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# South-South humanitarianism in contexts of forced displacement

## **Workshop report**

6 October 2012, Refugee Studies Centre

Refugee Studies Centre  
Oxford Department of International Development  
University of Oxford

This workshop report offers a thematic discussion of the main issues covered throughout the course of the international workshop on 'South-South humanitarian responses to forced displacement' convened by Dr. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh at the Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford in October 2012, in addition to presenting areas and questions for further research.

The workshop was generously supported by the Oxford Department of International Development and Refugee Studies Centre (University of Oxford) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' Policy Development and Evaluation Service (UNHCR-PDES). Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh's broader research project, South-South Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Displacement, is funded by an Oxford University Fell Fund Award (2012-2013).

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# Introduction

This workshop report offers a thematic discussion of the main issues covered throughout the course of the international workshop on ‘South-South humanitarian responses to forced displacement’ convened by Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh at the Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford in October 2012, in addition to presenting areas and questions for further research.

The workshop, and the broader research project of which it forms part, responds to the need for research into South-South humanitarian partnerships in an era when Northern-led humanitarian responses to contexts of forced displacement are increasingly being matched and at times actively challenged by a growing number of ‘alternative’ forms of humanitarian response emanating from the global South. The main aims of the workshop were thus to bring together academics, researchers and practitioners, and members of civil society in order to stimulate discussion and debate around the topic, and to create a space for critical reflection upon both the histories and contemporary realities of South-South humanitarianism in all its diversity.

To this end, the key questions addressed over the course of the day included:

- What is the history of different models of state and non-state South-South humanitarianism?
- What are the motivations underpinning diverse Southern state, civil-society, collective and individual responses to contexts of displacement?
- How are South-South humanitarian programmes and projects experienced and assessed by different members of Southern displaced populations?
- Given the heterogeneity which exists between and amongst Northern and Southern state and non-state actors, what, if any, are the similarities and differences which exist between Northern-led and Southern-led humanitarian initiatives?

A diverse selection of speakers presented papers on a wide variety of topics relating to South-South humanitarianism in contexts of forced displacement, and the annex includes brief biographical data regarding each presenter, as a means of contextualising the focus of each speaker’s research.

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## Setting the scene

Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh opened the workshop by welcoming the participants, and by situating the day’s programme within the context of her broader research project exploring South-South Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Displacement. She indicated that her focus on this topic has emerged as a result of her fieldwork, since 2001, in Southern states including Algeria, Cuba, South Africa and Syria, which have all provided different forms of humanitarian assistance to Middle Eastern and North African refugees. Her research has, in particular, critically explored Cuba’s ‘internationalist’ approach to humanitarianism, examining how, why and to what effect this low-GDP Southern state has provided educational scholarships to refugee children and youth

from around the world (including Sahrawis, Palestinians, Southern-Sudanese and Namibians),<sup>1</sup> in addition to sending medical commissions to emergency sites resulting from natural disasters and conflicts alike. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh noted that the principles underpinning Cuba's secular, internationalist approach, include José Martí's principle 'To share what you have, not to give what is left over' (*Compartir lo que tienes, no dar lo que te sobra*). She argued that rather than 'alternative' humanitarian perspectives being unequivocally idealised, such principles, and the humanitarian models built upon these, must be critically assessed; this issue was explored throughout a range of the day's presentations. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh also situated the workshop and broader research into South-South humanitarianism in relation to a parallel project, Faith-Based Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Migration, which has highlighted and explored a wide range of initiatives developed by diverse faith-based Southern state and non-state actors around the world.<sup>2</sup> These include local faith communities which have developed different responses to populations displaced by conflict and disasters across time and space. Since 'internationalist humanitarianism' and 'faith-based humanitarianism' are only two models underpinning Southern state and civil society groups' responses to diverse displacement contexts, the broader research project aims to comparatively explore diverse types, experiences and implications of Southern humanitarianism, including questions and themes addressed by the workshop participants throughout the day.

## Main themes

### The diversity of Southern actors

The case studies presented throughout the course of the workshop exemplify the multiplicity of actors that can be incorporated into an understanding of what constitutes South-South humanitarianism. From post-colonial middle-income states like Brazil and Southern regional organisations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), to civil society advocacy-humanitarianism and culturally-embedded, bottom-up expressions of humanity like hosting, the diversity of Southern actors analysed throughout the workshop demonstrates the heterogeneity of South-South responses to forced displacement across time and space. However, the inclusion of some of these 'alternative' modes of relieving the suffering of others into the rubric of 'South-South humanitarianism' is not without contention.

### Deconstructing the label

One of the key themes arising throughout the workshop was a critical questioning of the label 'Southern humanitarian actors' and a reflection upon how such a label has been, and potentially might be, understood. Indeed, in defining 'Southern humanitarian actors,' both of the constituent parts of the label have potentially contested meanings, and thus must be problematised in order to develop analytical clarity in research and to critically question any assumptions that may underpin these terms. This involves an analysis of what constitutes the 'global South' and an exploration into how this term is defined and what factors underpin its inherent meaning. Equally important is an exploration into the concept of 'humanitarianism,' especially focusing on the motivations, nature and implications of diverse forms of humanitarian action. The latter raises further questions with

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1 For instance, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2010) 'Education, Migration and Internationalism: Situating Muslim Middle Eastern and North African students in Cuba,' *The Journal of North African Studies*, 15(2): 137-155; and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2011) 'Paradoxes of Sahrawi Refugees' Educational Migration: Promoting self-sufficiency or renewing dependency?' *Comparative Education*, 47 (4):433-447.

2 See Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (Ed.) (2011) Special Issue on 'Faith Based Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Displacement,' *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 24 (3), and the research project page <http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/research/governance/faith-based-humanitarianism>.

regards to the relationship between politics and humanitarianism (see below), an issue which cuts across the many forms of South-South (and indeed Northern) humanitarian action, from local civil society initiatives to international responses to overseas crises.

### Defining the South

As well as highlighting the multiplicity of humanitarian initiatives taking place across the global South, the risks of essentialism inherent in oppositional binary categorisations like North/South were recognised throughout the workshop. Indeed, the workshop aimed to recognise both the similarities and wide-ranging differences within 'the South' as a specific category, leading, in particular, with presenters' engagement with the potentially contested nature of who, or what, constitutes a 'Southern actor'.

In her opening remarks, Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh stressed the need to recognise the limitations of the terms 'global North' and 'global South', and invited the presenters to critically engage with the label 'Southern humanitarian actors' throughout their papers. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh argued that the term used in the workshop's title reflected McEwan's suggestion that 'it is most useful to think of North/South as a *metaphorical* rather than a *geographical* distinction',<sup>3</sup> and that the terms global North/South transcend the connotations of typologies such as 'First World' and 'Third World', 'developed' or 'developing' which 'suggest both a hierarchy and a value judgement'.<sup>4</sup> She also added that this terminology also transcends the inherently *negative* framework implicit in the usage of the term '*non-West*' as the counterpoint to 'West,' and yet stressed the urgency of engaging critically with these and other terms throughout the workshop and in future research.

Of particular relevance to conceptualisations of states as 'Northern' or 'Southern,' was Fernando Brancoli and Diana Zacca Thomaz's discussion of Brazil as a 'Southern' state. Although traditionally understood to be a Southern state, the continuing expansion of the Brazilian economy, as well as Brazil's increasing participation in international fora, means that Brazil's contemporary position within a North/South typology is increasingly difficult to ascertain. Opposing discourses of sameness and difference vis-a-vis Southern countries offers states like Brazil a unique standing in global politics: Brancoli and Zacca Thomaz argued that, in Brazil's response to the 2010 Haitian earthquake, Brazil's knowledge and experience of tackling 'Southern' issues on a domestic level has been discursively affirmed, along with the concept of 'mutual South-South understanding', in order to instil legitimacy into Brazil's international humanitarian work. In official state discourse, for example, similarities between Haitian and Brazilian realities have often been highlighted, especially with regards to similarities between socio-economic and infrastructural conditions in Haiti and in Brazil's *favelas* (slums). However, Brancoli and Zacca stressed that it is Brazil's emerging economic and political position that allows it to pursue foreign humanitarian goals, and which is a significant factor in making it an attractive destination country for 'survival migrants' (following Betts) fleeing socio-economic hardship and human rights violations in Haiti and elsewhere.

The contested nature of who, or what, constitutes a Southern actor was also evaluated by Beryl Nicholson in her historical analysis of Albanian responses to displacement in the early twentieth century. Although Albania would not necessarily, in contemporary terms, be labelled a 'Southern' state, a historical contextualisation of Albania's global position was undertaken. As such, since Albania was part of the Ottoman Empire from 1481 to 1912, and as the research undertaken vis-a-vis Albanian communities hosting displaced populations focused on the years directly following Albanian independence from the Ottoman Empire, it can be argued that, at this historical moment, Albania was part of the Middle East and North Africa region, and thus part of the global South.

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3 McEwan, C. (2009) *Postcolonialism and Development*, Routledge, p. 13.

4 McEwan, C. (2009) *Postcolonialism and Development*, Routledge, p. 12.

## Defining humanitarianism and the role of politics

As noted in Simone Haysom's opening lecture, the humanitarian field is large, growing and diverse, but remains dominated by the North. In order to better understand contemporary humanitarian action, the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) has returned to the roots of humanitarianism in order to chart its evolution, in its project *Global History of Modern Humanitarianism*. Indeed, Haysom reasserted that Western humanitarianism itself has diverse roots, and the formal international humanitarian system is larger and more diverse than many realise. However it remains dominated by UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, and a select number of INGOs which have heavily influenced the contemporary structure of the system. The core humanitarian principles espoused by these actors – humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence – are themselves the creation of the Red Cross. With these principles in mind, UN agencies and NGOs strive to find an apolitical space from which to carry out their work. Nonetheless, there was arguably never an apolitical 'golden age' of humanitarianism, and an engagement with history demonstrates that both the motivations of humanitarianism and the spaces in which humanitarian action has been implemented have always been politically charged. Equally, the history of Western INGOs reveals that in many cases, action has long been based upon solidarity, rather than impartiality. Haysom thus argued that the history of Western humanitarianism shows that there is no 'pure' humanitarianism that risks pollution by new variants. However as a result of this dominant, albeit imagined, conceptualisation of humanitarianism, efforts to relieve the suffering of others that fall outside of this strictly delimited definition have been largely neglected in academic inquiry into humanitarianism. This workshop saw a variety of attempts to redress this imbalance.

The notion of humanitarianism as apolitical in nature was called into question by a selection of speakers and audience members alike, and it was suggested that because humanitarianism is a 'kind of politics', it cannot always be separated from 'political activism'. The argument was subsequently put forth by Rumana Hashem that because all humanitarianism is inherently political, Southern actors who combine activism with attempts to relieve the suffering of others should not be excluded from conceptualisations of humanitarianism. The extent to which an activist movement aiming to *prevent* displacement and the suffering of displaced people, could be conceptualised as part of the humanitarian spectrum was explored by Hashem through her analysis of the *Phulbari resistance*, a movement founded by grassroots activists to prevent the establishment of an open-pit mine in Bangladesh which threatens to destroy the homes, lands, and water supplies of as many as 220,000 people, and forcibly displace tens of thousands of people. Enduring definitional complexities regarding how to conceptualise 'humanitarianism' were recognised throughout the workshop, including through the question, posed by Jeff Crisp, of where, if at all, lines should be drawn to divide humanitarianism, human rights, and activism.

In turn, Helen Stawski, in her discussion of local faith communities (LFCs) and faith-based organisations (FBOs), highlighted many actors' reluctance to use the 'humanitarian' label to describe faith-inspired initiatives. Nonetheless, Stawski argued, LFCs and FBOs can be important sources of social and spiritual capital, and faith communities are a significant presence at the front line of many humanitarian situations, including within remote, rural, and marginalised communities. As a result of this geographical proximity, they can often respond quickly to emergencies and, as they are also often fixed presences and are thus deeply rooted within local communities, they hold the capacity to develop medium- and long-term programmes useful for the development and implementation of durable solutions. However, significant challenges remain with regards to utilising these forms of capital. The incorporation of faith into humanitarian work is seen by some to be at odds with the core 'international' humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, independence and neutrality, despite the broader recognition that 'modern humanitarianism's origins are located in Western

history and *Christian* thought.<sup>5</sup> However, while not all FBOs and LFCs may adhere to these core ‘international’ principles, this does not mean that they cannot be considered to be effective actors in aiding others. These groups are rarely neutral, for example, and yet not being neutral does not necessarily equate to contributing to violence in a conflict. Indeed, the very fact that these groups are not neutral can also help them play a key role in negotiations to implement durable solutions.

Nevertheless, Stawski stressed that there are contexts in which the ‘truth claims’ of religions manifest in a discriminatory fashion towards vulnerable groups and ‘other’ faith groups, and the impact of this should not be underestimated. Indeed, Jeff Crisp noted that the question of whether faith-based and faith-inspired organisations can and should situate themselves within the realm of humanitarianism remains open to contention, and that the role of LFCs and FBOs in displacement still remains relatively unrecognised in the formal humanitarian sphere because of a wider perception that these networks run in contradiction with the humanitarian principles espoused by the formal system. In particular, it was recognised that the fear of proselytisation and the possible connection between religion and faith on the one hand, and power and control on the other, remain significant barriers in engagement with faith-based and faith-inspired organisations.

The notion that the asylum practices of Southern host states could also constitute a form of South-South humanitarianism was another of the arguments put forward. As argued by Alexander Betts, host states’ responses to people fleeing human rights violations as a product of deprivation, rather than persecution, highlight the potential for politics to pervade this form of humanitarianism. The lack of legal precision in responding to these ‘survival migrants’,<sup>6</sup> unlike in the more precise legal regime of refugee protection, means that State-led humanitarian responses to such forms of forced migration are largely driven by national *politics*, and yet may simultaneously be denominated *humanitarian*. Indeed, it was argued by both Betts and Julia Smith that humanitarianism can be embedded within states’ mixed motivations in developing and implementing domestic policies related to different aspects and forms of forced migration. As explored by Julia Smith, this has been visible in the development of the recent enactment of counter-trafficking legislation in Iraq, during which time, beyond political pressure and that threat of economic sanctions, key Iraqi humanitarian spokespersons played an important role in the development of national counter-trafficking legislation.

The contentious and contested nature of the label ‘humanitarianism’, and the instances in which it can, and should be appropriated were thus highlighted throughout the workshop. The current oligopoly held by what Simone Haysom referred to as a small number of the ‘relief elite’ on the ‘humanitarian’ label has more than just theoretical implications. Rather, the marketisation of the humanitarian sphere has meant that the principles of humanitarian action are used as a rhetorical tool by humanitarian actors who wish to distinguish themselves as a distinctive market niche.<sup>7</sup> Haysom therefore discussed whether Southern efforts therefore risk being disparaged by different audiences, not because of performance but because of competition in the sector that compels formal actors to maintain dominance.

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5 Barnett, M. & Weiss, T. (2008) ‘Humanitarianism: A Brief History of the Present’, in Barnett, M. and Weiss, T.G. (Eds). *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*. Cornell University Press, p. 7, emphasis added.

6 Betts, A. (2010) ‘Survival Migration: A New Protection Framework.’ *Global Governance*, 16 (3), 361-382.

7 Collinson, S. and Elhawary, S. (2012) *Humanitarian space: a review of trends and issues*, HPG Report 32, April 2012. Cited by Haysom.



## Relationships between different actors

As demonstrated in the range of case-studies presented at the workshop and in the broader research project of which it forms part, it is essential to recognise the diversity of Southern humanitarian initiatives, which can include actors ranging from Southern International NGOs (SINGOs) and 'new' donor states, to local community and individual efforts to relieve the suffering of others. Some of these structures, including SINGOs and 'new' donor states, arguably have an easier relationship with the formal system than others, such as religious networks, which due to their often highly political and partial character are perceived as being more difficult to reconcile with the formal system. Beyond interactions with 'new' actors, Simone Haysom argued that established Northern INGOs already often have uneasy relationships with Southern actors, especially national and civil society structures. For instance, those who do not conform to the Northern model of humanitarianism are marginalised by the 'relief elite' who exert dominance over the humanitarian sphere. As noted by Haysom, this marginalisation has been visible in disaster management, whereby, once international agencies move in, they serve to dwarf and marginalise local structures, undermining the capacities of local actors.

Another example of this 'uneasy relationship' is found in the practice of UNHCR. On the one hand, Jeff Crisp stressed that UNHCR has reported that it is transferring increasing amounts of funding to its implementing partners, and that local/Southern NGOs are being increasingly incorporated as UNHCR implementing partners on the ground. However, it was recognised that the validity of this assertion is contestable, as the perception that local NGOs lack competency and are potentially sources of corruption still exists within the organisation. Equally, the issue of cooption is a matter of concern preventing UNHCR from engaging with local partners, as the organisation is reluctant to work through institutions that it considers lack autonomy.<sup>8</sup>

However, with increasing scepticism by some global players vis-a-vis the formal 'Western' system, it may in some instances be more beneficial for displaced populations if Southern actors remain outside of the formal system. For example, following the two main episodes of displacement in Myanmar in recent years, the first as a result of Cyclone Nargis and the second resulting from ethnic violence, the government of Myanmar refused access to INGOs and the UN, allowing access only to Southern regional organisations ASEAN and the OIC respectively (as discussed by Simone Haysom). Southern humanitarian actors may therefore foster better relationships with other Southern stakeholders precisely *because* they present themselves as an alternative to the formal international system.

The potential advantages and challenges arising from this relationship were clearly illustrated in Bhavani Fonseka's case-study of humanitarian responses to displacement in Sri Lanka, where increased nationalist sentiments following the 2004 tsunami created an environment hostile to Western humanitarian actors. Attacks were carried out against Western INGOs, who were treated with increased suspicion and perceived as neo-colonialists, while a space was thus created for Southern actors. However, certain Southern actors' increased access to the humanitarian space in Sri Lanka was fraught by tensions, as specific states did not necessarily pursue the uphold human rights standards, and, Fonseka argued, many Southern actors invoked the same accusations of imperialism as Western state and non-state actors.

On a different note, the importance of transnational networks in the support of South-South responses to forced displacement was highlighted by Rumana Hashem, who discussed the transnational solidarity networks linking grassroots activists with international environmental organisations and human rights advocates. In 2011, for example, 85 organisations based in 25 countries signed a global civil society letter detailing human rights abuses and risks associated with

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8 Crisp referred to this challenge as 'the three Cs': competence, corruption and cooption.

the Phulbari Coal Project. The transnational relationships between global and local actors, and between Northern and Southern humanitarian actors are visible in this context.

### **Agency vs. dependency**

Refugee and forced migration studies have long-affirmed the importance of understanding the agency of displaced individuals and communities, and the issue of agency vs. dependency was another theme addressed throughout the workshop.

As noted in Helen Stawski's presentation, in the case of faith-inspired organisations, engaging with LFCs and FBOs can build on the existing capabilities of local communities and thus reduce vulnerability. Stawski argued that new research into spiritual capital highlights its importance in building individual internal resilience through ritual, prayer and teaching. Both of these assertions demonstrate the importance of LFCs and faith-inspired resilience as expressions of agency emanating both from the South and, in particular, from displaced communities themselves.

In the historical case of family-based hosting in Albania, this method of helping others was not marked by dependency, but rather reciprocity. Beryl Nicholson noted that displaced 'guests' were reported to have contributed to the household through performing domestic tasks and/or in cash or kind, thereby avoided feelings of indebtedness and dependency, and demonstrating the agentic capacities of the displaced.

At the level of the state, Jeff Crisp stressed that the realisation that Southern states can behave assertively is important in moving beyond the idea of 'the South' as an entity dependent on the charity of the North. Crisp argued that the marginalisation and assertiveness of Southern states could be considered as two sides of the same coin: whilst the formal architecture of the international system and the 'international relief elite' in many respects retains dominance in the world of humanitarianism, the role of Southern states as actors should not be discounted as they can very often actively inform and influence the shape of refugee policy and protection. The idea of UNHCR as a 'surrogate state' is limited in this respect, as it ignores the agency of the host state as an actor in determining the form and nature of refugee protection within its territory.

## **By means of conclusion: South-South humanitarianism in the past, present and future**

The importance of history was noted by a number of speakers and audience members throughout the course of the workshop, in relation to the historical foundations of the 'modern' humanitarian system, in terms of the shifting denomination of particular states as Southern or Northern over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (i.e. the cases of Albania and Brazil), and with reference to claims that contemporary crises and responses to these are 'unprecedented' in their nature and form. Indeed, as argued by Jeff Crisp, although UNHCR documents often state that a particular crisis is 'unprecedented', if we apply a historical lens to displacement we find that most emergencies do, in fact, have historical precedents. Equally, Beryl Nicholson and Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh noted that local communities' responses to displacement have often been denominated as 'unprecedented', and yet historical accounts of Albanian families welcoming displaced people through informal hosting agreements demonstrate historical continuities which have otherwise been marginalised through depictions of Tunisian families' generosity towards Libyans displaced by the 2011 uprisings as 'unique' in nature. A historical perspective is therefore imperative to a comprehensive understanding of South-South humanitarianism. In this respect, Simone Haysom stressed that it should not simply be presumed that the end of the Cold War marked a fundamental historical transformation in global realities, despite many accounts of the contemporary humanitarian system using the Cold War as a key demarcator. Rather, a temporally broader lens

should thus be applied in order to understand the foundations and evolution of humanitarianisms in the global South.

Further research into the topic of South-South humanitarianism in contexts of forced displacement should therefore seek to explore what, if anything, is unique to contemporary South-South responses to forced displacement. Analysis of the historical precedents, and of the roots of a plurality of humanitarianism models across different cultures, will enable the development of a more nuanced understanding of current, and future, forms of South-South humanitarianism, in all its diversity.

In his concluding remarks, Jeff Crisp also reflected on UNHCR's changing priorities since the 1980s, including paradigm shifts which have occurred within UNHCR's key modes of operation as epitomised in a move away from the doctrine of 'care and maintenance' and the idea that refugees should remain in camps, to the increased attention given to urban refugees, and more comprehensive thinking about local *settlement* (as opposed to local *integration*) as a durable solution. Equally, institutions such as UNHCR have seen an increasing rhetorical commitment to engaging with Southern humanitarian actors, although significant barriers continue to prevent this rhetoric from becoming reality, and it remains to be seen to what extent the role of Southern civil society initiatives, and Southern-led local hosting receive increased attention by international institutions and both Northern and Southern states in future years.

A number of contributors recognised that further research into the role of civil society should also seek to understand the contribution of local faith communities and different types of faith-based organisations in contexts of displacement. The potential impact of 'spiritual capital' on resilience was noted in particular, and the importance of collecting information from faith-based and secular actors alike with the view to developing principles of best practice on partnership with these groups was stressed by Helen Stawski.<sup>9</sup> While the role of 'faith' and 'spiritual capital' in different forms of South-South humanitarianism therefore emerged as an important line of inquiry for further research, this in turn raises the question of whether people without religious faith are necessarily considered to exist in a more vulnerable position than displaced people of faith. Jeff Crisp therefore argued that the notion of non-religious faith in contexts of forced displacement also warrants careful consideration from the perspectives of diverse stakeholders, including host states and communities, and the displaced themselves.

These diverse stakeholders' perceptions and assessments of the past, present and future roles of Southern actors are also areas of study which require increased attention, as they have the potential to foster a better understanding of the dynamics of South-South interactions in these contexts. As stressed by Simone Haysom, it could also go some way to engaging with the question: if Southern actors provide assistance in weak states characterised by chronic crises, will they necessarily have a more equal relationship with these structures than their Northern counterparts, or will they still be accused of carrying out imperialist practices? These and other questions will be explored in the broader project, *South-South Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Displacement*, over the coming months and years.

*To access other resources arising from the workshop, including a podcast of the opening lecture, Working Papers, and further information about the broader research project, see <http://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/research/governance/south-south-humanitarianism>.*

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<sup>9</sup> This focus is represented in the on-going Joint Learning Initiative regarding Southern local faith communities and resilience in contexts of forced displacement which both Helen Stawski and Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh are working on alongside an extensive network of academics and practitioners (see [http://www.jliflc.com/en/learning\\_hubs/resilience\\_in\\_humanitarian\\_situations/](http://www.jliflc.com/en/learning_hubs/resilience_in_humanitarian_situations/)).

# Programme

- 09.45–10.10 **Registration** (Tea/Coffee)
- 10.10–10.20 **Welcome and Introduction:** Prof. Dawn Chatty (Director, RSC, Oxford University)
- 10.20–10.30 **Opening Remarks:** Dr. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (RSC, Oxford University)
- 10.30–11.15 **Opening Lecture:** *Contemporary Humanitarian Action and the Role of Southern Actors: Key trends and debates*, Simone Haysom (Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute)
- 11.15–13.00 **Session 1: South-South Civil Society Responses to Displacement: Past and Present**, Chair: Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (RSC, Oxford University)
- Bottom-Up, Not Top-Down: Accommodating the displaced in mid-Albania in 1918*, Beryl Nicholson (Independent researcher, UK)
- An Activist's Perspective on South-South Humanitarianism in North-West Bangladesh*, Rumana Hashem (University of East London)
- South-South Faith-Based Humanitarianism: Understanding the Social and Spiritual Capital of Local Faith Communities*, Helen Stawski (Archbishop of Canterbury's Deputy Secretary for International Development)
- 13.00–13.45 *Lunch*
- 13.45–15.30 **Session 2: Southern Host States' Responses to Different Forms of Displacement: Humanitarianism or Politics?** Chair: Simone Haysom (Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute)
- Who Is a Refugee? Explaining Variation in African Host State Policies*, Alexander Betts (RSC, Oxford University)
- Contradictions in South-South Counter-Trafficking Initiatives: A case-study of post-war Iraq*, Julia Smith (IOM Iraq)
- 15.30–15.45 *Coffee*
- 15.45–16.45 **Session 3 Beyond Hosting: The Politics of Southern Donor States**, Chair: Jeff Crisp (Policy Development and Evaluation Service-UNHCR)
- Controversial South-South Humanitarianism: Brazil's performance in post-disaster Haiti and towards Haitian displacement to Brazil*, Diana Zacca Thomaz (Universidade Federal Fluminense, Brazil) and Fernando Brancoli (San Tiago Dantas Program, Brazil)
- South-South Humanitarianism and its Impact(s): Reflections on the Sri Lankan experience*, Bhavani Fonseka (Centre for Policy Alternatives, Sri Lanka)
- 16.45–17.15 **Closing Remarks**, Jeff Crisp (Policy Development and Evaluation Service- UNHCR)
- 17.15–17.30 **By Means of Conclusion: Future steps**, Dr Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (RSC)

# Speakers

## Morning speakers

### **Dr. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (Workshop Convenor; Departmental Lecturer in Forced Migration, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford)**

Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh is Departmental Lecturer in Forced Migration at the Refugee Studies Centre, and Junior Research Fellow in Refugee Studies at Lady Margaret Hall. She has conducted research with Middle Eastern and North African refugees in countries including Algeria, Cuba, Egypt, Jordan, South Africa, Syria and the UK, and her main interests include the intersections between gender, Islam and asylum; faith-based humanitarianism in contexts of forced displacement; and South-South humanitarian initiatives. Since 2010, Elena has been the Director of the RSC's International Summer School in Forced Migration. Her recent and forthcoming publications include 'Faith-Based Humanitarianism in Contexts of Forced Displacement' (guest editor of Special Issue of the *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 2011), *The Ideal Refugees: Gender, Islam and the Sahrawi Politics of Survival* (Syracuse University Press, 2013), and *South-South Educational Migration, Humanitarianism and Development: Views from Cuba, North Africa and the Middle East* (Routledge, 2014). She is also the co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies*, a major, 54-chapter volume co-edited with Gil Loescher, Katy Long and Nando Sigona (Oxford University Press, 2014).

### **Simone Haysom (Research Officer, Humanitarian Policy Group)**

Simone Haysom is a Research Officer at the Humanitarian Policy Group of the Overseas Development Institute. She primarily researches displacement in urban areas, and issues relating to the protection of civilians. Her recent work includes a co-edited special edition of *Disasters* on urban vulnerability and humanitarian response, and conducting research on case-studies of internal displacement, and the attendant international response, in Kabul and Gaza. Simone has a BSc Hons in Human Geography from the University of Cape Town, and an MPhil in Geography from the University of Cambridge. Prior to moving to the UK, she researched alternative models of low cost housing provision in South Africa for the Development Action Group.

## **Session One: South-South Civil Society Responses to Displacement: Past and Present**

### **Beryl Nicholson (Independent Scholar)**

Beryl Nicholson is a sociologist with extensive experience in university research posts in the social sciences. She has also conducted far-reaching work as an independent researcher, initially with a special interest in Northern Norway, latterly doing research on Albania (both post- and pre-communist). Academic outputs resulting from this research have been published in academic journals including *Europe-Asia Studies*, *The Political Quarterly* and *East European Politics and Societies*, and as book chapters. A full list of Beryl's publications is available at <http://www.beryl-nicholson.co.uk/publications.html>. The paper presented at the South-South Humanitarianism workshop links two on-going projects, one on the resettlement of Kosovar and Çam refugees in Albania in the interwar period, the other a study of the district of Mallakastër, Albania, in 1918.

### **Rumana Hashem (Activist and Doctoral Researcher, University of East London)**

Rumana Hashem is an activist-researcher from Bangladesh. She volunteers for the Phulbari Resistance movement as an advocate and international campaigner, and voluntarily serves the National Indigenous Forum (as adviser) and the National Committee of Bangladesh (as strategist) on issues relating to environment and natural resources. Currently based in the Centre for Migration, Refugee and Belonging at the University of East London, Rumana's doctoral research

investigated the causes and consequences of the armed conflict in Southeast Bangladesh. At present she is contributing to teaching programs in Sociology and Psychosocial Studies in the School of Law and Social Sciences and is serving the post-graduate sociology journal, ENQUIRE, as a peer-reviewer. Rumana has published a number of research-based articles.

**Helen Stawski (Archbishop of Canterbury's Deputy Secretary for International Development)**

Helen Stawski is a senior advisor to the Archbishop of Canterbury - the global head of 80 million Anglicans worldwide. The scope of her work includes multi-faith dialogue and research into the intersection between faith issues, behavioural change and development assistance; partnering with governments, different UN agencies and human rights NGOs on faith literacy; engaging religious leaders and groups in local and global advocacy around social development and policy dialogues for development; and building the capacity of local churches' community development programmes in the areas of health, education and humanitarian relief. Previous to this role Helen worked in Uganda as well as South Sudan to support the church's work on livelihoods and education. Helen has an MA in Social Development, and is about to complete a second MA in Christian Spirituality.

**Session Two: Southern Host States' Responses to Different Forms of Displacement: Humanitarianism or Politics?**

**Dr. Alexander Betts (University Lecturer in Refugee Studies and Forced Migration, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford)**

Alexander Betts is University Lecturer in Refugee Studies and Forced Migration and a Fellow of Green-Templeton College at the University of Oxford, where he was previously the Hedley Bull Research Fellow in International Relations. He received his MPhil (in Development Studies, with Distinction) and DPhil (in International Relations) from the University of Oxford. His research focuses on the international politics of asylum and migration, with a geographical focus on Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition to ongoing research vis-à-vis the role of transnational exiles in the African state system, Dr. Betts is currently the Director of the Humanitarian Innovation Project. He is author or editor of numerous books, including *Protection by Persuasion: International Cooperation in the Refugee Regime* (Cornell University Press, 2009), *Global Migration Governance* (Oxford University Press, 2011), and *Refugees in International Relations* (with Gil Loescher, Oxford University Press, 2011).

**Julia Smith (International Organisation for Migration-Iraq)**

Julia Smith is a program assistant with the International Organization for Migration's Mission in Iraq's Integrated Capacity Building Program, and an officer on the board of Pro-Microfinance International USA. From 2006 until 2010, Julia researched and contributed to various development projects, including in Ecuador, Ghana, India, Liberia, and DR Congo. Julia holds a BA from Long Island University, and an MA with distinction from the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit at the University of York.

**Session Three: Beyond Hosting: The Politics of Southern Donor States**

**Dr. Jeff Crisp (Head of Policy Development and Evaluation-UNHCR)**

Jeff Crisp is Head of Policy Development and Evaluation at UNHCR. He has also held senior positions with the Global Commission on International Migration, the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues and the British Refugee Council. Jeff has a PhD from the Centre for West African Studies, University of Birmingham, and has published extensively on refugee, humanitarian and migration issues, as well as African affairs. He has first-hand experience

of UNHCR and UN operations throughout Africa, Asia, the Americas and Middle East. He was recently appointed as Honorary Professor at the School of Global Studies, University of Sussex.

**Fernando Brancoli (Doctoral Researcher, San Tiago Dantas Program)**

Fernando Brancoli is a PhD candidate in International Relations at San Tiago Dantas Program in Brazil, a joint curriculum program with Universidade do Estado de Campinas, Universidade do Estado de São Paulo and Pontifícia Universidade Católica - SP. Fernando is also a Visiting Professor at Universidade Federal Fluminense, where he concluded his M.A in Strategic Studies. He holds an MBA in International Relations from the Getulio Vargas Foundation and took specialization courses in the Hague School of International Law, at University of Uppsala (Sweden), University of Copenhagen and University of Oslo (Norway). Fernando has served as political advisor for a range of humanitarian agencies, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, where he had the opportunity to visit conflict and displacement contexts on several occasions, including Haiti.

**Diana Zacca Thomaz (Assistant Researcher, Department of International Relations, Universidade Federal Fluminense)**

Diana Zacca Thomaz is currently an Assistant Researcher in the Department of International Relations at Universidade Federal Fluminense (Brazil). She holds a degree - Magna cum laude - in International Relations from the same university. In 2012, Diana worked in the Brazilian office of Doctors Without Borders, with fund raising programs, and also conducted research in Egypt. Her areas of academic interest are Forced Migration, International Relations Theory, International Humanitarian Law and Brazilian Foreign Policy.

**Bhavani Fonseka (Senior Researcher, Centre for Policy Alternatives, Sri Lanka)**

Bhavani Fonseka is a Senior Researcher and human rights lawyer working with the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), a think tank based in Sri Lanka. She has worked on human rights and humanitarian issues in Sri Lanka for over a decade, having researched and written on the rights of internally displaced persons, land issues, humanitarian space and related issues in Sri Lanka. In December 2011, Bhavani co-authored a report entitled *Land in the Northern Province: Post War Politics, Policy and Practices*, which documents the complexities related to land issues in post-war Sri Lanka. She has also appeared in several landmark cases filed in the Sri Lankan courts fighting for the rights of affected communities including the rights of IDPs and land rights. In 2009 she presented a paper at the international conference on *Protecting People in Conflict and Crisis: Respond to the Challenge of a Changing World* hosted by the Refugee Studies Centre. Her paper, entitled *Protection in Practice: The Sri Lankan Case*, was subsequently published as *Civilian Protection in Sri Lanka Under Threat* – RSC Working Paper Series No 58 in January 2010. Bhavani is an Asia 21 Fellow and Richard C. Holdbrooke Fellow with the Asia Society, USA.