



Annual Report

2024–2025



Contents

Director's foreword	1
Research	2
Integration of resettled Syrian refugees in the UK	7
Refugee Economies Programme	8
The Refugee-Led Research Hub	10
Policy and impact	12
Dangerous journeys: saving lives and responding to missing migrants and refugees	14
The Politics of Education and Hope in Forced Migration: Insights from Syrian Young People's Journeys	16
Studying and learning	18
Understanding state violence: how Italy legitimises migration control	24
The Anthropology of Good: Volunteering to help refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and Sweden	26
Gil Loescher: a lasting legacy	28
Palestinian refugees and refugee protection	30
Outreach	32
Events	35
Fundraising and development	39
Academic record	40
Income and expenditure	46
Staff and associates	47

Front cover photo: Balukhali camp, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Credit: Andrew Philip.

Compiled and designed by Catherine Meredith and Simon Minter, Nineteenpoint Ltd.

Director's foreword

The past year at the Refugee Studies Centre has been one of both adaptation and renewal. Like many organisations, we have been affected by a challenging funding environment since early 2025, marked by cuts in international aid and the sudden withdrawal of key financial support. This has impacted the number of practitioners attending our Online School and, more profoundly, the funding model for *Forced Migration Review* (FMR). We are acutely aware that these changes have also affected many of our close partners – from NGOs to refugee-led organisations and community initiatives – and we offer them our solidarity. The work of FMR and the Online School continues, and a summary of FMR's most recent issue can be found on pp. 14–16, but both are undergoing a strategic rethink. In this process, we welcome feedback and new partnerships (see p. 34 & 39).

Alongside these challenges, there has still been much to celebrate. Two new legacies received this year will establish important opportunities for advanced academic work: a postdoctoral fellowship in Refugee Studies based at the Centre, and a doctoral scholarship for researchers with lived experience of displacement (p. 39). The Refugee-Led Research Hub also marked a milestone, launching new hubs in Oxford and Kuala Lumpur and reinforcing its mission to place displaced scholars at the forefront of research and leadership (see pp. 10–11). At the end of the year, the Hub also secured a USD 9 million grant from the Mastercard Foundation for a three-year partnership that will support 1,000 African refugee and displaced scholars to access graduate-level education.

Our research portfolio remains as rich and vibrant as ever. This report features the Refugee Economies Programme's update, with an innovative new project on refugee stories and documentary film (pp. 8–10), Dr Hiba Salem's work on education and hope among Syrian youth (pp. 16–17), Associate Professor Naohiko Omata's work on the integration of resettled Syrian Refugees (p. 7), and Emeritus Professor Dawn Chatty's reflections on volunteerism during Europe's 2015 refugee crisis (pp. 26–27). The Gil Loescher Fund continues to support original fieldwork by graduate students across the University (pp. 28–29), while our DPhil researchers keep producing outstanding and

imaginative scholarship, from studies of mountain rescue to the social lives of mortar bombs (p. 20). In this report Diana Volpe writes in more detail about her work on the legitimisation of migration control (pp. 24–25). We also continue to welcome a thriving rotation of Visiting Fellows; examples of some projects can be found on p. 22, with a full list of visitors on p. 44.

It is impossible to reflect on the past year without acknowledging the appalling events in Gaza. Through our teaching and seminar programmes, we have sought to deepen understanding of the wider issues surrounding this crisis. We continue to offer our popular short course on Palestine Refugees and International Law, and we recently launched a new project on the international legal rights of those forcibly displaced within and from the Occupied Palestinian Territories (for more, see pp. 30–31).

As ever, it is rewarding to see our close colleagues move into prestigious positions around the world. This year, Dr Julia Schweers became a Max Weber Fellow at the European University Institute, and Dr Molly Fee joined the University of Florida as Assistant Professor. We also recognise the enormous contribution of Jo Boyce, Maureen Schoenfeld, and Sharon Ellis, whose years of dedicated service have been invaluable to the Centre's success. We welcome Catherine Meredith as our new Communications Manager and Dr Margaret Neil as the new Pedro Arrupe Fellow, in partnership with Campion Hall. It has been wonderful to see so many former colleagues attend our vibrant series of events, which are listed here on pp. 42–43, and especially our landmark public lectures listed on p. 35. We hope everyone who has come through the centre will continue to remain in close contact. ●



Tom Scott-Smith
Director, Refugee
Studies Centre
Professor of Political
Anthropology

Research

The Refugee Studies Centre undertakes independent, multidisciplinary, academic research on the causes, consequences, and responses to forced migration. Its academic staff have expertise across a range of disciplines, including anthropology, economics, geography, history, law, politics, and international relations. Through their research, members of the Centre challenge common assumptions and understandings related to forced migration, with important implications for public debate, policy, and practice. The Centre's influence relies on an extensive network of relationships with other universities, research institutions, governments, international organisations, NGOs, and businesses.

Humanitarian Shelter

2015–2025

Professor Tom Scott-Smith

This research explores emergency housing strategies for refugees. The research began with a project, *Architectures of Displacement*, which was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Economic and Social Research Council between 2016 and 2019. This project brought together experts in forced displacement, archaeology, anthropology, and architecture to study refugee shelter across six countries, and resulted in an edited book published by Berghahn and a feature-length documentary film, which was released at festivals across Canada, Norway, New Zealand, Romania, the United Kingdom and the United States and won the AHRC 'Research in Film' award in 2020. The project has also yielded several peer-reviewed publications in *American Ethnologist*, *the Journal of Humanitarian Affairs*, and *Humanity*. In addition, the project was involved in two exhibitions, at the Oxford Pitt Rivers Museum and the Imperial War Museum in London, and was featured on BBC radio. Outputs from this project have engaged with humanitarians and policymakers through the UK Shelter Forum, a bi-annual event for shelter specialists and architects. The final monograph from the research has now been published: *Fragments of Home: Refugee Housing and the Politics of Shelter* (Stanford University Press, 2024).

Humanitarian Nutrition

2015–ongoing

Professor Tom Scott-Smith

This project examines humanitarian nutrition and its history from the 19th century to the present day. Through archival research, fieldwork, oral history, and the analysis of humanitarian handbooks, it examines

how Victorian technologies such as the soup kitchen were transformed into contemporary mechanisms for emergency feeding. A book capturing the key lessons from this project was published by Cornell University Press in 2020, entitled *On an Empty Stomach: Two Hundred Years of Hunger Relief*, which won the Association for the Study of Food and Society best book award in 2021. An extension to this project was launched in 2021, funded by the Leverhulme Trust, which concerns the Nobel Prize-winning work of Lord John Boyd Orr, first director of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. A short film on Boyd Orr's work has already been completed, entitled *Bread and Statistics*, and a political biography is currently in preparation, provisionally entitled, *In Search of Lost Idealism: a life of Lord John Boyd Orr*.



Preparing chapati in Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya.
Credit: Raphael Bradenbrink

The Liberal State and the Expulsion of Members: Banishment, Denationalisation and Deportation

2015–ongoing

Professor Matthew J Gibney

The lawful power to expel people considered criminal, dangerous, or otherwise undesirable has been a feature of virtually all human communities. This project explores the various incarnations that expulsion power takes in modern liberal states and the issues it raises for communities ostensibly committed to principles of freedom, equality, and human rights. The main foci of analysis in the project are: the history of banishment as a precursor of modern deportation power; denationalisation and the evolution of powers to strip citizenship in liberal states; and the evolution and legitimacy of deportation. In addition to illustrating the ongoing tension between the power to expel and liberal principles, this project attempts to show how new developments in membership and concerns over crime and terrorism in modern states fuel contemporary controversy over expulsion.

The Duties of Refugees

2017–ongoing

Professor Matthew J Gibney

This project examines the contentious but highly important issue of the duties of refugees. Refugees and asylum seekers are often criticised in public debates for failing in their moral responsibilities. They have recently been admonished for failing to integrate; for not claiming asylum in the first state they come to; for ‘queue jumping’ or failing to ‘wait their turn’ to be resettled; and for not returning home once they no longer need asylum. However dubious these criticisms may be, there is little doubt that they have played an important part in legitimising recent erosions of the rights of refugees. A key question thus emerges: just what are the duties of refugees as refugees? In this project, the role of refugees as duty holders in relation to a number of different groups will be considered.

The research will draw upon the resources of ethical theory, political science, history, and law. First, it will interrogate critically the duties ascribed to refugees in current political debates. Second, it will trace the different ways in which the duties of

refugees have been understood historically and the way they relate to changing conceptualisations of the refugee. Third, through interviews, the question of how refugees themselves understand their responsibilities will be explored. Finally, the project will draw upon the results of the above, as well as the resources of contemporary moral and political thinking, to provide a considered and practically relevant account of the moral and political duties of refugees. The latest research output is ‘Must Refugees Be Grateful?’ (with Rebecca Buxton), *Political Studies*, 2024.

Preserving Refugee Protection in the Era of Externalisation 2.0

2023–ongoing

Professor Catherine Briddick, with Professor Cathryn Costello (University College Dublin)

Scholars have long noted that the refugee regime is a regime of containment, with many barriers in place to prevent refugees from seeking protection in the Global North. Notwithstanding decades of policy failure and legal challenges with mixed results, many states and regions in the Global North, notably the UK and EU, are doubling down on containment practices, and facing renewed legal challenges. We characterise this as the era of externalisation 2.0. While earlier scholarship has identified a process of a ‘cat-and-mouse game’ between law and politics, with the norm of non-refoulement preserving protection, scholars now ask whether we have entered an era of ‘demolition’ of the institution of asylum, rather than endogenous contestation. This project explores the legal and political contestation around externalisation 2.0 and its implications for the global refugee regime, at a critical juncture where containment and externalisation practices are both deeply embedded and attracting renewed political attention. The project treats the post-Brexit United Kingdom as an index case to understand these legal contestations, with particular attention to legal challenges within the UK (noting the diverse constitutional positions of the UK Supreme Court and Northern Irish courts), its neighbours (taking into account litigation in Ireland and France) as well as potential challenges before global and African human rights bodies. The research builds on previous scholarship of the PIs, examining the principles of non-refoulement, non-discrimination, and non-penalisation in contesting externalisation

and containment practices, and on the growing role of global fora (eg, United Nations Treaty Bodies) to challenge these practices.

Without Protection or Assistance? Palestinian Refugees, Displacement and International Law

2024-ongoing

Professor Catherine Briddick, with RSC Virtual Academic Visitor Teresa Rasella (Advisor to UN Special Rapporteur on the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Francesca Albanese)

This project examines the international legal framework that should protect the rights of those forcibly displaced within and from the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), considering both Gaza and the West Bank. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has found that Israel's conduct in Gaza following the attacks of 7 October 2023 has given rise to a 'real and imminent risk that irreparable prejudice' will be caused to the 'right of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip to be protected from acts of genocide and related prohibited acts'. When examining the legal consequences of the ongoing violation of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, the Court identified forcible transfers of protected populations, violence, and other violations of humanitarian law as contributing to Palestinian displacement. Experts

from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination have characterised the situation in the OPT in terms of 'colonisation', itself 'a negation of human dignity', and as 'systemic discrimination' contributing to 'racial segregation'.

International law, including international humanitarian and refugee law, offers vital, life-saving protections to those who are forced to flee. This project examines the application of legal frameworks relevant to Palestinian displacement, analysing jurisprudence across jurisdictions and identifying protection gaps. In doing so, it situates responses to Palestinian refugees within the context of four jus cogens, or peremptory norms of international law: the prohibition of genocide, the prohibition of refoulement, the prohibition of race discrimination and the right to self-determination. See the article on p. 30 for more information.

The Politics of Education and Hope in Forced Migration

Pedro Arrupe Research Fellowship, 2022–2025

Dr Hiba Salem

Education plays a central role in the lives of children and young people living in long-term displacement, yet its meaning and promise are often contested. While schools are seen as sites of hope and opportunity, the reality is undermined by refugees'



Forced displacement of Gaza Strip residents. Credit: Jaber Jehad Badwan, CC BY-SA 4.0

limited rights beyond the classroom. Over the past three years, my research has brought education studies into conversation with forced migration to explore how young people build aspirations amidst structural injustice and restrictive immigration policies.

Drawing on storytelling interviews with displaced young people from Syria and Palestine, I examine how they navigate the contradictions of education in contexts of precarious socio-economic rights, and the strategies of hope they create for themselves. Based on interviews across nine settings, I am currently drafting my monograph, *The Politics of Hope and Education in Forced Migration: Journeys of Syrian Young People Across the World*.

My work is now expanding to investigate the role of education in Syrian refugees' decision-making about return in the post-Assad era. Alongside this, I am contributing to policy discussions within the region, helping to inform best practices at a time of significant change. See the article on p. 16 for more information.

Refugee Children as a Site of Critical Intervention

The Leverhulme Trust, 2022–2026

[Dr Ashwiny O Kistnareddy](#)

This Leverhulme Trust-funded project focuses on the experiences of refugee children from a range of geographical spaces: North Korea, Vietnam, Latin America, Rwanda, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. The focus is on those who have sought asylum either in neighbouring countries or in the UK, Europe, or the USA. Through an analysis of a range of media, including memoirs, autobiographical narratives, YouTube videos, blogs written by refugee children, and documentaries focusing on refugee children, I engage with the particularities of the child as a refugee, which is an understudied dimension of refugee studies. I also include the stories of children I met in Calais during a recent trip to understand their experiences of transitory spaces and how human rights organisations come to their aid. By doing this, I underline the importance of attending to the specific circumstances of being a child refugee, the provisions that are in place (or the lack thereof) and how this might affect individuals in the longer term. Ultimately, this project offers a critical analysis of what refugee children's experiences enable us to understand about the

impact of forced migration, mobility, and integration (or the absence thereof) on children.

Resettled Refugee Children: EAL and other Provisions and Policy Making

OPEN Seed Fund, 2023–2024

[Dr Ashwiny O Kistnareddy](#)

There has been a marked increase in the number of refugee, immigrant, and asylum-seeking children arriving in regions in the UK which have no previous experience of dealing with the issues presented by these arrivals, particularly in terms of English as Additional Language (EAL) and well-being provisions. The children come through different routes and the support level they are offered depends on the route (eg, those coming through the Homes for Ukraine or Hong Kong BNO or Afghan resettlement schemes are supported in different ways compared to those arriving from Eritrea or Sudan). Whether children are accompanied or unaccompanied also creates different categories and responsibilities for stakeholders. Often there is a lack of EAL provision, so that outside stakeholders are brought in to provide these lessons. Currently, Jacari provides one-to-one tutoring, in school and outside, to EAL pupils in Bristol and Oxford, and Positive Youth Foundation does the same in Coventry. In all three cities different strategies and tools are deployed depending on the level of funding available to the charities. This project seeks to identify, examine, develop, and disseminate strategies and best practice through observations, interviews, and analyses of current provisions in EAL and wellbeing for refugee, immigrant, and asylum-seeking children in Coventry, Bristol, and Oxford. Workshops aim to develop and exchange knowledge and best practice to improve children's integration. This project will form the basis of a longer-term project at national level providing consistency and working towards better inclusive practices.

Newly-Arrived Children: EAL and Other Provisions Project

Open Public Policy Challenge Fund and John Fell Fund, 2023–2026

[Dr Ashwiny O Kistnareddy](#)

The Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) team at the UK's Department for Education (DfE) has

noted that the increase in the number of UASC arriving in the country over the last couple of years has created a particular challenge for the team: the mandatory National Transfer Scheme has meant that UASC are increasingly less concentrated geographically. Indeed, one of the questions that the team is concerned with is how can refugee children (including UASC) be effectively enabled to access English as Additional Language (EAL)/English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision (including post 16) and other cultural supports in this context recognising that some will be placed in less culturally diverse and geographically rural settings? The UASC team is keen to explore remote access as an option. Through observations, interviews, data capture, and the collation of resources from organisations that have developed best practice, this project seeks to pool together the resources gleaned from a range of stakeholders within the UK to build a virtual hub, enabling remote access to resources for newly arrived children in different parts of the UK, as well as for the teachers and practitioners who work with them. During the project term, four workshops will be organised to monitor and evaluate progress, and ensure that we are meeting the aims and objectives of the project. Ultimately, the project will identify and bring together best practice and resources to be uploaded to an app and set up an accessible space. It will involve young people from the different organisations partnered with us testing the app from the beginning to improve its effectiveness. This will enable us to gauge the

possibility of remote access to resources for minors who are sent to regions where resources are scarce as set out by the UASC team at the DfE.

Anthropology of Good: Exploring Volunteerism in the 2015 European Refugee Crisis

British Academy, 2024–2026

Emerita Professor Dawn Chatty

This study sets out to examine the impulses which led so many to volunteer their time and energy to welcome and make Syrians feel ‘at home’ upon arrival in the United Kingdom and Sweden during the 2015 European refugee crisis. Rather than focus on the suffering of Syrians seeking safety, it interrogates the motivations which drove so many citizens and residents to step forward and be generous to those in need. In the UK there was little media sympathy for such hospitality, whereas in Sweden the media was generally very supportive. These two study sites offer an opportunity to study volunteering to come to the aid of Syrians in both a relatively hostile policy environment and a sympathetic one. It is this spirit of being hospitable, of being generous, both among nationals and refugees in the United Kingdom and Sweden that this project seeks to understand. It follows on from my previous research exploring ‘the duty to be generous’ in the Arab world. See the article on p. 26. ●

Alexander Betts made Fellow of British Academy

Professor Alexander Betts was made a Fellow of the British Academy in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the humanities and social sciences.

Founded in 1902, the British Academy is the UK’s national academy for the humanities and social sciences. It is a Fellowship consisting of over 1,800 world-leading scholars from the UK and overseas. In 2025, a total of 58 UK Fellows, 30 International Fellows and four Honorary Fellows were elected to the British Academy Fellowship. Professor Betts was one of eight Oxford researchers to be elected in this round.

‘I am deeply honoured to be elected a Fellow of the British Academy’, Professor Betts said. ‘Many

congratulations to all the new fellows for 2025, particularly my Oxford colleagues from across the Social Sciences and Humanities

Divisions. The BA’s work is especially vital at a time when we need to celebrate and promote the social sciences and humanities, and to ensure that their insights inform public debate.’

Professor Betts is Leopold Muller Professor of Forced Migration and International Affairs, a Fellow of Brasenose College and Pro-Vice-Chancellor for External Engagement, Sport and Community.



Integration of resettled Syrian refugees in the UK

Research led by Professor Naohiko Omata explores the integration experiences of Syrian refugees who came to Oxfordshire through a third-country resettlement programme.

Naohiko Omata
Associate Professor

Third-country resettlement involves the long-term relocation of refugees, usually from the Global South to high-income countries. Once received in the third country, refugees experience a process of 'integration' into the host society.

Issues related to the integration of refugees have formed an important agenda in immigration policy in the UK and elsewhere in recent decades. Despite years of debate and extensive use in migration policy, integration remains a highly contested concept. Although receiving governments place significant emphasis on functional aspects, such as acquiring a host language and obtaining employment, integration also entails an adjustment of cultures and identities between the homeland and the receiving society.

In collaboration with municipalities and supporting agencies in Oxfordshire, we worked with Syrian refugee families who came to Oxfordshire through the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme (SVPRS). The central aim of the study was to understand the process of 'integration' through the lived experiences and voices of these refugee families. As my co-researcher, I worked with Dunya Habash, a graduate of our MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies and a native Arabic speaker of Syrian origin.

For almost all refugee interviewees, this was their first time living outside the Middle East and the Arabic-speaking world, which sparked numerous challenges. Among the most frequently raised were those associated with parenting practices. Adapting to a new living environment with differing socio-cultural norms, refugee parents strived to adjust their traditional parenting styles to the new UK environment.

In particular, Syrian parents highlighted the absence of extended family support, on which their previous child-rearing practices were based. Because only immediate family members were accepted for the SVPRS, most of these families were 'nuclear families', typically consisting of biological parents and their school-aged children. Most resettled Syrian families told us that child-rearing in Syria was 'a total family endeavour' and not limited to biological parents, and that extended family members (grandparents, uncles and aunts) actively helped teach children appropriate behaviour and intervened when children misbehaved. But now, the full responsibility for parenting rested with fathers and mothers while they were simultaneously striving to establish themselves in their new living environment.

Currently, issues emerging from new parent-child relations fall outside the institutional support areas of the UK Home Office. In the long term, however, addressing the loss of extended family may be a useful, concrete intervention. One possible measure would be for host governments to think about setting up 'socio-cultural advisors' who are familiar with the sorts of cultural and religious disputes that might arise within families. ●

Read more: Naohiko Omata and Dunya Habash (2025) 'Parenting dilemmas: Syrian refugee families resettled in the UK', *Human Organization* 84 (3): 316-27

We are very thankful to the Syrian refugees who participated in this research, which was enabled and facilitated by generous support from Connection Support, Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, Asylum Welcome, Refugee Resource, and refugee-supporting community groups.



For most interviewees, the move to Oxford was their first time living outside the Middle East. Credit: © University of Oxford Images / Public Affairs Directorate – All rights reserved

Refugee Economies Programme

IKEA Foundation

Professor Alexander Betts, Professor Naohiko Omata, Professor Olivier Sterck, Dr Yotam Gidron, Dr Julia Schweers, Madison Bakewell, Vittorio Bruni

The Refugee Economies Programme undertakes research on the economic lives of refugees. Our research is mainly focused on East Africa, and since 2016 we have published and disseminated research that has had a significant impact on policy and practice. We aim to support the socio-economic inclusion of refugees by highlighting the conditions under which refugees can become self-sufficient and achieve better welfare outcomes. Between 2016 and 2021 we undertook a large-scale data collection, following refugees and host community members' economic lives over time. The dataset covers urban and rural areas, refugees and hosts, and includes multiple data collection periods. It includes over 16,000 refugee and host community members from across six research sites and is available online. Drawing on this data, we have written a book, *The Refugee Trap: The Economics of Forced Displacement* (forthcoming,

Cambridge University Press), which explores what difference it makes to be a refugee in economic terms, identifies the poverty traps associated with becoming a refugee, and highlights the policies needed to fully restore refugees' integration into the local, national, and global economy.

Since 2021, the Programme has evolved to focus on three main subprojects: 1) cross-border economies; 2) the impact of shocks on refugees' economic lives; and 3) the political economy of refugees' access to socio-economic rights.

First, the **Borders, Mobility, and Livelihoods** project involves research undertaken by Professor Naohiko Omata and Dr Yotam Gidron. The project focuses on the following border regions: Uganda-South Sudan, Uganda-Democratic Republic of Congo

A vendor in Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya. Credit: Raphael Bradenbrink



(DRC), Rwanda-DRC, and Rwanda-Burundi. We have collected qualitative data in Uganda (the Kyangwali and Pagirinya settlements), South Sudan (Juba), DRC (Goma), Rwanda (Kigali, and the Mahama and Kigeme refugee camps), and Burundi (Bujumbura and Kirundo). The aim of the research is to identify the patterns and drivers of mobilities, and how these movements shape refugees' livelihood strategies, opportunities for self-reliance, and socio-economic outcomes. In addition to these activities, we ran a small-scale survey in Kyangwali and Pagirinya in Uganda to capture the mobility practices of refugees currently living in these settlements to help quantify some of the practices we identified in our qualitative research, as well as highlight the differences between nationalities and genders. We also implemented a small-scale survey in Burundi, targeting Burundian returnees from the Mahama refugee camp in Rwanda in order to better understand their patterns of mobilities and livelihood strategies upon return. Publications include:

- Gidron, Y (2025) 'Refugee mobility and livelihoods in Uganda', RSC Research in Brief 21.
- Omata, N, and Y Gidron (2024) 'Returning to fund refugeehood: Dispersal and survival between Uganda and South Sudan', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 51 (1): 101-21.



- Gidron, Y (2024). Survivalist mobilities: Freedom of movement and the economic lives of settlement refugees in Uganda. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *feae079*, pp. 1-19.
- Omata, N and Y Gidron (2023). *Refugee entrepreneurship in Rwanda*. Oxford: RSC.

Second, the **Shocks, Vulnerability, and Livelihoods** project involves research undertaken by Professor Olivier Sterck and Vittorio Bruni and has focused on exploring the role that unanticipated 'shocks' such as changes in food assistance levels, theft, and unemployment have on economic outcomes and behaviour. The research focuses on Kakuma and Kalobeyi in Kenya and involved undertaking surveys with the same 622 refugee households at monthly intervals for one year, as well as two phases of qualitative data collection. Findings have been published in *Refugee Debt and Livelihoods in Northern Kenya*, available on our website, which explores how debt is used as a coping strategy by refugees living in Kakuma and Kalobeyi and concludes that, to be effective, policy solutions should try to simultaneously reduce the prevalence and levels of debt, address the causes of indebtedness, and mitigate the negative consequences of debt. In 2025, we published two working papers based on 1) the impact of aid delays on food security, markets, and other socio-economic indicators in Kakuma and Kalobeyi, and 2) the welfare and market effects of a 20% cut in cash assistances using high-frequency household data with randomised survey timing and weekly price data collected in Kakuma and Kalobeyi:

- Bruni, V and Sterck, O (2025) 'The welfare and market effects of delays in humanitarian assistance', *SSRN*: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5190878.
- Bruni, V and Sterck, O (2025) 'The welfare and general-equilibrium impacts of aid cuts', *SSRN*: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5270846.

Third, the **Politics of Socio-Economic Rights** project involves research undertaken by Professor Alexander Betts and Dr Julia Schweers. It draws upon a combination of archival research and semi-structured interviews to explore the political history of refugee rights – and particularly socio-economic rights. Their book, *Authoritarian Sanctuaries: How Illiberal Governments Forge Liberal Refugee Policies* (under

review, Oxford University Press), aims to understand the politics that sometimes lead authoritarian states to adopt refugee policies that come to be framed by liberal international organisations, and notably the UN Refugee Agency, as ‘liberal’. In order to do that, the book adopts a comparative and historical approach to focus on one particular regional context, East Africa, and to inductively theorise how and why it is that authoritarian governments sometimes forge – both in the sense of ‘make’ and ‘pretend to have’ – ostensibly liberal refugee policies. It examines the refugee politics of four under-researched countries, Uganda, Rwanda, Sudan, and Ethiopia. In particular, we examine refugee politics under four contemporaneous autocrats of the 1970s and 1980s: Idi Amin, Juvenal Habyarimana, Gaafar Nimeiry and Mengistu Haile Mariam.

In addition to the book, the team are writing a series of journal articles which draw on the vast material collected for the book:

- Schweers, J, and Betts, A (under review)
Authoritarian legacies: How 1970s African dictators shaped contemporary refugee policies.
- Schweers, J, Betts A, and Smith J (forthcoming)
A political history of the Nakivale refugee settlement: Sixty-six years of Ugandan refugee politics.

Finally, the Refugee Economies Programme has developed a new public engagement project called **Refugee Stories**, with additional funding from the OUP John Fell Fund, IKEA Foundation, and partly in collaboration with the Gapminder Foundation. Refugee Stories aims to develop an innovative approach to ‘representative story-telling’. It does so through a novel approach to integrating qualitative and quantitative data. Normally when we hear stories about refugees they are de-contextualised, and we have no idea whether they are representative or not. We collected representative survey data from across the Kakuma population. We then ordered the surveyed households by income, enabling us to approach households at particular percentiles – 10th, 20th, 90th etc – to get a representative window into life in the camps. In collaboration with a refugee film crew, we then interviewed key household members to get an understanding of their lives, and enable viewers to understand how those stories relate to the wider context and population. The project will result in both a documentary film series and a book. ●

Publications are available on the RSC website and on the project website: www.refugee-economies.org

The Refugee-Led Research Hub

IKEA Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Bosch Foundation, Mastercard Foundation, Robert Ho Foundation, Porticus Abdulmajid Chahrour, Mohamed Hassan, Joshua Low, Winnie Makau, Andonis Marden, Florin Najera-Uresti, Fardosa Salah, Ghazal Sarah Salehi, Oudai Tozan, and Pauline Vidal

The Refugee-Led Research Hub (RLRH) supports individuals affected by forced displacement to become leaders in academic, research, and professional fields related to forced migration, human rights, humanitarian response, and other areas identified by RLRH affiliates.

The last academic year has seen expansion through the launching of new hubs and hiring of key new staff members, as well as continuing progress in our graduate support, professional placement and research activities.

We launched a new local initiative in Oxford, the East Oxford Hub, in partnership with local charity Asylum Welcome and Oxford Brookes University, in late 2024, offering a space for refugee and displacement-affected learners in Oxfordshire to connect with RLRH’s wider academic, research, and professional programmes. We delivered a series of community engagement events through the hub in early 2025, including research workshops, cultural excursions, and career pathways activities.



Research training at the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya

RLRH also secured funding for a new Southeast Asia Hub based in Kuala Lumpur from the Robert Ho Foundation and Porticus, which launched in July 2025. The programme will have a core focus on producing research by individuals with lived experience, addressing topics of particular salience in the region.

In Oxford, we hired two new senior leaders, Dr Oudai Tozan as Director of Academic Programmes and Abdulmajid Chahrour as Director of Operations and Strategy. Their leadership will be critical to supporting and expanding our network of affiliates throughout the world, and to ensuring RLRH's sustainable growth.

Continuing our graduate access support, through Graduate Horizons we helped 32 displacement-affected students gain admission to universities, including eight to Oxford, with the involvement of 100 Oxford students and alumni as mentors. Elsewhere, planning is underway for a new programme, Graduate Essentials, which aims to equip offer-holders with essential academic and writing skills in preparation for their graduate studies. We also piloted a new programme, RSC Foundations, a self-paced version of our RSC Pathways online course in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, which will be available to a larger pool of students. A total of 56 learners completed the course in the pilot phase.

In our research pillar, we continued our collective projects on refugee graduate employment pathways; access to work permits and opportunities in Africa; the digital opportunities available to women

refugees in Kenya; and the impact of refugee participation on livelihood programmes in Kenya. We also launched two new studies, on the political lives of refugees in Kenya and Tanzania and women in refugee leadership spaces, as well as six Independent Research Projects led by displacement-affected researchers. In addition, we published six new working papers (for details, please see the Academic Record), and held two training sessions for refugee scholars and researchers, one online and one in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya, on forced displacement research and analysis.

Within our Livelihoods and Professional Placements Pillar, we have continued expanding partnerships with external organisations to create paid, professional pathways for RLRH affiliates after completion of their studies. We have co-created more than 15 opportunities with partners, ranging from professional placements to research fellowships. In parallel, we have also strengthened our advocacy efforts to support employers to systematically include refugees and others affected by displacement in their workforce. This includes developing guidelines on meaningful inclusion of refugees in the workplace, and best practices to advance ethical and sustainable pathways for career progression. In addition, we are currently preparing for the launch of an advanced graduate traineeship in Nairobi that will prepare master's graduates with lived experience of forced displacement to pursue careers in research and leadership. The traineeship will serve cohorts in Kenya, Uganda, and other locations across the African continent in the coming years. ●

Policy and impact

A key aim of the Refugee Studies Centre is to ensure that our work has a meaningful impact beyond the academic community. We achieve this by combining our independent, objective, and critical scholarship with an active role in engaging policymakers in governments, intergovernmental agencies, and non-governmental organisations, shaping public understanding through the media, and working directly with refugees.

Drawing on their current research on 'Borders, Mobility, and Livelihoods', **Professor Naohiko Omata** and Dr Yotam Gidron, former postdoctoral researcher at the Refugee Economies Programme, conducted a series of meetings to disseminate their research findings on refugees' cross-border activities for policymakers at both national and regional institutions in East Africa.

In March 2025, they travelled to Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Uganda to disseminate findings to multiple stakeholders, including The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (Djibouti, Djibouti), Policy Studies Institute (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), and Office of the Prime Minister, the department responsible for refugees (Kampala, Uganda). The findings were particularly welcomed at a time when humanitarian and development institutions are trying to cope with, and understand the impact of, dramatic aid cuts.

Following the visit to Djibouti, they were invited by IGAD to present their research on cross-border movements of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda at the 4th Scientific Conference on Migration, Displacement, and Urbanisation. The conference was attended by high-level government officials and migration researchers from across the region. They also presented their work at the African Union in Addis Ababa for the expert team working on forced migration issues in Africa. For these practitioners and policymakers working on refugee self-reliance and mobility, the research provided important insights into current dynamics on the ground in East Africa's borderlands and the impact of aid reductions on refugees.

In July 2025, Dr Gidron presented the work to the East African Community (EAC)'s Investment Promotion and Private Sector Development section in Arusha, Tanzania. The officials interviewed expressed strong interest in seeking out the authors' input and advice

in the future, as the EAC is set to review its approach to refugee management in the region.

Dr Hiba Salem was asked to consult on and co-lead an ERICC Helpdesk rapid study aimed at understanding how education can both enable and inhibit decision-making for Syrian families with school-age children considering a return to Syria in the post-Assad era.

The ERICC Helpdesk provides expert technical assistance to FCDO country offices, implementation partners, and in-country partners.

The study responds to current and anticipated movements of Syrian families and examines the barriers, challenges, and considerations for return in both refugee-hosting countries (Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon) and Syria itself, with a focus on education. It provides key recommendations for educational programming, practices, and policies to:

- support voluntary return of refugees,
- promote inclusive and equitable re-integration of refugee children into Syrian education systems, and
- protect refugees' rights to continued learning in host countries.

The report aims to inform host governments, the Syrian Ministry of Education, FCDO country offices, implementation partners, and in-country stakeholders involved in refugee education and return programming.

Professor Alexander Betts and colleagues from the **Refugee-Led Research Hub** took part in the UNHCR's Global 15by30 Refugee Higher Education Conference in Istanbul in June. The conference brought together universities, humanitarian and



RLRH team members attending the 15by30 conference

development agencies, students, and policy-makers to focus on how the UNHCR's target of getting 15% of refugees into higher education by 2030 (15by30) can be met.

Professor Betts moderated the opening plenary with Angela Li Rosa and Suhaila Mohamed Reza, sharing what Oxford is doing and learning as a University of Sanctuary, including expanding sanctuary and crisis scholarships; supporting refugees' access to transformative career paths; and centring the leadership of refugees, and displaced students and researchers, and building partnerships in refugee-hosting regions through the RLRH.

In October, Emeritus **Professor Dawn Chatty** and Dr Ariell Ahearn of the School of Geography and the Environment (SoGE) held a side event at the United Nations to mark the release of a report by the Special Rapporteur for Indigenous Peoples to the UN General Assembly. The report reviewed the challenges faced by Mobile Indigenous Peoples and the initiatives undertaken by states, Indigenous Peoples, and other stakeholders to recognise and respect their rights.

The report was a response to the Dana Declaration +20 Manifesto of 2022, the outcome of the Dana +20 Workshop organised by the RSC and SoGE. The Manifesto called for the UN to take into account Mobile Peoples' special vulnerabilities and needs. Professor Chatty chaired the Standing Committee of the Dana Declaration from 2002 until 2021 when Dr Ahearn joined her as co-Chair. The October side event was co-hosted with the UN Development Program.

Professor Tom Scott-Smith was interviewed for the New Books Network Podcast about his book *Fragments of Home* in November. The book analyses seven examples of emergency shelter, from Germany to Jordan, which emerged after the 'summer of migration' in 2015 and suggests current approaches to shelter have led to destructive forms of paternalism. The New Books Network is a consortium of author-interview podcast channels dedicated to public education which reaches about half a million people every month.

The podcast is available at newbooksnetwork.com/fragments-of-home. ●



The Humanity 1 carrying out a rescue operation. Credit: Wanda Proft/SOS Humanity

Dangerous journeys: saving lives and responding to missing migrants and refugees

By Jo Boyce and Alice Philip
FMR Editors

Every year thousands of people who undertake migration journeys never reach their destination: according to the International Organisation of Migration, more than 75,000 people have disappeared on migration routes across the world since 2014. The true figure is likely to be much higher.

In the most recent issue of Forced Migration Review we look more closely at these ‘dangerous journeys’, asking how deaths and disappearances could be prevented and, where tragedies continue to occur, how greater resolution and support could be provided for the loved ones left behind.

What hinders search and rescue...

The issue explores new constraints on search and rescue (SAR). Marc Tilley describes the move from criminalisation of individuals and organisations

helping migrants at sea to the more insidious ‘bureaucratisation’ – the use of measures such as complex compliance requirements, arbitrary port restrictions and vessel seizures under the pretext of safety regulations. He argues these measures enable states to deter SAR activities while avoiding legal scrutiny and public backlash, and have contributed to a big fall in the number of NGO vessels operating in the Mediterranean.

Eleanor Paynter focusses in particular on the ‘distant ports’ practice, whereby authorities direct SAR vessels to dock not at the nearest port but at ports that are often hundreds of miles away, straining crew resources and further endangering rescued people. According to data collected by the NGO SOS Humanity, in 2023–24 NGO vessels operating in the Central Mediterranean travelled for 653 additional days and more than 261,990 extra miles in order to disembark migrants at assigned ports.

...and what can help

In their article, Ralph Mamiya and Caroline Abu Sa'Da suggest commercial shipping is a significant untapped resource that could be better mobilised to assist with SAR, either directly or through data collection. Drawing on their own survey data, they find that seafarers recognise a responsibility to help those in distress but feel they lack the training to do so, while also citing operational challenges and fears of possible criminalisation.

Elisa Sisto and Malvika Verma outline some more successful approaches to rescue in different contexts. In the Alps, Médecins du Monde has partnered with a local organisation to provide joint mobile rescue units, featuring locals with terrain knowledge and medical professionals. Recognising that border guards are often unsure of their rights and responsibilities, legal guidance has also been developed. In Niger, rather than being criminalised, SAR is supported by authorities, with prompt information-sharing and coordination between NGOs, local volunteers, the police, and military helping to support rescue efforts in the desert.

The dangers of new routes

With the increasing fortification of Europe's borders, new migration routes are opening up. Growing numbers from the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa are heading to the Americas, with many navigating the treacherous Darién Gap into the North. Houman Oliaei takes a look at the brokers who facilitate these journeys and how they juggle constantly changing requirements along the route in a complex interplay of legal statuses, visa requirements and strategic decision-making that blurs distinctions between regular and irregular migration.

Alberto Hernández Hernández and Carlos S Ibarra highlight the increasing commodification of migration along these routes. Rather than relying on ad hoc smuggling arrangements, they found some migrants were purchasing 'packages' – organised tiers of service, often labelled as basic, standard or VIP depending on the degree of danger. This stratification forced resource-poor migrants into more perilous journeys while also complicating humanitarian support. Packages were increasingly

advertised via social media, with online 'influencers' falsely glamorising journeys through scenic footage of river crossings or tropical mountains.

Ngang Fru Delvis' article brings out the brutal reality of these journeys through interviews with Cameroonian women who have travelled through the Americas. The women described the physical toll of the journey, as well as the exploitation and sexual violence experienced at the hands of narco-traffickers, armed bandits and smugglers. They also highlighted the mutual support they developed as a survival strategy, as well as the kindness they received from local communities, although they noted the solidarity fatigue that set in as greater numbers of migrants began to arrive.

As Magdalena Arias Cubas and co-authors explain, children travelling alone face similar risks of exploitation. Child separation on migration journeys can happen for many reasons, including deliberate division by smugglers, chaotic border situations or even a simple inability to keep up. They outline approaches that can limit the risks for children, such as 'invented kinship', where groups of children travel together for both companionship and safety, better information for those policing borders, and ensuring access to support services.

Enhancing identification

Where deaths do occur, it is important that families receive answers about the fate of their loved ones and that the identity and dignity of deceased persons is restored to enable the return of their human remains for proper burial.

Lucinda Evert, Stephen Fonseca and Vaughn Rossouw explore how, with some adjustments, countries' existing systems for identifying the missing and the dead can be adapted to address the specific challenges relating to missing and deceased migrants. They outline a pilot project run by the International Committee of the Red Cross in South Africa and Zimbabwe that used better liaison with families, enhanced forensic identification procedures, and improved training for police to increase identification rates.

Antonietta Lanzarone, Panthelis Themelis and Florian von König highlight another example of good

practice in the response to the 2023 Pylos disaster, in which a boat carrying over 750 people sank off the Peloponnese coast. Some 100 men were rescued and 82 bodies recovered. The authors describe how the Greek authorities' decision to activate the country's Disaster Victim Identification protocol in the context of a migration-related incident for the first time led to an exceptionally high 90% identification rate.

The role of states and regional cooperation

Recognising the urgent need to step up efforts to prevent and resolve cases of missing migrants, states have begun to develop increasingly specific political commitments, policies and practices. Jana Röthlisberger, Ndumbeh Saho and Florian von König write about a joint project by the ICRC, Switzerland and The Gambia to establish a Network of National Focal Points to address the shortage of government officials with designated responsibilities for missing migrants – a lack which has hampered previous coordination.

Julian Pahlke and Paulo Pisco outline positive efforts being undertaken by the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly to bring together governments, parliamentarians and civil society actors to address the issue. But Gilberto M A Rodrigues and Luiza Fernandes e Silva point to the recent renegotiation of the Cartagena process, the regional framework for refugee protection in Latin America and the Caribbean, as a missed opportunity which, despite useful recommendations developed by civil society organisations, failed to introduce substantial measures to address dangerous migration journeys.

There isn't space here to mention all 25 articles in the issue but we would like to thank all the authors who shared their insights. Together their articles document the tireless efforts of individuals, communities, local actors, organisations and governments across the world to tackle the tragedy of missing migrants, and the work that still needs to be done. ●

The Politics of Education and Hope in Forced Migration: Insights from Syrian Young People's Journeys

Hiba Salem

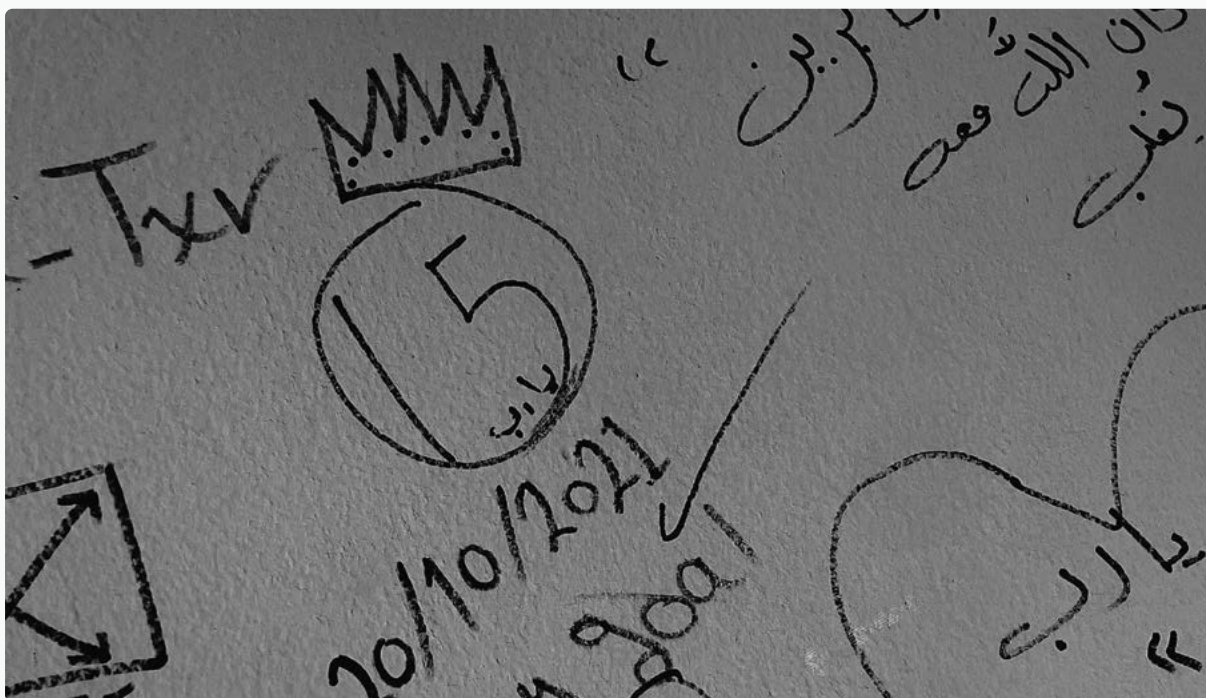
Pedro Arrupe Research Fellow in Forced Migration Studies

Research by Hiba Salem explored how shifting national and international migration policies impact on the education of displaced Syrian young people.

Education plays a crucial role in the lives of children and young people who often spend many years in contexts of prolonged displacement. Yet their ability to pursue learning is disrupted by numerous challenges. Many of these obstacles stem from shifting international and national policies, which determine where forcibly displaced populations can seek protection, for how long, and under what circumstances. Increasingly, such policies are

justified by political narratives portraying large-scale displacement caused by conflict as a crisis for states and societies, presenting it as a threat to borders and socio-economic stability.

The Syrian displacement context exemplifies how learning is shaped by the competing priorities of states at both global and national levels. Since 2011, over 14 million Syrians have become displaced, more than 6 million of whom are refugees. Efforts to expand access to education have been made under agreements that are frequently criticised for prioritising European border security, particularly by directing aid to neighbouring host states – Turkey,



Jordan, and Lebanon – in exchange for containing Syrian displacement within the region. As a result, most Syrian refugees remain in countries where they are granted only temporary legal status, with little or no access to pathways toward permanent residence or citizenship that are more readily available in wealthier states.

Throughout my Research Fellowship at the RSC, I examined how Syrian refugee young people reflect on their educational journeys and aspirations. Using storytelling interviews with 60 young people across nine contexts, my research explored lived experiences shaped by the interplay of international and national negotiations of their rights. These accounts document how young Syrians navigate promises of education disconnected from their everyday realities. They also show how education is inseparable from the wider politics of migration, and how current provisions – still reliant on humanitarian assistance and segregated schooling – often harm rather than support displaced learners, despite policies promoting ‘integration’ into national systems.

My research critiques current international frameworks of 'responsibility sharing,' which force young people to make painful trade-offs about their aspirations in the face of systemic injustice. Some confront the borders of Jordan's camps to access education, others grapple with Lebanon's residency

requirements that block entry to national exams, while still others risk dangerous journeys to Europe to maintain their educational goals. These struggles highlight the shortfalls of international responses, which often leave individuals in limbo, making significant sacrifices in pursuit of equitable learning and work opportunities.

The findings reveal that the promise of education as a universal right is undermined by its disconnection from broader rights frameworks. While education is promoted as a pathway to integration and mobility, young people continue to face restricted access to work, limited legal protections, and uncertainty about their futures. This produces a disjuncture: education offers hope for progress, but there is a risk of disillusionment when opportunities fail to materialise.

Despite these constraints, young Syrians continue to practise what I term acts of hope. These are not expressions of naïve optimism but deliberate strategies of resistance and survival in contexts of uncertainty. Examples include working to save for private lessons when public education is inaccessible, pursuing informal language learning to maintain aspirations for mobility, or reframing goals when confronted with repeated exclusion. Such strategies reveal the agency of young people who, despite protracted displacement and systemic barriers, continue to assert their right to dignity and a future. ●

Studying and learning

The RSC offers teaching programmes that are academically rigorous and multidisciplinary, attracting outstanding students and practitioners from around the world. Our degree and non-degree courses have two distinct aims: to further academic understanding of forced migration by training future researchers and teachers; and to cultivate the ‘reflective practitioner’ by enabling professionals who work in the field of forced migration to engage with key debates and to situate displacement in a broad historical and international context.

Master of Science in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies

This interdisciplinary nine-month master’s degree offers an intellectually demanding route to understanding forced migration in contexts of conflict, repression, natural disasters, environmental change, and development. It places forced migration in an historical, global and human perspective, and encourages informed reflection on international and national responses to both cross-border and internal displacement.

Taught by leading experts in the field of forced migration drawn from a range of disciplines including anthropology, history, international law, politics, international relations, and sociology, students on the degree benefit from Oxford’s exceptional academic environment and teaching tradition, featuring individual supervision by world-class scholars as well as small-group teaching. They explore forced migration through a thesis, research methods essays, assessed essays, and written exams.

MSc teaching usually takes place in small classes to encourage active participation and to enable students to learn from each other. Teaching styles vary, and involve lectures, workshops, seminars, and student presentations. The programme’s academic content is complemented by a range of extra-curricular activities, including object-handling sessions at the Ashmolean, a trip to the Living Refugee Archive (at UEL), and a film series.

In the first term, students follow three core courses, which introduce the subject of forced migration from anthropological, political, and legal perspectives. In the second term they follow a fourth core course on moral philosophy, and across both terms all students take a course dedicated to research methods in the study of forced migration.

In the second term, students also choose two option courses from a list, which changes from year to year. In 2024–25, our option courses included Refugee Economies, Postcolonial Borders and Forced Migration, the History and Politics of Humanitarian Aid, Violence and Cities: From Destruction to Reconstruction, and an advanced law option that explored current issues in International Human Rights and Refugee Law. In the final term, students write a 10,000 to 15,000-word thesis based on research conducted over the year.

The students

Since 1998 the MSc has drawn outstanding students from all over the world, including Rhodes, Marshall, Commonwealth, and Fulbright scholars. Students come from a range of countries, with many in receipt of bursary or other financial support. The degree is competitive, with over 250 applicants for the 25 places available on the course each year.

Over 500 students have graduated and gone on to doctoral degrees, law school, and/or work relevant to human rights, refugees, and migration. Graduates are employed in organisations such as UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration, UNDP, Save the Children, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the Brookings and MacArthur foundations, as well as national governments and universities around the world.

For further information on the master’s degree, please see the RSC website at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/msc.

Funding and studentships

Information about support available for study is provided on the website of the Oxford Department of International Development. Various awards are available for students. For example, the Department offers a number of full scholarships (covering University and college fees, plus an amount towards maintenance), which are available to students on any ODID courses. There is also a range of scholarships for international students, such as Clarendon and Weidenfeld. Find further information at: www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/fees-funding

Uttara Shahani wins Teaching Excellence Award

Dr Uttara Shahani won a 2025 Teaching Excellence Award in the Early Career Strand.

Dr Shahani was recognised for her significant contributions to the MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies through her innovative and engaging teaching methods. Her approach to teaching archival research was particularly noteworthy, as she organises and leads trips to the National Archives at Kew and the Living Refugee Archives at the University of East London, providing students with hands-on experience in handling primary sources.

Her use of primary sources and film in her lectures and seminars on the long history of forced migration not only enthuses students but also enhances their understanding of complex historical and contemporary issues. Her teaching method

embodies the flipped classroom approach which includes pre-recorded lectures followed by in-person seminars, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the subject matter. Additionally, she employs a variety of innovative resources, such as podcasts, documentaries, interactive maps, and songs, to make her courses more accessible and engaging.

Students reported that her teaching acted as a catalyst for connecting their understanding across a number of different disciplines.

The Teaching Excellence Awards celebrate exceptional contributions to education and teaching practices by colleagues across the University's Social Science Division at all career stages.



Short courses

The RSC convenes occasional short courses that offer participants the opportunity to engage actively and critically with contemporary debates under the tutelage of distinguished experts in the field of forced migration. The courses, usually held over a weekend, focus on a particular issue related to forced migration, enabling participants to develop their expertise through a mix of lectures, working group exercises, and interactive sessions. RSC short courses are suitable for experienced practitioners, graduate researchers, parliamentarians and staff, members of the legal profession, government officials, and personnel of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations.

In March 2025, Professor Dawn Chatty (RSC) and Professor Susan M Akram (Boston University School of Law) convened the course Palestine Refugees and International Law, held at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul. This two-day course places the Palestinian refugee case study within the broader context of the international human rights regime. It examines how the policies and practices of Middle Eastern states impinge upon Palestinian refugees.

The course will run again from 13–14 March 2026 at the Issam Fares Institute of Public Policy and International Affairs in Beirut.

For further information, see www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/short-courses

Doctoral studies

The RSC is a vibrant training ground for young doctoral researchers. The Centre's staff supervise candidates undertaking research degrees at the Oxford Department of International Development and other centres within the University, and provide external supervision to candidates based elsewhere. Students come from various academic disciplines including development studies, politics and international relations, social and cultural anthropology, and geography.

Current topics under investigation include 'Temporal ambiguities and humanitarian imaginings: how do humanitarians' perceptions of time shape "durable solutions" for forcibly displaced Syrians?', 'Climate

Crises, Gendered Impacts, and Legal Responses: A Feminist Examination of International Human Rights Law Reform' and 'The architecture/geography of international development' (see the Academic Record for a complete listing of current DPhil theses).

The RSC aims to secure further doctoral research scholarship funds, targeted where possible at students from the Global South. It is also committed to the development of additional postdoctoral opportunities at the Centre.

For further information about DPhil opportunities, visit the RSC website at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/dphil.

Elisa Sisto DPhil Candidate

Migration and Mountain Humanitarianism: Risk, Rescue, and Solidarity in the Alps and Pyrenees: Since France reinstated internal border controls in 2015, surveillance along the key coastal crossing points and transportation routes has intensified. As a result, migrants increasingly undertake dangerous journeys through the Alps and Pyrenees, traversing high-altitude passes, valleys, and rivers. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, I explore how border geography and mountainous landscapes mediate both surveillance

and solidarity at the French-Italian and Franco-Spanish borders. I examine the politics of risk, rescue, and solidarity, focusing on how terrain is mobilised both to enforce and contest the border apparatus. I also investigate how border politics are negotiated through material traces and memorial infrastructures along these historic migration routes. Ultimately, my research explores how distinctive perceptions of responsibility and interpretations of humanitarian principles emerge at these borderlands.

Rosanna O'Keeffe DPhil Candidate

My DPhil research explores how mortar bombs are perceived by those who live and work with them. Mortar bombs are a traditional, conventional weapon used by both state forces and non-state actors around the world. Taking a material culture-oriented approach, I use the 'life cycle' of a mortar bomb as a route to explore how weapons are perceived in different contexts. Using both ethnographic research and in depth interviews, I trace the journey of a mortar bomb from

production to sales, deployment, and afterlife. During my research I have spoken to individuals who test the efficacy of mortars, sell them, fire them in training, those who have used them in combat, who destroy them in post-conflict settings and those who have experienced their effects. I hope this research will help understand how those with intimate knowledge of weapons relate to conflict and its material culture.

International Online School in Forced Migration

Central to the RSC's calendar is the International Online School in Forced Migration. Once again, the School was held three times this year, in December 2024 and then March and June 2025.

The International Online School provides an exciting forum for the discussion of contemporary issues in the field and an opportunity for practitioners from around the world to reflect on their work and learn from each other.

The Refugee Studies Centre has always set the highest academic and pedagogic standards in all its research and teaching. The International Online School offers a programme of study that is theoretically rigorous, empirically informed, and participatory. Participants have early access to pre-recorded lectures and readings, which are then followed by live online seminars and discussions. The School's engaging academic content is complemented by a range of social and networking opportunities.

The diversity of participants is always crucial in the success of the School. This year, across the three Schools, we welcomed 103 participants from 31 countries. David Turton Awards were made to 15 participants with lived experience of displacement, enabling them to participate fully in the programme.

The School's Directors were Professor Matthew Gibney and Associate Professor Catherine Briddick, who, along with Professor Tom Scott-Smith, also acted as tutors. Guest lecturers and speakers included Dr Maher Abdel Aziz (Swedish-Palestinian artist and filmmaker), Professor Susan M. Akram (Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the International Human Rights Clinic, Boston University School of Law), Dr Ammar Azzouz (British Academy Research Fellow, School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford, and Research Fellow, Somerville College), Dr Rebecca Buxton (Lecturer in Social and Political Philosophy, University of Bristol), Professor Dawn Chatty (Emeritus Professor of Anthropology and Forced Migration, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford), Dr Jeff Crisp (Visiting Fellow, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, and Associate Fellow in International Law, Chatham House), Dr Molly Fee (Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and

Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, University of South Florida), Associate Professor Luisa Feline Freier De Ferrari (Universidad del Pacífico, Lima, Peru), Dr Madeline Garlick (Chief, Protection Policy and Legal Advice Section, UNHCR, Geneva), Dr Anne Irfan (Lecturer in Interdisciplinary Race, Gender and Postcolonial Studies, University College London), Dr Maryanne Loughry (Part-Time Faculty, School of Social Work, Boston College), Dr Caroline Nalule (international law and human rights scholar and consultant, Research Fellow with UNU-CPR and Coventry University, and affiliated with MIDEQ), and Victor Nyamori (Researcher and Adviser on Refugee and Migrant Rights, Amnesty International, Nairobi).

The International Online School offers an intensive, interdisciplinary, and participative approach to the study of forced migration. It enables people working with refugees and other forced migrants to reflect critically on the forces and institutions that dominate the worlds of displaced people. The course combines Oxford's tradition of academic excellence with a stimulating discussion-based method of teaching, learning, and reflection. Subjects covered include: Conceptualising Forced Migration, The Moral Foundations of Refugeehood, International Law and Refugee Protection, and The Politics of Humanitarianism, as well as a choice of optional modules.

Participants on the Online Schools described the Schools as offering "excellent content and materials" delivered by "brilliant professors." They highlighted the "truly interdisciplinary approach" that encourages critical reflection rather than easy answers, and praised the "extremely professional delivery" that provided both an excellent foundation and depth to the topic. Many found the experience "very enriching and supportive," noting that it was "personally and professionally beneficial to everyone," and several emphasized that the programme is "essential for anyone working in the field of refugees and forced migration.

In the 2025-2026 academic year, the Online School will again take place three times, in December, March and June.

Full details are available at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/online-school

Visiting Fellowships

Visiting Fellowships provide an excellent opportunity for professional academics, postdoctoral scholars, independent non-academic researchers, and doctoral students to study in a renowned intellectual environment. Visiting Fellows undertake a specific programme of self-directed study or research under the guidance of an assigned academic advisor. Fellows are able to attend the core seminar series of the MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, and the RSC's Public Seminar Series. They have full access to the University's academic facilities, including libraries and seminars. The RSC's Library holds the world's largest collection of unpublished literature in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies.

During the past year the RSC has welcomed Visiting Research Fellows and Student Visitors from a variety of countries with a diverse range of experiences and expertise. Through mutual exchange and learning, their presence has greatly enhanced the academic work of the Centre.

Details of this year's Visiting Fellows can be found in the Academic Record; two fellows outline their experiences below.

For further information about the Visiting Fellowship programme, visit www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/visiting-fellowships.

Synne Dyvik **Visiting Research Fellow**

I was fortunate enough to spend a sabbatical term away from my normal role as an Associate Professor at the University of Sussex as a Visiting Fellow at the RSC during Michaelmas term 2024. This time was spent working on my co-authored book (with Gabrielle Daoust, UNBC), *Humanitarianism in the Home: Hosting-at-Home and the Politics of Hospitality* (forthcoming, Routledge).

The RSC provided the perfect welcoming setting for me to research and write, and I have learned so much from it. I would like to mention in particular my sponsor, Tom Scott-Smith as well as Jeff

Crisp both of whom have been very welcoming and supportive of my project. The book has no doubt improved from the discussions, advice and recommendations offered by them. In addition, with help from the excellent Sarah Rhodes and other staff at the Social Science Library, I was able to find valuable resources in the RSC archive that would otherwise have been unavailable to me. I would highly recommend this fellowship. The collegial and supportive environment of the RSC, the seminars open to VFs, the facilities and research support offered, as well as the relationships formed are invaluable.

Serde Atalay **Visiting Research Fellow**

I visited the Refugee Studies Centre as a fellow during Trinity term 2025. These two months were most enjoyable and productive. During my time at the Centre, I worked on finalising my doctoral dissertation entitled 'Right to Access Housing for Migrants and Refugees: An Inquiry into the Unfulfilled Promises of International Law'. My stay in Oxford provided me with the fresh perspectives, rich resources, and deep focus that I needed to finish the two last substantive chapters of my thesis. I thoroughly enjoyed the active research

environment of the Centre. I benefited particularly from my interactions with Tom Scott-Smith. My sponsor, Catherine Briddick, was so kind to spare her valuable time to give me detailed feedback on my written work which proved indispensable for me going forward. Oxford itself was a source of inspiration for my intellectual endeavours. I particularly enjoyed discovering the many wonderful libraries. The Social Science Library played a particularly important role for my research and writing.



Inside the Manor Road building, which houses the Social Science Library

RSC Library

The Refugee Studies collections are housed in the Bodleian Social Science Library (SSL) where readers gain from the wider social science context within which the specialist forced migration materials sit. These benefits include access to over 220,000 open-shelf monographs and c.1,200 print-runs of social science-related journals, as well as the stack request routes between the Bodleian Libraries.

Access to the unique grey literature collection of unpublished and semi-published material is still much appreciated by readers, and although unpublished materials are often now freely available online, the SSL still adds new print documents and newsletter issues to this collection. The SSL also houses several archival collections including the papers belonging to Dr Paul Weis and Tristram Betts. Both archives were consulted by a number of researchers during the past year.

In addition to the grey literature and archive collections, the specialist book collection has also continued to expand with 240 monograph purchases for both research and teaching purposes. New book acquisitions were further supplemented by donations acquired via the RSC as well as weekly UK-published legal deposit books selected for the SSL.

Readers have also benefitted from electronic book and e-journal acquisitions, a trend accelerated during and after pandemic library closures. We purchased 71 new e-book titles for the forced migration and international development field this year. There are presently over 475,000 refugee-related electronic articles and books accessible via SOLO, of which

93,000 are Open Access, the latter allowing non-University members full-text access via the catalogue.

The RSC's MSc students continued to profit from Oxford Reading Lists Online (ORLO) this academic year. These are embedded in the Centre's Canvas VLE site, making collections of resources more accessible and relevant to students. Real-time book availability and direct links to electronic books, chapters and articles is beneficial to their learning environment.

In-person subject-specific library welcomes were provided for MSc students and Visiting Research Fellows this year. In addition, the Subject Consultant also offered tailored one-to-one research sessions, taught a search-skills session for the MSc students, and answered a wide range of email enquiries. Topics included: intergenerational trauma and mental health of refugee women; social-capital based interventions for refugee populations; and Syria's changing statelessness landscape. The online research guide for Refugee and Forced Migration Studies also continued to be a well-used tool for locating electronic and print resources and is available at libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/refugee-studies.

Contact Sarah Rhodes (sarah.rhodes@bodleian.ox.ac.uk) to make an appointment for subject-specific research queries or search SOLO for refugee-related material at solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk. You can also visit the Bodleian Social Science Library website at www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/libraries/ssl. ●



Students taking part in a Labour Day protest. Credit: Diana Volpe

Understanding state violence: how Italy legitimises migration control

Diana Volpe
Doctoral student

Doctoral research by Diana Volpe seeks to understand how states maintain support for the outsourcing of migration control, despite the human rights abuses this enables beyond national borders.

Every day, people attempt the dangerous crossing from Libya to Italy over the Mediterranean Sea on unseaworthy boats. The Libyan Coast Guard, supported by Italy and the EU, is tasked with finding these boats and holding migrants in detention centres. For every person that makes it to European

shores, there are thus many that are pulled back, or kept in detention facilities that are rife with human rights abuses. Despite widespread documentation of these abuses, the policy continues with remarkable public support. How does a democratic state legitimise such arrangements?

This puzzle drove my doctoral research, which examined the Italy-Libya migration outsourcing through the lens of legitimacy. Rather than simply documenting policy failures, the study investigates how both Italian government officials and citizens understand and justify these arrangements, investigating how democratic societies can justify state-sponsored human rights abuses through racialised boundary-making.

The thesis combines focus group discussions with politically engaged Italians with discourse analysis of parliamentary debates and other forms of government archival sources. Through conversations with citizens across the political spectrum, I conceptualise these appeals to legitimacy across three major axes: a form of moral legitimacy, based on their moral values; legal legitimacy, based on their understanding of adherence to national and supranational laws; and political legitimacy, understood in broad terms as the procedural and discursive elements that give legitimacy to the 'will of the people'. Crucially, citizens could find the policy legitimate on some dimensions but troubling on others, contradictions that nonetheless enabled overall acceptance.

Across the conversations, the role of colonial amnesia in shaping people's understanding of the policy was most striking. Italy's colonial history in Libya, which involved concentration camps, mass deportations, and genocide, remains largely absent from Italian public consciousness. The Italy-Libya Friendship Treaty, which was signed by the two countries in 2008 and nominally included reparations for colonial wrongs, was framed domestically as a deal for "less illegal immigrants and more oil".

This deliberate forgetting allows for these policies to be framed through the lens of security and humanitarianism, and obfuscates historical responsibility. Citizens express concern about human rights abuses in Libya while feeling little responsibility for Italy's role in creating and funding the very

systems producing those abuses. Colonial amnesia thus serves as a crucial legitimising mechanism, allowing the public to maintain moral self-perception while supporting policies that reproduce colonial logics of control.

The research reveals how migration control serves functions beyond border management, actively constructing Italian national identity through racialised exclusions. In a country with a fragmented sense of nationhood, marked by deep regional, linguistic, and economic divisions, immigration has become a unifying force. By defining 'Italianness' against a racialised Other, outsourcing policies actually help construct the political community they claim to protect.

These dynamics extend far beyond the Italy-Libya case. As European states increasingly outsource migration control to third countries, understanding how such arrangements gain legitimacy becomes crucial for grasping contemporary governance patterns. The research suggests that legitimacy in complex transnational arrangements operates less through coherent belief systems than through overlapping, sometimes contradictory appeals that create sufficient justification for policy continuation.

The broader implications are sobering. The study reveals how democratic societies can accommodate systematic violence against racialised populations through processes of legitimisation that simultaneously construct national identity and manage troubling histories. As long as modern states remain anchored in notions of homogeneous cultural boundaries and territorial sovereignty, policies that produce disposable populations will continue finding legitimacy among its citizens. ●

Diana submitted their DPhil thesis in International Development entitled "Legitimising Migration Control: Italy-Libya Cooperation" in April 2025. Their research was supervised by Professors Matthew Gibney and Tom Scott-Smith. In October 2025, they will join the Université Libre de Bruxelles' REPI Department as a Wiener-Anspach Research Fellow, where they will research the Italy-Albania offshore migrant detention centres.

Diana is also the Managing Editor of the [Border Criminologies](#) blog, and the student chair of the board of trustees for [People and Planet](#).

The Anthropology of Good: Volunteering to help refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and Sweden

Dawn Chatty

Professor Emerita of Anthropology and Forced Migration

A new research project aims to understand the perceptions, aspirations, and practices of those who volunteered to help Syrian refugees in the UK and Sweden.

In 2024, the British Academy agreed to fund an exploratory study of the impulses which led so many to volunteer their time and energy to welcoming Syrians and other refugees upon arrival in the United Kingdom and Sweden in 2015. This study we referred to as 'The Anthropology of Good'.¹ We hoped that understanding the impulse to 'do good' within civil society from an ethnographic and empirical perspective might be a key to future successes in mobilisation at the national, regional, and local level in providing refuge to those in need.

In the UK there was little media sympathy for the hospitality shown to these refugees, whereas in Sweden the media was generally very supportive. It was assumed that these two study sites would offer a comparative opportunity to study volunteering to assist refugees and other asylum seekers in both a relatively hostile policy environment and a sympathetic one. What we did not originally account for was that the UK, with a 'closed-door' policy, only received Syrians already granted refugee status by the UN Agency for Refugees and assessed as vulnerable, largely from Jordan and Lebanon. And those permitted entry to the UK were topped at 20,000 over five years. Sweden with its 'open-door' policy received more than 160,000 asylum seekers in 2015 all of whom needed their asylum requests to be processed.

Studies of 'volunteerism' have a relatively recent history. In 1957 David Sills published the first

book² on organised volunteering, and the study of volunteerism has since expanded greatly³. Different aspects of volunteering (and altruism) such as motivations, its economic cost and benefits, and how it affects brain development have been studied in various fields such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, economics, and socio-biology. This project took an original approach to understanding individual volunteering by avoiding the more common religious, psychological, and philosophical explanations. Instead, the study was grounded in an ethnographic and phenomenological perspective. It sought to comprehend what were the perceptions, the aspirations, and the practices of those individuals who spontaneously stepped forward to offer succour to total strangers from far off lands, arriving with generally nothing other than the clothes on their backs? Was this impulse stimulated by personal history of migration? From religious sentiment? Or simply a need to 'do something'? Or another incentive? Was this a temporary engagement among these volunteers or did some carry on 'being generous' after 2015/2016 and become involved in the longer-term engagement necessary for 'successful' resettlement of Syrians? And finally, in the case of the latter, did ongoing engagement in providing hospitality to asylum seeking Syrians have a reflexive element? Did these hospitable volunteers feel they were changed by their experiences?

In Great Britain, the study commenced its work in Oxford, and moved on to interview volunteers based in Leamington, Didcot, London, Bristol, Wrexham, Llandudno, Petersfield, and Edinburgh. In Sweden, fieldwork commenced in Stockholm and moved on to Malmo, the port at which many Syrians arrived. Interviews were conducted with the founders

1 Professor Chatty is principle investigator on the project. Professor Annika Rabo is a participant, conducting interviews in Stockholm and Malmo. Audra Morris is the research assistant for the UK interviews and Emma Larsen the research assistant for the interviews in Sweden.

2 Sills, D (1957) *The Volunteer*, Glecoe, IL: Free Press

3 See, for example, Horton Smith, D (1981) 'Altruism, Volunteers and Volunteerism', *Journal of Voluntary Action Research* 10 (1): 16-32.



Refugees arriving at Malmo station. Credit: Johan Wessma, © News Øresund, CC BY 3.0

of the Swedish NGO Refugees Welcome, which emerged almost spontaneously at the Malmo port and Stockholm railway station. Twenty-five semi-informal interviews were collected in the UK and 20 in Sweden. We aimed to have a non-random sample which reflected the same gender, class, and ethnic diversity of the overall population of volunteers as held in the records of Citizens UK in the UK and Refugees Welcome in Sweden and other major NGOs and local councils who were active during the 2015–16 influx of Syrians to the UK and Sweden. In the UK, the first set of volunteers for interviewing were identified for us by Citizens UK and additional volunteers were identified by snowball sampling. A similar approach to identifying volunteers was followed in Sweden with the help of Refugees Welcome and through contacts with locally active refugee associations and local councils in Stockholm and Malmo. The interviews sought to understand the original impulse which drove people to volunteer, what activities they engaged in, and what personal impact – if any – this experience had had on the volunteer in the years since. Interviews were conducted between July and September 2024 in the UK and between July 2024 and April 2025 in Sweden.

Analysis of these interviews is still in the preliminary stage. Thematic coding has been undertaken manually and using the computer-assisted software Atlas.ti. Nevertheless, some striking differences have emerged. The comparative element which we assumed would provide us with distinct responses to positive or negative media and government policy did not emerge. In both the UK and Sweden volunteers expressed exasperation with government policy as a key element in their decision to ‘do something.’ In the UK this was expressed often as ‘not in my name’ or ‘It was anger with government that drove me to volunteer to help’. Surprisingly, to us, Swedish volunteers exhibited similar attitudes, though expressed linguistically a little differently. They often

said: ‘It is disgusting what is happening’. By this they were not referring to the original open-door policy of the Swedish government in 2015, but rather to the lack of any government-organised preparation for what to do next, where to house the incoming asylum seekers, how to provide them with food, and how to manage their asylum claims. In desperation, the Swedish Migration Agency (Migrationsverket), occasionally sent as many as a thousand asylum seekers to villages with a population of less than 3,000, creating outcries of ‘disgust’, and ‘incompetence’.

Reviewing the interviews manually, several elements stand out. Nearly all those interviewed in the UK had experience living abroad – sometimes a ‘gap year’ before university. These interviewees credited their experience of other cultures and people as a factor in their volunteering. Where the interviewee had not lived or travelled abroad, they often had refugee experience in their family. One interviewee recalled that her grandparents were refugees from the Austro-Hungarian empire before World War One. Others had more recent refugee experience in their family history (World War Two, the Hungarian Uprising, the breakup of Yugoslavia, and the Zimbabwean exodus during Mugabe’s rule). In Sweden, while travel or experience abroad was significant, it was not at such a high rate as among our UK interviewees. However, the desire to know more about other peoples and other cultures was expressed often as a motivating factor for becoming involved. Overall, it appears that the motivations and sentiments behind volunteering in both the UK and Sweden are similar. People want ‘to do something,’ to do good in the face of suffering, while at the same time interviewees were not impressed with their governments’ bureaucracy, which either needlessly delayed refugee reception (in the UK) or lacked the organisation to deal with the very large numbers arriving in 2015 (in Sweden). ●

Gil Loescher: a lasting legacy

Professor Gil Loescher was one of the world's leading researchers on the politics and international relations of refugee protection, who taught and undertook research at the RSC for more than two decades until his death in 2020. He had an illustrious career in which his many books and articles shaped the policies and practices of the UN Refugee Agency, as well as governments and NGOs around the world.

Teaching and research were two of Gil's great passions. He always looked forward to teaching his 'UNHCR and World Politics' options course at the RSC, and was energised by the enthusiasm and curiosity of his students. He remained convinced that emerging scholars, especially scholars from the Global South or those who themselves had been displaced, could bring the ideas and conviction that could finally convince those in power to take the steps needed to help refugees. He also believed that original research, through hours spent trawling through the archives or interviewing those closest to the phenomenon of forced displacement, was an essential task for researchers in this field.

In celebration of those twin passions and acting in conjunction with Gil's family and friends, the RSC set up the Gil Loescher Memorial Fund in 2023 to honour his memory. The fund supports Oxford graduate students conducting research on refugee and displacement issues, with preference given to students from low and middle-income countries or who themselves have been displaced.

Since its establishment, the Fund has helped six young scholars to pursue their research. Here, you can find out more about their work. ●

Find out more about the fund at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/gil-loescher-memorial-fund.

Abdirashid Ahmed (2023), MSc in Education

Abdirashid's research project explored the effectiveness of support provision to primary school children from refugee backgrounds. It featured a case study of a primary school in Greater Manchester, in the northwest of England. Abdirashid spoke with parents/guardians, school

support staff and the senior leadership team, and engaged children through creative ways to understand the school support landscape and the different kinds of challenges it attempts to address and its outcomes.



Bisimwa Mulemangabo (2024), DPhil in International Development

Bisimwa's research project examines the past and present of energy programming in displacement settings. When displacement response plans are prepared, humanitarian agencies seldom think of energy as a worthwhile sector. Energy projects are implemented on an ad hoc basis, often with limited impact. By investigating the history of energy programming in refugee camps, it is possible to gain an appreciation of evolving institutional

practices and the possibilities for the future of humanitarian energy. The project asks the questions: how does the humanitarian system support energy access for forcibly displaced persons? What project design approaches are used? Who is and who is not involved? The research takes a historical perspective to provide answers, drawing upon UNHCR's archival material and expert interviews.



Salma Daoudi (2023), DPhil in International Relations



Salma's project proposed to better conceptualise and understand the use of health as a weapon. Using the patterns of health weaponisation in Syria and their repercussions on Lebanon and Jordan as a case study, it asked: in what ways is health being weaponised in contemporary asymmetric

conflicts and to what extent does it represent a departure from classical modes of exercising violence? How can this weaponisation of health jeopardise human security beyond the locus of violence?

Tegan Hadisi (2024), MPhil in Development Studies



Tegan's research focused on the migrant TikTok ecosystem. TikTok has transformed digital content creation, empowering marginalised voices such as refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers from the Global South to share their migration experiences. Migrants use TikTok to challenge prevailing media portrayals and construct counter-narratives that contest prominent Global North media stereotypes of 'invading' migrants. Its wide reach and accessibility create an ecosystem where many varied actors can contribute to dominant and media-

adjacent narratives. This results in a tension between different actors and their vested interests in refugee, migrant, and asylum-seeking issues. The influence and legitimacy of TikTok in the migration context were underscored when the UK government attempted to hire TikTok influencers to create content aimed at deterring migrants. The way this ecosystem manifests on TikTok has potential implications for the lives of refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers, as well as their home and host countries.

Alessandra Enrico-Headrington (2025), DPhil in Migration Studies



Alessandra's project explores the evolving asylum and immigration policies in three Andean countries, Colombia, Peru, and Ecuador, with a particular focus on the South-South mobility of Venezuelans. Central to her analysis is the rise of temporary protection legal mechanisms and their impact on asylum, as well as on how migrants navigate these frameworks while shaping their futures. By adopting a dual perspective – top-down and

bottom-up – her research aims to provide insights into both policy shifts and the lived experiences of migrants, an approach that remains unexplored in South America. In doing so, her research examines the broader implications of these evolving legal mechanisms, particularly how they may transform asylum processes and influence the long-term prospects of migrants in the region.

Emily Venturi (2025), DPhil in International Development



Emily's doctoral research focuses on refugee-centred perspectives on self-reliance and labour mobility. Via mixed quantitative and qualitative methods, her project explores how forcibly displaced people define self-reliance and make livelihoods and mobility decisions within

structural constraints faced during protracted displacement. Grounded in refugees' own definitions and priorities, the research aims to problematise the concept of 'self-reliance' and contribute a nuanced interpretation to policy and programming.

Palestinian refugees and refugee protection

Catherine Briddick

Andrew W Mellon Associate Professor of International Human Rights and Refugee Law

A new project will contribute to scholarship on article 1D of the Refugee Convention, which determines the rights of Palestinian refugees, through historical research into the Convention's drafting and analysis of recent legal cases.

The Refugee Convention defines refugees, protects them from penalisation, expulsion, and *refoulement*, and accords them a broad array of essential rights.

The first article of the Convention deals with the term 'refugee', defining inclusion, cessation, and exclusion from protection. Article 1A(1) applies the term to those covered by previous legal arrangements, while 1A(2) sets out the Convention's own refugee definition, one that turns on persecution and which originally applied only to those displaced as a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951. Article 1B provides for an optional, European geographical limitation to the 1A(2) refugee definition.

Neither wholly excluding nor wholly including, article 1D determines the rights of Palestine refugees. It states:

- This Convention shall not apply to persons who are at present receiving from organs or agencies of the United Nations other than the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees protection or assistance.
- When such protection or assistance has ceased for any reason, without the position of such persons being definitively settled in accordance with the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, these persons shall ipso facto be entitled to the benefits of this Convention.

Examining the history and circumstances of the Convention's drafting sheds light on Article 1D and its contemporary operation.

In August 1949, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) passed two resolutions concerning the establishment of a UN organisation for refugees and an Ad Hoc Committee to draft an instrument on their status and rights. As 'the problem of refugees was international in scope and nature', and in light of the United Nations' responsibility for their 'international protection', in December 1949 the General Assembly decided to establish a High Commissioner's Office for Refugees.¹ UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, was established five days later 'to prevent conditions of starvation and distress' and to 'further conditions of peace and stability'.²

On 14 December 1950, the General Assembly directed the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP) to make arrangements for the assessment and payment of compensation to Palestine refugees.³ Significantly, it also called for 'refugees, whether repatriated or resettled' to be 'treated without any discrimination either in law or in fact'.⁴ Later that day, it adopted UNHCR's Statute and convened a conference to complete the drafting of the Refugee Convention.

The final text of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, together with the Conference's Final Act, was adopted in July 1951. As noted, at this point the Convention's refugee definition contained an optional geographic limitation alongside its 1 January 1951 dateline.⁵

1 UN GA Res 319 (IV) (3 December 1949) UN Doc A/RES/319(IV)[A].

2 UN GA Res 302 (IV) (8 December 1949) UN Doc A/RES/302 [5].

3 UN GA Res 394 (V) (14 December 1950) UN Doc A/RES/394(V) [2].

4 Ibid [3].

5 Final Act and Convention relating to the Status of Refugees UN Doc A/CONF.2/108/Rev.1 (26 November 1952).



The streets around Jabalia camp in Gaza, June 2025. Credit: Mohammed Ibrahim on Unsplash

While it became clear in the early 1950s that UNCCP was unable to carry out its mandate,⁶ UNHCR and UNRWA continue to provide protection and assistance, the latter to Palestine refugees in its five areas of operation: Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), and Gaza. As a result of the activism and engagement of its ‘beneficiaries’, UNRWA evolved into ‘an extensive and complex system that operates across international borders and rivals the scope of national governments...’.⁷

Against the broader legal and institutional framework created by a series of General Assembly Resolutions, the Refugee Convention, and UNRWA, article 1D operates as a ‘contingent inclusion clause’.⁸ It starts from the premise that those displaced from Palestine are refugees and, therefore, side-steps article 1A(2)’s definitional gateway. At the same time, it makes these refugees’ ‘inclusion within the Convention regime contingent upon certain events’: the ceasing of ‘protection or assistance’.⁹ It ensures such protection and assistance’s continuity, providing automatic, ‘ipso facto’ entitlement to the rights that the Convention provides, but in circumstances that are ‘not entirely clear’.¹⁰ This lack of clarity has generated divergent applications of article 1D over time and across jurisdictions.

The research underway seeks to contribute to the scholarship on article 1D in two ways. First, archival research on the Convention’s drafting illuminates how different and contested approaches to

protection and discrimination were central to the development of its refugee definition. Materials from throughout the Convention’s drafting are drawn on to explore how the treatment of Palestine refugees in general, and article 1D in particular, was central to broader debates on the scope and future of the international legal protection of refugees, including from discrimination.

Second, and building on this, the research engages in a comparative analysis of cases decided in the UK and by the Court of Justice of the EU between 2018 and early 2025. This analysis uses protection and discrimination as lenses to reveal the misapplication of concepts relevant to article 1A(2), including in relation to ‘safe’ third countries and internal relocation, to those whose rights are determined by article 1D. It also explores discrimination between refugees and against Palestinian women. ●

The research is being undertaken as part of the project ‘Without Protection or Assistance? Palestinian Refugees, Displacement and International Law’, which analyses legal frameworks to identify protection gaps. In doing so, it situates responses to Palestinian refugees within the context of four ‘peremptory norms’ – or fundamental principles – of international law: the prohibition of genocide, the prohibition of refoulement, the prohibition of race discrimination, and the right to self-determination. Find out more about the project at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/research/without-protection-or-assistance.

6 ‘The Commission was aware that during the past three years all its efforts to conciliate the points of view of the two sides within the terms of reference given to it by the General Assembly had failed.’ *Progress report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine covering the period from 23 January to 19 November 1951* (UN Doc A/1985, 1951) [11].

7 Anne Irfan (2023) *Refuge and Resistance: Palestinians and the International Refugee System*, Columbia: 2.

8 Guy S. Goodwin-Gill and Jane McAdam (2021) *The Refugee in International Law* (4th edn), Oxford University Press: 185

9 Ibid 185

10 Ibid 185

Outreach

At the Refugee Studies Centre, outreach activities play a key role in advancing refugee issues and developing a global community of academics, policymakers, and practitioners working in the field of forced migration. An increasing number of dedicated outlets for a variety of academic and non-academic materials promote the work of researchers and practitioners, and give a voice to refugees themselves.

The RSC's varied portfolio of outputs includes publications such as the *Journal of Refugee Studies*, public events, and networking initiatives that promote influential engagement with a range of academics, policymakers, and practitioners. *Forced Migration Review*, the RSC's flagship publication, is the most widely read publication on forced migration. It is available free of charge, in print and online, in four languages – English, Arabic, French, and Spanish. Our Working Paper series numbers over 140, all available to download from the RSC website. We also have

a 'Research in Brief' series which aims to make our academic research more accessible to policymakers, practitioners, and the public.

We keep in regular touch with supporters through a monthly newsletter, emailed to subscribers. To subscribe to our newsletter or to receive alerts about events, courses and *Forced Migration Review*, fill in the form on our website at: www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/forms/general/connect

Digital communications



RSC website

The RSC website is central to communicating our research and providing information about our courses, events, and public engagement. It provides a wealth of information about the RSC's research, as well as profiles of staff members and a searchable database featuring both RSC publications and external publications by RSC academics. Prospective students can learn about our postgraduate and professional teaching programmes, and read about the experiences of our alumni. Online at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk

Social networking and multimedia

We engage with supporters, students, academics, practitioners, policymakers, and others through a wide range of media. In 2024–2025, we expanded our activity with the launch of our new Bluesky channel and the almost doubling of our LinkedIn followers.

- On **Bluesky**, we have over 3,000 followers: [@refugeestudies.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/refugeestudies.bsky.social)
- On **X/Twitter**, we have over 42,000 followers: [@refugeestudies](https://twitter.com/refugeestudies)
- On **Facebook**, we have over 25,000 followers: www.facebook.com/refugeestudiescentre
- On **LinkedIn**, we have 9,200 followers: www.linkedin.com/company/refugee-studies-centreuniversity-of-oxford
- Our **YouTube** channel has received over 20,000 views in the past year. Video playlists include Events, such as RSC online seminars and lectures; selected staff media interviews; and Studying at Oxford: www.youtube.com/refugeestudiescentre
- Our podcast series on our **SoundCloud** channel registered around 2,000 plays over the past 12 months. This provides podcasts of in-person RSC seminars, Annual Lectures, and other events: www.soundcloud.com/refugeestudiescentre
- We also have a **Vimeo** account for videos. Find us at vimeo.com/refugeestudiescentre/videos

Journal of Refugee Studies

The *Journal of Refugee Studies* (JRS) is published by Oxford University Press in association with the Refugee Studies Centre. The editors are Professor Simon Turner (Lund University) and Professor Megan Bradley (McGill University).

The multidisciplinary journal provides a forum for exploring the dynamics and challenges of forced migration, and critically analysing national, regional,

and international responses, covering all categories of displaced people. Contributions that develop theoretical understandings of forced migration, or advance knowledge of concepts, policies, and practice, are welcomed. Find full information at academic.oup.com/jrs. Members of the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration may subscribe at a reduced rate.

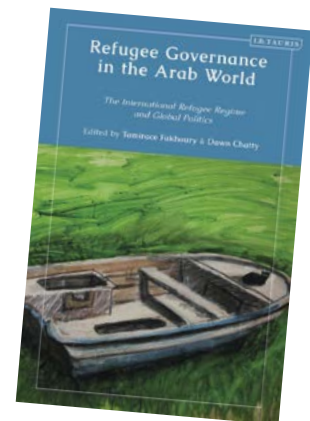
New book

Refugee Governance in the Arab World: The International Refugee Regime and Global Politics

Tamirace Fakhoury and Dawn Chatty (eds)
(Bloomsbury, 2025)

The Arab region has played an oversized role in hosting refugees. Yet a paucity of literature exists on how the region has contributed to shaping the international refugee regime. This anthology presents the first comprehensive study of how Arab states interact with the international refugee regime. It offers a multidisciplinary perspective bringing together historical, political, legal, sociological, and anthropological approaches. Through a wide range of case studies, the anthology explores how Arab states

have created norms and practices of refugee governance beyond – and not necessarily aligned with – international refugee law. It also analyses how Arab states have negotiated and contested international agreements and processes. In doing so, the book ‘de-exceptionalises’ the Arab region, positioning states and societies as norm shapers with an impact on global politics beyond the Arab world.



New research in brief

Refugee mobility and livelihoods in Uganda Yotam Gidron

Refugees in Uganda predominantly reside in rural settlements, but they are free to move within the country and engage in income-generating activities. Given the limited availability of farmland and livelihood opportunities within settlements and the gradual reductions in the humanitarian aid provided to refugees, freedom of movement can play an important role in their economic lives. To evaluate how freedom of movement contributes to the livelihoods of settlement-based refugees in Uganda, the authors conducted mixed-method research among South Sudanese and Congolese refugees in two refugee settlements in Uganda's borderlands: Pagirinya and Kyangwali. They found that movement

between settlements and urban areas was uncommon and very rarely undertaken in order to engage in income-generating activities; rather refugees mostly moved in order to survive under conditions of extreme precarity. Maintaining humanitarian aid while providing sustained and tangible support to agricultural and off-farm enterprises that target customers and markets outside the settlements are essential for promoting more sustainable and dignified livelihoods for refugees.



Forced Migration Review

Forced Migration Review brings together diverse authors from around the world – especially those with lived experience – to foster practical learning and discussion that can improve outcomes for forcibly displaced people. The magazine is published in Arabic, English, French and Spanish in print and online and is available free of charge to readers. In 2024–2025 FMR produced two issues:

FMR74: Financing displacement response

From humanitarian aid by wealthy governments to remittances from diaspora communities, responses to forced displacement are shaped by funding from an array of actors, in ways that express those actors' interests and priorities. In recent years, new actors and new financing approaches have emerged. What do these shifts mean for forcibly displaced people and displacement response strategies? How does displacement response financing interact with the choices of forcibly displaced people and their communities, with local and global economies, and with broader geopolitical events and trends? This issue advances understanding of these questions and others.

FMR75: Dangerous journeys: saving lives and responding to missing migrants and refugees

Dangerous journeys are taken every day by refugees and other migrants, often with tragic consequences. This issue explores how more lives can be saved on land and sea and how disappearances can be prevented or resolved. Articles highlight the growing constraints on search and rescue through criminalisation and 'bureaucratisation'; how rescue operates in different locations – from the mountains to the desert; the role of high-level diplomacy and regional cooperation in preventing deaths and disappearances and on-the-ground approaches to identification; the particular perils of new migration routes – and more. See the Feature Article on p. 14 for more information. ●



Looking ahead

Forced Migration Review, like many grant-funded projects within the international development sector, was affected by the downturn in donor funding available from the beginning of 2025 onwards. Following a major restructure of staffing, Managing Editor Alice Philip is now undertaking a strategic review of FMR's work in order to develop a new model which is resilient, sustainable and that continues to serve FMR's audiences with quality content written by informed and diverse authors. If you would like to contribute to the future work of FMR, by helping to shape our strategic direction, suggesting a partnership idea or giving financially then please do get in touch – fmr@qeh.ox.ac.uk.

Events

The RSC convenes a diverse range of events each year, including public seminars, workshops, and conferences. These include major conferences on Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, public seminars, and the Annual Harrell-Bond and Elizabeth Colson public lectures. We believe it is important to engage both at a 'local' level, whether with the local Oxford community or with civil society, and beyond, with the international community.

Annual Lectures

Annual Harrell-Bond Lecture 2025

We were delighted to welcome writer, lecturer and broadcaster Kenan Malik to deliver this year's Annual Harrell-Bond lecture on **The Politics of Immigration and the Politics of Identity**.

Two of the most significant political developments in Western nations in recent years have been the growth of hostility to immigration, on the one hand, and the rise of the politics of identity, on the other. This lecture examined the relationship between the two. It showed how and why the debate about immigration has increasingly become one about culture, history and identity. It showed, too, how the politics of identity, which for much of the post-war period was in the province of the left, has become appropriated (or rather, as the lecture showed, re-



appropriated) by the right and by white nationalists, and become a key weapon in their battle against immigration.

The Annual Harrell-Bond Lecture is named in honour of Dr Barbara Harrell-Bond, the founding Director of the Refugee Studies Centre.

The lecture is available to listen to at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/ahbl2025-podcast

Annual Elizabeth Colson Lecture 2025

For this year's Elizabeth Colson Lecture, we were very pleased to welcome Professor Diana Allan of McGill University for lecture entitled **Living Archives: Palestinian Displacement in Lebanon**.

The talk addressed the concept of 'Living Archives', which has evolved from Professor Allan's ongoing research as an ethnographer, filmmaker, and archivist working with Palestinian refugee communities in Lebanon. It builds on the Nakba Archive – a grassroots testimonial initiative that has documented histories of forced expulsion of 1948 – and is premised on the reimagining of archive as a creative, participatory practice that resists fixity and centres process. It draws inspiration from recent shifts in how Palestinian scholars, writers, and artists are rethinking mnemonic and documentary witness practices, and explores camp spaces as stateless archives,



mnemonically embodied rather than institutionally housed.

The lecture was preceded by a showing of Professor Allan's documentary *Partition*, which brings together colonial films from British Mandate Palestine with recordings from the Nakba Archive.

The Annual Elizabeth Colson Lecture is named after renowned anthropologist Elizabeth Colson.

The lecture is available to listen to at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/colson2025-podcast

Public Seminar Series

Our weekly seminar series is a space for dialogue across disciplines, subjects, and geographical case studies that highlight many different aspects of forced migration. While past series were often organised around specific themes, we have moved away from this approach to open up a broader and more inclusive conversation, interspersing contrasting speakers to generate surprising juxtapositions. Seminars this year have explored everything from NGO advocacy in Ireland to the experiences of refugees fleeing Pinochet's Chile, from a personal memoir of forced migration from Somalia to a study of the Rohingya refugee response. By not clustering talks under a single topic, we can highlight the diversity of research and practice in the field, and welcome contributions that speak to different audiences – scholars, practitioners, students, and members of the wider community. This shift allows the seminar series to reflect the richness and complexity of forced migration studies, while creating opportunities for unexpected connections and collaborations across disciplines, subject areas, and methodological approaches. For a full list of the year's seminars, see the Academic Record.

Special seminar

Understanding Syria through Syrian Voices: Refugees' Stories of Revolution, War, and the Struggle for Home

Professor Wendy Pearlman
(Northwestern University)
Co-hosted with the Middle East Centre,
St Antony's College

Over 13 years, Northwestern University Professor Wendy Pearlman has interviewed more than 500 displaced Syrians around the world about their lives under a brutal authoritarian regime, the popular uprising against it, and the subsequent war and refugee crisis. In this presentation, she shared and explored their stories collected in her two books, *We Crossed A Bridge and It Trembled: Voices from Syria* (2017) and *The Home I Worked to Make: Voices from the New Syrian Diaspora* (2024). These personal testimonials offer a human lens on the stunning recent collapse of the Assad regime, while also offering broader lessons about migration, belonging, and the search for dignity.

Work-in-Progress Seminars

The RSC Work in Progress Seminar series has two aims. First, to enable those engaged in research to share and receive feedback on written work in advance of publication in a supportive and rigorous environment. Second, to strengthen the RSC as a community of scholars whose members are interested in, and knowledgeable about, each other's work.

This year, Catherine Briddick, Uttara Shahani, Julia Schweers, Molly Fee, Ammar Azzouz, Vicky Taylor, Hiba Salem, and Raphael Bradenbrink all presented their work. We also had termly seminars for our Visiting Fellows, to discuss their projects and celebrate their term with us.



Exhibition: Sanctuary in Oxford: Hope in Times of Crisis

University Church

Curated by the Oxford Sanctuary Community and local charity Asylum Welcome, in collaboration with key partners, this exhibition hosted at the University Church celebrated the powerful spirit of welcome that defines Oxford's sanctuary movement. It highlighted the collective efforts to foster belonging, hope, and opportunity for people from displacement backgrounds, including refugees and asylum seekers, amidst the challenges of a hostile environment. Through art, stories, and photographs, the display revealed the courage, creativity, and resilience of those who have found safety in Oxford. It also reflected the unity and compassion that underpin the city's commitment to being a place of sanctuary, even in difficult times.

Workshop reports

Humanitarian Terrains

12–13 September 2024

Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford

This two-day event convened an interdisciplinary group of scholars to examine how different terrains – both physical and non-physical – shape the principles, practices, and politics of humanitarian action.

The workshop emerged from several years of research at the Centre into the spatial dimensions of humanitarianism, beginning with Imogen Dobie's excellent thesis on the challenges of maritime rescue operations from the 1970s to the 2015 European migration 'crisis'. Indeed, that moment in 2015 demonstrated for many people how geography is never a neutral backdrop, but an *actant*, in Latour's sense, that structures humanitarian access, authority, and obligation. Building on this insight, the workshop explored a wide range of terrains through a series of original papers, which will form the basis of an edited volume.

The papers covered terrains from mountains to deserts and cities, each addressing a common set of questions: How do we define and understand this terrain? What examples of humanitarian intervention can be found there, past or present? What specific issues does it raise for humanitarian actors – whether operational, ethical, or political? Some chapters focused on a particular site, others adopted a comparative or conceptual approach, but all sought to draw broader conclusions about how terrain affects humanitarian principles and practice.

The programme began with an introduction from Tom Scott-Smith on why terrains matter for the aid world, framing geography as a critical but underexplored dimension of humanitarian thought. In *Soils*, Rosanna O'Keefe examined landmine clearance and the subterranean politics of humanitarianism underground. Imogen Dobie's paper on *Seas* analysed maritime assistance in the Mediterranean and the complex politics of rescue on the ocean. Elisa Sisto then turned to *Mountains*, focusing on Alpine rescue along the French–Italian border, while Joris Jourdain explored *Deserts* through stories of life and loss in a Saharan borderland.

In *Forests*, Joanna Pienkowska compared humanitarian encounters in green borders from Poland's Białowieża forest to Panama's Darién Gap. Myfanwy James's paper on *Rivers* considered fluvial humanitarianism in the Congo basin, highlighting rivers as both lifelines and barriers. Catherine Briddick's contribution on *Islands* traced their role in a legal context, focusing on Diego Garcia and looking at the history of imperial regimes and contemporary practices of protection and legal exception. Finally, Maren Larsen and David Kostenwein analysed *Cities*, showing how humanitarian urbanism shapes the politics of displacement in complex metropolitan environments.

The second half of the workshop looked *beyond the terrestrial*. Kristen Sandvik mapped *Cyberspace* as a new humanitarian terrain, raising questions of surveillance, accountability, and digital vulnerability, and then, closing the programme, Tom Scott-Smith looked at *Airspace*, from Biafra's humanitarian airlifts to contemporary aerial monitoring and logistics.

Discussion across the two days was animated and comparative, highlighting the shared challenges and dynamics of each terrain. Participants reflected on how geography reshapes the relationship between aid workers and recipients and affects the application of classical humanitarian principles.

By bringing these diverse perspectives together, the workshop laid the foundation for a landmark edited volume and strengthened a growing network of scholars committed to interrogating the spatial and environmental dimensions of humanitarianism.



Race, Refuge and Repair: Rethinking Migration from the Global South

29–30 May 2025

University of Cape Town, Cape Town

While the causes and experiences of displacement are complex and diverse, at their heart are issues relating to conflict and insecurity, state formation, and bordering. *Race, Refuge and Repair* speaks to these, taking Professor E Tendayi Achiume's work on decolonial migration as its intellectual entry point to address the central question of what is owed, by whom, to Global South citizens on the move.

The colloquium brought together empirical work currently organised under the banner of 'border criminologies' with critical legal analysis, including Third World Approaches to International Law and related work at the intersections of refugee law, race, decolonisation, and criminalisation. It sought to advance scholarship on the imbrication of law and colonisation and the legal, political, and economic relationships embedded in Empire, displacement, mobility, and refugee protection.

The project centres Global South perspectives on migration and reparation, both in terms of the colloquium's location, UCT, and in the content of the research engaged with. Participants came from 14 countries – South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, India, England, Ireland, Germany, Belgium, Poland, Sweden, and the United States – and presented on two regions (the Sahel and the European Union) as well as ten countries: Palestine, Rwanda, South Africa, Tunisia, Egypt, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Libya, the UK, and Italy.

Over two days, speakers drew on insights from law, criminology, history, race and ethnic studies, refugee studies, and anthropology to analyse the relationships between, and the co-constitution of, colonial and postcolonial governance, international law, and refugee protection. Professor E Tendayi Achiume gave the keynote lecture on 'Corporate Border Imperialism'. Dr Catherine Briddick presented a paper 'When Treaties are Forbidden: Jus Cogens, Norm-Conflict, and Refugee Protection' while Dr Uttara Shahani analysed 'Colonial Legacies of the Management of Im(mobility)'.

The colloquium organisers are now working with speakers on a Special Issue proposal to bring the research presented to publication.

The Colloquium was co-hosted by the Centre for Criminology and the Refugee Rights Unit at the University of Cape Town (UCT), the Refugee Studies Centre and Border Criminologies at the University of Oxford, and the Centre for International Governance and Dispute Resolution, King's College London.

Catherine Briddick and Uttara Shahani would like to thank the other members of the colloquium's organising committee: Dr Nicola Palmer, Dr Lufuno Sadiki, Dr Nomfundo Ramalekana, Professor Fatima Khan, Joanna Rahmatoulay Bakilana, Sky Kruger, Dr Alpa Parmar, and Dr Zelia Gallo. ●

Fundraising and development

Our network of supporters is always of critical importance to the RSC and the success of our research, teaching, and outreach programmes. We would like to extend our recognition and gratitude not only to donors but also to our alumni, our cutting-edge researchers, our renowned emeritus colleagues, and the many policymakers and practitioners in our orbit. We continue to work with the Oxford University Development Office to identify new supporters for our work.

The Refugee-Led Research Hub has grown and developed thanks to ongoing funding and support from both the MasterCard Foundation and the IKEA Foundation.

Our three-year funding agreement with the IKEA Foundation has also enabled us to continue the research of the Refugee Economies Programme at the RSC. This agreement built upon previous funding from the Foundation that enabled the Programme to undertake pioneering work on the economic lives of refugees.

The work of our Pedro Arrupe Research Fellow is possible due to the generous support of Campion Hall and Jesuit Refugee Service Europe. With the arrival of a generous new legacy from Dr Robert Conway the Centre is in a position to create a new post-doctoral fellowship along similar lines in the coming year.

The funding provided to Dr Ashwiny Kistnareddy by the Leverhulme Trust has supported her project on Refugee Children as a Site of Critical Intervention, enabling the development of further research projects funded by the Open Public Policy Challenge Fund and the John Fell Fund.

An ongoing priority is to raise funds to support bursaries or participants from the Global South,

including refugees themselves, to be able to attend our courses. With this in mind we would like to acknowledge the generous donation from the Sandy's Trust, via Exeter College, to create a new scholarship for DPhil candidates with experience of displacement. We are always seeking further support in this area, with Online School bursaries one of the most affordable and tangible ways in which such donations can have a direct impact on policy and practice.

We continue to be extremely thankful to the range of supporters who fund the work of *Forced Migration Review*. The Managing Editor fundraises to support the publication, and the ongoing relationships the publication enjoys with governments, NGOs, and foundations are a central part of our ability to continue to publish relevant issues aimed to shape thinking among policymakers and practitioners.

Most of our work depends upon external financial support. In many cases we are privileged to have benefited from research council grants, including from the European Research Council, the British Academy, and the Economic and Social Research Council, but in other areas, philanthropic, governmental or private funding is essential. A list of our supporters can be found below. If you are interested in providing financial support for any aspect of our work, please do get in touch. ●

Donors

We are deeply appreciative to all of the donors, both for their financial support and their enthusiastic collaboration over recent years.

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
European Commission
IKEA Foundation
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
International Labour Organization (ILO)
Leverhulme Trust
MasterCard Foundation
Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Denmark

Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
Refugees International
Robert Bosch Stiftung (Stuttgart)
Estate of Robert Conway
The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Global
Sandys Trust
Stichting Benevolentia
Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
UK Research and Innovation
UNHCR

Academic record

Books and edited volumes

Chatty, Dawn (with Tamirace **Fakhoury**, eds) (2025) *Refugee Governance in the Arab World: The International Refugee Regime and Global Politics*, I.B. Tauris.

Chapters

Gibney, Matthew (2024) 'A right to citizenship... somewhere'. In Bauböck, Rainer, Julia Mourão Permoser, Martin Ruhs, and Lukas Schmid (eds) *Debating Refugee Protection 'Here' or 'There'*, European University Institute.

Kistnareddy, Ashwiny O. (2024) 'Crossing Borders in Two Francophone Texts: Ying Chen's *Lettres chinoises* and Ananda Devi's *Les Hommes qui me parlent*'. In Amit Thakkar, Chris Harris and Brian Baker (eds) *Border Masculinities, Cross-disciplinary Dialogues and New Directions*, Palgrave Macmillan.

Shahani, Uttara (2024) 'Analysing Archives to Write Migration Histories'. In William Allen and Carlos Vargas-Silva (eds) *Handbook of Research Methods in Migration*, 2nd edition, Edward Elgar.

Articles

Betts, Alexander (with Kathrin **Bachleitner**) (2025), 'The EU's Normative Dissensus on Migration: How National Identities Shaped Responses to the European Refugee Crisis', *Journal of European Integration*, 47 (3): 469-84.

Chatty, Dawn (2024) 'Refuge in the Levant and Eastern Mediterranean: Spaces of containment or places of choice?', *Journal of Refugee Studies* 38 (1): 240-55.

Gibney, Matthew (with Rebecca **Buxton**) (2025) 'Must refugees be grateful?' *Political Studies* 73 (1): 287-304.

Kistnareddy, Ashwiny O. (2024) 'Refugee Memoirs: Kouamé's *Revenu des ténèbres* (2018) and Dina Nayeri's *The Ungrateful Refugee* (2019) and the challenge of refugee narratives', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*.

Kistnareddy, Ashwiny O. (2024) 'Ambivalent Encounters in Calais', *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 45 (5): 817-35.

Kistnareddy, Ashwiny O. (with Jaakko **Heiskanen**) (2024) 'Encountering Nations: Interdisciplinary Perspectives', *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 45 (5): 811-16.

Omata, Naohiko (with Dunya **Habash**) (2025) 'Parenting dilemmas: Syrian refugee families resettled in the UK', *Human Organization*.

Omata, Naohiko (with Yotam **Gidron**) (2024) 'Returning to fund refugeehood: dispersal and survival between Uganda and South Sudan', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 51 (1): 101-21.

Shahani, Uttara (2025) 'Bonded citizenship: Caste, Partition, and the prevention of exit', *Modern Asian Studies*.

Scott-Smith, Tom (2025) 'Humility, autonomy, and simplicity: three principles for humanitarian design', *Third World Quarterly*.

Sterck, Olivier (with L **Derksen**, JT **Kerwin**, N **Ordaz Reynoso**) (2025) 'Healthcare appointments as commitment devices', *The Economic Journal* 135 (665): 81-118.

Papers and reports

Bruni, Vittorio, and Olivier **Sterck** (2025) 'The welfare and market effects of delays in humanitarian assistance', *CSAE Working Paper*.

Salem, Hiba (with A **Pacifico**) (2025) 'Education for Syrian refugees and returnees: Opportunities and risks in the post-Assad transition'. ERICC.

RSC Research in Brief

Gidron, Yotam (2025) 'Refugee mobility and livelihoods in Uganda', RSC Research in Brief 21.

RSC Working Papers

Cohen, Robin, and Nicholas **Van Hear** (2025) 'Refugia – a reflection five years on', RSC Working Paper Series 143, July.

Blythe, Laura (2025) 'UK-France Cooperation on Border Control: Efficacy, Deterrence and Human Rights', RSC Working Paper Series 142, June.

RLRH Working Papers

Ramazani, Uwezo (2024) 'Alternative Secondary Education Pathways in Nyarugusu Camp: Preparing Refugee Youth for Higher Education in Tanzania and Beyond', Refugee-Led Research Series Working Paper 2, November.

Asrat, Tolossa (2024) 'Navigating the City: The Internal Migration of Refugees from Kakuma and Dadaab Refugee Camps to Nairobi', Refugee-Led Research Series Working Paper 3, December.

Muraya, Peter (2024) 'Adaptation in Adversity: the Impact of Drought on the Livelihood Adaptive Strategies of Refugee Youth with Physical Disabilities in Kakuma Refugee Camp', Refugee-Led Research Series Working Paper 3, December.

Mohammed, Wala (2025) 'Hate Speech in Sudan: A Driver of Conflict and Displacement', Refugee-Led Research Series Working Paper 4, January 2025.

Adoch, Betty (2025) 'Linking, Bonding, Bridging: The Role of Social Capital in Facilitating Access to Livelihoods among Refugees in Gulu City, Uganda', Refugee-Led Research Series Working Paper 5, March.

Akot, Lonah (2025) 'Coping with Displacement: Coping Mechanisms and Mental Health Support in Palabek Refugee Settlement, Uganda', Refugee-Led Research Series Working Paper 6, June.

Selected presentations

Betts, Alexander (2024) 'Authoritarian Sanctuaries: Refugee Politics in East Africa', London School of Economics, December.

Betts, Alexander (2025) 'Book Launch and panel discussion for Social Science: A Very Short Introduction', Pembroke College, March.

Briddick, Catherine (2025) 'Palestine Refugees: Drafting and Interpreting Article 1D' paper presented at the 9th Annual Refugee Law Initiative Conference, University of London, June.

Briddick, Catherine (2025) 'Domestic Violence and International Protection', UNHCR Hong Kong (online), March.

Briddick, Catherine (2025) Ruth Steinkraus-Cohen International Law Lecture, 'Fragmented Refuge', Bar Council, SOAS, United Nations Association, March.

Chatty, Dawn (2025) Two socio-historical lectures, Palestine Refugees and International Law short course, Swedish Research Institute, Istanbul, March.

Chatty, Dawn (2024) 'Tribes and Bedouin in the Middle East and North Africa: Challenging Stereotypes', Keynote, University of Vienna, October.

Chatty, Dawn (2024) Presentations to the United Nations Development Programme, New York, on the particular crisis facing mobile indigenous peoples due to development planning around the world, October.

Chatty, Dawn (2024) Presentation to the United Nations General Assembly on the Special situation of Mobile Indigenous as part of a panel for the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples' Report on the Situation of Mobile Indigenous Peoples, developed from the Dana +20 Manifesto, Dana Declaration Standing Committee, October.

Gibney, Matthew (2025) 'The Moral Foundations of Refugee Protection', Keynote Lecture, Campion Hall, Oxford, 29 June.

Gibney, Matthew (2024) 'Migration and Rights in a European Context', Lecture at Oxford-Jindal Summer School Programme, Somerville College, Oxford, 12 December.

Omata, Naohiko (2025) 'The role of cross-border mobility in the economic lives of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda', Public lecture, University of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 22 May.

Omata, Naohiko (2025) 'Borders, Mobility, and Livelihoods', 4th IGAD Scientific Conference on Migration and Displacement by The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 19-21 May.

Omata, Naohiko (2024) 'What is Refugees and Forced Migration Studies?', Special Lecture for Intercultural cohesion studies programme, Shizuoka University, Japan, 19 December.

Omata, Naohiko (2024) 'Forced Migration as a Global Agenda', Public lecture organised by Gaien Social Academy, Japan, 16 December.

Scott-Smith, Tom (2024) 'Airspace: Humanitarianism in the skies, from Biafra to beyond', Humanitarian Terrains Workshop, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, 12 September.

Scott-Smith, Tom (2024) 'Refugee Housing, Humanitarian Design and the Politics of Shelter', London School of Economics (LSE) Public Lecture, 19 November.

Scott-Smith, Tom (2024) 'Fragments of Home: How the Politics of Shelter shapes Responses for Refugees', Department of Politics, University of Cambridge, 29 October.

Scott-Smith, Tom (2025) 'Book Seminar: *Fragments of Home: Refugee Housing and the Politics of Shelter*', Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute, University of Manchester, 5 February.

Scott-Smith, Tom (2025) 'Contemplating (dis)comfort in humanitarian spaces – roundtable discussion, Collegium Helveticum, Swiss Institute for Advanced Study, Zurich, 18 March.

Shahani, Uttara (2025) 'The Colonial Management of Mobility', online guest lecture to MSF staff, University of Manchester, February.

Zetter, Roger (2025) Lectures on 'Policy labels and the language of climate migration and displacement. Whose labels count?' and 'Climate Change, Adaptation and Labour Migration Pathways', Centre for Refugee Studies Summer Programme, York University, Toronto, Canada, June.

Public Seminar Series

Convenors: Professor Tom Scott-Smith and Professor Catherine Briddick

Michaelmas term 2024

Rewriting Refugee Law: Centring Refugee Knowledges and Lived Experiences

Professor Kate Ogg (College of Law, Australian National University); **Dr Saba Vasefi** (scholar-journalist, poet, documentary filmmaker, University of Sydney); **Professor Veronica Fynn Bruey** (Africa-Oxford Fellow, 2023–24; Assistant Professor of Legal Studies, Athabasca University); **Dr Khulud Alhamazani** (Australian National University); **Dr Irene Antonopoulos** (Royal Holloway University of London); **Dr Mehrnoosh Farzamfar** (Faculty of Law, University of Turku, Finland); **Professor Colin Grey** (Faculty

of Law, Queen's University Canada); **Ayesha Riaz** (Queen Mary University of London); **Sitarah Mohammadi** (Lawyer, Russell Kennedy), 4 December.

Anthropology of Good: Exploring Volunteerism in the 2015 European Refugee Crisis

Professor Dawn Chatty (Refugee Studies Centre) and **Professor Annika Rabo** (Stockholm University), 7 November.

NGO Refugee Advocacy: Strengths, Weaknesses and Challenges

Nick Henderson (CEO, Irish Refugee Council), 20 November.

Conflict Refugees: European Union Law and Practice

Dr Christel Querton (Wallscourt Fellow in Law, University of the West of England), 13 November.

Refugee Afterlives: Home, Hauntings, and Hunger

Dr Ashwiny Kistnareddy (RSC), 6 November.

Protection in the UK: the Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill

Professor Başak Çalı (Bonavero Institute of Human Rights, Oxford), **Raza Husain KC** (Matrix Chambers), **Professor Cathryn Costello** (University College Dublin), **Yasmine Ahmed** (UK Director of Human Rights Watch), **Professor Catherine Briddick** (Refugee Studies Centre), 30 October.

Fragments of Home: Refugee Housing and the Politics of Shelter (Book Launch)

Professor Tom Scott-Smith (Associate Professor of Refugee Studies and Director, RSC), 16 October.

Hilary term 2025

'Wicked' Challenges in Migration Management: Weaponization, Politicization, and Hostile Influence Operations

Professor Kelly Greenhill (Professor of Political Science and International Relations, Tufts University, and Visiting Professor and Resident Senior Fellow, MIT), 12 March.

Scattered: The making and unmaking of a refugee.

A conversation with Aamna Mohdin

Aamna Mohdin (Community affairs correspondent, The Guardian), 26 February.

Supply Chain Justice: The Logistics of British Border Control

Professor Mary Bosworth (Professor of Criminology, Faculty of Law, University of Oxford), 19 February.

Film Screening and Q&A: Chileans of the North

Professor Ben Bollig (Professor of Latin American Literature and Film; Fellow and Tutor in Spanish, University of Oxford), **Dr Helia López Zarzosa** (Sociologist and Independent Researcher) and **Chris Paul** (Director, Chileans of the North), 12 February.

No Exit: Preventing Exit to Prevent Entry

Professor Audrey Macklin (Professor & Rebecca Cook Chair in Human Rights Law, University of Toronto Faculty of Law), 6 February.

Refuge-Making: Stories from Iraq

Dr Sana Murrani (Associate Professor in Spatial Practice, University of Plymouth), 29 January.

Producing the Camp-able Territory: Displacement, Domicide, and the Common Camp in Palestine-Israel's Century of Settler Colonialism

Dr Irit Katz (Lecturer in Architecture and Urban Studies, University of Cambridge), 22 January.

Trinity term 2024

Ruling Emancipated Slaves and Indigenous Subjects: The Divergent Legacies of Forced Settlement and Colonial Occupation in the Global South

Professor Olukunle Owolabi (Associate Professor of Political Science, Villanova University), 4 June.

Refugees at work: Ending exploitation, advancing justice

Emily Arnold-Fernández (Refugee Law Initiative, University of London, and Forced Migration Review) and **Yusra Herzi** (PILnet), 28 May.

Empire of Refugees: North Caucasian Muslims and the Late Ottoman State

Dr Vladimir Hamed-Troyansky (Assistant Professor of Global Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara), 20 May.

Governing Migration and Mobility: Military-Humanitarianism at Brazil's Northern Frontier

Dr Bronte Alexander (Research Fellow in Political Geography, Collegium Helveticum, Zurich), 14 May.

Localization in the Rohingya refugee response

Dr Miriam Bradley (Senior Lecturer in Humanitarian Studies, University of Manchester), 7 May.

Special seminars and lectures

Annual Elizabeth Colson Lecture

Living Archives: Palestinian Displacement in Lebanon

Professor Diana Allan (ethnographer, filmmaker and archivist)

11 June 2025, ODID.

Safe for Whom? Rethinking Return Through Marginalised Refugee Voices

Dr Jasmin Lilian Diab (Institute for Migration Studies, Lebanese American University)

5 June 2025, ODID.

FMR75 launch event

Dangerous Journeys: Saving lives and responding to missing migrants and refugees

3 June 2025, Online.

Annual Harrell-Bond Lecture

The Politics of Immigration and the Politics of Identity

Kenan Malik (writer, lecturer and broadcaster)

13 March 2025, Magdalen College, Oxford.

Understanding Syria through Syrian Voices: Refugees' Stories of Revolution, War, and the Struggle for Home

Professor Wendy Pearlman (Northwestern University)

11 March 2025, St Anthony's College.

Book Launch and Panel Event | Social Science: A Very Short Introduction

Professor Alexander Betts (Professor of Forced Migration & International Affairs); **Dr Nandini Gooptu** (Associate Professor of South Asian Studies); **Dr Marnie Howlett** (Lecturer in Russian and East European Politics); **Professor Lucie Cluver** (Professor of Child and Family Social Work); **Professor Ben Ansell** (Professor of Comparative Demographic Institutions)

6 March 2025, Pembroke College.

FMR74 launch event

Financing Displacement Response

12 December 2024, Online.

Refugee-Led Research Hub Events

Refugee-Led Research Festival 2024

16–19 September, Nairobi.

Sanctuary Community Events

Alan Kurdi Annual Lecture

(in collaboration with Mansfield College)

Tegan Hadisi (MPhil in Development Studies student) and
Yevhen Yashchuk (DPhil in History student)

19 February 2025, Bonavero Institute of Human Rights,
Mansfield College.

Let's Talk Palestine Lecture

Rola Soboh (Master of Public Policy student); **Professor
Dawn Chatty** (Emerita Professor of Anthropology and
Forced Migration)

27 February 2025, Blavatnik School of Governance.

Hope in Times of Crisis

Art Exhibition in collaboration with Asylum Welcome,
Multaka Oxford, and Iraqi Women Art and War
27 April to 22 June 2025, University Church.

[De]Constructing Physical Space Art Workshop

Erick Moreno Superlano (DPhil in Migration Studies
student) and **Francisco Llinas Casas** (PhD student,
Edinburgh University)

16 May 2025, St John's College.

Oxford Sanctuary Fair 2025

In collaboration with Asylum Welcome, Oxford Brookes,
Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council
17 June 2025, Oxford Town Hall.

Visiting Fellows

Sara Arapiles

Lund University, Sweden

Serde Atalay

Lund University, Sweden

Jinan Bastaki

New York University, Abu Dhabi

Rosa da Costa

Human rights lawyer and independent researcher, UK

Synne L Dyvik

University of Sussex, UK

Hanna Geschewski

Chr. Michelsen Institute and University of Bergen in Norway

Marina Gómez Hernández

University of Murcia, Spain

Odessa Gonzalez Benson

University of Michigan, USA

Helene Grøn

University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Lidia Guardiola Alonso

Carlos III University of Madrid, Spain

Jane Lilly López

Brigham Young University, USA

Dario Mazzola

University of Geneva, Switzerland

Thomas McGee

Melbourne Law School, Australia

Kate Motluk

University of Toronto, Canada

Patrick Mutinda Muthui

World Bank, Kenya

Yvonne Su

York University, Canada

Tyler Valiquette

University College London, UK

Johanna Wallin

Stockholm University, Sweden

Ruben Wissing

Ghent University, Belgium

Doctoral research students

Rawan Alfuraih. Keble College

The Epic of Najd: Embodied remembering and Rebirth in
the Environmental Rupture of Saudi Arabian Urbanisation
*Supervisors: Professor Dawn Chatty and Professor Zuzanna
Olszweska*

Maria Al Qassim, Linacre College
Battleground for Belonging: Transregionalism and Identity
Formation of Qeshmi and Hanjani Emiratis
*Supervisors: Professor Dawn Chatty and Professor Walter
Armbrust (Middle East Centre, St Antony's College)*

Zoe Bantleman, St Catherine's College
Hospitality and the Common Law: A Symptomatic Study of
Legal Judgments
Supervisor: Professor Catherine Briddick

Maya Beney, Brasenose College
Temporal ambiguities and humanitarian imaginings: how
do humanitarians' perceptions of time shape 'durable
solutions' for forcibly displaced Syrians?
Supervisor: Professor Tom Scott-Smith

Raphael Bradenbrink, Jesus College
Public-Private Collaboration in Global and Local Refugee
Governance
Supervisor: Professor Alexander Betts

Frederike Brockhoven, Keble College
Refugee-led Grassroots Organising in Palestinian Refugee
Camps
Supervisor: Professor Tom Scott-Smith

Katherine Daisy-Gard, St Antony's College
Climate Crises, Gendered Harm, and State Responsibility:
Towards a Conceptual Framework for Normative
Responsibility and Legal Redress
*Supervisors: Professor Catherine Briddick and Professor
Matthew Gibney*

Alessandra Enrico Headrington, St John's College
Reassessing asylum effectiveness: A study of Venezuelan
mobility and policy responses in five South American
countries
*Supervisors: Professor Catherine Briddick and Dr Peter Walsh
(COMPAS)*

Isabelle Lemay, St Edmund Hall
Understanding 'Alan Kurdi' Effects: A Study of the
Emergence and Decline of Movements of Openness
Towards Refugees in the Global North
Supervisor: Professor Matthew J Gibney

Sacha Mouzin, St Antony's College
Shepherds in the Shadows: Lebanese Pastoralism in a
Context of Eco-systemic Crisis
*Supervisors: Professor Dawn Chatty and Professor Morgan
Clarke (Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology)*

Bisimwa Mulemangabo, Hertford College
The Politics of Sustainable Energy Transition in Refugee
Settlements
Supervisor: Professor Alexander Betts

Maggie Neil, Lady Margaret Hall
Exploring Europeaness in Sicily: Re-Assessing Hospitality
Towards Immigrants and Newcomers
*Supervisors: Professor Tom Scott-Smith and Professor Ruben
Andersson (ODID)*

Rosana O'Keeffe, St Anne's College
War and Material Reality: The Social Life of an Object
Designed to Kill
Supervisor: Professor Tom Scott-Smith

Vasiliki Poula, St Hugh's College
Architecture/geography of international development
*Supervisor: Professor Tom Scott-Smith and Professor John
Gledhill*

Abril Rios Rivera, Green Templeton College
Women's Empowerment and Labour Outcomes in the
Context of Migration in Kenya
*Supervisors: Professor Alexander Betts and Professor Carlos
Vargas-Silva (COMPAS)*

Elisa Sisto, Merton College
Mountain Humanitarianism and Cross-Border Migration:
Towards an Alpine Duty to Rescue?
Supervisor: Professor Tom Scott-Smith

Diana Volpe, Wolfson College
Legitimising Migration Control: Italy-Libya Maritime
Cooperation
*Supervisors: Professor Matthew J Gibney and Professor Tom
Scott-Smith*

Emma Walker-Silverman, St Catherine's College
Positively Polarized: Can Social Media Push Ambivalent
Locals to be More Supportive of Refugees in Turkey?
Supervisor: Professor Alexander Betts

Income and expenditure

Statement 1. Refugee Studies Centre income and expenditure, 2024–25 (1 August–31 July)

Reserve balances	Actuals 2023–24 (£)	Actuals 2024–25 (£)
Opening reserves brought forward	280,818.67	307,837.95
Revenue¹	Actuals 2023–24 (£)	Actuals 2024–25 (£)
Restricted project income		
Research Grant revenue ²	901,568.90	700,070.22
Forced Migration Review	244,888.96	249,080.06
Other revenue		
Overheads from research projects and awards	47,646.78	28,795.65
Other Income (e.g. donations, publication royalties, institutional consultancies)	34,876.73	75.00
Workshops, conferences, short courses, and Visiting Fellowships (total revenue)	125,956.74	163,303.90
International Summer School in Forced Migration Fee Income	77,582.07	53,170.00
ODID Contribution to RSC Core Costs		37,114.82
Transfer from Trust Fund Reserves to support Centre administrative staff costs	104,855.72	78,213.60
Total revenue	1,537,375.90	1,308,523.25
Expenditure	Actuals 2023–24 (£)	Actuals 2024–25 (£)
Research grant expenditure (including research staff salaries)	908,684.00	707,348.76
Core administrative staff salary costs	109,354.39	121,034.69
Other core administrative expenses	3,871.73	417.10
Workshops, conferences, short courses, public lectures, and Visiting Fellowships	92,139.12	138,972.01
International Summer School in Forced Migration	85,603.29	86,012.89
Outreach and dissemination		
Forced Migration Review (including FMR staff salaries)	244,888.96	249,080.06
Other publications, communications, and outreach activities	65,815.13	31,140.63
Total expenditure	1,510,356.62	1,332,706.14
Closing balances	Actuals 2023–24 (£)	Actuals 2024–25 (£)
Surplus/deficit after consolidation	27,019.28	24,182.89
Closing reserves carried forward	307,837.95	283,655.06

Statement 2. Performance of endowments

Endowments ⁵	Actuals 2023–24 (£)	Actuals 2024–25 (£)
Opening revenue account balance	429,734.45	355,727.45
Endowment income (dividends from Shares and Deposit Pool Interest)	315,110.00	327,260.11
Endowment expenditure (Salary costs and management fees)	389,117.00	374,127.66
Closing revenue account balance	355,727.45	308,859.90
Capital account balance	3,098,923.00	3,098,923.00

1 Total revenue – encompassing the Centre’s activities – amounts to £2.4896m. This figure is inclusive of endowment income (£327,260) and the MSc in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies Course Fees (£853,860).

2 Research grant revenue are reported as earned only when project expenditure is incurred.

3 Other deferred donation balances were £180,321 at July 31, 2025. These donations include funding restricted for MSc student scholarship bursaries and hardship funds.

4 The salaries of the Centre’s four permanent academic staff members are paid for through Oxford Department of International Development accounts, drawing upon both endowment revenue and MSc teaching income.

5 The Refugee Studies Centre is the beneficiary of several endowment funds, which are managed by the Oxford Department of International Development. As at 31 July 2025, revenue balances stood at £308,860. The related Capital Balances were £3.099m.

Staff and associates

Academic Staff

Professor Alexander Betts

Leopold Muller Professor of Forced Migration and International Affairs; Director of the Refugee Studies Centre, 2014–2017, and 2022–2023; Associate Head of the Social Sciences Division

Professor Catherine Briddick

Andrew W Mellon Associate Professor of International Human Rights and Refugee Law

Vittorio Bruni

Researcher and Fieldwork Coordinator, Refugee Economies Programme

Professor Matthew J Gibney

Elizabeth Colson Professor of Politics and Forced Migration; Director of the Refugee Studies Centre, 2017–2022

Dr Ashwiny O Kistnareddy

Leverhulme Early Career Fellow

Professor Naohiko Omata

Associate Professor

Dr Hiba Salem

Pedro Arrupe Research Fellow in Forced Migration Studies

Dr Julia Schweers*

Research Officer, Refugee Economies Programme

Professor Tom Scott-Smith

Associate Professor of Refugee Studies and Forced Migration; Director of the Refugee Studies Centre

Dr Uttara Shahani

Departmental Lecturer in Forced Migration

Professor Olivier Sterck

Associate Professor Emeritus

Professor Dawn Chatty

Emerita Professor and former Director of the Refugee Studies Centre, 2011–2014

Professor Roger Zetter

Emeritus Professor and former Director of the Refugee Studies Centre, 2006–2010

Publications and Outreach Staff

Jo Boyce**

Communications Manager, and Forced Migration Review Deputy Editor (maternity cover)

Emily Arnold-Fernandez*

Forced Migration Review, Associate Managing Editor

Sharon Ellis

Forced Migration Review, Assistant

Tamsin Kelk*

Communications and Information Coordinator

Catherine Meredith

Forced Migration Review, Deputy Editor

Alice Philip

Forced Migration Review, Managing Editor

Sarah Rhodes

Forced Migration, African and Commonwealth Subject Consultant

Maureen Schoenfeld

Forced Migration Review, Promotion and Finance Assistant

Joanna Soedring

Senior Library Assistant, Reader Services/Refugee Studies

Administrative Staff

Madison Bakewell

Programme Manager, Refugee Economies

Natasha Treunen

Programme Coordinator, Oxford Sanctuary Community

Daljit Kaur**

Events and International Summer School Officer (maternity cover)

Annelies Lawson

Events and International Summer School Officer

Felicity Leary

Centre Manager

Laurence Medley

Accounts Officer

Andrea Smith

Postgraduate Courses Coordinator

Refugee-Led Research Hub

Andonis Marden

Executive Director, Refugee-Led Research Hub, Oxford

Ghazal Sarah Salehi

Director of Partnerships, Refugee-Led Research Hub, Oxford

Abdulmajid Chahrour

Director of Operations and Strategy, Refugee-Led Research Hub, Oxford

Staff and associates

Oudai Tozan

Director of Academic Programmes,
Refugee-Led Research Hub, Oxford

Florin Najera-Uresti

Operations and Strategy Coordinator,
Refugee-Led Research Hub, Oxford

Hana Davis

Livelihoods Programme Officer,
Refugee-Led Research Hub, Oxford

Ali Ahmed

Academic Communications Officer,
Refugee-Led Research Hub, Oxford

Abigail Isaac

Academic Facilitator, Refugee-Led
Research Hub, Oxford

Joshua Low

Southeast Asia Programme Manager,
Refugee-Led Research Hub, Kuala
Lumpur

Mohamed Hassan

Research Officer, Refugee-Led
Research Hub, Nairobi

Winnie Makau

Junior Research Facilitator, Refugee-
Led Research Hub, Nairobi

Fardosa Salah

Research Officer, Refugee-Led
Research Hub, Nairobi

Pauline Vidal

Senior Research Facilitator, Refugee-
Led Research Hub, Nairobi

Buhendwa Iragi

Research Officer, Refugee-Led
Research Hub, Nairobi

Uwezo Ramazani

Research Lead, Refugee-Led
Research Hub, Nairobi

Research Associates

Professor E Tendayi Achiume

Professor of Law, Stanford Law School

Professor Megan Bradley

Professor and William Dawson
Scholar in Political Science and
International Development Studies,
McGill University

Professor Cathryn Costello

Full Professor of Global Refugee and
Migration Law, Sutherland School of
Law, University College Dublin

Dr Evan Easton-Calabria

Senior Researcher, Feinstein
International Center, Tufts University

Dr Molly Fee

Postdoctoral Prize Research Fellow in
Sociology, Nuffield College, University
of Oxford

Professor Michelle Foster

William Hearn Professor of Law and
Dean, Melbourne Law School

Dr Yotam Gidron

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of
Social and Cultural Anthropology, KU
Leuven

Professor Randall Hansen

Canada Research Chair, Department
of Political Science and Director,
Global Migration Lab, Munk School for
Global Affairs, University of Toronto

Dr Leander Kandilige

Senior Lecturer, Centre for Migration
Studies, University of Ghana

Dr Ulrike Krause

Professor of Political Science, Institute
for Political Science, University of
Münster

Dr Maryanne Loughry

Boston College

Professor Kirsten McConnachie

Professor of Socio-Legal Studies,
University of East Anglia

Professor James Milner

Professor of Political Science, Carleton
University

Dr Derya Ozkul

Assistant Professor in Sociology,
University of Warwick

Dr Cory Rodgers

Assistant Professor of Migration
Studies, Lebanese American
University

Dr Sarah Rosenberg-Jansen

Independent scholar

Professor Nando Sigona

Chair of International Migration
and Forced Displacement, and
Director, Institute for Research
into International Migration and
Superdiversity, University of
Birmingham

Dr Jade Siu

Assistant Professor in Economics,
University of Reading

Professor Eftihia Voutira

Professor of the Anthropology of
Forced Migration, University of
Macedonia

Professor Reuven Ziegler

Associate Professor in International
Refugee Law, University of Reading
School of Law

**Left in 2024-25*

***Joined in 2024-25*

Oxford Associates

Professor Renée Hirschon

Senior Research Fellow, St Peter's
College

Dr Nick Van Hear

Emeritus Fellow, COMPAS

Honorary Associates

Professor Jan Egeland

Secretary General, Norwegian
Refugee Council

Dr Madeline Garlick

Chief, Protection Policy & Legal
Advice, UNHCR

Professor Guy S Goodwin-Gill

Emeritus Fellow, All Souls College,
Oxford; Professor of Law and Deputy
Director, Andrew & Renata Kaldor
Centre for International Refugee Law,
University of New South Wales

Filippo Grandi

United Nations High Commissioner
for Refugees

Professor Jane McAdam

Scientia Professor of Law and
Director, Andrew & Renata Kaldor
Centre for International Refugee Law,
University of New South Wales

Refugee Studies Centre
Oxford Department of International Development
University of Oxford
3 Mansfield Rd
Oxford, OX1 3TB

T. +44 (0)1865 281 729

E. : rsc@qeh.ox.ac.uk

