Salvation Army (TSA)** engaged host families to provide individual support to survivors of trafficking. The initiative was slow to start because it was a new approach in both Nigeria and the Philippines, and there were no willing volunteers when the project was launched. But TSA leveraged their officers' network, engaging families that are already voluntarily engaged with TSA. Once families were trained and several families had hosted survivors of trafficking, more families have agreed to become involved. Continuous community engagements and awareness of the model has encouraged non-TSA members to volunteer as host families. Compared to other models of direct support, host families provide individual support and a home-based environment that is likely to have a higher rate of rehabilitation than a shelter. As host families are volunteers, with a contribution provided to cover food and other costs, the model is likely more cost effective also.

Given the challenge of responding to labour exploitation, **Stronger Together** partnered with the trade associations **Sustainability Initiative of South Africa (SIZA)** and **Wine and Agricultural Ethical Trading Association (WIETA)** in South Africa. This was an effective way of getting fruit and wine producers in the country to take the issue seriously.

Although the project was framed as "beyond audit", the involvement of SIZA and WIETA provided local ownership, credibility, reach and strategic input. Accordingly, the approach was not confrontational, but rather the aim was to be supportive of business, ensuring their involvement through steering groups that shared learning and best practice. Accordingly, it followed the approach set out in Ruggie's tripartite framework, which promotes a race to the top, and also seeks a remedy where exploitation has occurred.[2]

Best practice principle 1:

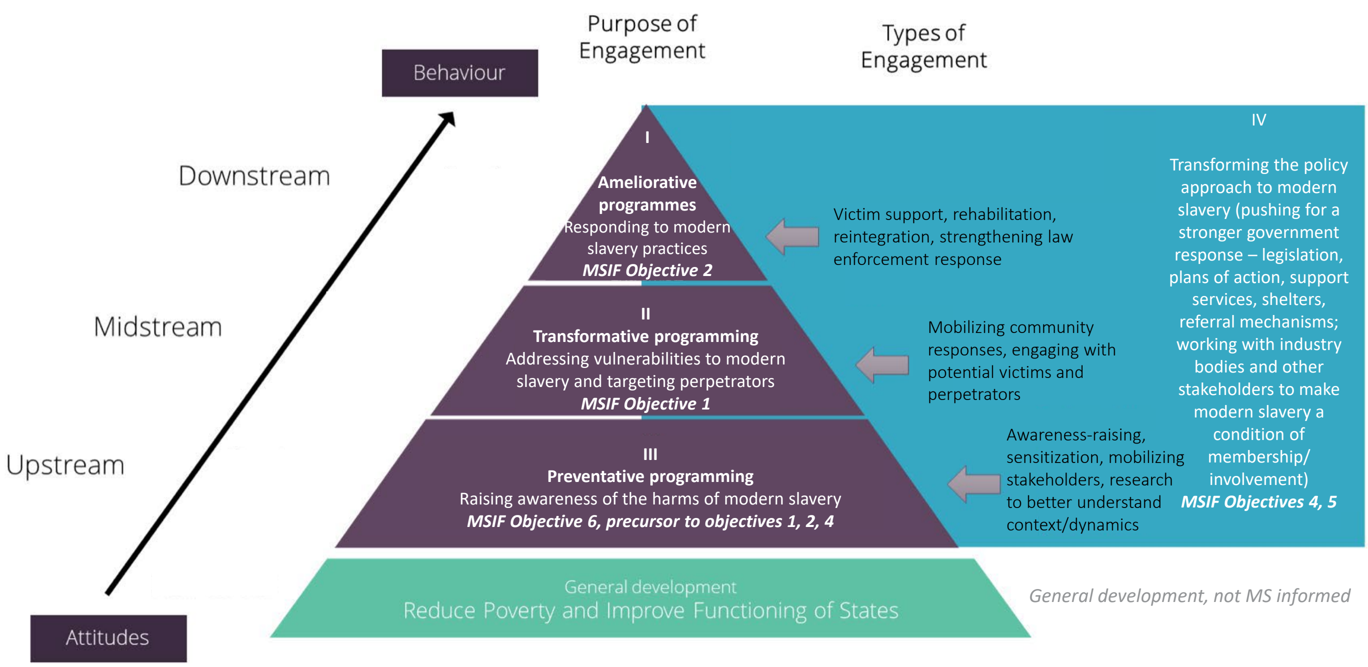
Understand what sort of behavioural change a project is seeking to effect

Long-term, integrated multidimensional approaches are key to tackling complex problems. Most of the programmes funded via the MSIF, at their core, were seeking to enact behavioural change.

A behavioural change framework that explains how some of the projects are already doing exceptionally well at seeking to enact deeper, multifaceted, behavioural change across multiple stakeholders is introduced. Contextual factors dictate the starting point and how much effort is required to achieve that change, who should be targeted and how.

Figure 1 is an intervention pyramid (adapted from the counter-terrorism/countering violent extremism space), which provides a useful means of visualizing what sort of behavioural change an intervention is seeking to achieve. There is strong evidence that well-designed interventions that seek to achieve systemic/holistic change, involving multiple stakeholders, are more likely to be successful in the long term.

Figure 1. Behavioural change pyramid[3]



[2] For further details, see www.business-humanrights.org/en/un-secretary-generals-special-representative-on-business-human-rights/un-protect-respect-and-remedy-framework-and-guiding-principles.

[3] Adapted by Saskia Marsh from methodologies used by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (see Brett et al. (2015)), drawing on research previously conducted by Sasha Jesperson to identify appropriate responses to modern slavery.

As explained by the pyramid, behavioural change interventions may be viewed along a spectrum, with different target audiences, time frames and intervening stakeholders. Each context will define what is possible, and where interventions should be focused. For example, in South Africa, labour exploitation has not been viewed as a serious problem, so before any direct interventions were implemented, a significant amount of awareness-raising was required to raise labour exploitation as an area of concern.

At one extreme is broad-brush work to deal with underlying factors in the long-term (bottom of pyramid). At the other are very targeted interventions focused on immediate action to interdict behaviour already underway (top of pyramid). A fourth category – which lies outside the pyramid but overlaps with the other categories within the pyramid – is about engaging with policymakers and other structural power holders or brokers on modern slavery issues. Here, it is the behaviours of these policymakers/institutions/relevant government counterparts that an intervention is seeking to change.

- Category III initiatives are preventative. They take a broad-brush approach and target the wider community where there are already indicators of an issue associated with modern slavery occurring. While this is an important category to better understand the dynamics and gain greater traction for modern slavery, this category is a precursor for change in the other categories.
- Category II initiatives are transformative. They aim to target at-risk individuals who are most vulnerable to being recruited into modern slavery, seeking to prevent exploitation by challenging the permissive environment.
- Category I initiatives are ameliorative, engaging in environments where modern slavery has already taken place. These initiatives engage with and rehabilitate individuals who have already been subjected to modern slavery. Many projects will need to engage with this category, while also seeking to transform the situation by engaging in categories II, III and IV.
- Category IV, which lies outside the pyramid, comprises initiatives that, at a macro level, shape and create policy frameworks/processes associated with tackling modern slavery. The primary target audience consists of State actors and potentially civil society organizations that are invited to take part in policy discussions. Engagement in this category alongside the others is crucial to achieving long-term structural change.

It is particularly important for projects to address the structural issues that lead to modern slavery. Programming should consider how to move beyond a focus on individuals and communities affected by modern slavery to engage with category IV stakeholders, including government counterparts and other powerbrokers.

The more impactful projects funded by the MSIF worked across several categories in the behavioural change pyramid, seeking to engage with multiple levers to transform the dynamics of modern slavery. However, engaging in behavioural change depends on the starting point and the appetite for change. In some contexts, significant broad-brush awareness-raising may be needed (i.e. engagements may need to begin in category III) to create an opening for more substantive change or more direct engagement with at-risk individuals (that is, move “up” the pyramid to categories II and I).

Best practice principle 2:

Work politically, engage locally

Evidence shows that the most successful behavioural change programmes, whether on modern slavery or other issues, recognize the need to “work politically” in fragile overseas contexts.[4] This was very much the case with the best-performing projects reviewed under the MSIF.

Contextual knowledge, the ability to navigate local political and stakeholder dynamics, the ability build local relationships and the ability adapt methodologies to local realities are thus critical to success, alongside technical skills. Engaging in research, stakeholder mapping and relationship building in the first six months of project delivery ensures partners engage with the nuances of the situation and have built foundations on which the sustainability of the project can rest. Selecting partners with the appropriate mix of skills and experience is thus key.

[4] See for example, Independent Commission for Aid Impact (2015) and Cheng et al. (2018).

A sustained capacity-building approach – necessary for deeper behavioural change over time – requires a methodological “red thread” and implementers who can engage in regular on-the-ground work to embed and operationalize policies. “Fly in, fly out” models are rarely effective; programmes with strong local presence are more likely to have a sustained impact. While some of the project implementers that have received funding from the MSIF in Phase 1 meet many of these criteria, others fell short.

Best practice principle 3:

Create feedback loops between modern slavery research, design and real-world interventions

The evidence base on “what works” in responding to modern slavery is still in its infancy. This places a responsibility for projects and programmes to contribute to building lessons for others on effectiveness. The MSIF tested new approaches to modern slavery, or sought to use the research generated to influence policy. Creating these tangible links between theory and practice – whether in terms of on-the-ground implementation or influencing policy debates and decisions on modern slavery issues – should be more consistently built into modern slavery programming.

Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and the generation of easy-to-understand results frameworks are not an add-on. They are an intrinsic component of the overall design process for a programme, directly linked to the programme’s theory of change and a core mechanism by which implementers as well as funders can adapt programme components as implementation progresses, to ensure stated outputs and outcomes are appropriate, and that activities remain relevant to the achievement of those.

There is a need therefore for modern slavery programmes across the board to more clearly articulate in their documentation their theory of change and underlying assumptions, make better use of SMART indicators to capture how they plan to achieve behavioural change more consistently, and then cascade these into reader-friendly reports for audiences who do not have the time or resources to refer to earlier documentation. Monitoring and evaluation takes some time, effort and additional resources to do well (best practice dictates that 10–15 per cent of a programme’s budget should be set aside for monitoring and evaluation purposes), but small improvements can be made quickly with relatively little additional cost.

Best practice principle 4:

Acknowledge that deeper change takes time

As an innovation fund, the MSIF supported initiatives that were potentially riskier than regular programming, which justifies a shorter time frame for projects. However, nearly all the projects supported by the MSIF were engaged in deeper behavioural change programming, where real impact cannot be achieved overnight.

For example, sustained behavioural change in the form of enabling a particular community to become, and remain, “slave labour free” takes between three to five years. Bringing on board government or institutional stakeholders, who may initially be slow to respond or resistant to change, will also require a longer time frame.

That is not to say that shorter projects fail; in fact, several of the implementers funded by the MSIF should be commended for the impressive results they have achieved so far, while taking a pragmatic, patient approach to generating longer-term deeper change. As noted above, the key is for partners to demonstrate in their theory of change and results frameworks that they are clear on their trajectory, that is, their desired “end state” and how their activities are generating more immediate outputs that will lead to medium-term outcomes that in turn will influence that end state.

Summary of best practices and key lessons

- Long-term, integrated, multidimensional approaches are key to tackling complex problems. Most programmes responding to modern slavery seek to enact behavioural change and would be strengthened by defining how they work across the behavioural change categories outlined in Figure 1.
- Evidence from programming on other complex sociopolitical issues shows that these multi-stakeholder approaches are more likely to have longer-term impact. To effectively respond, projects must be embedded in a deep contextual

understanding and engage in a variety of activities to institute change. The projects that were the most effective had a clear theory of change and activities that engaged with multiple levers to enact that change. The strongest of these delivered activities across all four categories of the behavioural change pyramid.

- However, achieving effective and sustainable results when it comes to behavioural change – whether on modern slavery issues or other thematic areas premised on individual or institutional change in complex environments – takes time.
- For shorter projects, it is useful for implementers to clearly articulate the overall "pathway to change", even beyond the current funding life cycle, so that donors can easily understand the desired end state. However, implementers also need to be realistic about what can be achieved in a given context and time frame.
- Evidence shows that the most successful behavioural change programmes, whether on modern slavery or other issues, recognize the need to work politically in fragile overseas contexts. A sustained, sophisticated capacity-building approach – necessary for deeper behavioural change over time – requires a methodological red thread and implementers who can navigate these political sensitivities and engage in regular on-the-ground work to embed and operationalize approaches.
- Selecting partners with the appropriate mix of skills and experience is thus key. A key criterion for success is for implementing partners to have an on-the-ground presence, as well as the ability to take models or approaches developed elsewhere and adapt them to local contexts.
- Research and evidence generation is important but needs to be linked to tangible policy or programmatic outcomes. Often, this process of engagement is just as, if not more, important than the research product itself. Such engagement is sometimes time-consuming but reaps rewards as findings are more likely to resonate with target audiences and thus more likely to lead to follow-up actions. ■

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Online migration campaigns: Promises, pitfalls and the need for better evaluations

Gustavo López[1]

Every year, thousands of migrants crossing Africa and the Mediterranean die in hopes of reaching Europe.[2] Research has shown that migrants sometimes embark on their journeys without accurate or complete information, and as a result, may put their lives at risk (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2018; European Commission, 2018). Organizations and governments have turned to information campaigns as a tool for raising awareness about the risks of irregular migration in hopes of saving lives.[3] Campaigns are disseminated through billboards, posters, news articles, movies, community sensitization events and now increasingly over the Internet. Yet little evidence exists about the efficacy of information campaigns in correcting misconceptions or changing attitudes among prospective migrants (Browne, 2015; Schans and Optekamp, 2016; Tjaden et al., 2018).

Conducting rigorous impact evaluations is difficult and expensive – and even more so for campaigns over the Internet. Issues like low-Internet access rates, low Internet speed and social media algorithms make it uniquely challenging to evaluate the impact of online information campaigns. This article reviews existing online migration campaigns, analyses the benefits and drawbacks of conducting campaigns over the Internet and discusses why new ways of obtaining evidence of their impact must be developed.

What are migration information campaigns?

Mass communication campaigns have been used as policy tools by governments, non-governmental organizations and other organizations for decades. Information campaigns use ideas, new information, persuasive arguments and the arousal of emotion to achieve some specific goal (Weiss and Tschirhart, 1994). Migration information campaigns tend to focus on raising awareness about the risks of irregular migration, providing information on the difficulties migrants may face in host countries, showing alternatives to irregular migration or sending anti-trafficking messages.

Migration information campaigns are a popular tool in Europe. Recently, the European Commission's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) opened up some of its EUR 3 billion fund for proposals related to migration information campaigns. This year, a new EUR 4.8 million call for proposals opened up. Several European governments are currently running their own information campaigns in key sending regions like West Africa and Western Asia. Similarly, IOM currently operates several information campaigns in West Africa aimed at potential migrants and their communities.

For decades, migration campaigns have operated through traditional media channels like newspapers, billboards, radio and television. For example, in 2006, the Government of Switzerland ran a campaign against illegal immigration in Cameroon and Nigeria through a set of television advertisements. In 2015, the Government of Germany put up billboards in Kabul, Afghanistan, with messages addressing "rumours about Germany". Now, as more people go online and spend more time on social media, many campaigns deliver messages directly into people's phones or computers. The next section briefly reviews the various types of online migration campaigns.

Types of online campaigns

Online migration campaigns vary in their goals, audiences and messages. They also vary by channels; some campaigns set up websites or create content on social media. Facebook, however, is by far the most popular medium for online campaigns.

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[2] See https://missingmigrants.iom.int/region/mediterranean.

[3] See https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/blg-803426 from the European Commission for a detailed listing of all the ongoing and planned information campaigns in European States as of 2016.

The most common type of recent information campaigns on migration in the African context includes those that seek to raise awareness of the dangers of migration, specifically irregular migration. These campaigns may highlight the physical danger migrants may face if they cross dangerous terrains like deserts or oceans, or the dangers posed by traffickers and smugglers. Often, the campaigns rely on community-based or peer-to-peer approaches to share information from migrants who themselves faced dangers while migrating.

Figure 1. Sample videos targeting potential migrants on risks of irregular migration

Sources: Migrants as Messengers (IOM); Telling the Real Story (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees).

IOM is currently operating several campaigns with this goal. For instance, the Migrants as Messengers campaign targets migrants and potential migrants in West Africa and aims to spread "information about the trials and tribulations of irregular migration". The campaign, which primarily operates offline, has an active Facebook page that shares videos that can be targeted to potential migrants in West Africa. Similarly, the Government of Australia launched a series of online videos in 2014 that directly told asylum seekers that they would "not make Australia home". The video features a military official in front of an image of turbulent waters warning potential asylees that they should not travel by boat.

A second type of online campaigns includes "myth busting" campaigns that aim to correct perceived misbeliefs about migration in Europe, especially as it relates to asylum and visas. The Government of Belgium, for example, launched a site titled Facts about Belgium that "aims to inform potential and current migrants about the Belgian legislation and procedures regarding migration". Germany's Federal Foreign Office launched a similar website, Rumours about Germany.

A third example are campaigns aiming to change public opinion about migration or immigrants themselves. One visible example is the I Am a Migrant campaign of IOM. This campaign aims to "promote diversity and inclusion of migrants in society. It's specifically designed to support volunteer groups, local authorities, companies, associations, groups, indeed, anyone of goodwill who is concerned about the hostile public discourse against migrants."

Lastly, campaigns with anti-human trafficking messages are also common in some regions, particularly Asia. These campaigns typically target potential victims in risk of trafficking and exploitation, and are usually disseminated in sending countries (Schans and Optekamp, 2016). They tend to highlight the dangers associated with falling victim to traffickers. IOM X ran several anti-trafficking campaigns across South-East Asia through a series of media channels like radio, billboards and an active Facebook page.[4]

The promise of the Internet

Online migration campaigns have become a popular tool because they are easy to operate, have lower associated costs and can reach better-targeted groups of people. Research has also shown that social media and messaging apps like Facebook and WhatsApp are important tools used by potential migrants and

[4] See www.facebook.com/IOMXorg/.

migrants in transit (European Commission, 2018; Dunsch et al., 2019). This section focuses primarily on the utility of Facebook given its popularity among campaign organizers.

Firstly, the ability to target detailed audiences makes online campaigns potentially more effective in reaching intended audiences. Facebook allows advertisers to narrowly define audiences based on demographics, location, behaviours and even interests.[5] A hypothetical campaign targeting potential migrants in Senegal can show a specific video to people who speak French or Arabic, between the ages of 15 and 35 and who state that they have family members abroad and are interested in migration-related pages. This means that there is a higher opportunity that the intended audience will see the message.

Secondly, online campaigns are also popular because of the ease of sharing digital media content. Anyone who follows a campaign's page – including potential migrants in key regions – will regularly see these posts as they scroll through their feeds. It is also easy to share this information with friends and family members over Facebook, ensuring an even wider footprint for content.

Lastly, online campaigns promise lower costs and ease of operation in delivering messages. Facebook's advertisement platform has become one of the top advertising tools because of how much cheaper it is compared to television or radio spots. For example, Pötzschke and Braun (2017) used Facebook advertisements to survey Polish immigrants living in different European countries. Using a budget of EUR 500, the researchers were able to reach almost 100,000 people.[6] This meant that each advertisement cost only a few cents per view.

The evidence gap for information campaigns

IOM recently released the first-of-its-kind impact evaluation of a migration information campaign. The study relies on robust methods to evaluate the causal impact of the campaign on the information, knowledge, risk perceptions and migration intentions of potential migrants. The study uses a scientific randomized controlled trial design recognized as the gold standard for impact evaluations (see the design chapter of IOM's impact evaluation report for more details).

Today, no such impact evaluation of an online migration campaign exists. Instead, managers of online campaigns may rely on engagement metrics to measure and monitor the reach of their campaigns. Facebook, for example, allows for detailed analysis of user engagement – how many people view a video, click on a link or share a certain post. Evaluation reports of online campaigns therefore tend to rely on reporting of the number of people who were reached by a campaign, but this has little to say about whether the campaign goals were reached. Were people's attitudes changed after watching the video? Did their perceptions of risks rise or decrease? And were potential migrants, the typical intended target, actually reached? These questions can often only be answered through a rigorous experimental design.

The absence of experimental research on online campaigns is primarily due to the difficulty in measuring the impact of campaigns on social media platforms. The field of online advertisement, similar in many ways to online information campaigns, has pioneered various methodologies to test whether an advertisement "works" but has also failed to find a perfect solution.

The pitfalls of online campaigns

Information campaigns are notoriously difficult to evaluate. These problems are compounded in a digital context. Key challenges that make evaluations difficult include problems with experimental design and difficulty in knowing whether the right targets are being reached (Lewis and Rao, 2015). New privacy technologies make it easier to mask one's online identity and make it harder to track someone, complicating experimental design (Coey and Bailey, 2016). It is also very difficult to create control and treatment groups that do not overlap, given social media's algorithms and the fact that multiple people may use a singular device or account. And in certain areas, like in West Africa, the sample of people who actively use sites like Facebook may not be representative of the population the campaigns are trying to reach.

5 See www.facebook.com/business/ads/ad-targeting.

6 Facebook's advertisement reach is the estimated number of people who saw the advertisement at least once. This does not necessarily mean that all who saw the advertisement clicked on it. Impressions are the number of times that an advertisement was seen, which can include multiple counts by the same individual.

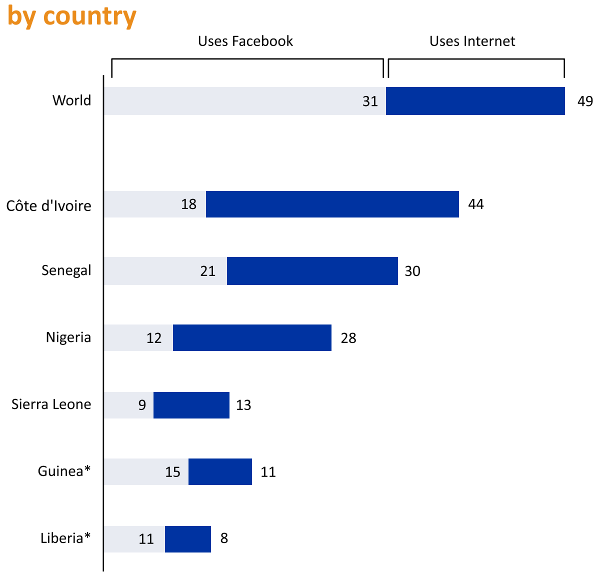
Firstly, what makes social media sites like Facebook so attractive for online information campaigns also makes them so difficult to evaluate through experimental design. Facebook's advertisement platform relies on algorithms to show your content to the people who are more likely to engage with it.[7] This makes sense for advertisers trying to sell a product; if you are interested in selling shoes, then the system will show the advertisement to people who are more likely to click on advertisements and make online purchases for shoes. But this also means that content is not delivered randomly, and instead, is shown selectively. This makes it infeasible to apply the same concepts of a randomized controlled trial to Facebook. This effect, known as selection bias, makes it almost impossible to control for unobservable differences between people who get shown an advertisement and those who do not (Lewis and Rao, 2015). People who are more likely to click on advertisements or watch videos may be fundamentally different from people who would not click on them. If the effect of information delivered through an advertisement through the system is to be tested, the result would be a biased sample of people that may not represent the population of interest.

However, Facebook does offer some promising options. One of them is the Test and Learn platform.[8] This tool allows one to test a counterfactual of what would have happened if someone had not seen a particular advertisement. However, the tool only allows for advertisements run in English in the United States and Canada, and the campaign must have a minimum budget of at least USD 30,000. Another option is the A/B testing tool called split testing, which allows one to test differences in advertisements and how they perform. For example, one can test whether different target audiences will produce different results in engagement, or whether different creative content will lead to more views or clicks.

A second important problem in evaluating online campaigns is that it is not known whether potential migrants online are truly reached. While Facebook allows for detailed targeting using key demographic variables like age, sex, language and even whether someone has friends living in another country, it is much more difficult to assess whether someone has the intention to migrate. This problem is further complicated given that the population of people who use Facebook are not representative of the overall population. In West Africa – a key target area for many online campaigns – Internet access rates are also low across different groups.

Thirdly, it is important to consider low-Internet access rates in key immigrant-sending locations. Today, over 500 million people can access the Internet in Africa,[9] but digital connectivity varies greatly by country and region. Figure 2 shows Internet access and Facebook usage in six West African countries. These Internet usage rates are for the entire population of each country, and not necessarily people who are intending to migrate. All six countries fall below the global average for Internet access (49% as of 2017). Nearly 75 million people use the Internet in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone in 2019. Overall, some 35 million people use Facebook in the six West African countries targeted in this study.

Figure 2. Internet and Facebook usage rates, by country



Note: Prepared by the author. Facebook users are at least 13 years old. Facebook users are for monthly active users and is updated as of June 2019. Internet user data is for 2017; the percentage of Facebook users is larger than the share of Internet users for Guinea and Liberia.
Sources: World Bank, 2017; Facebook, 2019; UN DESA, 2019.

Limited Internet access and Facebook usage must be considered when implementing an information campaign over the Internet. More importantly, in addition to the low Internet penetration rates, issues exist with the quality and speed of the Internet access. The European Commission found that in some areas of West Africa, Internet speeds were too slow to reliable process or play videos – one of the key elements of migration-related online information campaigns (European Commission, 2018). Research

[7] See www.nytimes.com/2017/10/12/technology/how-facebook-ads-work.html.

[8] See www.facebook.com/business/help/1915029282150425?ref=fbb_measurement.

[9] See www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm.

from the Worldwide Speed League shows that Africa has the slowest Internet speeds in the world (Kazeem, 2017).

Although the problems with experimental design and Internet access rates remain important obstacles for rigorous evaluations, there is a growing body of creative solutions that migration practitioners can adapt. For instance, Gordon et al. (2019) reviewed 15 randomized controlled trial (RCT) experiments conducted on Facebook among United States financial companies. They find that rigorous experiments are tremendously expensive to set up, but it does suggest that they are possible. Johnson et al. (2017) suggest a unique methodology they call “ghost ads” to create counterfactuals, allowing researchers to estimate what would have happened without the advertisements. And more and more researchers are using Facebook to conduct surveys, suggesting the possibility of recruiting participant panels to conduct experiments on third-party platforms like SurveyMonkey or Qualtrics.[10]

Conclusion: The need for evidence and innovation

Information and awareness-raising campaigns have now been used by governments and international organizations for decades, and significant financial investments continue to be made ensuring their continued use. Yet little evidence exists about their efficacy. The recent IOM RCT-based impact evaluation of an offline migration campaign provides evidence of the causal impact of these campaigns on migrant’s intention to migrate, and their attitudes and perceptions of the risks of irregular migration. It allows for better understanding of what works and what does not in that context. As more and more campaigns launch online components, it will also be essential to test and analyse the true impact of these campaigns.

As noted, there are many key structural challenges that make conducting traditional impact evaluations over the Internet difficult. Many campaigns rely on targeted Facebook advertisements to deliver information and content to potential migrants and their communities. In West Africa, where a lot of European interest in information campaigns lie, Internet access and Facebook usage is limited. Moreover, the platform itself was designed to deliver advertisements to sell products and thus introduces bias that would make experimental design infeasible and makes designing a rigorous evaluation challenging.

Still, there is a growing field of research that is testing new ways to rigorously evaluate the impact of online advertisements. While it may not yet be possible to conduct randomized controlled trials on Facebook, other tools and scientific methodologies can help establish solid evidence. Online migration campaigns hold many promises, but investment should be placed more on researching their evaluation methods and avoid falling in their many pitfalls.

[10] See Allcot et al. (2019), Pötzschke and Braun (2017), Rait et al. (2015), Guillory et al. (2018) and Yuan et al. (2014) for examples of sampling through Facebook.

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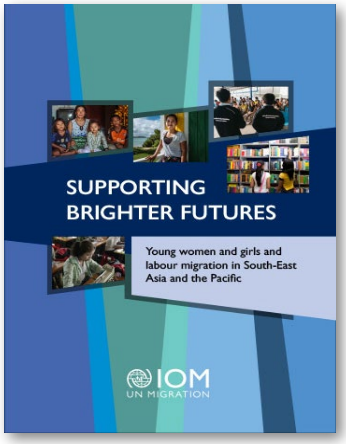
Publications

Migration Health Annual Report 2018
2019/28 pages
English

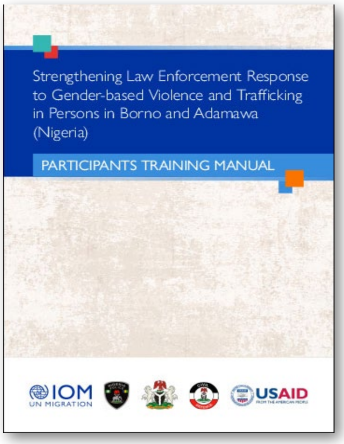
The Migration Health Division of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) acts with Member States, UN agencies and other partners in the international community to meet the operational challenges of migration, advance understanding of migration health issues, encourage socioeconomic development through migration, and work towards ensuring respect of the human dignity and well-being of migrants. This report provides a snapshot of IOM's health activities in 2018 and presents key achievements under three broad themes: (a) improved access to health services for migrants; (b) outbreak preparedness and response; and (c) international cooperation and global partnership in migration health. The report illustrates IOM's growing multidimensional migration health activities and partnerships in 2018, and demonstrates IOM's commitment to advancing the health of migrants and their families worldwide, as well as supporting IOM Member States in addressing migration health challenges.



Supporting Brighter Futures: Young women and girls and labour migration in South-East Asia and the Pacific
2019/124 pages
E-ISBN 978-92-9068-794-8
English

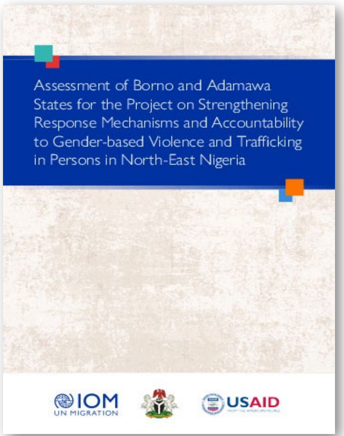
Supporting Brighter Futures: Young Women and Girls and Labour Migration in South-East Asia and the Pacific explores and critically examines the existing evidence base on key aspects of the topic so as to inform potential policy and programmatic responses designed to enhance labour migration impacts for young women and girls in South-East Asia and the Pacific. This publication entails a desk-based review of the current published evidence base and provides a knowledge "stocktake" for those involved in the ongoing development, delivery and refinement of related policy and programmatic interventions in the region.

This research publication was made possible through support provided by the Gender Equality Branch of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.



Strengthening Law Enforcement Response to Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking in Persons in Borno and Adamawa (Nigeria)
2019/98 pages
English

This Training Manual is part of the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) efforts to strengthen law enforcement response to gender-based violence and trafficking in persons in Borno and Adamawa states of Nigeria, with focus on the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) personnel in the current humanitarian situation in the North-East Nigeria. The manual was designed based on the recommendations from the training needs assessment conducted by IOM in North-East Nigeria. It integrates training materials and resources developed by other agencies and experts, provides recommendations from the assessment report, operationalizes key guidelines including those from the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and is an accompanying resource for the training of trainers.



Assessment of Borno and Adamawa States for the Project on Strengthening Response Mechanisms and Accountability to Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking in Persons in North-East Nigeria
2019/54 pages
English

Under the framework of the technical working group on Engaging the Security Sector on Gender-based Violence (GBV), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is implementing a project on strengthening response mechanisms and accountability to GBV and trafficking in persons (TIP) in North-East Nigeria, with focus on the Nigeria Police Force and Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps in Borno and Adamawa states. IOM carried out an in-depth assessment in October–November 2018 to map and assess training needs and existing internal mechanisms in addressing GBV, TIP and sexual exploitation and abuse. Recommendations made in the assessment report were tailored to the development of the training of trainers manual for law enforcement agencies.

The International Forum on Migration Statistics (IFMS) is a unique, global platform devoted to improving data on migration in all its dimensions. Organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the IFMS offers space for dialogue for a broad range of actors, from national and regional authorities, NGOs, international agencies and the private sector.

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- Cover any area of migration policy but discuss, as far as possible, particular solutions, policy options or best practice relating to the themes covered;
- Provide, as often as applicable, lessons that can be replicated or adapted by relevant public administrations, or civil society, in other countries.

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