The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework: A Commentary

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This article examines the Global Compact on Refugees—a UNHCR-led effort following recommendations by the United Nations. The article reviews the progress to date, focusing in particular on Annex I of the 2016 New York Declaration: the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). It argues that two elements of the CRRF—its emphases on inclusion and self-reliance and its call for easing pressures on host societies—are necessary and commendable, but that two other elements—the focus on voluntary repatriation and third-country solutions—create unrealistic expectations about the degree to which these solutions can reach enough refugees to constitute a meaningful durable solution. Neither assisted voluntary return nor third-country solutions will serve enough refugees to make a significant difference to the global population of displaced people.

Keywords: refugee, global compact, UNHCR, CRRF, resettlement, durable solutions, repatriation, inclusion, self-reliance, education, development aid

Introduction

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, there have been three great upsurges in attention accorded to global migration. The first occurred in the early 1990s, in the context of a mass outflow of refugees following the Yugoslav wars. The second was in the early 2000s, when the United Nations took up the issue, leading eventually to the state-led Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD).¹ The Global Forum has had 10 meetings and is still active. And the third major moment of attention resulted from the mass influx of refugees to Europe in 2015 and 2016.

In the aftermath of the influx, and against the backdrop of well-publicized deaths of refugees in the Aegean and Mediterranean, the United Nations adopted the New York Declaration, which called on the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and states to agree to two separate compacts on migration in the autumn of 2016 (United Nations 2016). The refugees compact consists of two parts. The first is Annex I of the New

York Declaration: the CRRF. The second is the programme of action, which will underpin the CRRF and will guide its implementation. This article examines the CRRF. It also accords brief attention to the 'zero draft' of the Global Refugee Compact published in early 2018 (UNHCR 2018). As the name implies, the draft is a working document that will be discussed at a series of formal consultations at the United Nations in Geneva between February and July 2018 (Rummery 2018). Only then will we see the final, non-binding Global Compact on Refugees.

The article argues that two elements of the CRRF—its emphases on inclusion and self-reliance and its call for easing pressures on host societies—are necessary and commendable, but that two other elements—the focus on voluntary repatriation and third-country solutions—create unrealistic expectations about the degree to which these measures can reach enough refugees to constitute a meaningful durable solution. Neither voluntary return nor third-country solutions will serve enough refugees to make a significant difference to the global population of displaced people.

Background

The United Nations General Assembly adopted a set of commitments known as the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016. Despite some concerns before the meeting, the Declaration reaffirmed the international refugee regime, the core of which is of course the 1951 Convention, and committed the states to strengthening mechanisms protecting forced migrants. Following the Declaration, work began on two new global compacts: first, a Global Compact on Refugees and, second, a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration. UNHCR directs and oversees the development of the Global Compact on Refugees, which is separate from the state-led Global Compact on Migration facilitated by Switzerland and Mexico. The making of this distinction at the outset appears both wise and prescient in view of the American withdrawal from the Global Compact on Migration.

Content

On the matter of refugees, Member States undertook four broad objectives in adopting the Declaration. The first, as noted, was a reaffirmation of existing obligations to refugees. The second was a commitment to increased burdensharing. The third was a commitment to work towards the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees itself. And the fourth was the agreement to a CRRF. The CRRF makes four broad recommendations:

- first, the Global North should ease pressures on host societies;
- second, the global community should encourage and support refugee self-reliance;

- third, states should expand third-country solutions; and
- fourth, states should support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.

These proposals are best evaluated empirically: are they realistic, and will they provide a durable solution for significant numbers of refugees? Taking them in reverse order, the rest of the article pursues these questions.

Supporting Conditions in Country of Origin for Safety in Return and Dignity

For refugees, repatriation is the ideal solution, as most want to return home.² And, over the decades, millions have done so: between 1974 and 2013, just over 28 million refugees were repatriated (UNHCR 2015a: 49). Returning home signifies both a personal and a political triumph: refugees are home and, if they are safe there, then the original causes of their flight have been resolved.

Repatriation can occur in multiple ways. It may be either unassisted or assisted, and the assisted variant may, in turn, be voluntary or forced. Unassisted return occurs even in some of the world's most dangerous conflict zones. For example, 200,000 people returned to Ethiopia during the 1974–91 civil war, and 500,000 refugees returned from Zaire/DRC to Rwanda in 1996, shortly after the genocide (Hammond 2004, 2014: 503).

Assisted repatriation involves Member States or international organizations (UNHCR, IOM) providing advice, information, funds and/or transport to aid refugees who wish to return home. Forced return occurs, as the name implies, without the consent of the repatriated.

Under the cessation clause of the 1951 Convention, voluntary repatriation should only occur if the conditions that led to the refugees' flight have been resolved and, above all, when they no longer face a well-founded fear of persecution on the grounds of religion, race, nationality, political opinion or membership of a social group. In principle, this requires the establishment of conditions that guarantee 'basic rights', a 'fundamental and durable' change in the home country, as well as 'effective protection' (Cwik 2011: 724–725). In practice, UNHCR will also assist refugees who want to return even when the agency does not believe that it is safe to do so (UNHCR 1996a: Chapter 3.1).

The importance of voluntary repatriation as a durable solution is reflected in articles 66–68 of the 'zero draft' (UNHCR 2018). Though it can be an ideal solution under the right conditions, there are serious reasons to doubt that the practice of voluntary repatriation will be expanded. Conditions are rarely ideal, and repatriation is rarely fully voluntary. There is always, and inevitably, a blurry line between some forms of forced and some forms of voluntary repatriation (Long 2013: Chapters 3–6). The Comprehensive Plan for Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees secured the 'voluntary' return of 88,000 Vietnamese refugees, but scholars and activists have widely criticized the programme as a capitulation to political expediency and as a programme of forced repatriation in disguise.³

Even were these moral concerns addressed (or set aside), the case in favour of voluntary repatriation as a durable solution falters in the face of overwhelming numbers. In 2013, a year in which 2.5 million refugees fled beyond their borders (another 6.5 million were internally displaced), approximately 414.000 refugees returned to their countries of origin (UNHCR 2014, 2015b). Moreover, voluntary repatriation is decreasing as displacement increases. Whereas 14.6 million refugees returned to their countries between 1993 and 2003, only 6.5 million did so between 2003 and 2013 (UNHCR 2015b). In 2014, the number of returnees fell further, to 126,800 (UNHCR 2016). Under the most expansive definition of return, 753,549 refugees were repatriated in 2015.⁴ In that year, some 5 million people were displaced.⁵ In the greatest current refugee crisis, the Syrian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that were originally optimistic about repatriation possibilities now view that option as impossible for the foreseeable future.⁶ Voluntary repatriation's main role—both in the CRRF and as a durable solution overall—might be more in reassuring host societies than anything else.

It is not hard to see why. The greatest cause of flight is not persecution but, rather, war and institutional collapse (Crisp 1995). There are, to be sure, cases of pure persecution: the hundreds of thousands of Rohingya who fled Myanmar are an important contemporary example. Nonetheless, the majority of refugees fled generalized violence rather than individual persecution. The top refugee-producing countries are:

- 1. Syrian Arab Republic (5,500,000);
- 2. Afghanistan (2,500,000);
- 3. South Sudan (1,400,000);
- 4. Somalia (1,000,000);
- 5. Sudan (650,600);
- 6. Democratic Republic of Congo (537,000).

All are war-torn, failed and/or highly unstable states (statistics here from UNHCR 2017e).

Ending the causes of flight in any of these countries requires nation building, including the development of stable institutions, a rights-respecting culture, political practices of accommodation and mutual respect for ethnic and religious difference, and social and political resilience that will enable the states to cope with exogenous shocks in the form of economic crisis and violent attack. States must be able to build 'successful societies' (Hall and Lamont 2012).

The problem is that nation state building, even if we are to overlook its colonial undertones, is much more easily said than done. Recent experience in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria shows that the Global North's record in this area is poor. Indeed, there is a reasonable argument that the main effect of every Western intervention has been to get more people killed. Hoping to achieve the 'conditions in country of origin for safety in return and dignity' is

about as realistic as perennial calls for world peace—and as about as likely to be achieved.

Expanding Third-Country Solutions

Accidents of geography rather than wealth or capacity determine the current distribution of refugees internationally, and it is a distribution that is impossible to justify. Fully 86 per cent of refugees live in the Global South, and over half of them are in countries with a per-person GDP of less than US\$5,000. There is thus a strong—indeed seemingly incontrovertible—case in favour of expanded third-country solutions in the Global North.

Against this background, the CRRF recommends several such solutions: expanded private-sector engagement; expanded opportunities for skilled migration, labour mobility, and education; and expanded resettlement. All are commendable, though they face challenges.

Education is likely the low-hanging fruit. Using scholarship money provided by states of the Global North to allow refugees to study at those countries' universities is a relatively easy matter, although, as is the case with all scholarships, only a few students would benefit. Efforts to expand private-sector engagement, by contrast, face serious constraints. Capital is drawn to high-return, low-risk opportunities, whereas refugees live in areas that are high-risk and would probably provide low returns.⁷ But that does not have to be the end of the story. Governments and the World Bank can use financial incentives to attract private-sector interest. Jordan is currently experimenting with such programmes and has achieved a modest degree of success (more on this below).

There are multiple arguments in favour of expanding skilled migration and opening labour policies generally. Although the 'win, win, win' formula bandied about by global migration stakeholders oversimplifies the matter—as all cheerleading does—migration on the whole is a benefit for migrants themselves (above all) and to the societies welcoming them (to a lesser, but still tangible, degree) (Hansen 2016). In the case of refugees, more open immigration policies in the Global North might take pressure off asylum systems by channelling into more appropriate categories individuals who are fleeing intolerable conditions in their countries of origin but who do not technically face a well-founded fear of persecution that would make them eligible for asylum status.

Given that the vast majority of the world's migrants is low-skilled, such policies will only make a meaningful difference if they allow for low- as well as high-skilled immigration. There is, for the moment, little chance of that. Publics in the Global North are opposed to current levels of immigration, and a serious expansion of migration policy—for instance, by allowing tens of thousands of low-skilled visas—would face serious opposition in the United States and all European countries (indeed, it is an utter non-starter in Eastern Europe). Even the world's most immigration-friendly countries—Canada and Australia-strongly favour skilled migration and provide only temporary work visas for the unskilled.

Leaving the proposal's practicality aside, it is worrisome—if not objectionable—for other reasons. UNHCR and refugee advocates have for decades tried to maintain the distinction between refugees and economic migrants. Deliberate expansion of immigration policy, or even the advocacy of one, with the goal of allowing refugees another entry point to the Global North might collapse that distinction. This would be a great risk to take, above all when there is no guarantee that refugees, rather than non-refugee economic migrants, would benefit from migration schemes for the low-skilled.

The final third-country solution-expanded resettlement-is also unlikely to benefit large numbers of refugees (also discussed in UNHCR 2018: section 3.2). Third-country resettlement involves processing refugee claims abroad and bringing refugees directly from a refugee camp or non-camp setting to a 1951 Convention signatory state without the need for the long and dangerous journeys by land and/or sea. The problem is, again, the numbers: too few refugees are resettled. Approximately 90,000-100,000 refugees are resettled each year. The vast majority of them is resettled by the United States (some 70,000 per year), Australia (some 6,000-12,000) and Canada (some 12,000-14,000) (UNHCR 2016: 21-22). In theory, 14 out of the 28 EU Member States operate resettlement regimes (Kumin 2016), but they reach a relatively small number of people: Sweden resettled 3,400 refugees in 2017 and will raise its quota to 5,000 under the current government (Swedish Migration Agency 2017) and Norway resettles between 1,000 and 3,000.⁸ Denmark, by contrast, reduced its commitment from 500 (in place since 1989) to zero, though it may voluntarily resettle some refugees (Rolander 2017). Under pressure from both the German government and public and press opinion at home, the United Kingdom Conservative government agreed to resettle 20,000 Syrians over four years as a one-off measure.

Since the autumn of 2015, when the global refugee crisis became international news, there has been much talk of expanding resettlement. Observers paid particular attention to Canada's private resettlement scheme as a means to harnessing private-sector resources in a manner that would allow resettlement to expand. None of these efforts, despite the heartfelt goodwill surrounding them, has translated into a sufficient increase in resettlement. To be clear, resettlement has increased in percentage terms. From 2013 through 2015 (inclusive), the following numbers of people were resettled: 71,449, 73,608 and 81,893 (UNHCR undated b). In 2016, the year after the refugee crisis became global news, 126,291 people were resettled—a 35 per cent increase from the previous year (*ibid*.). Parsing the data by country, however, it is clear that most of that increase reflected expanded resettlement in Canada and the United States, to the benefit of Syrian refugees coming via Jordan and Turkey. Canada doubled its intake from 10,236 to 21,865 and the United States increased its intake from 52,583 to 78,761 (*ibid*.). These increases were one-off occurrences: Canada, after its government surpassed an electoral promise to admit 25,000 Syrians (some 40,000 came overall), rolled back the programme (Government of Canada 2017). President Donald Trump has turned decisively against accepting refugees into the United States: in September 2017, the United States State Department issued, under Trump's orders, a report indicating that the United States will reduce resettlement to 45,000 in 2018 (Laughland 2017). The European Union currently has a proposal for a new resettlement scheme for 'at least' 50,000 refugees, and the European Commission has set aside 500 million euros for resettlement (European Commission 2017). 'At least' probably means 'at most' but, even if successful, the scheme would, given American reductions, involve moving forward in order to stay still.

Whether global resettlement numbers remain at some 100,000 per year or rise on the back of European Union and Latin American efforts (countries from this region are now entering the field) makes, in the end, little difference. The numbers are just too small: between 2013 and the first half of 2017, UNHCR and the receiving states resettled 405,135 refugees; in 2015 alone, 1.8 million people fled their countries seeking asylum (UNHCR 2016: 6). The contrasts are even more striking if the global population of the forcibly displaced (including internally displaced persons) is included: there were 45.2 million in 2012, 51.2 million in 2013, 59.5 million in 2014 and 65.3 million in 2015 (*ibid.*: 5). Globally, only 1 per cent of refugees are resettled.

There is little reason to think that the numbers of resettled individuals will ever increase drastically, as there are serious structural constraints on expanding resettlement. The first is political opposition: the 2015 global upsurge in sympathy for refugees is fast becoming a distant memory. By 2016, majorities across Europe associated refugees with terrorism, and majorities in all countries but two—Germany and Sweden—believe that refugees take jobs and social services from citizens. A majority of Swedes and Germans said that refugees make their countries stronger because of their hard work and talents; the most negative attitudes were found in Central Europe and Southern Europe (Poushter 2016).

The second obstacle to expanding resettlement is financial. In the United States, costs for processing the resettlement of refugees (security checks, confirming identity, overseas language, and cultural orientation and initial settlement grants) were \$494 million in 2014 and \$418 million in 2015 (Hansen 2015: Table II). These figures represent approximately \$8,000 per refugee, before any post-resettlement costs for health, social assistance or education are included. The conservative Center for Immigration Studies estimates the five-year cost of a resettled refugee at \$64,370 (Valverde 2017). These costs are manageable when refugee-resettlement figures are relatively low, but they would become financially and above all politically intolerable were they to rise significantly.

Given the costs of resettlement, UNHCR officials, NGOs and states have looked to Canada's private-sponsorship model (La Corte 2016), which exists

in addition to the usual government-sponsored system. In both types, resettled refugees receive financial support for housing, food and clothing for one year. The main difference between the two categories is that, in the latter, the government provides the financial support whereas, in the former, private individuals or entities (churches, universities, etc.) provide these resources. The financial savings of private- over government-sponsored resettlement is approximately \$22,000 for a single person or \$38,000 for a family of three (the official poverty line in both cases). There are no savings on refugee processing before resettled refugees arrive in Canada and no savings on the costs after the first year, all of which are picked up by the state. The chief benefit of Canada's resettlement programme is not financial savings, but rather the programme's integrative effect: because privately sponsored refugees are supported by individual Canadians, they generate greater social capital more quickly (above all better contacts) and their employment and earnings outcomes are better than those of government-sponsored refugees (Dhital 2015). This translates-given progressive taxation-into higher tax receipts, but the total numbers are still modest. There is every reason to expand private sponsorship as an effective integration tool, but the numbers will never be enough to make a significant dent in the global population of refugees. The 'zero draft' tacitly concedes this point by limiting its call to 'encourage[ing] ... the established and expansion of resettlement programmes' (UNHCR 2018: section 3.2, paragraph 69).

Lest these points be misunderstood, it is worth emphasizing that voluntary repatriation and resettlement are and will remain important durable solutions, and there are reasons for expanding both as much as possible. As noted, in the case of voluntary repatriation, refugees want to go home and, if they can go home safely, it is better for them and for their countries of origin. In the case of resettlement, any effort that provides a durable solution to a single refugee is well worth it, and resettlement certainly does that. Moreover, expanding resettlement sends an important if modest signal: it is a way for countries in the Global North to indicate to countries in the Global South that they are actively engaged and are not passing off responsibility for refugees to the latter. But, given the numbers involved and the costs in achieving them, voluntary repatriation and resettlement will never be anything more than a part, and a minority part at that, of the solution.

The limited prospects for third-country solutions make it doubtful that they deserve to be two of the four pillars of the Global Refugee Compact.

Enhancing Refugee Self-Reliance

Implicitly, the last two pillars of the Global Compact seek refugee solutions through *movement*: allowing (or persuading) refugees to move back home once conditions there have been improved, transferring them with refugee status to third countries and opening opportunities for new forms of mobility. The next two principles in the compact take a different tack: they build

on the merits of stasis. Durable solutions to refugee crises are found where refugees themselves are: in the first countries of asylum.

Like most ideas in the CRRF, self-reliance is not new. It goes back to the interwar period; UNHCR has actively promoted it since the 1980s; the agency published its *Handbook for Self-Reliance* in 2006; and new literature on the topic has emerged over the last decade (see Jacobsen 2014). At its core, self-reliance recognizes two basic facts: scarcity and skill. In the former, resources for refugees are understood as finite and the growth potential of those resources is limited, whereas growth in refugee populations is rapid and even exponential. More simply put, there is not enough money to meet the needs of growing refugee populations. All people are carriers of capital: they have formal training, life experiences and idiosyncratic talents that can be productively deployed. There has been no systematic proof of this contention, but common sense suggests that refugees have enhanced skills sets. It indeed takes bravery, initiative and often guile to leave one's home, undertake long journeys and figuratively or literally dodge bullets to seek relative safety in a third country.

In view of these two facts, self-reliance as a strategy is hard to gainsay: allowing and encouraging refugees to work and to create businesses will provide them with more resources to improve their quality of life, make them less reliant on temporary and often inadequate humanitarian aid and expand their contacts. Moreover, the right kind of work will enable refugees to acquire that ineffable but essential commodity: dignity. The claim might be viewed as unforgivably bourgeois, but there is a strong case that it is difficult in the absence of work and at least some measure of self-support to achieve any personal sense of autonomy and self-respect. In the wealthy Global North, long-term welfare dependency is not associated with self-satisfaction but, rather, isolation and depression, which is one of many reasons why the most generous welfare states in the world—the Nordic ones—do everything they can to maximize employment levels (Esping-Andersen 1996). In the Global South, long periods of forced idleness in refugee camps create demoralized and frustrated populations.

If encouraging work on the part of refugees has many arguments in its favour, we are left with some obvious questions: Do allowing and encouraging refugees to work, as it were, work? Can self-reliance become a new pillar of refugee protection? Here, the evidence is mixed but not discouraging. There are multiple historical examples of refugee work and self-reliance:

- Now a classic example in the refugee literature, Tanzania in the early 1970s gave five hectares per family to refugees who fled the 1972 Burundi massacre. Through the judicious use of land grants, the refugees transformed their new property into some of the most productive in the country (US Department of State 2014: 9).
- In 1975, the Nepali government issued Tibetan refugees with a Refugee Identity Certificate. With it, the Tibetans were able to move freely

throughout the country (Mathur 2014; Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2015). They farmed land purchased for them by the Nepal Red Cross in the 1960s and, in Kathmandu, they interspersed themselves among the local population (Banki 2004: 7). Drawing on skills and knowledge brought from Tibet, they developed thriving carpet and jewellery-making industries (*ibid.*). As recently as 2009, a UNHCR report stated that the long-staying Tibetan refugees in Nepal had 'found adequate protection and de facto economic integration' (UNHCR 2009: 288). The Tibetans' situation has worsened since then, partly because of the decline of the carpet industry and partly because, possibly under pressure from China, the Nepalese government has taken a more restrictive stance towards the issuance of Refugee Identity Certificates (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2015). The Tibetans' past success nonetheless illustrates how refugees can carve out a life for themselves given the right legal framework.

- In 1997, the American Refugee Committee (ARC) began a micro-enterprise development programme for Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees in Guinea (details from de Klerk 2004). The programme gave refugees a series of small grants to help them start businesses. ARC rolled the money out in three phases: (i) start-up grants of \$25 for women, (ii) interest-free loans, mostly to women (80 per cent) but also to men who had managed to start businesses, to be repaid within six months, and (iii) once the loan was repaid, a low-interest loan of \$75 to help refugees expand existing businesses (de Klerk 2004). The results were impressive: 1.200 clients benefitted, some 90 per cent repaid their loans and 60 per cent of clients reported 'increased pride'. The refugees' quality of life improved significantly: 60 per cent reported that they could buy better clothes, 45 per cent better food and 27 per cent a better variety of food; 47 per cent said they were more self-reliant, 33 per cent reported better health and 38 per cent were debt free. From a policy point of view, the main takeaway concerned the separation of competencies, transparency and oversight: agents monitoring implementation were separated from those disbursing funds; the criteria and disbursement conditions were clearly explained to the refugees; and a new monitoring and evaluation department oversaw the whole enterprise (de Klerk 2004).
- In the mid-1980s, Mexico allowed refugees to farm land under less-thanideal conditions: the land was poor, the plots were small and they were isolated from supplies and markets (Aguayo *et al.* 1987: 44–45; Stepputat 1989: 13). Refugees with some access to finance and funded training schemes rented extra land from Mexican farmers and, in particular, engaged in extensive wage labour (Stepputat 1989: 19). If it had included more liberal regulatory regime, mobility rights and locations nearer to markets, the (still successful) Mexican scheme could have achieved far more.
- Uganda since the early 2000s has pursued a self-reliance strategy and, to its credit, has learned from its mistakes, notably by consulting the local

population. Refugees farm, work as labourers and set up businesses both within camps and outside of them. The results are positive: just 1 per cent of refugees in Uganda depend entirely on humanitarian assistance, one in five refugees in Kampala employs non-family members and 40 per cent of those employed by refugees overall are Ugandan nationals. Uganda is committed to implementing the CRRF, and indeed its 2006 Refugee Act and 2010 Refugee Regulations provide refugees with access to documentation, freedom of movement, the right to work and access to educational institutions and social services (UNHCR 2017b). The government of Uganda also included refugees in its Second National Development Plan (Republic of Uganda 2015).

These examples are, admittedly, selective and there are many cases in which self-reliance schemes failed. Indeed, UNHCR and refugee advocates had concluded by the 1980s that earlier efforts to encourage local settlement and self-reliance in Africa's rural refugee settlements had achieved very little (Crisp 2003: 3; for a critique of self-reliance, see Hunter 2009). In the search for durable solutions, achievements will likely be modest rather than transformative. Anything that improves the situation of refugees is to be encouraged, and self-reliance measures will likely do that to some degree. But they are certainly no panacea.

Easing Pressures on Host Societies

The constraints on expanding voluntary return and third-country solutions might appear to render unachievable the remaining recommendation: easing pressures in the Global South. The broader conceptualization of refugees that underpins the document, however, has this potential problem in view. Too often, UNHCR and the international community treat refugees as a humanitarian crisis: food, medicine and temporary shelter are rushed in; aid is expected to be time-limited; and assistance is targeted at refugees and not the local population (Aleinikoff 2017). The Global Compact shifts this approach in two important ways. First, the emphasis on education and work becomes part of a broader endorsement of inclusion or the incorporation of refugees into their host societies. Second, the compact recommends that refugee situations be conceptualized not as humanitarian, but rather as development challenges. Quoting public UNHCR documents, at the heart of this approach is the idea that refugees should be included in the (host) communities from the very beginning. When refugees gain access to education and labour markets, they can build their skills and become self-reliant, contributing to local economies and fuelling the development of the communities hosting them. Inclusion is thus maximalist in its view of rights, flexible with respect to naturalization (desirable, but not immediately necessary) and based in essence on incorporating migrants into existing economic and social structures rather than constructing parallel ones. This is guite revolutionary. It accepts the

logic of what Alexander Aleinikoff calls 'Newton's fourth law': displaced populations remain displaced. The statistics on this point are widely available and thoroughly depressing. Until the Syrian refugee crisis, two-thirds of refugees were in protracted situations (understood as situations lasting more than seven years). The figure fell to 50 per cent as Syrians fled their homes (5.4 million are registered refugees), but this was an artificial reduction: as the Syrian crisis enters its seventh year in 2011, it will rise again.

Many of the ideas and proposals underpinning the Refugee Compact are not new; indeed, they have been around for many years (Aleinikoff 2017). Efforts to convince humanitarian and development actors that they should work more closely together go back at least to the 1960s (Hunter 2009: 3; Thomas 2017: 70). Nonetheless, by placing inclusion at the centre of its efforts, the Refugee Compact acknowledges that traditional durable solutions—a grant of refugee status by a 1951 Convention country, voluntary repatriation and third-country resettlement—are insufficient. Even inclusion—the durable solution that has most in common with integration—differs importantly from inclusion because the latter does not imply naturalization.

Full inclusion is a long way off, but many states are endorsing the principles that underpin the CRRF. Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama as well as Djibouti, Ethiopia and Uganda have all agreed to pilot the CRRF (UNHCR 2017d).⁹ Uganda has supported the inclusive measures found in the CRRF for many years and the United Kingdom government recently provided development aid to Ethiopia with the understanding that Ethiopia would provide jobs for 30,000 refugees. Kenya passed a refugees bill in the summer of 2017 that provides the opportunity for 500,000 refugees to have the right to work and to farm land (Wesangula 2017). Finally, the government issued Kenyan identity cards to 1,176 Makonde descendants of Mozambique labourers brought in by the British in the 1930s (Ndubi 2017).

The Tanzanian government has, by contrast, walked away from the CRRF. The country committed originally itself to the principles of inclusion—among them, naturalization for the Burundians who have been without Tanzanian citizenship since the 1970s—but there was little progress (UNHCR 2017g). The country participated in a UNHCR tree-planting scheme that provided training and work for approximately 100 refugees (Bond 2017), but its efforts ended there. On 9 February 2018, the president of Tanzania, John Magufuli, announced his withdrawal from the CRRF, citing security concerns and a lack of donor support (Refugees Deeply 2018). In particular, the requirement that Tanzania take out a US\$50 million loan from the World Bank (albeit matched by a US\$50 million grant) decided the matter (Betts 2018). World Bank funding for refugees and their communities draws on a SDR 1.4 billion programme for gender and development, climate change, fragility, conflict and violence, and governance and institutions, and it requires such arrangements to be composed of 50 per cent grants and 50 per cent credit for 'moderate and low risk of debt distress countries' (World Bank

2017b: xii). Tanzania's withdrawal naturally disappointed refugee advocates, but it does not negate the positive developments in other African countries.

There has also been progress on the other side of the Atlantic. Well before the compact began to take shape, Latin American countries took a liberal view of the right to work: asylum seekers in Brazil, Costa Rica, Argentina and Uruguay enjoyed the right (Zetter and Ruaudel 2016: 13).¹⁰ Under the Global Compact, Central American countries have committed themselves to a Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (or 'MIRPs', from the Spanish) based on four pillars: reception/admission, immediate/persistent needs, support to host countries and durable solutions (UNHCR 2017h). States lead the MIRPs discussions with input from several regional processes.

Beyond the formal rollout of the CRRF, Jordan announced the 'Jordan Compact', which opened special economic zones to 200,000 Syrian refugees (Government of Jordan 2016). This plan followed pledges of hundreds of millions of dollars in donor support at the London conference on Syrian refugees.¹¹ In exchange for Jordan's commitment, the European Union exempted 52 Jordanian products from rules-of-origin stipulations if (i) the products are manufactured within one of 18 special economic zones and (ii) at least 15 per cent of the labour required is Syrian (rising to 25 per cent within two years) (Almasri 2017). The results seem to be mixed: many refugees do not like the long commutes to factories and often prefer informal employment in restaurants or construction, which pays more and has lower, if any, commuting costs (Howden et al. 2017: 14-18). Agricultural work permits issued to camp-based refugees have proven to be a greater success, though some refugees use the permits merely to escape the camps. Many refugees, furthermore, lack the requisite skills for the work, resulting in an abnormally low level of cultivation in the Jordan Valley (*ibid.*: 42). Firm estimates of employment numbers are hard to come by. The Jordanian government has issued 73,000 work permits (a widely cited figure), but these figures include expired permits and renewals (ibid.: 43). It is more likely that between 35,000 and 45,000 Syrians are working with government-issued permits (Lenner and Turner 2018). The figure falls far short of 200,000, but—combined with the tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands in informal work-a significant number of Syrians are now active in the Jordanian labour market.

Given these concrete steps towards opening host-country labour markets, the timidity of the 'zero draft' is curious. The discussion of work, despite its overwhelming role in determining refugee life chances, is limited to one mention. Under 'Jobs and livelihoods', the draft states that

[[]t]o foster inclusive economic growth for both host communities and refugees ... interested States and relevant stakeholders will support efforts, based on data, ... to promote economic opportunities for host communities and refugees, specifically for women, youth, and those with disabilities (UNHCR 2018: section 2.2, paragraph 54).

The policy recommendation is broadly commendable, but it is a generality (promote how?), it is unnecessarily restrictive (adult men need economic opportunities as well) and it gets the justification wrong. States and relevant stakeholders should not promote economic opportunities because those opportunities lead to economic growth; rather, they should do so because new opportunities improve life chances for refugees. In this respect, it is noteworthy that drafters opted for a vague commitment to 'economic opportunities' rather than a concrete—and essential—commitment to a right to work.

There are few better pathways to work, and above all good work, than education. Here, there has been progress. The percentage of refugee children receiving primary education has risen over the last few years from 50 per cent to 61 per cent; the global average is 91 per cent (UNHCR 2017f). Most such increases reflect Syrian refugees, but there are other examples. Backed by United States donor support, Djibouti signed an agreement in August 2017 with UNHCR by which it will allow refugee children access to education on the same terms as Djiboutian children (UNHCR 2017i). Under the umbrella of inclusion, Djibouti also agreed, in October 2017, to provide refugees with access to its national health systems (UNHCR 2017a). The World Bank promised funds for these programmes through its International Development Association (IDA) 18 programme (ibid.). Again in educational policy, in June of 2017, Zambia's president signed a new law giving refugees in the country access to educational institutions and a right to work (National Assembly of Zambia 2017). In Latin America, Costa Rica has given asylum seekers access to educational institutions while their applications are being processed (UNHCR 2017c).

The 'zero draft's' sections on education are among its strongest. The language is more definitive—'will' rather than 'could'—and the promises are concrete: expanding or enhancing educational capacity; meeting the specific needs of refugee youth and children; expanding access to secondary and tertiary education; and deploying refugee teachers (UNHCR 2018: section 2.1, paragraph 53). These recommendations are clear, and their implementation is essential.

For the moment, secondary and post-secondary education—both globally and for Syrian refugees specifically—remain woefully inadequate: only 23 per cent of refugees receive secondary education (versus 84 per cent of children globally) and a mere 1 per cent receive post-secondary education (versus 36 per cent of adults worldwide) (UNHCR 2017f).

Conclusion

The Global Compact on Refugees is a glass half full. Conceptually, the accent on inclusion through work and education reflects an emerging, evidence-based global consensus and this is to be commended. The sections on voluntary repatriation and third-country solutions, by contrast, deserve a

more qualified endorsement. Though both of these elements are essential in securing durable solutions and providing some reassurance to countries in the Global South, they are minor considerations relative to work and education. Excessive emphasis on them, moreover, would raise the risk of unrealistic expectations regarding the number of refugees that can benefit from them.

This observation does not detract from the compact's strengths or, less still, from the progress made since September 2016. It is always easy to carp, but the achievements in refugee inclusion are real, and the lives of some refugees have materially improved. Labour markets are newly open and/or conditions of access to labour markets have improved for hundreds of thousands of refugees. In education policy, hosting states have opened hundreds of thousands of spaces to refugees, particularly at the primary level.

The risk in any effort to improve the lives of the displaced is that even the best efforts—conceptually, normatively and financially—will be overwhelmed by the numbers. Despite the progress, millions of the forcibly displaced have no prospect of access to work and income, education and social mobility and, therefore, to hope. There is still much to do, and the Global Compact on Refugees faces two headwinds. The first is the withdrawal of United States support for global solutions to migration, to say nothing of refugees. Donald Trump has demonstrated a clear willingness—even eagerness—to equate refugees with terrorists and to fan the racist flames of anti-migrant/anti-refugee prejudice for domestic political gains. The second challenge is compassion fatigue: as the numbers of refugees arriving in the Global North decrease, and as the memories of the then well-publicized misery of the 2015–16 refugee crisis fade, there is a danger that both publics and politicians in the Global North will lose interest in refugees and once again view them as the Global South's problem.

If these unhappy outcomes are to be avoided, politicians in the Global South must continue to keep up the pressure on the Global North and politicians-above all in Europe, which sits atop an arc of violence and instability extending from Central Africa into the Middle East-must proactively respond to it. As so often, funding is the core of the matter; without money from the Global North to pay for inclusion in the Global South, inclusion will not happen. As is the case with the CRRF generally, the right steps have been taken in the right direction. The World Bank has provided matching development funds for CRRF pilot countries and the Bank's Global Concessional Financing Facility is providing, with donor country support, subsidized loans to Jordan (through the Jordan Compact discussed above) and Lebanon-major refugee-hosting countries that would normally not, as middle-income countries, be eligible for World Bank development support (World Bank 2017a: vii). The goal is to secure \$1.5 billion in grants over five years, primarily from Global North countries, and to leverage these funds to provide \$4.5 billion in subsidized loans to refugee-hosting countries. As of late 2017, \$370 million had been raised (ibid.: viii).

Impressive though they are, these figures remain inadequate in light of the scale of the crisis. Conservatively, providing primary education for the 40 per cent of refugee children who do not currently have access to it will alone cost US\$1 billion *per year*.¹² And primary education is, of course, only one element in inclusion: secondary and tertiary education, health care, housing outside camps and care for the aged all represent major costs. The costs increase even further if one accepts the logic that inclusion requires that benefits for refugees be extended to nationals as well. This in itself constitutes a daunting task. In Uganda, for instance, there are 12 doctors per 100,000 people (versus 242 per 100,000 people in the United States) and some 50 per cent of the population have no access to health care (Kelly 2009; Health Access Corps 2014).

In light of these challenges, figures in the US\$100 million for pilot projects and even US\$4.5 billion in grants and loans over a five-year period are inadequate, though certainly not without effect. A shift, still tentative, towards major development funding for refugees is the only hope of anything approaching a durable solution, but this shift will in turn require a substantial increase in development funds from wealthy donor countries. Such an increase is a matter of global justice, but it is also a matter of interest: no government in the Global North wishes to see a repeat of the 2015 refugee crisis, in which the comparatively modest arrival of some one million refugees in Europe split the European Union, led to a great upsurge in support for the far right and almost cost German Chancellor Angela Merkel her job. To avoid repeating this scenario, and above all to provide something approaching a decent life to tens of millions of the world's globally displaced, the Global Compact on Refugees' pious generalities have to be followed up with meaningful financial commitments. In the absence of a compact between the Global South (which hosts most refugees) and the Global North (which has the resources to pay for their support), another global refugee crisis is not merely likely-it is a certainty.

1. In 2003, the UN Secretary General launched the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), which, for two years, gathered evidence and issued reports on international migration. Following the completion of the Global Commission's work in 2005, the UN Secretary General created the inter-agency Global Migration Group (14 UN agencies, the World Bank and the International Organization for Migration) in 2006. In the same year, the UN General Assembly hosted the High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which led to the non-binding Global Forum.

2. Though 'home' is itself not a simple concept, as it is often viewed with a nostalgia that blinds both returners and returned to the realities of the places that refugees fled (see Warner 1994: 168–169).

3. And, it should be noted, the resettlement of 74,000 (see UNHCR 1996b: 1–2). For a discussion of the criticism, see Towle (2006).

4. These figures include large numbers to returns from Pakistan to Afghanistan (UNHCR undated a). The returns were doubtfully voluntary and, rather than securing a durable solution, most returnees traded registered refugee status in Pakistan for internal displacement in Afghanistan. For a critique, see Human Rights Watch (2017).

5. Even when large-scale returns occur, and even if they are truly voluntary, they generally leave great residual populations, meaning that it will at best be a partial solution for a minority of the population. Some 1,150,000 Afghans residing in Iran returned to Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban, but that still left 862,000 Afghani nationals in Iran (2012 figures, UNHCR 2012: 120). 6. Interview with UNHCR officials, Gaziantep, 13 June 2014.

7. Conversations with Alexander Aleinikoff and Joel Bell clarified these points.

8. Interview with an Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum official, 10 January 2018.

9. The CRRF Global Digital Portal is located at http://crrf.unhcr.org/en/ (accessed 23 March 2018).

10. Such an approach also serves state interests in that granting labour market access in lieu of refugee protection, as it means that the state can forcibly return the asylum seekers at a later date.

11. The 'Supporting Syria and the Region' conference was co-hosted by the United Kingdom, Germany, Kuwait, Norway and the United Nations on 4 February 2016. Website: https://www.supportingsyria2016.com (accessed 23 March 2018).

12. See my calculation of the total global cost for the world's top 14 refugeehosting countries multiplied by 0.40 (Hansen 2015: 34).

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