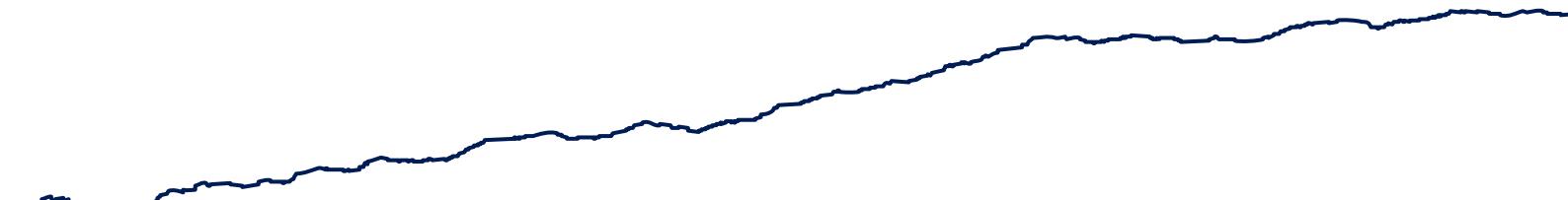




Permanent crises?

Unlocking the protracted displacement of refugees
and internally displaced persons



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About this paper

This policy overview has been prepared as part of an RSC's joint research and policy project on 'Unlocking crises of protracted displacement for refugees and internally displaced persons' with the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.

This paper considers how international actors should frame protracted displacements and the search for 'solutions' to such crises. It draws on the findings of three case studies (Central America during the 1980s and 1990s and contemporary displacements in Somalia and Iraq) as well as wider research on protracted refugee situations and the politics of refugee 'solutions'. The paper suggests a number of innovative strategies which might better match international policy to the needs of those trapped in protracted displacement. Based on the evidence assessed, the paper concludes that ensuring the quality of asylum, opening up migration routes and adopting a more flexible approach to residency and citizenship rights are all key to unlocking protracted displacements.

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Introduction

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) defines a protracted refugee situation (PRS) as one in which refugees have sought asylum in another country (or countries) and have since been displaced for five years or longer ‘without immediate prospects for implementation of durable solutions’ (UNHCR 2009a: preamble). Such indefinite exile leaves the displaced in a ‘long-lasting and intractable state of limbo. Their lives may not be at risk, but their basic rights and essential economic, social, and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile’ (ExCOM 2004: II.3). Today, more than 7.2 million refugees are trapped in protracted refugee situations (PRS) (UNHCR 2011: 14). To these numbers must be added – taking the most conservative of estimates and applying the same criteria – at least 16 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) (IDMC/Brookings 2011). The average length of a refugee or IDP’s displacement is now approaching 20 years (Milner and Loescher 2011: 3).

Currently, there are 30 recognized major PRS and a similar number of major protracted IDP situations.¹ The vast majority of these protracted displacements are situated in poor developing regions where host states and communities are often also under political, economic and social stress. The largest PRS – in terms of numbers – confirm this analysis: Pakistan hosts around 1.8 million Afghans, Syria over a million Iraqis, Kenya around 400,000 Somalis.² Many protracted IDP crises are similarly located in states where violent civil conflict is endemic: in April 2011 there were estimated to be 1.46 million IDPs in Somalia, while Columbia hosts at least 3.6 million IDPs (IDMC/Brookings 2011: preface map). Protracted displacement is not only an issue in the developing world: some 17 years after the Dayton accords were signed, continued political conflict means that substantial numbers of IDPs/refugees await a ‘solution’ in the Balkan region (see e.g. Allen and Le Rosi 2010).

Protracted displacements are, therefore, by definition displacements for which there are ‘no solutions in sight’ (Crisp 2002). Hence to some extent it is stating the obvious to declare that if these protracted – and often forgotten – crises are to be ‘unlocked’, the international community must search for new and innovative strategies. However, to do so, the international community must first establish exactly *whose* problem it is that they are trying to solve. As researchers have pointed out, refugees’ and IDPs’ ‘problem’ can be summarized as an absence of state protection, an inability to access the basic rights of citizenship. Any solution to this form of exclusion must involve the restoration – or even the creation – of meaningful citizenship (see e.g. Long 2010b).³ Yet states – whether host, origin or donor – have often chosen to understand *their* refugee problem in demographic terms, as the physical presence of unwanted foreign residents on *their* territory. Their solution is the removal of such interlopers.

Understanding these different approaches arguably helps to explain why the traditional ‘durable solutions’ framework – developed in a refugee context, but also the model for IDP solutions – has evidently failed to provide solutions to so many crises of displacement. Although there are formally three durable solutions – repatriation or return, resettlement and local integration – the international community has always been very clear that it views repatriation as its ‘preferred’ solution. For most PRS, repatriation is considered the

only viable solution for the majority of refugees. Similarly, most IDP ‘solutions’ focus on the goal of returning groups to their communities of origin.

Return has evident benefits for many refugees and IDPs. Compared to other solutions, it provides a more obvious foundation for compensatory justice and it allows for the protection of collective political interests. Yet the international community’s pursuit of repatriation, and particularly of permanent physical return, to the exclusion of other alternatives has been criticized by many refugee advocates in the past two decades. In particular, return is clearly an inappropriate ‘solution’ to displacement when it involves premature physical return to a state or community only just emerging – or still engulfed by – conflict.

Protracted displacement is not a new phenomenon. In fact, the shift towards more active pursuit of repatriation can be traced to increasing concerns within the international community during the late 1970s and 1980s that African displacements in particular were not being resolved through local integration efforts. As Jeff Crisp, writing in 1986, observed, ‘lasting solutions to refugees’ plights have proved elusive. In many part of Africa, “temporary” refugee camps have become semi-permanent settlements.’ The result was a shift to incorporate refugees into development plans because ‘today, everyone is in favour of development’ and to encourage repatriation. These two approaches were combined at the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, held in 1984 (ICARA II), but results were unimpressive (Crisp 1986: 163).

Recognizing the long historical trajectory of protracted displacement is useful, because such an approach underlines that what is required are new approaches that may help to break the impasse in facing old – but still unresolved – problems of displacement. A historical view also emphasizes the serious nature of contemporary PRS: while in 1990 the average protracted exile lasted nine years, today the average is approaching 20 (Milner and Loescher 2011: 3). Most importantly, a historical view underlines that anxieties about protracted displacement are closely connected to the declining quality of asylum. It is only as conditions in asylum have become increasingly restrictive, preventing the resumption of ‘normal life’ as a refugee, that the search for solutions to the ‘refugee problem’ has become so imperative for international actors.

Unlocking crises of protracted displacement for refugees and internally displaced people

The recognition of the need for new approaches with which to respond to worsening crises of protracted displacement provided the framing for the joint RSC/NUPI/NRC/IDMC⁴ project, *Unlocking crises of protracted displacement for refugees and internally displaced peoples*. The project sought to answer the following questions:

What relationships exist between protracted displacement and state fragility and how may a better understanding of this relationship enhance solutions for prolonged displacement?

How do the perceptions and interests of the displaced people and their political engagement in peace, reconciliation and return processes affect situations of protracted displacement, modalities of return and state building processes?

To what extent can a more strategic use of the available settlement options for refugees and IDPs (resettlement/settlement elsewhere in the country, repatriation and reintegration/return, local integration) be pursued to address protracted displacement situations in a sustainable way? What are the challenges and opportunities to the social, economic and political reintegration of returnees? How can the practical, political and policy challenges to local integration of refugees in regional host states be overcome? How can the same challenges be overcome for IDPs who choose to settle in their area of displacement or elsewhere in their country?

Are there innovative national, regional or international initiatives which can help to unlock protracted population displacement (for example development projects in areas hosting displaced populations of refugees and IDPs, freedom of movement mechanisms)? How can these initiatives be implemented by national governments and what is the role of international actors?

To investigate these research areas, three case study sites were selected (Bradley 2011, Chatty and Mansour 2011, Lindley and Haslie 2011).⁵ A desk study of the Central American displacement crises – and the methods used to pursue their resolution – during the 1980s and 1990s complemented two contemporary cases studies that drew on qualitative field research (Bradley 2011). One research team examined Iraqi experiences of displacement, focusing particularly on the perceptions of Iraqis in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria (Chatty and Mansour 2011). The second research team considered the dynamics of Somali displacement, with a particular focus on Somali refugees in Kenya and IDP movements within the state (Lindley and Haslie 2011).

The project's basic premise was that protracted displacement cannot be understood – much less resolved – without first comprehending the interests and hopes that the displaced themselves invest in the idea of 'solutions'. The aim of all three case studies was therefore to provide new insights into 'bottom-up', refugee and IDP-led understandings of protracted displacement. These findings thus provide a much needed complement to existing research and policy literature on PRS, which has tended to focus more on 'top-down' institutional responses to protracted displacement (see e.g. Milner and Loescher 2011).

The specific aim of this paper is to synthesize the general findings of these case study papers and draw on wider PD and ‘solutions’ literature to suggest new ways in which international actors should seek to both frame and respond to protracted displacement. It is important to state that this paper does not just summarize the key case study findings from Central America, Iraq or Somalia. While this work draws on the main findings of the research teams, this paper can – and should – be read as a stand-alone document.⁶ It is clearly important not to over-generalize from what are relatively small-scale and context-specific studies, but nevertheless, this research into refugee-led responses to protracted displacement shows very clearly that there are common themes running across all the selected case studies.

The paper first presents a typology of protracted displacement crises, and considers the failures of traditional approaches to ‘solving’ these crises. It then outlines a number of thematic findings from the case studies, and supplements these with considerations from other protracted refugee settings including Afghanistan, Myanmar/Burma, Bhutan, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. The paper concludes by offering a number of conclusions and recommendations for international actors concerned with unlocking protracted displacement crises.

The dynamics and typologies of protracted displacement

Studying contemporary Iraqi and Somali displacement makes very clear that there is no single experience of protracted displacement. In fact, it is arguably more fitting to talk about endemic but sequential *waves* of displacement. Collectively, these waves reflect a chronic failure of governance in the state of origin; yet each separate wave may have distinct causes of flight. In Iraq, for example, one million Iraqis were already internally displaced or living in exile prior to the 2003 American-led invasion (Chatty and Mansour 2011: 6). For this group, the immediate post-2003 settlement offered an opportunity to resolve their protracted displacement through a return to Iraq. The dynamics governing this migration flow are thus very different from those shaping the mass outflow that resulted from increasing sectarian violence in 2006/2007.

Similarly, Somali displacement can arguably best be characterized as a series of movements. Massive external and internal displacement resulted from the collapse of the Somali state in 1991; a decade of relative stability from approximately 1996 to 2005 was then followed from 2006 by new waves of political violence and accompanying displacement. In recent months, displacement has intensified in the context of drought and famine (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 8–10). These waves of displacement can be understood as responses to different iterations of the same crisis of government within Somalia, but they also underline that there is no single experience of ‘protracted displacement’.

These findings are echoed in research from other protracted displacement settings: in Afghanistan, some three-quarters of those refugees remaining in Pakistan have lived there for more than 30 years, since the 1979 Soviet invasion. Others arrived more recently, fleeing the Mujahideen, the Taliban and drought in the 1990s. A third and final group include those who have been displaced since the 2001 American-led invasion. Again, all these iterations of exile reflect the chronic inability of the Afghan state to function adequately; but within this framework, they are also responses to *different* crises (Monsutti 2008). Another parallel between these cases is the extent to which external interventions – intended to foster the development of particular forms of (Western-allied) government – have also triggered new crises of governance and new displacements.

The reality of protracted displacement thus reflects a landscape of recurring crises. In both the Iraqi and Somali cases, many have been displaced for decades. Their experiences and interests are shaped by long-term exile, and most closely fit UNHCR’s description of a PRS (see above). Yet others are relatively new arrivals: in the case of Somalia, the current (July 2011) influx of some 10,000 refugees a week into Kenya represents just one dimension of an unfolding major humanitarian emergency. The fight to save lives has understandably dominated immediate media and donor agendas (UNICEF 2011). Yet in both Somalia and Iraq such acute crises continue alongside protracted exile.

Focusing on the dynamics of protracted displacement suggests that the international community should consider far more carefully the connections between emergency crises and protracted exile. Evidence from Central America – where an apparent resolution to a crisis of physical displacement masks a continued dependence on irregular and precarious

forms of migration – confirms that displacement crises (even if ostensibly resolved) must be understood as symptoms of ongoing ‘crises of citizenship’, which in the case of El Salvador and Guatemala have not yet found a ‘solution’ (Bradley 2011). Peace, stability and justice depend upon the establishment of a functional and capable state.

One type of protracted displacement crisis, then, is that caused by the chaotic or absent state. This fundamental failure of governance across a territory is likely to lead to intermittent violent conflict and endemic insecurity and poverty, leading to waves of displacement – often affecting different groups and regions – over a number of years or decades. This model of ‘permanent crisis’ fits other notable protracted displacements, including Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where displacements have occurred over a long temporal scale (since at least 1996) and large geographic area (with major numbers being displaced not only from North and South Kivu but also in north-eastern DRC and in the west along the border with the Central African Republic (CAR) and Angola).

Yet there is also danger that in focusing on state frailties and the ‘permanent crises’ of displacement that these provoke, other forms of protracted displacement may be missed. There are many protracted displacements where the challenge faced by international institutions and the displaced themselves in seeking to resolve the crisis is not an *absence* of governance but an excess of *authoritarian* government. Populations of refugees from Myanmar in Thailand and Bangladesh, and Eritrean refugees in East Sudan, for example, may similarly suffer multiple iterations of displacement, but in their cases, the cause is state repression rather than the absence of a state (Bartsch and Dualeh 2011; Barnett 2000; Anonymous 2010). This was also the case in Central America. In other settings such as Serbia, strong governments may seek to deliberately politicize protracted displacement, preventing formal resolution of a ‘crisis’ (despite considerable levels of *de facto* integration) in order to protect high political interests. These cases were not the focus of the current project, where all three cases studies instead investigate protracted displacement in weak state settings. However, any future research projects should also seek to investigate protracted displacement in such strong state settings.

As a final note, it is equally important to recognize the danger in focusing only on models of crisis. In nearly all regions of protracted displacement, migration has played an important role in economic, social and cultural relations before any crisis of governance, and such movements continue to occur alongside displacement, and will continue after any crisis of displacement has been ‘unlocked’. Although there has been considerable attention paid to this phenomenon of ‘mixed migration’, to date mixed migration research has not been explicitly connected with work on the problem of protracted displacement. Yet evidence from an increasing number of studies suggests that not all migration from conflict zones or repressive states should be characterized as ‘displacement’, distinct from migration (e.g. Monsutti 2006; Chatelard 2010a, 2010b).

Policy implications

Policy makers should recognize the connections between the emergency and protracted phases of displacement, which may often occur in parallel.

A typology of protracted displacement should be developed. All displacements are crises of citizenship, whether they involve an absence of citizenship or an exclusion from citizenship. While in many instances these crises are provoked by chronic failures of governance, in other settings an excess of authoritarian government is responsible. Understanding these different forms of displacement will help international actors to tailor appropriate policies.

It is important not to focus on crises of displacement to the exclusion of other forms of movement that pre-date displacement crises, and will continue after displacement crises have been resolved. ‘Solving’ displacement does not mean movement will stop.

The failure of existing approaches to protracted displacement

The very fact of protracted displacement is evidence that existing approaches to ‘solving’ displacement have failed. Voluntary return, local integration and resettlement – the traditional ‘durable solutions’ – are not accessible for those trapped in protracted displacement, as demonstrated by this research project’s case studies. One question which must be asked, however, is whether the very language of ‘solutions’ is in fact creating – rather than confronting – the apparent impasse in protracted displacement crises.

Although the concept of protracted displacement is usually framed by a lack of access to ‘durable solutions’, protracted displacements are an important issue because the displaced also suffer from a parallel lack of access to adequate asylum protection during their displacement. In the last two decades, it is very clear that the quality of asylum protection on offer in most host states – not only in Africa and Asia, but also in Europe – has been significantly diminished in response to domestic political agitation. In Kenya, as Lindley and Haslie’s paper makes clear, the Kenyan state’s working policy of encampment for Somali refugees has not only diminished the prospects for local integration, but has significantly undermined the quality of asylum, so that ‘to ensure basic protection – even before discussing durable solutions – there is much work to be done’ (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 41). Similarly, Chatty and Mansour depict the Iraqi displaced in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon as suffering from economic and social marginalization, plagued by continuing uncertainty as a result of their precarious legal status in these states (Chatty and Mansour 2011).

Similar observations have been made by other researchers, who have pointed out that while asylum may preserve ‘bare life’, over time the minimal asylum rights that remain cannot meet the needs of refugees. Writing for UNHCR in 2000, Arafat Jamal observed in Kakuma camp⁷ that ‘by and large, minimum standards have been attained, and human survival, at least, is safeguarded. However, the safety, well-being and dignity of the refugees are not assured, and in some cases are deteriorating’ (Jamal 2000). Some have also noted a worrying trend of ‘solutions creep’, so that initiatives that previously would have gone unremarked are presented as exceptional efforts to ‘solve’ a crisis. In Iran, for instance, one programme in recent years has offered family breadwinners work permits, conditional upon the rest of the family repatriating to Afghanistan. Yet far from unlocking protection space, this effort arguably underlines the extent to which asylum space has actually been diminished to meet domestic political concerns. As one UNHCR staff member has observed:

Prior to this policy, at the beginning of the 1990s registered Afghans were already permitted to work in sixteen designated sectors in Iran. This worked very well, did not require an expensive or laborious bureaucratic process to administer, and was well adapted to the economic profile of the Afghans in Iran. It's difficult therefore to escape the conclusion that the present exercise is merely designed to offset the low level of repatriation (UNHCR sources, August 2009).

Yet rather than directly addressing these declining standards of protection, the majority of international policy interventions and research into protracted displacement has focused instead on the question of ‘solutions’. As Chatty and Mansour note, international

interventions in cases of protracted displacement are shaped ‘with the aim of brokering return’ (Chatty and Mansour 2011: 4).

However the research findings from this project suggest that in fact, there is an urgent need to focus on securing adequate protection *during* displacement. Asylum – accessed through fair and speedy refugee status determination processes – can provide an adequate quality of life *pending* a final resolution. This removes the urgency of rushing towards solutions – predominately return – that may be premature and ill-conceived. Furthermore, for those refugees and IDPs for whom mass repatriation is evidently not an available option at present, such as Somalis and Iraqis, improving the quality of asylum and ensuring access to formal mechanisms of protection would have a far greater and more immediate impact on the lives of the displaced. While this suggestion is not entirely new – UNHCR has tried to promote ‘self-sufficiency pending return’ in protracted settings – it is important that other policy actors also recognize the need to protect the quality of asylum, particularly in cases of protracted displacement.

Linking PRS to the declining quality of asylum protection available is also important because it underlines the fact that the quality of solutions often rests on the quality of asylum. In the case of registered Guatemalan refugees, for example, the quality of asylum provided (particularly after 1985) was generally very good. Mexican NGOs provided considerable resources to support education and training; it was during their stay in the camps that many of the refugees learnt to speak Spanish, to read and write, and to use and understand the language of human rights (Bradley 2011; author’s fieldwork Guatemala 2007). In other words, exile acted as a protected and transformative space, enabling the refugee communities to develop their capacities to engage as political citizens. This process provided the framework for the refugees’ eventual repatriation or local integration.

The declining quality of asylum itself thus provides one reason why solutions have often proved elusive in cases of protracted displacement. This is most obvious in the case of local integration. Encampment policies and restricted access to labour markets such as those currently followed in Kenya, Syria and Lebanon obviously reduce opportunities for the displaced to move towards *de facto* local integration. They also reflect serious opposition to any prospect of *de jure* integration, either as permanent residents or citizens. The reasons for this are often connected to concerns over national security and cohesion. In the case of Iraqi refugees, the lack of any prospective resolution to the 60-year old Palestinian refugee crisis looms over any discussion of Iraqi integration: in Kenya, long-running fears regarding the irredentist ambitions of Kenya’s own Somali minority dovetail with anxieties regarding the spread of Al-Shabaab radicalism. Nevertheless, there are very few examples of host states being prepared to consider mass local integration of the displaced.

One notable exception to this is the recent 2007 Tanzanian initiative to naturalize 162,000 ‘old’ Burundian refugees (the original caseload fled Burundi in 1972, but in 2008 85 per cent of the registered group had actually been born in Tanzania) (Fielden 2008). This initiative was greeted with universal praise from both NGOs and international donors,

yet in the past year serious concerns have emerged. This programme of ‘local integration’ has been premised upon the obligatory relocation of the refugees away from the Western settlements in which they had been self-sufficient since 1985, at a proposed cost of US\$106 million (United Nations 2010). Not only does this raise serious questions about the nature of ‘durable solutions’ – is naturalization a viable solution if it is conditional upon forced internal relocation? – but at time of writing (August 2011) only 800 Burundians had actually received their Tanzanian naturalization certificates (UNHCR sources, August 2011).

More generally, local integration has often been conditional upon the majority of refugees first repatriating, again underlining the ‘return bias’ inherent in approaches to protracted displacement. In West Africa, residual Liberian and Sierra Leonean populations have been able to integrate locally as ECOWAS citizens (see below), but this programme has been closely tied to larger repatriation movements. Similarly, as Bradley points out, Mexico did not formally decide that it would be willing to offer Guatemalan citizens a pathway to permanent residency and citizenship until 1996, over three years after mass repatriations had begun (Bradley 2011). Similar provisions were put in place in Costa Rica, although contemporary researchers suggested at the time that the Costa Rican economy was heavily dependent on Nicaraguan labour and many were actually reluctant to see mass repatriation (Wiley 1995).

Explaining the failure of repatriation programmes is also closely tied to the lack of asylum protection. Too often, repatriation efforts have been premature, precipitated by a desire to remove refugee populations from host states and to point to a visible sign of a ‘resolved’ crisis moving into a post-conflict phase. States of origin may also be keen to encourage early return, either for domestic political purposes or to shift donor attention from asylum countries to the country of origin. This has resulted in significant numbers of ‘ricochet’ returnees, who move back into exile, or become internally displaced. Assessments of early Afghan repatriation efforts fit this model (e.g. Turton and Marsden 2002). A more recent development has been the close association of repatriation efforts with imminent declaration of the cessation of refugee status. While the declaration of cessation has itself proved seriously controversial, particularly in the case of Rwanda (see e.g. Muramira 2010), the case of Angola – where most experts agree that refugee status *per se* is no longer a necessary protection – illustrates that poor planning for reintegration, and a failure to account for those refugees who, in experiencing protracted displacement, have actually built up significant links with their host communities, are also serious obstacles to sustainable and successful ‘solutions’ when ‘solutions’ are understood not just in terms of physical movement but as political processes of re-engagement with state structures and national communities (UNHCR Sources July 2011).

However, it is also important to note that in the cases of Iraq and Somalia, the more serious obstacle to the use of traditional repatriation programmes as solutions is that permanent return is simply not a viable option for many of the displaced. As discussed earlier, in both cases the protractedness of displacement is closely linked to continuing crises of governance within regions of origin, which are resulting in new refugee and

IDP flows joining those already in exile. In the case of Iraq, while UNHCR has facilitated returns to some areas, it does not advise or support any minority returns to Iraq because of the continuing risks such groups face.

If the failure of repatriation is closely linked to the quality of return, the failure of resettlement must be understood at least in part as a failure of quantity. This marginalization of resettlement – a solution from which globally only one per cent of refugees will benefit, and only one in ten of those refugees who are formally identified by UNHCR as in need of resettlement – is arguably a consequence of the same political trend towards nationalizing domestic political space by narrowing the scope for migration. Although the recent mass resettlement of Bhutanese from Nepal is an exception in terms of the numbers involved, in most protracted displacements resettlement will not provide a ‘solution’ for more than a small percentage of the displaced, particularly as it is a solution only available to refugees and not to IDPs.

Since 2003, UNHCR and resettlement states have invested considerable political capital in ‘the strategic use of resettlement’; one intended benefit was the hope that if caseloads for resettlement were carefully selected, this could help ‘unlock’ other solutions for more refugees (UNHCR 2009b). Yet there is no consensus on whether strategic use of resettlement has resulted in any significant breakthrough in securing durable solutions. The research findings from this project, however, suggest that ultimately, quality of resettlement is not enough. Numbers matter too.

Policy implications

There is an urgent need to focus on securing an adequate quality of asylum as a means of responding to protracted displacement, and not just on ‘solutions’.

It is clear that the three ‘traditional’ solutions are not capable of resolving contemporary cases of protracted displacement, in part because of the constrained political context in which they operate.

As a result of these failings and limitations, international actors should be prepared to consider radical new approaches to framing ‘durable’ solutions. In particular, there is an urgent need to move away from an excessive focus on repatriation as a permanent removal of refugee populations from host communities.

Donor states should be extremely careful to understand the broader context of ‘post-conflict’ settings before moving to promote return as a preferred – or even a possible – solution.

Migration and movement

It is absolutely clear that in all three of the case studies selected for this research project, migration is a crucial component of populations' responses to their protracted displacement. In Central America, Iraq and Somalia, all displaced groups have made widespread use of movement in many forms – including permanent, seasonal and circular migration at a transnational, regional and local level. This migration is more than simply flight – though it is equally important to recognize that the very act of moving away from a place of persecution, even when such flight is forced, underlines how human mobility is a crucial component in accessing adequate protection. However, in terms of unlocking protracted displacement crises, migration can perhaps be best described as the deliberate and strategic employment of movement to maximize access to rights, goods and opportunities.

Traditionally, the international community has categorized the initial movement of refugees and IDPs as 'forced', and subsequent movements, as well as the movements of those who are not subject to persecution or whose lives are not under direct violent threat, as 'voluntary'. In recent years, international agencies – particularly the International Organization for Migration – have invested considerable energy in efforts to 'manage' the phenomena of 'mixed' migration, as well as the onward movement of refugees (see e.g. IOM 2008). However, the findings from these case studies suggest that these approaches, which seek to separate out legitimate 'forced' movements from illegitimate 'voluntary' migrations, are misguided.

It is evident that, particularly in cases of protracted displacement where the quality of asylum on offer is minimal and access to formal protection limited, this distinction between 'forced' and 'voluntary' secondary movement is unhelpful. As both Lindley and Haslie's and Chatty and Mansour's studies document, movement after flight often has complex motivations, which may include a desire to escape the oppressive conditions of displacement in the place of first asylum as well as hope that a place of migration may offer new opportunities, or diffuse the risks faced by a family or kin group during their collective displacement. As a result of restrictions on the movements of the displaced, the vast majority of such movements – particularly in the Somali and Central American case studies – take place irregularly and involve undocumented migration. In Lebanon and Jordan, a large number of Iraqis have suffered from restrictive legal frameworks designed to prevent access to skilled labour markets, resulting in a growing number of undocumented Iraqis with at best precarious legal status. Secondary destinations may at once offer great opportunity but – particularly when movement is officially prohibited and therefore takes place irregularly – such migration may also offer only a 'least worst' option. The fact that so many refugee and IDP movements involve migration to urban areas in developing states adds to the difficult challenges faced by international actors seeking to provide goods and services to a displaced population who are often intent on not being identified by global actors, or labelled as 'refugees' (Chatty and Mansour 2011: 15). Lindley and Haslie capture this mix of grim deprivation and possible opportunity when writing about Eastleigh, Nairobi – a place of secondary migration for many displaced Somali people – as 'a place of deprivation, failing infrastructure and frequent crime, as well as vibrant informal trade and impressive entrepreneurial wealth' (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 25).

In the post-Cold War period, strategies to combat protracted displacements have focused almost exclusively on ending mass refugee crises through repatriation, rather than facilitating continued refugee movement.⁸ Yet in the past decade, a growing research output has critiqued this ‘sedentary bias’ in international approaches to solving displacement (Bakewell 2008). This work has demonstrated that refugees’ and IDPs’ strategic use of migration is not only an empirical reality and a rational response to the livelihood challenges faced by such groups, but may also strengthen wider peace-building and development processes, helping to break through the political impasses, or crises of citizenship, that underlie protracted displacement.

Research by Alessandro Monsutti has shown that Afghan transnational regional migration to Pakistan and Iran is an important structural component of the Afghan economy that pre-dates the modern cycles of conflict in the area, but which has become still more fundamental to Afghan livelihood strategies as a result of compounded and protracted displacements. His work estimates that remittances may have been twice as effective as international aid in reaching local populations, underlining the potential contribution that migration may make in addressing deeper developmental and peace-building questions (Monsutti 2006, 2008). A recent UNDP study, led by Laura Hammond, has similarly underlined the significant role that transnational Somali movement may play in securing economic and political development within Somalia (Hammond *et al.* 2011).

In West Africa, self-settled Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees also adapted to fit into well-established intra-regional West African migration patterns during their displacement, and since the end of conflict have combined continued work abroad as West African or ECOWAS citizens with renewed citizenship links with Liberia and Sierra Leone (Adepoju *et al.* 2007). Migration has played a part in facilitating South Sudanese development, both during exile and as part of repatriation processes (Kaiser 2010, Hovil 2010a, Jansen 2011). The work of Geraldine Chatelard has similarly demonstrated the importance of understanding protracted Iraqi displacement after 2003 in the context of broader cultural and economic migration patterns (Chatelard 2010a). The case studies that form part of this joint project add to this body of work attesting to the importance of both recognizing and responding to refugee migration in protracted crises.

However, as the joint case studies also make very clear, recognizing the significance of mobility must be accompanied by a parallel acknowledgement that to date the international community has been extremely resistant to supporting the migration of the displaced. States have even actively obstructed such continued movements, implementing restrictive visa policies and labour market tests intended to appease domestic interests in limiting migration. This has increased the protection risks faced by those displaced who choose to migrate or work outside of formal structures, placing them at risk of employer abuse, official corruption and potential deportation as illegal migrants or visa overstayers (see e.g. Chatty and Mansour 2011). In the case of the Iraqi displaced, even those who do manage to obtain legal residence permits struggle to access labour markets legally. Somali movements to Yemen, Southern Africa and Europe involve considerable risks – including death.

These policies place clear limits on the extent to which refugee-directed mobility can offer a viable means of ‘unlocking’ protracted refugee crises. On the one hand, there is growing recognition – including from UNHCR – that facilitating the mobility of the displaced is often a crucial component of securing a ‘good life’ for the displaced, both during exile and as part of a solution. States emerging from conflict may often be willing to offer citizenship to their displaced in theory or on paper, but are not yet able to provide equal – or even adequate – access to socio-economic goods such as education or employment. Allowing the displaced to ‘split’ their residency and their *de jure* citizenship between a host community and their community or state of origin arguably makes eventual return more rather than less likely, because such a return can take place gradually, and represents a *choice* rather than a requirement. Cross-border migration also better reflects many cultural norms and economic structures that long pre-date modern conflict. The case of South Sudan offers a timely example of how migration is crucial to building peace in such settings (Hovil 2010a, Long 2010b).

However, on the other hand, policy interventions which are designed to heavily restrict such movements mean that the displaced must resort to clandestine and irregular forms of movement, leaving them exposed to new risks and without meaningful protection from either host state or the international community. The ability of such policies to achieve even their intended aims is dubious – Iran, for example, deported over 600,000 Afghans in 2007–2008 as irregular workers, but it is estimated that a considerable number simply returned, judging the risk of additional deportation to be an acceptable price for access (albeit irregular) to Iran’s labour market (IOM/UNHCR). As Bradley reminds us in relation to the Central American NUPI case study:

The clandestine war-time migration of Guatemalans and Salvadorans to North America should not be mistaken for the secure enjoyment of free movement... for mobility to support dignified, rights-based solutions to displacement, migrants require formal recognition and access to protection mechanisms. The widespread exploitation of undocumented migrants makes it clear that bringing ‘bottom-up’ solutions above board is essential to ensuring that this practice supports the sustainable resolution of protracted displacement (Bradley 2011: 34).

Building a framework for regularized, safe and voluntary migration and movement of the displaced after their initial flight is clearly integral to any unlocking of protracted displacement. It is certainly important not to lose sight of the need to enhance the quality of asylum *in situ*, and it is undoubtedly true that some secondary movement would stop should conditions in camps such as Kakuma and Dadaab improve significantly (see Horst 2007). Yet the international community needs to recognize the value that mobile strategies may have beyond a compensation for the failures of classic ‘asylum’ models. Mobility functions not only as a mechanism for rights-accumulation for the individual displaced, but as a broader structural support to peace-building and development processes. This requires a radical rethinking of international attitudes to the movement of the displaced, so that unlocking protracted displacement is not associated with stopping movement, but with facilitating the access of the displaced to rights.

In practical terms, there are fairly obvious initiatives that could be promoted to encourage a liberalization of migration regimes for the displaced. Regional states should be encouraged to open up borders and labour markets to the displaced: in particular, initiatives should be encouraged to facilitate repeated cross-border movements between host and origin communities, so that those who return are not trapped in a new crisis of ‘involuntary immobility’. It is clear that the complex visa regimes regulating Iraqi flows to Jordan and Lebanon, for instance, have resulted in additional stress being placed on Iraqi refugees in their search to secure sustainable livelihoods. In the long term, considerable efforts should be directed towards opening up regional migration opportunities not only for the displaced, but for regional citizens more generally, building on models such ECOWAS and the emerging East African Community (EAC) (see below).

Understanding the continued movement of the displaced between host and integration states may also provide an acceptable form of legally recognizing *de facto* integration, based on citizenship in a country of origin that is emerging from conflict and a residency/work permit in the host country (though it is important to recognize this should not be a substitute for full refugee protection if this is still needed, or for full naturalization for those refugees, especially second and third generation, who have no meaningful tie to their nominal country of origin). The international community should redouble its interests in facilitating and supporting the flows of remittance money generated by members of displaced communities. More directly, developed states could contribute – both in concrete and symbolic terms – to the opportunities for migration available to the displaced by reforming their own migration systems to allow refugees to move more easily as ‘migrants’ rather than through formal channels of refugee resettlement. Sweden is one state which has begun to investigate how such an initiative might work in practice (UNHCR interviews January 2011).

Above all, such a shift in policy requires a similar shift in conceptual understandings of displacement. As Chatty and Mansour (2011) note, ‘Iraqis themselves do not regard themselves as “refugees”’. Lindley and Haslie (2011) also point out that the blanket use of terms such as ‘refugee’ to describe Somalis in Kenya does not necessarily reflect individuals’ own understandings of their identity, particularly those with established economic and social networks. International actors – both states and NGOs – continue to insist that ‘refugees are not migrants’ (Feller 2005). Yet as this project’s case studies make very clear, many refugees are – or become – migrants, and the unlocking of many protracted crises will depend on the recognition of that fact and a shift to facilitating and supporting – rather than preventing – these movements.

Clearly, migration alone cannot offer both *de jure* and *de facto* citizenship, and so on its own, without parallel access to membership of a political community, migration can not be considered a ‘fourth solution’ (and in fact, UNHCR abandoned the use of this term in 2010). However, meaningful citizenship is not necessarily sedentary. What needs to occur to ‘solve’ a protracted displacement is not necessarily an end to movement, but rather an end to forced movements that offer only partial or inadequate protections. Migration –

or human mobility – provides one means of facilitating access to such protection while simultaneously reaffirming displaced populations' own autonomy.

It should be acknowledged that these 'migration as a solution' debates have tended to occupy those agencies and researchers focusing on refugee 'solutions' rather than the internally displaced. In part this is because unlike international migration, intra-state freedom of movement is a recognized human right, although many states do not respect this right in practice. Policy interventions are thus less often directly intended to prevent the movement of the internally displaced, and more often focused on securing their access to their community of origin. Yet it is clear that the distinction between IDPs and other poverty-stricken migrants can blur, particularly in cases where 'classic' IDP movements (i.e. violent or persecutory displacement) converges with other primarily economic rural to urban movement, as in Columbia or Malaysia. Alex de Waal, for instance, has suggested that the Darfur IDP crisis may be partly a reflection of traumatic urbanization processes (de Waal 2009). Such an analysis might also fit with aspects of the Central American IDP crises of the 1980s, where internal displacement echoed a clear intersection between underdevelopment, poverty and landlessness that also prompted mass urbanization during this period (see e.g. Smith 1990).

All this prompts the question: in states where few citizens can seriously claim to have adequate access to a full complement of socio-economic rights, where does displacement end and migration begin? The answer perhaps lies in directing IDP 'solutions' towards development-centred rather than movement-centred programmes that ensure IDPs are not forced to move, but are *free* to move, while avoiding plans for large-scale returns of protracted IDP populations from urban areas. More effective support is likely to be provided in ensuring adequate levels of urban planning and development.

A more serious challenge to internal migration may result from the 'Balkanization' or fracturing of states placed under prolonged stress or suffering a sever crisis of governance. In both Iraq and Somalia, state structures are fragile, and regional or federal systems of governance may command more loyalty and govern more efficiently – this is most evident in the case of self-declared independent Somaliland and autonomous Puntland, both viewed by the international community as component parts of the Somali state. As detailed by Lindley and Haslie, IDPs have recently been 'deported' from Puntland to south-central Somalia (2011: 21). Thus, while the construction of new 'national' communities may strengthen governance in one region, such new citizenships may also create new obstacles to migration, movement and the securing of viable rights, as internal migration is reframed and subjected to new bureaucracies of exclusion.

Policy implications

The mobility of the displaced must be recognized by the international community as playing a key role in securing the rights of the displaced and policy must shift away from a traditional 'sedentary bias' in approaches to solving protracted crises. Although migration

is not a solution in itself, it is an important means of connecting and facilitating the access of the displaced to meaningful citizenship.

Migration and mobility are potentially of benefit not only for individual refugees (who gain access not only to secure livelihoods but also to opportunities and are able to exercise their own agency), but also to broader political aims connected to peace-building and development agendas.

The international community should accept that refugees may choose to be migrants too, both during and after a ‘displacement’.

International actors should encourage regional states to liberalize migration regimes, particularly in post-conflict settings where migration may help to foster recovery in communities of origin. Developed states should also be encouraged to open up regular migration routes for refugees and ‘repatriates’ beyond resettlement.

All actors should seek to ensure that IDPs are not forced to move, but that they are equally free to move through their country of citizenship. Support programmes should recognize that internal displacement may often occur alongside other forms of development-induced migration, and tailor programmes to reflect the likely permanence of rural–urban flows.

The politics of resettlement

Current resettlement practices cannot hope to ‘unlock’ protracted displacements. First, formal international resettlement is a solution that is usually only available to recognized refugees – whose displacement is an acknowledged international *political* problem – and not to IDPs or, as Bradley reminds us, to the large numbers of non-registered displaced who instead choose to engage in irregular or undocumented movements (Bradley 2011). This means that classic approaches to resettlement start from a narrow base.

Second, the numbers involved in resettlement programmes are tiny. Particularly in cases where protracted displacement is accompanied by further iterations of crisis and influx, rather than simple stagnation, refugee resettlement cannot even keep pace with numbers of new arrivals. As Lindley and Haslie report in their case study, Somali resettlement is seen as ‘having little strategic value. We resettle some 8,000 people per year, and Dadaab is receiving some 9,000 new refugees per month. It does not create space’ (UNHCR official, Lindley and Haslie 2011: 39).⁹ Although resettlement has played a more significant role in the Iraqi case – some 23,000 refugees were resettled from Iraq in 2009 – the numbers still remain extremely small when compared with the total population facing protracted exile (Chatty and Mansour 2011: 9).

Similarly, while recent years have seen a major expansion in the number of refugee resettlement countries working with UNHCR, including non-traditional resettlement countries in Eastern Europe, South America and Asia, the numbers involved are at best symbolic and at worst a figleaf obscuring serious questions about some states’ own first-asylum refugee status determination processes. Japan – the only Asian country to offer resettlement to date – has agreed to take just 90 refugees from Myanmar over three years from 2010–2012. Romania has offered to resettle up to 40 Burmese a year (from 2010), and serious concerns have been raised about the integration experiences of these groups (UNHCR 2010a, 2010b; UNHCR Sources June 2011).

These problems stem in part from the fact that although resettlement is projected as a humanitarian response, meeting the needs of refugees who cannot be protected in states of first asylum, these case studies show that it is in fact an intensely politicized process. Resettlement is a political tool used by states to meet political aims.¹⁰ The result is a process which rests on an illusion of equity, belied by a reality in which refugees’ resettlement prospects are measured not only in terms of their protection needs, but also in terms of their ‘potential for integration’ and political affiliations. Germany and France, for example, have focused on resettling only Christian Iraqis. Resettlement policies of several states also exclude former Ba’ath party members from Iraqi resettlement programmes, a blanket prohibition which does not account for the fact that middle-class professionals were required to join the Ba’ath party in order to find employment under the Hussein regime (Chatty and Mansour 2011: 22).

Similarly, Somali resettlement has focused on the movement of minority Somali Bantu from Kenya, while other Somali groups are often viewed as ‘difficult’ resettlement cases, in part because of domestic concerns in resettlement states about the integration of Islamic

migrants. A further question surrounds the extent to which eligibility for resettlement should be based on length of exile. Somali resettlement is currently focused on those refugees who left in 1991–1992 and have consequently been in Kenya for two decades. On the one hand, this may represent a ‘just’ approach in allocating sought-after resettlement places to those who have been displaced for longest. Yet on the other hand, these may include individuals best placed to benefit from local integration, given their long residence in Kenya (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 37).

One important exception to the generally limited role played by resettlement in resolving protracted displacement is the mass resettlement of Bhutanese – primarily to the United States – from protracted displacement in Nepal. A mass resettlement programme for these effectively stateless Bhutanese began in November 2007, and by August 2011 50,000 Bhutanese – from a total population of around 110,000 – had been resettled in the US, with others being resettled to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK. The vast majority of the remaining populations in camps are also expected to be resettled. Yet this programme also reflects political calculation. As Christer Lænholm pointed out in 2007, ‘cynics have pointed to the desire of the Bush Administration to be seen to fulfil their refugee resettlement quota by absorbing a group of politically unthreatening refugees’ (Laenholm 2007: 59). Furthermore, the pursuit of resettlement in the Bhutanese case has arguably rendered repatriation – the preferred solution for many of the Bhutanese displaced – practically impossible (IRIN 2010). The success of resettlement has effectively ratified the Bhutanese Nepalis’ expulsion from their country of origin, confirming Bhutanese policies of ethnic cleansing.

This case of the Bhutanese is an important counter-example to the prevalent belief among many NGO, UN and state officials involved in resettlement processes that nearly all refugees in protracted crises will ‘hold out’ for resettlement because it offers the chance of regularized migration to the developed world. This is not always true: the reluctance of many Iraqi refugees to consider resettlement to the US for political reasons – by far the largest resettlement destination for refugees globally – also underlines the need to avoid thinking of all Western resettlement states as ‘equal’ destinations in the eyes of refugees. Refugee responses to resettlement opportunities are also highly political.

Nevertheless, it is true that many long-term refugees do see resettlement as the ideal, for economic and social reasons as much as because of protection needs. As a result, there is deep suspicion of refugees’ motivations in pursuing resettlement. It is certainly true that many refugees do view resettlement as the ultimate ‘solution’ because it offers the opportunity for economic gain as well as protection, and have developed their own strategic methods to maximize access to official resettlement channels, as detailed in Lindley and Haslie’s paper (Lindley and Haslie 2011; see also Jansen 2011). This has obstructed the resolution of some protracted crises: in the case of Liberian refugees in Ghana, for example, protests that erupted in 2008 were in part a response to the scaling back of resettlement programmes. As Lindley and Haslie explore, on the one hand even the distant prospect of resettlement can offer hope to refugees otherwise trapped in limbo,

particularly given the lack of any *de jure* integration opportunities. Yet on the other hand, as the Liberian case shows, clinging to resettlement may prevent other local solutions where these are available.

The politics of refugee resettlement are, to a great degree, closely connected to its *de facto* role as a migration channel, albeit one reserved for refugees and supposedly premised upon humanitarian protraction needs rather than socio-economic interest. Just as states seek to find refugees with ‘potential to integrate’, many refugees clearly view resettlement as a means of migration, particularly given the limited numbers able to move through other regular migration channels. It is interesting to note Moret’s finding that some 40 per cent of urban Somali refugees expected to move onwards, but the vast majority do so as migrants – documented or undocumented (Moret in Lindley and Haslie 2011: 37). Very few move using Convention Travel Documents (UNHCR in *ibid.*). Yet while traditionally the international community has moved to prevent such abuse of resettlement channels, it must be acknowledged that in the absence of alternative regular migration channels, resettlement may play a very positive role precisely because of the economic and social advantages it confers. Transnational remittances and diaspora participation in home-country politics, as well as the security of dual citizenship, may play an important role in limiting the impact of displacement for those who remain in a place of first displacement, and also contribute to peace-building efforts and the eventual sustainability of repatriation.

Given the political realities shaping resettlement, how can resettlement policies be better tailored to match the needs of the displaced and unlock protracted crises? To some extent the answer is obvious. If resettlement is to function adequately as a means of securing protection for those unable to find this in a country of first asylum, there is clearly a simultaneous need both for more resettlement spaces and more opportunities for refugees to move as migrants, as discussed above. More resettlement spaces would have an obvious impact on the quantity of resettlement: expanding migration opportunities might help to ensure that resettlement continued to be viewed as a primary form of protection, while simultaneously recognizing the value and importance of migration in responding to protected displacement crises. Yet the politics of resettlement – so closely connected to the politics of migration – make this unlikely, particularly in the case of ‘difficult’ groups such as Somalis or Afghans.

There is, however a clear need to revisit the ‘strategic use of resettlement’ and consider what benefits it has brought in protracted displacement crises. Only 10 per cent of those refugees identified as in need of resettlement by UNHCR actually resettle: many of those who enter such programmes face long and uncertain waits (see Chatty and Mansour 2011: 26). Western states, UNHCR and many NGOs have arguably been too quick to praise the generosity of resettlement states, when in fact many states make only nominal contributions and the US resettles the vast majority of refugees. A policy of horizontal expansion is premised on the value of resettlement to global burden-sharing

commitments, but such expansion has had a relatively limited impact on the quantity of resettlement available, and may even have reduced the quality of such protection.

Furthermore, the Bhutanese example warns of the potential dangers in imposing any solution to the exclusion of other alternatives, whether it be repatriation or resettlement. This speaks to the value of a ‘comprehensive’ approach, in which protracted displacement is not unlocked by the collective application of group solutions, but by creating the political conditions in which the displaced can pursue *their* chosen route to citizenship, be that through resettlement, repatriation or local integration (facilitated or not by migration or continued movement) as appropriate.

Policy implications

Current resettlement programmes do not meet UNHCR-identified needs (let alone refugee demand) for resettlement. Both states and refugees use resettlement for purposes other than securing refugees’ primary protection. This is in part because of the lack of other migration alternatives available for refugees, but also because states’ approaches to resettlement are often highly politicized.

The concept of the ‘strategic use of resettlement’ should be reviewed.¹¹ To date, its impact in unlocking protracted displacements is unclear and a focus on horizontal expansion of resettlement as a symbolic ‘burden-sharing’ tool has arguably obscured the need to focus on expanding the overall quantity of resettlement places available to refugees globally.

States should move to accept refugees for resettlement on the basis of protection needs alone, while at the same time exploring opportunities to open up other regular migration routes to suitably qualified refugee candidates. UNHCR should seek to expand opportunities for recognized refugees to travel and seek work using Convention travel documents.

Resettlement should be pursued as part of a ‘comprehensive solutions’ package, to ensure that in rare cases where resettlement is offered to significant numbers, it does not act to *de facto* confirm ethnic cleaning or denaturalization in a country of origin.

***De facto* integration**

The two contemporary case studies forming part of this research project both emphasize the almost total resistance by refugee hosting states to providing *de jure* integration opportunities for Somali and Iraqi refugees. Conversely, in the case of IDPs, the displaced usually already hold *de jure* citizenship: their protracted exile is a result of high-quality citizenship being inaccessible in practice. In both cases, it is opportunities for *de facto* integration which are arguably more central to improving both the conditions of displacement and the prospects for an ultimate solution to their political marginalization.

To focus on *de facto* integration opportunities is not to deny the importance of formal legal status in facilitating local integration. If protracted displacement reflects a prolonged crisis of citizenship, any solution must involve a reforming of citizenship. All three case studies stress the risks that precarious legal status may involve for the displaced, including those who leave camp settings to establish residency outside formal protection spaces, often in urban centres. A lack of legal status prevents access to local labour markets, prevents the displaced setting up businesses or accessing education or health services. In Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, ‘distrust and marginality’ have become strategies of Iraqi survival because of official resistance to Iraqi integration. Yet it is clear that in both the Somali and Iraqi cases, full *de jure* integration is so unlikely as to be impossible in current political circumstances (Chatty and Mansour 2011: 15).

Yet if *de jure* integration is politically impossible, it is equally clear that in both cases *de facto* integration is inevitable. It would therefore ‘be advisable for government actors to acknowledge this reality and formulate proactive policy responses in relation to it’ (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 42). The challenge for the international community is to consider how best to maximize the benefits gained from such practical integration, and minimize the risks that a lack of accompanying *de jure* status involves. The findings from the case studies in this project indicate that this should arguably involve rethinking approaches to integration to better reflect the dynamics of interactions between the displaced and the host community.

First, a more flexible approach to integration should be explored that might open up pathways to ‘cumulative’ citizenship. As Lindley and Haslie remark, ‘offering citizenship to a large number of Somali refugees is politically unfeasible in the current climate but the choice is too often presented as an all-or-nothing one. Options for piecemeal or gradual approaches to integration – identifying subgroups or progressive pathways to fuller legal status contingent on the fulfilment of particular conditions – remain largely unexplored’ (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 31). Disaggregating groups within wider protracted displacement crises and identifying those best placed to integrate may help to reduce host states’ unwillingness to consider later processes of naturalization.

This observation in fact reflects existing use of integration with residual refugee populations, where states have been encouraged to offer local integration to remaining refugees (often by default those with strong ties to their host community) after large-scale repatriation programmes have ended. This occurred in some West African states with

Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees. The international community should undoubtedly redouble its efforts to persuade host states to accommodate all residual refugee populations through local integration, particularly as part of cessation processes.

Some observers, for instance, have expressed serious concerns that preparations for the invocation of an Angolan cessation clause on 31 December 2011 have been accompanied by preparations for large-scale repatriation, but no state has yet formally agreed to offer local integration to the residual population. Particularly for second and third generation refugees who are self-settled in a host community, *de facto* integration is already a given, and so their prospects for a successful return to their ‘home’ state – particularly in cases where there are language barriers – are poor. Although ExCom Conclusion No. 69 urges states to offer such individuals legal status to reflect these accumulated rights, UNHCR has no power to compel them to do so (UNHCR 2005: Conclusion No. 69).

Concentrating on obstacles to *de facto* integration, however, is also likely to encounter significant opposition. In protracted rather than emergency settings, compulsory encampment serves to deliberately remove the displaced from the local economy, preventing *de facto* integration. Such groups often remain dependent on aid, effectively becoming the long-term dependents of ‘humanitarian’ donors. Restrictions on work may render economic self-sufficiency impossible, so that – as Chatty and Mansour demonstrate – Iraqi refugees who initially were able to rely on their own financial capital become newly dependent on humanitarian aid as their exile becomes protracted (Chatty and Mansour 2011).

Removing obstacles to labour markets and restrictions on movement would help to facilitate interaction – and through interaction foster prospects for integration – between displaced and host communities. Another option, particularly where camps are sizeable, is to move towards the more autonomous administration of refugee camps ‘as cities’, improving conditions in exile and potentially contributing to the prospects for sustainable repatriation by allowing refugees to develop administrative, professional and political skills that would be invaluable in post-conflict recovery processes (Lindley and Haslie 2011).

A further question the international community needs to address – and arguably to nuance in accordance with the specific cultural contexts of particular protracted displacements – is what meanings, or end goal, are actually attached by refugees themselves to understandings of ‘integration’. Lindley and Haslie, for instance, point out the complex interaction between local resistance to Somali integration and the desire of many displaced Somalis to maintain a separate identity, and comment that the English word ‘integration’ is usually translated into Somali as *isdaaxgaal* – or ‘coexistence’ (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 25). Yet toleration – rather than integration – may also increase the risk of xenophobia and host community resentments. The eruption of xenophobic violence in South Africa in 2008, for example, was in part blamed on the failure of successful Somali businessmen to integrate into local communities (ACMS 2011).

One important dimension in encouraging *de facto* integration is a move away from categorizing groups as ‘displaced’ or ‘hosts’ and instead focusing on community-level engagements. The Syrian and Jordanian governments have insisted that “parallel systems” (for refugees) should not be created and the services should be available for poor citizens as well’ (Chatty and Mansour 2011: 14). Lindley and Haslie suggest that a development-led approach to integration may be particularly appropriate for addressing the protracted displacement of IDPs in Somalia and Puntland as part of responses to urban poverty, ‘embracing displaced people as part of much wider initiatives for economic improvement’. This approach demands a greater understanding and appreciation of the macro-economic benefits that protracted displacement – internal or external – may bring to regional economies. Camps for the displaced are often located in otherwise marginalized regions of host states: Dadaab has been estimated to bring benefits of around US\$14 million annually to Kenya’s North-Eastern frontier province (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 41, 35). This understanding of the stimulus displacement can provide to development should help to encourage comprehensive long-term development approaches which include – but are not centred on – refugee–host relations (see Lindley and Haslie 2011: 36).

The Guatemalan experience of displacement in Mexico offers many lessons as to how programmes aimed initially at ensuring the displaced population’s self-sufficiency can help to encourage *de facto* integration and ultimately pave the way for formal naturalization. Although Mexico only formally offered opportunities for naturalization in 1996 (and 1998 in the case of refugees settled in the Chiapas region), decade-long programmes had established the refugee population’s self-sufficiency, in particular through ensuring ready access to land. Around one-third of the Guatemalan refugees in Mexico eventually chose to naturalize (with one-third repatriating and one-third holding Mexican citizenship by right of birth on Mexican soil) (Bradley 2011). The Mexican example offers some key clues about what conditions help to foster prospects for integration: linguistic and cultural affinity between host and displaced communities, including pre-existing kinship ties; open camps where training and support provided were high; ample access to otherwise unused land and a rapidly expanding local economy; a *jus soli* citizenship provision that removed the difficult question of how to address the rights of second-generation refugees born in exile (Bradley 2011).

These indicators suggest that the best foundations for successful *de jure* integration is *de facto* integration building on existing cultural affinities and sensitively supported through community-based development projects. However, the most notable case of recent protracted displacement being ‘solved’ through integration has arguably adopted the opposite approach. UNHCR, donors and NGOs have all been fulsome in their praise for Tanzania’s 2008 decision to naturalize 162,000 Burundians from the 1972 caseload (see e.g. BBC News 2010). Yet naturalization has arguably come at the expense of local integration, with the refugees being required to relocate to new areas of Tanzania before they receive their citizenship certificates.

Despite significant development initiatives being planned for areas hosting these newly nationalized Tanzanians (NNTs), the process has stalled amid reports of the ex-refugees' reluctance to relocate, host communities' hostility to their arrival and the domestic politics of the Tanzanian 2010 General Election. Given that the 1972 caseload were *de facto* integrated, had not received material assistance from the international community since 1985 and produced a small surplus of cash crops, it is important to question whether this process of naturalization has really served to 'unlock' protracted displacement, rather than initiate a new cycle of forced relocation undermining an already achieved day-to-day integration and arguably compromising these NNTs' rights, as citizens, to establish their homes as they choose within Tanzanian territories (see e.g. Hovil 2010b). This underlines that a classic approach focusing on the legal formalities of citizenship, even when such an approach is viable, must be accompanied by a focus on the practical realities of integration.

The international community also need to consider how refugees themselves value and access formal markers of integration. As Lindley and Haslie note, some Somalis have been able to obtain Kenyan identity documents through informal channels, providing them with some measure of 'paper' citizenship. This has also been reported in the case of Eritreans in East Sudan, and of self-settled Angolans in Zambia (see e.g. Bakewell 2000; UNHCR sources). Such strategies are by definition clandestine, and rely upon remaining undetected or being unofficially tolerated. This makes international intervention problematic; but it again underlines the importance of legal identity in finding solutions. It also highlights the connections between securing *de facto* citizenship – an important dimension of refugee response to protracted displacement crises – and having some (albeit fraudulent) proof of a *de jure* right to remain.

Policy implications

In protracted displacement, some measure of integration is inevitable over time, particularly in regions where links between displaced and host groups (based on language, culture, religion or clan) predate conflict and flight. Policies should acknowledge and reflect the force of this accumulative process, rather than seeking to resist *de facto* integration.

International actors should focus on emphasizing the potential economic benefits created through processes of displacement, and 'unlock' displacement by focusing on broader development plans that include all citizens and residents within a region.

Local integration should not only be considered synonymous with naturalization. While *de jure* status is important, the securing of sustainable livelihoods and the building of a safe residence depend on *de facto* lived experiences of integration, which are influenced – but not always controlled – by formal integration procedures.

The international community should continue its efforts to encourage host communities to facilitate legal local integration by issuing residency and work permits. States should be encouraged to adopt a 'cumulative' approach to citizenship that better mirrors normal

migration practices, where migrants become eligible for permanent residency and eventual naturalization after a number of years.

International advocates should also encourage host states to adopt citizenship practices which provide for the possibility of automatic citizenship being granted to second generation refugees.

Any acquisition of *de jure* status should not undermine *de facto* integration that has already taken place. Citizenship must not be made contingent on forced dispossession or relocation.

Persecution, poverty and return

The international community continues to present return as the ideal solution to displacement. Yet as this research project's case studies show, in cases where protracted displacement emerges from chronic failures of governance that continue to prompt further displacement, return remains an idealized – but impossible to realize – ‘solution’. UNHCR does not currently facilitate or encourage minority returns to Iraq because of fears over safety. The escalating famine in the Horn of Africa and the lack of a functioning Somali state make the notion of widespread long-term returns to south-central Somalia impossible to support in present circumstances, with the few who do return being ‘politicians or wealthier people able to buy security, and the very poor unable to secure livelihoods or safety elsewhere’ (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 25). Refugees and IDPs are displaced precisely *because* of a lack of safety and protection in their communities of origin; until safety can be assured (at which point those affected are arguably no longer ‘displaced’ or in need of international protection), return cannot provide a ‘solution’ to displacement.

There is little doubt that a fixation – particularly by host states – on permanent return as the only viable solution to displacement has contributed to the political impasse that has created many protracted displacement crises, not just in Somalia and Iraq, but also in cases such as Afghanistan, the Balkans and the Rohingya in Bangladesh. In part, this is because host states – such as Pakistan in the case of Afghanistan or Bangladesh in the case of the Rohingya – have been insistent that return must be total and absolute, an approach which ignores the precarious conditions and lack of sustainable reintegration prospects in countries of origin, framing the problem in solely demographic terms. Kenya’s interest in promoting ‘Jubaland’ as a buffer zone area to which Somali refugees could be returned also echoes this fixation on physical return rather than addressing the crises of citizenship underlying displacement (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 29–30).

In fact, the case studies presented as part of this project echo other research papers in suggesting that what is needed above all is a reframing of repatriation as a much more sequential, piecemeal process that involves the gradual remaking of citizenship in a community of origin, with a number of preparatory trips made by a small number of family members, to establish residence and secure necessary resources, before other members (often women and children) return. Return also appears to be most effective when it can be combined with other strategies such as continued transnational relocation (see e.g. Hammond *et al.* 2011), or regional dual residence/citizenship (see Hovil 2010a). These strategies have broad benefits: a more secure return is likely to prove more sustainable, contributing to broader peace-building aims. For refugees themselves, such combined strategies also help to diffuse the risks involved in returning to a site of former persecution and violence.

The research findings from this project also suggest that an important question which the international community needs to consider – if its aim is to unlock protracted displacement crises – is the relationship between persecution, poverty and return. Although specific contexts vary, many protracted displacements can be characterized as generally involving large groups who have fled from conflict (sometimes resulting

in general insecurity, sometimes ethnically targeted or sectarian violence). Yet these groups are often reluctant to repatriate even in cases where conflict – the initial cause of general violence or targeted persecution – does end. In many cases this is because there is continued fear of persecution, or uncertainty about the strength of a peace agreement; but many fear poverty, not just persecution, on return. Return and reintegration processes must therefore be addressed in a development context.

As Bradley's account of Central American displacement shows, return processes which are not anchored in broader development and reintegration programmes designed to connect the displaced to economic resources are likely to result in continuing patterns of movement which, although not directly forced by persecution, are made necessary by poverty (Bradley 2011). This raises a broader question about the nature of 'protracted displacement' and international protection: if undocumented migration is a sign of an inability to secure a livelihood in a community, at what point does this represent a crisis of citizenship and a displacement? Clearly, governance has economic and not just political consequences, as shown by the massive outflow of Zimbabweans to South Africa in the past decade (see Betts 2010). If migration *must* continue in order to secure basic protections, can a protracted displacement be claimed to have been 'resolved', rather than just transformed and re-labelled as a form of irregular migration, more easily excluded from entry?

The interface between poverty, persecution and conflict is clearly complex, but such analyses suggest a need to rethink the basis on which claims for international protection are adjudicated, to reframe return as a gradual and diffused process, and to focus much more closely on development aspects of reintegration. The relief–development gap in return programmes has been well documented over the past decade (see e.g. Crisp 2001); but the gap remains, despite several initiatives intended to bridge the institutional chasm between humanitarian relief agencies and their developmental counterparts. Though forced migration organizations have often been quick to criticize development agencies for failing to account for displacement, it is equally clear that humanitarian agencies and donor states also need to avoid the tendency to focus on the 'emergency' phases of perpetual crises (which are often deemed by media agencies to be more newsworthy), or the physical processes of return, and instead focus on building up long-term governance foundations that can support economic transformation for *all* citizens and that do not make such processes contingent on permanent physical return.

Preparations for repatriation should also be seen as an integral part of exile. As Bradley explains, the Central American experience – for those who were able to or chose to access formal protection spaces – was often transformative, providing a basis for an eventual return as informed and engaged citizens, rather than marginalized peasants (Bradley 2011). Similarly, Lindley and Haslie suggest that encouraging self-administration in refugee camps and opening up training and experience for the displaced would help to build foundations for sustainable Somali return and governance, if and when security conditions allow (Lindley and Haslie 2011).

Recognizing exile as political, the displaced should also be encouraged to express their own agency in determining the timing, manner and content of return after protracted displacement. In objective terms, if conflict ends and a country of origin now becomes ‘safe’, a refugee may have very little choice but to accept the eventuality of repatriation (an IDP, as a citizen of the country in which they are displaced, should be able to *choose* to return to their community of origin, but must also have the right to choose to integrate into another community within their state). Yet encouraging refugees to plan for such a return and to set their own criteria for repatriation can still provide the displaced with considerable agency to shape the end of their protracted displacement. As Bradley’s depiction of Central American return shows, many of the gains that were made by the displaced were a result of the camp refugees’ ability to participate directly in negotiating conditions for their return (see Bradley 2011). Historically, the international community has tended to view repatriation as a process to be governed by tripartite agreements concluded between states and UNHCR, however, this reluctance to engage with refugees as political agents seriously compromises both the sustainability of many repatriations and commitment to the broader principle of respecting refugees as autonomous decision-making agents (see Long 2011).

Recent work by James Milner has similarly helped to establish why the displaced need to be brought into peace-building processes (Milner 2009). This work has highlighted that self-settlement and vocational training can help to build up key skills and strengthen peace-building processes. However, in practice those exiles who are directly engaged with as part of such peace talks have tended to be high-level elite refugees (as in the Iraqi, Afghan and Sudanese cases). These groups may have experiences of prolonged exile from their homeland, but have often not suffered protracted *displacement*, or dislocation from citizenship. They have instead accessed citizenship and rights in third countries during their exile. Likewise, the expansion of out of country voting (OCV) programmes to include refugees from the Balkans, Iraq, and Afghanistan in transitional elections should be welcomed, because it breaks the assumption that refugees must physically return in order to participate politically in their country of origin, and so provides political space to pursue more gradual formats for return. Yet such practices have also proven to be expensive, and excessively focused on the symbolic act of voting rather than facilitating broader democratic inclusion (see e.g. Long 2010a).

Policy implications

Return has an important role to play in resolving crises of displacement, and in facilitating processes of reconciliation and justice. It remains the only solution which is recognized in international law as a right.

However, protracted displacement crises cannot be ‘unlocked’ by encouraging premature returns to settings or states which are still unsafe. Such strategies are tantamount to *refoulement*, and are prohibited by international law.

Nevertheless, in the past two decades it is clear that the international community has maintained an excessive focus on return as ‘the’ solution to displacement. This political intransigence has made it far more difficult to pursue other solutions, and contributed to many current protracted dilemmas.

In cases where return may be possible – when a state or region has entered a post-conflict transition phase – poverty may still be a barrier to return (and even a motivation for further exits), even if the displaced are no longer fleeing persecution. The international community needs to examine more closely the connections between poverty, persecution and conflict, and consider how such poverty-driven migration flows impact on our understandings of ‘protracted crises’.

The international community should reframe return as a gradual, diffused process which may involve several stages of cross-border movement. This means repatriation and return processes must be linked to a broader liberalization of regional migration channels and a commitment to respect citizens’ internal freedom of movement.

Return processes must also be viewed as a development and peace-building challenge rather than focusing on mass physical movement. The international community should focus on establishing the foundations and infrastructure that will facilitate economic growth and stability. This framing will encourage gradual, sustainable refugee-led returns, thus contributing to broader peace-building objectives far more effectively than sudden mass return.

International community members should urge UNHCR and those states directly involved in finalizing tripartite repatriation agreements to include refugee and IDP representatives in the negotiation of returns. Although refugees are unlikely to have a ‘veto’ over return processes, engaging their representatives in discussions over the timing, content and manner of return would help to tailor return programmes to refugee (and IDP) needs.

Understanding micro-level displacements

In general, approaches to ‘unlocking’ protracted displacement tend to be concerned with ending ‘far’ displacements. This explains in part the disproportionate attention focused on protracted displacement of registered refugees: these individuals have a right to insist on international protection, yet their continued presence in exile threatens regimes with domestic political turmoil. Even when considering IDP crises, the focus of attention has tended to assume relatively long-distance displacement: from south-central Somalia to Somaliland, for instance, or from Northern Guatemala to Guatemala City.

Yet in fact, all three of the case studies selected for this report suggest that far greater attention should be paid to the impact of micro-level displacement in protracted crises, and the use of such ‘near’ movements as potential coping strategies. In the case of Central America, while many IDPs did follow ‘classic’ displacement routes involving rural to urban drift, some groups chose to stay close to their lands and attempted to continue some farming, while remaining hidden in the forests nearby, in some cases for over a decade, as members of ‘People’s Communities in Resistance’ (*Comunidades de Pueblo en Resistencia*). These communities were often closely aligned with civil war guerilla movements and suffered aerial bombardment and severe deprivation: yet this micro-level displacement was a deliberate choice, a coping strategy. De Waal has also commented on this phenomena, pointing to the ‘dormitory’ use of IDP camps in Darfur as a kind of securitized village that allows protection at night but also access to fields for farming during the day (de Waal 2009).

Similarly, in Iraq there is evidence that many displacements, particularly in urban areas such as Baghdad, take place at a micro-level: from street to street and across urban districts, as Iraqis are forced out from neighbourhoods by the drawing of effective sectarian borders. Somali urban displacement has been shaped by shifting front lines, and their impact on access to food aid, as both Al-Shabaab and western donors have placed restrictions on the movement of aid into Al-Shabaab areas. Yet Lindley and Haslie suggest that increasing pressures mean that in the current iteration of the Somali crisis, ‘former coping strategies are no longer adequate: earlier systems of socio-political protection have unravelled, micro-spatial adjustments and relocations described above still leave people exposed’ (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 10).

The role of micro-level displacement in shaping protracted crises is under-researched, and deserves to be the subject of more significant study. This is in part because such small, local movements appear to be the first line of defence against crisis, an early coping strategy that may offer some hint as to how protracted displacement may be ‘unlocked’. Lindley and Haslie report, for instance, that organized relocations over short distances, in and around urban centres, have been carried out in several places in Somaliland and Puntland, in the best case providing IDPs with secure tenure over land and relieving urban pressures, although the complexities of the land issues that must be negotiated mean this seems likely to remain a solution only for a minority ‘and for now only sustainable in the more stable urban settings of Puntland and Somaliland’ (Lindley and Haslie 2011: 19–20). Iraqi refugees in Lebanon have also made micro-level settlement choices in the

search for stability, with Christian Iraqis settling in Beirut's northern suburbs and Muslim refugees in the south. The international community should consider how it might be able to strengthen the positive use of intra-community relocations as a 'solution' to some of the rights deprivations and exclusions suffered in protracted displacement.

Closely tied to this question of micro-level movement is the issue of *involuntary immobility*. The Somali study shows that, in any situation where demographic power rests on population control, even micro-level displacements may be actively resisted by authorities, as has been the case with Al-Shabaab (Lindley and Haslie 2011). More generally, the alternative side of micro-level relocation to areas of ethnic, clan or sectarian security may be an inability to leave such 'safe' areas. Bradley also offers a useful reminder that involuntary immobility may be a consequence of undocumented migration, as those who manage to cross a border undetected cannot risk making such a crossing to return, and may in effect become trapped at a micro-level precisely because of their attempts to engage in 'far' migration. Again, the role of involuntary immobility in perpetuating protracted crises is under-researched, particularly in terms of its broader effects on crises of citizenship. Yet at a general level, such observations reinforce the need to examine approaches to protracted displacement within a broader mobility framework.

Some of the concerns raised about the impact of micro-level displacement echo the dilemmas faced in the early 1990s when the 'right to remain' gained political currency, until it was shattered by the inadequacy of the 'safe zone' at Srebrenica in 1995. There is a risk that in investigating the dynamics of micro-level displacement and micro-level migration coping strategies to deal with crises of governance, the international community may effectively accept and even endorse patterns of ethnic and sectarian cleansing. This would in effect represent a move away from supporting inter-ethnic remixing after a conflict, a principle most notable enshrined in the Dayton Accords (Dayton Peace Accords 1995: Annex 7). Yet it is arguably more compelling to acknowledge that Dayton proved unsuccessful in the practice of 'remixing' Bosnia, and that at present, many of these micro-level displacements are actually refugee and IDP led. The secession of Kosovo, and more recently of South Sudan, also suggest that on a more fundamental level, it may be important for the international community to recognize that not all existing national-state structures should be considered inviolable, and that federal regions such as Kurdish Iraq, Somaliland and Puntland have been able to maintain stability precisely because these communities have been able to coalesce around powerful sub-national identities.

Policy dimensions

The importance of the under-researched dynamics of micro-level displacement should be acknowledged, and attention paid to these movements and their potential role in alleviating (or exacerbating) protracted displacement and crises of government. This reinforces the need to build up a typology of protracted displacements.

In particular, the international community should consider what role micro-level relocations of IDPs might be able to play in reducing integration and resource pressures

in protracted crises, and the conditions which would need to be attached to formal organization of such movements.

The international community should consider whether using such strategies may risk exacerbating ethnic or sectarian division, or whether in fact it is pragmatic to accept the reality of such movements into geographic areas matching political identity, and work instead to ensure that such movements reflect refugees' and IDPs own wishes (rather than those of any local or national authority) and will contribute to the securing and stabilizing of post-conflict regions more generally.

New citizenships and networks of belonging

This paper began by setting out an understanding of displacement as a symptom of a crisis of governance: an absence of meaningful citizenship. There is no longer an effective Somalia-wide state; although Iraq has stabilized since the violence of civil war in 2006–2007, access to effective rights within Iraq is often dependent upon precarious sectarian allegiance rather than national citizenship. In Central America, while ‘displacement’ has ostensibly been resolved, rural to urban drift, large-scale continued migration and the continued poverty of returnees speak of the continuing failures of Central American governance. Taken collectively, these three case studies quite clearly demonstrate the links between protracted displacement and endemic weaknesses in formal state–citizen relationships.

However, all three case studies also document the presence of other alternative ‘citizenships’ that have played an important role in shaping responses to protracted displacement. In areas where states themselves have been racked by conflict over several years, the emergence of federal and regional governance structures may offer other, more functional forms of citizenship. These autonomous areas – Kurdish Iraq, or Somaliland and Puntland – have undoubtedly helped to stabilize regions that might otherwise have been drawn into protracted crises, preventing the escalation and expansion of displacement. Yet the identities that coalesce around these processes of state-building may exclude as well as include.

Most notably, Somaliland declared independence from Somalia in 1991 (although its status as an independent state is not recognized by the international community). Hosting refugees from south-central Somalia (considered as IDPs by the international community) is ‘a mark of credibility and stability’: it underlines that Somalilanders themselves have not been forced into flight and have established relatively secure processes of governance. Yet the emergence of a *de facto* Somaliland state has ‘helped to formalize legal boundaries between Somalilander citizens and outsiders’, so that for example non-Somalilanders cannot legally buy land in the territory, reducing the prospects for local integration. Similar processes of identity creation have occurred in Puntland, with the most serious impact being the illegal deportation of south-central Somalis (Lindley and Haslie 2011). In the case of Iraq, the politics of regional and federal governance arguably reflect the historical constructions of a composite Iraqi state, but again a danger lies in protective structures that by definition exclude ‘others’ based on sectarian or ethnic affiliation.

Newly independent South Sudan stands as an example of how the establishing of new (and in this case formally recognized) governance structures may provide new citizenship and re-establish the legitimacy of governance structures, unlocking protracted displacement by creating conditions for return. Yet the international community has rightly been wary of declaring South Sudan a success story prematurely. Extremely limited state infrastructure means that South Sudan cannot yet provide many of its citizens with secure or sustainable livelihoods, so that poverty remains a major driver of migration. Still more seriously, South Sudan is still a region of conflict, and there are concerns that Dinka–Nuer rivalry may spark new struggles for power. As in the Balkans, creating new national citizenships may in fact risk perpetual division and the production of new displaced groups: the

securing of Kosovo by NATO in 1999, for example, created conditions for Kosovar Albanians to return from their displacement very quickly, but prompted a second mass exodus of Serbian residents who are today displaced in Serbia, in part because of the political value the Serbian state places on the continued fact of their ‘displacement’.

A further risk lies in the promotion of federal or sub-national structures by external actors, primarily interested in solving their own refugee ‘problem’ by removing refugees from their territory, rather than engaging in the creation of new and inclusive citizenships. In particular, Kenya’s support for the idea of ‘Jubaland’ as a buffer zone seems to be rooted in the notion that sub-state level stabilization may help to precipitate repatriation. Yet the Kenya-backed Transitional Federal Government’s territorial control of Jubaland is incomplete and the modest area currently controlled was only recently won from Al Shabaab. In fact as Lindley reports, Kenya’s military offensive into the region actually produced substantial numbers of refugees in early 2011 (Lindley 2011: 14). There is also a risk that far from offering a meaningful alternative setting for Somali governance, Kenya’s focus on establishing a ‘preventative zone’ continues to frame the Somali refugee crisis in terms of numbers and border-crossings.

Nevertheless, one important insight from these case studies is to recognize that new citizenships may unlock elements of protracted displacement crises by sitting either below or above traditional or formal state–citizen structures. The emergence of new ‘citizenships’ or community memberships within regions of protracted crisis, as described above, is one facet of this development. The other is the development of new supra-national and regional citizenships that may in coming years have a profound effect on both integration prospects and mobility, helping both to unlock and to prevent protracted displacements. ECOWAS citizenship has proved useful in resolving residual displacement of Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees. There are hopes that EAC citizenship could perform a similar function in East Africa, a region with historically high levels of displacement, although concerns have also been raised that such regional citizenship ties could actually prevent states recognizing *forced* migration flows from other member states (Esom 2011).

It is also clear that for many displaced, it is not formal citizenship but kin, clan and other affiliations which provide alternative structures of protection. It is estimated that around 40 per cent of Guatemalan refugees who left for Chiapas in Mexico stayed with kin networks; Pashtun ties across the Afghan-Pakistan border have proved important in supporting this displaced population, as have Hazara and Shia affiliations of other Afghans who moved to Iran; Macedonian Albanians sheltered the majority of displaced Kosovar Albanians who arrived in the state before the Macedonian government shut the border in May 1999 for fear of mass influx. Iraqi refugees have relied upon family networks and pooled resources in their struggle to establish themselves in exile, while Lindley and Haslie both stress the importance of clan relations in determining prospects for local integration within Somalia, while also pointing out that these traditional protection networks have found themselves increasingly stretched by the continued iterations and

recent intensification of the Somali crisis, so that kin and clan no longer offer many the protection such structures could once provide.

This is an important reminder that the international community should not over-emphasize the protective capacities of such networks: although significant ties do remain, expectations of family support have in the past ignored that a continued crisis of governance is likely to impact on the resources of those who remain too. In Cambodia, for instance, studies following up mass repatriation in the 1990s found that returnees were often resented by families, who refused to share their limited resources, leaving 73 per cent of returnees dependent on food aid a year after their repatriation (Eastmond and Ojendal 1999). In the short term, clan and kin networks are often an important means of diffusing risk and sharing resources; but their resilience is not limitless.

Policy implications

The international community should consider whether an insistence on the territorial integrity of existing states can be counter-productive in terms of regional stability and peace.

'New citizenships' are likely to emerge in areas where there is a long-term failure of formal governance structures. These should be supported, with particular emphasis being placed on ensuring that these areas do not exclude 'other' displaced, or prevent the local integration of IDPs from the broader state.

Clan and kin networks play an important role in coping with crises of citizenship, particularly in providing short-term security and protection for those who make micro-level displacements. The international community should consider how it can better support these types of structures, while also recognizing the inherent limitations of clan and kin, particularly in regions where resources are increasingly stretched.

The international community should support the emergence of supra-national citizenship structures as a means of securing freedom of movement and increased opportunities for secure livelihoods for all regional citizens, including the displaced. However, it is important that alongside this potential 'unlocking' of protracted displacements through the development of supra-national citizenships that allow continued residency in a host state, the value of *refugee* protection for those citizens who are at risk of persecution in their state of origin continues to be respected.

Conclusions and recommendations

This research project aimed to offer new and innovative approaches to unlocking protracted crises of displacement, based on a detailed case-study assessment of refugees' and IDPs own perceptions and understandings of their needs in the contemporary cases of Iraqi and Somali displacement, and the strategies used in the 1990s to 'resolve' Central American displacement. There are of course clear limitations to these studies: their conclusions are based on limited qualitative research and are highly context-specific. Yet nevertheless, there is a clear value in attempting to synthesize from these cases – as well as other research related to the question of protracted displacement – some observations about approaches to protracted displacement crises that may be applicable in a global – as well as situation-specific – context. State structures and international institutional responses are informed by the values and expectations of international and transnational political calculations, albeit filtered through local experience. Protracted displacement is informed by understandings of global governance, and as such it is important to understand how we might move forward to begin analysing – and addressing – protracted displacement by changing the ways in which international actors approach this phenomenon.

This paper shows that a number of conclusions can first be drawn about the characteristics of protracted displacement:

1. The fundamental cause of prolonged displacement is a crisis of citizenship or governance in a community or state of origin. This may result from an absence or an excess of state authority. The physical consequences of displacement follow from this political failure.
2. There is a need to recognize the links that exist between 'emergency' crises and protracted displacement, as exemplified by the current Horn of Africa emergency. Protracted displacement is often a result of continued cycles of displacement that follow new iterations of crisis, and are thus dynamic and constantly changing, not stagnant or static.
3. There is a need to consider developing a 'typology' of protracted displacement. Both the contemporary case studies researched can be seen as responses to 'chaotic' crisis, or the breakdown of state authority; however, other protracted displacements, including that in Central America during the 1980s and 1990s, are arguably the result of the excessive intransigence of authoritarian regimes.
4. It is therefore clear that protracted displacement must be framed by broader peace-building and state-building discourses, and that final resolution of protracted displacement is contingent on the (re)building of viable state governance structures. These processes are likely to take decades. Protracted displacement is not just a humanitarian crisis and it is therefore important that development, security and political actors (including refugees themselves) are involved throughout in establishing frameworks for 'solutions'.
5. The traditional 'durable solutions' approach encompassing return, local integration and resettlement is clearly unable to function in settings where protracted displacement has

emerged. Host and donor states have remained excessively fixed on permanent physical returns of the displaced as ‘the’ solution to exile. This means that local integration and resettlement have been downgraded and there has been little exploration of how these avenues might be opened up to more displaced.

6. Protracted displacement is a serious cause for concern not just because it reflects endemic weakness in governance structures, but because it underlines that states and international institutions are not able to offer an adequate quality of protection to the displaced during exile. Concern with preventing any local integration has resulted in a declining quality of asylum, that makes protracted displacement far more intolerable, and the incessant search for solutions far more urgent.

7. Despite this, all the case studies show that refugees and IDPs are often able to demonstrate remarkable resilience in these circumstances, particularly through the use of clan and kin networks to diffuse risks among family members, and through using migration and mobility.

Detailed policy implications are offered at the foot of each of the thematic sections which consider these observations in more detail. However, this paper also makes seven key recommendations. Although broad in scope, it is clear that without the international community shifting to adopt these perspectives, it is extremely unlikely that protracted displacement crises are likely to ‘unlock’.

1. The urgent need to improve the quality of protection refugees and IDPs may access during displacement, and particularly as part of asylum, must be the primary focus of international efforts to stabilize protracted displacements, rather than any premature rush to offer new ‘solutions’.

2. The international community must look to expand and support the access of the displaced to migration channels, and to support the ability of the displaced to access and practise secure freedom of movement. This should involve relaxing border and visa restrictions, and ensuring that the costs associated with negotiating such border-crossings do not have to be borne by the displaced, as well as acknowledging the broader benefits that transnational movement can bring to peace-building processes.

3. Host states and the international community must accept that, in protracted displacement settings, some *de facto* integration will inevitably occur, even where encampment policies are used. Efforts should be focused not on trying to prevent the gradual development of such links, but on ensuring that they are productive for communities as a whole and are not undermined by precarious legal status leaving the *de facto* integrated at risk of deportation.

In particular, efforts should be made to encourage recognition of second-generation refugees’ obvious links to their host communities. Where possible, states should explore

the possibilities of offering gradual or piecemeal pathways to citizenship, or other forms of fuller legal integration or regular residency status, even if only to some appropriate groups or sections within a wider displaced community.

4. Development-led and community-based (rather than displacement or solutions-led) approaches to both integration and return should be promoted, to encourage sustainable economic growth and ensure that international engagement with displaced populations does not actually create conditions for continued claims of ‘protracted displacement’.
5. Further research should be carried out into the role of micro-level spatial adjustments in shaping the dynamics of prolonged displacement, particularly as a coping strategy employed by the displaced themselves. The international community should consider how it can best support such movements.
6. There is a need for further research examining ‘bottom-up’ approaches to addressing protracted displacement. In particular, such research should focus on how these ethnographic understandings of displacement may be fed into discussions shaping the development and the implementation of policy by donor states and international NGOs and UN organizations.
7. The international community should support supra-national regional citizenship initiatives as a means of opening up economic, social and political space, while ensuring these arrangements continue to recognize the needs of the displaced. The international community should also consider how it can best strengthen inclusive forms of federal and sub-national governance as a means of stabilizing some regions involved in protracted crises of citizenship, whilst ensuring that the emergence of such new identities do not precipitate new forms of exclusion.

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Endnotes

1. Early definitions of a Protracted Refugee Situation used a threshold number of 25,000 to identify PRS. Later research has shown that there are many smaller ‘residual’ caseloads that should also be considered PRS, and this threshold figure does not appear in the 2009 UNHCR ExCom conclusion (see Milner and Loescher 2011: 15).
2. At the time of writing (August 2011), this figure was subject to rapid change as a result of an ongoing mass influx of Somalis fleeing drought and famine.
3. It is important to note that of course refugees and IDPs usually still hold a recognized *de jure* citizenship from their state of origin throughout their displacement. However, this paper takes the view that this citizenship is effectively broken in any meaningful sense (given that these refugees and IDPs are *forced* to flee), and so ‘solutions’ must restore a full range of rights and goods associated with citizenship in order for such a relationship to constitute meaningful protection.
4. Refugee Studies Centre (Oxford), Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Norwegian Refugee Council, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.
5. Case study reports are all available to read online at www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/publications/working-papers.
6. This also applies to all three case study papers, which offer a much richer contextualization of the specific dynamics of displacement in each region than this global policy paper can hope to capture.
7. This Kenyan camp housed Sudanese displaced, many of whom have now been able to return to South Sudan, as well as smaller refugee populations from the Horn of Africa.
8. This discussion has also paid only limited attention to IDP ‘solutions’, which are arguably seen as less of a pressing *international* concern.
9. This interview was conducted before the most recent escalation in famine influxes. In July 2011, 40,000 refugees from Somalia arrived in Dadaab (<http://reliefweb.int/>).
10. Resettlement has always been closely bound to political goals: the US interest in resettling large numbers of Eastern Europeans and later Indochinese during the Cold War reflected geopolitical strategy far more than humanitarian inclination (see e.g. Loescher and Scanlan 1998).
11. UNHCR is in fact planning to carry out such a review in 2012.



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