



Frontiers of Development symposium

**Inclusive prosperity and wellbeing in
the context of mass displacement**

11 to 14 February 2018 | Kigali, Rwanda



Introduction to the Frontiers symposia

The Frontiers symposia bring together more than 70 of the best early- and mid-career researchers and practitioners from industry, academia, NGOs, and the public sector in multidisciplinary workshops that address fundamental development challenges.

The objective of the symposia is to encourage collaborative work that addresses international development challenges, and to promote cross-disciplinary thinking among the next generation of engineering leaders.

Competitively allocated seed funding is available to strengthen the collaborations developed at the symposia.

This symposium was run in collaboration with the Royal Society, British Academy, and Academy of Medical Sciences.



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Symposium

Sixty-five delegates met for and worked together in three sessions over three days, during which they shared presentations, networked, and engaged with theme-related content. The symposium was held at Park Inn Kigali, Rwanda.

Frontiers insights: inclusive prosperity and wellbeing in the context of mass displacement

The Frontiers of Development Symposium event took place between 11 and 14 February 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda. The event brought together researchers and practitioners to promote international development, encourage collaborative work, and facilitate cross-disciplinary thinking among the next generation of leaders. Cochaired by Professor Dilanthi Amarunga and Professor Dame Henrietta Moore FBA, the event took place in person through three sessions over two and a half days interspersed with networking opportunities, receptions, and dinners.

The world is facing a growing number of pressing challenges, and, coupled with disasters following extreme weather events, our opportunities for sustainable growth are being hindered. To address these challenges, an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach must be taken.

On top of this, displacement is truly a global issue – and several key actions can be taken to address this. These include boosting disaster prevention measures, creating safe and inclusive public spaces and communities, understanding the nexus between climate change and displacement, building sustainable and inclusive finance models, and providing essential services to communities in need. Prevention, adaptation, and mitigation, coupled with a paradigm shift to centre the needs of people impacted by disasters, can help ensure prosperity and wellbeing for all.

This report summarises the key insights from the discussions and activities that took place at the symposium.





**Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga,
Director, The Global Disaster Resilience Centre**

Dilanthi, Director of the Global Disaster Resilience Centre, is a professor of disaster risk management and reduction. Based at the University of Huddersfield, UK, she is the head of its Global Disaster Resilience Centre. She is a leading expert in disaster resilience, with an international reputation with specific emphasis on the built environment and championing the underrepresentation of women in this key research area. Her research focuses on socio-economic measures for disaster risks; preparedness for response, recovery, and reconstruction; built environment dimensions of climate change and sustainability; gender and protection; and public policy, governance, and procurement.



**Professor Dame Henrietta L. Moore FBA,
Director, The Institute for Global Prosperity**

Henrietta is the Director of the Institute for Global Prosperity at UCL, where she also currently holds the chair in Culture, Philosophy, and Design. A distinguished anthropologist and cultural theorist, she has focused her recent work on the notion of global sustainable futures. She has more than 30 years' experience working throughout Africa and is committed to involving grassroots communities in the production of new types of knowledge through 'citizen science'. Among numerous visiting appointments during her career, she is a Fellow of the British Academy, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, and an Academician of the Learned Societies for the Social Sciences.



Disaster prevention

Key insight:

- Disaster prevention must be included in future strategies to reduce mass displacement.

Summary

The world's global challenges – urbanisation, climate change, poverty, conflict, and more – impact the frequency of disasters. These global trends must be at the core of all disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies and policies in order to manage and prevent disasters.

Recommendations

- To reduce vulnerability and exposure to disasters, we must dedicate resources to early warning systems and infrastructure.
- DRR must be included at local, regional, and global policy levels, and should be integrated into legal frameworks and governance structures.
- New models for engagement can incentivise the private sector to invest in resilience infrastructure and involve them in DRR response strategies.
- We can promote accountability and transparency at the government level by advocating for DRR policies.
- We must keep DRR at the core of strategies to tackle the world's biggest challenges.



Public spaces and community building

Key insight:

- Public spaces promote community building and reconciliation in rural and marginalised communities affected by complex disasters.

Summary

Communities are by nature shared, bringing people together based on shared experience, views, or ideas. However, each member needs the agency to be different as well. We must create public spaces that allow communities and individuals to thrive, especially for rural and marginalised groups that have been affected by disasters.

Recommendations:

- Multiuse spaces can maximise limited environments such as camp settings.
- Use human-centred and environmental design to develop public spaces that are cocreated and maintained by authorities and members.
- Public spaces must be 'people oriented', meaning that they encourage social interaction while addressing cultural identity needs.
- Public spaces should provide an area for reconciliation and reflection, and create a sense of belonging.
- Community areas must be open, inclusive, and safe for all.

Understanding climate change and disaster displacement

Key insight:

- To better understand the scale and impact of displacement resulting from extreme weather events, strategies must be interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral.

Summary

Climate change is a multifaceted challenge, and tackling it requires an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach. To better address displacement related to climate change, the wider context of climate change must first be understood. National and local prevention strategies are helpful to inform solutions on a global level.

Recommendations

- The specific context and challenges of communities and countries must be considered.
- Indigenous and local knowledge must be harnessed when engaging with affected communities.
- To ensure that policymakers and innovators are up to date, monitoring and collaboration efforts should be prioritised in order to determine that investment and reconstruction policies are best informed.
- Barriers must be removed to ensure that all people have access to the necessary information that will help them change perceptions and attitudes around climate change and displacement.

Sustainable and inclusive finance models

Key insight:

- Community-centred and integrated access to finance and fintech is key to empowering women in conflict-affected communities.

Summary

Lack of finance and access to financial education is a hinder to gender equality, especially in conflict-affected communities. Helping women to achieve financial independence not only helps them thrive in their local communities, but also benefits the wider community.

Recommendations

- Context-specific gender issues and cultural norms must be understood and respected.
- Easy, equal access to finance systems and knowledge can scale up informal businesses in communities.
- In conflict-affected communities, creating a system for financial saving can foster financial security.
- A system in which the whole community contributes to and borrows from a community savings pot can help to provide capital as it is needed.



Provision of essential services

Key insight:

- Interventions for essential services for displaced people must be at the centre of national policies and strategies.

Summary

'People on the move' – displaced communities – must be viewed and treated as members of society. The provision of essential services, such as access to healthcare and education, is crucial to ensuring these people can prosper and contribute fully to the community in which they have sought refuge.

Recommendations

- Policymaking must take a holistic approach and include human rights perspectives as well as legal and political contexts.
- Engaging with local communities and refugees by evaluating their skills and capacity can encourage leadership and ownership.
- Approaches to implementing solutions must be fully participatory, and feedback and evidence must be gathered on an ongoing basis.



Drivers of mass displacement

Session chair

Danielle Botti,
Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat

Presentations

1. Disasters: displacement, relocation, and return
Dr Nishara Fernando,
University of Colombo
2. The continually transforming status of refugees and IDPs and their return to conflict-affected areas
Dr Irina Kuznetsova,
University of Birmingham
3. Can Ethiopia use the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) to provide a durable solution to the problem of refugees?
Tsion Abebe,
Institute of Security Studies Africa

This session focused on the causes of mass displacement globally and, in particular, displacement resulting from complex disasters. The session also concentrated on the relocation and return of internally displaced peoples (IDPs) in conflict-affected areas, drawing on case studies from Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, and Ukraine.





Presentations

Disasters: displacement, relocation, and return

Dr Nishara Fernando

Dr Nishara Fernando's presentation stressed the importance of relocating those affected by disasters to planned settlements close to their original homes. Moreover, these relocation efforts must provide the necessary infrastructure facilities and adhere to global and national policy guidelines. Using the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami in Sri Lanka as a case study, Nishara emphasised that community-centric relocation policy guidelines are key. Following such guidelines can help with the success of relocating displaced people, ensuring their safety, and reducing the risk of poverty or chronic poverty.

The continually transforming status of refugees and IDPs and their return to conflict-affected areas

Dr Irina Kuznetsova

In Dr Irina Kuznetsova's presentation, she explained that a displaced person's legal status – as an IDP or refugee – impacts their ability to integrate socially or economically in their host region. She cautioned that those not able to retain an IDP or refugee status are often forced to return to war-torn territories. In eastern Ukraine, for example, elderly people have been found to be the most vulnerable and to face challenges in verifying their IDP status. As a result, many have been forced to return to conflict-ridden territories. This prolongs and worsens the humanitarian situation, and government policies must therefore ensure the status of IDPs is at the forefront of decision-making.

Can Ethiopia use the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) to provide a durable solution to the problem of refugees?

Tsion Abebe

The [CRRF](#) is a major shift in Ethiopia's refugee strategy, as it seeks to promote refugees' self-reliance. It does so by drawing on wider support from host communities and by fostering the coexistence and inclusion of refugees into national development plans. In her presentation, Tsion Abebe reflected on the successes of this framework so far and the overall impact of the CRRF in managing the mass of influx of refugees to the country. Ethiopia is the second-largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, sheltering approximately 900,000 refugees (as of 2018).

Shared spaces and services

Session co-chairs

Dr Jayati Das-Munshi,
King's College London

Dr Leopold Mbereyaho,
University of Rwanda

The Shared Spaces and Services session broadly focused on the environments, systems, and services for those in need – specifically, the prevalence of essential services such as healthcare and education, as well as how to design an effective and resilient system. The session drew on the case study of Rwandan refugees in Burundi and on the healthcare system of Sierra Leone.

Presentations

1. Healthcare performance and resilience: redesigning the system

Dr Nebil Achour,
Anglia Ruskin University

2. Mental health services and disaster response in low resource settings

Colonel Dr Stephen Sevaile,
Mental Health Sierra Leone

3. Concerning mass displacement: roots, causes, and effects, and inclusive integration – case study of Rwandan refugees in Burundi (1959–1994)

Dr Gaspard Gapayari, University of Rwanda, College of Education

4. Access to education and health services among refugees in Nairobi

Edmund Lang'at,
Xavier Project





Presentations

Healthcare performance and resilience: redesigning the system

Dr Nebil Achour

In Dr Nebil Achour's presentation, he explained that, despite the many improvements in both the quality of healthcare and the system overall – which have brought about a reduction of diseases as well as increased life expectancy – healthcare services continue to face many challenges. One such challenge is inadequate financing in the face of climate change and disasters. Nebil stressed the importance of redesigning the healthcare system to better foster resilience.

Mental health services and disaster response in low resource settings

Colonel Dr Stephen Sevalie

The health system in Sierra Leone is confronted with many challenges, including epidemics and natural hazards. In his presentation, Colonel Dr Stephen Sevalie explored the healthcare system in Sierra Leone, and in particular the impact that these challenges have on mental health. The Ebola outbreak in the country from 2014 to 2016 and severe flooding in 2017 led to widespread disruption of families and communities. Consequently, 'task shifting' was crucial in the provision of mental health services and surveillance in the country. The [World Health Organization](#) defines task shifting as the rational redistribution of tasks among health workforce teams.

Concerning mass displacement: roots, causes, and effects, and inclusive integration – case study of Rwandan refugees in Burundi (1959–1994)(CRRF) to provide a durable solution to the problem of refugees?

Dr Gaspard Gapayari

Dr Gaspard Gapayari's presentation addressed the roots, causes, and effects of the mass displacement of Rwandan refugees in Burundi in the 1990s. Facing resource scarcity, inequality, and injustice, refugees suffer hardships across the board. However, as Gaspard advised, education has a role to play in integration and prosperity. Access to education can provide stability to refugee communities, increase employment opportunities, and boost financial stability in the long term.

Access to education and health services among refugees in Nairobi

Edmund Lang'at

In his presentation, Edmund Lang'at talked about the importance of access to education and health services for refugees. Kenya has been a host country for refugees for many years, with a large number residing in the capital, Nairobi. Many studies have explored the livelihoods and rights of these refugees, but there is a gap in the research on access to education and health services. International organisations and government agencies have an important role to play in improving access to education and healthcare for refugee communities, as well as managing the space shared between refugees and their host country.

Enhancing value

Session co-chairs

Professor Siri Hettige,
University of Colombo

Corinne Gray,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Presentations

1. Conflict-sensitive employment: doing things differently in fragile and conflict-affected settings

Rabia Nusrat, International Alert

2. Job creation in complex contexts: challenges from post-war Sri Lanka

Dr Udan Fernando, Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA)

3. Large-scale displacement of civilians during the three decades of civil war in Sri Lanka and the challenges of resettlement

Dr Murugesu Ganeshamoorthy, University of Colombo

4. Integration of refugees and migrants in Europe: the German labour market

Eva Degler, At the time she was at 'The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'

The Enhancing Value session focused on employment opportunities for displaced people, considering, for example, how to integrate refugees into the labour market and how to create jobs in complex contexts. The speakers drew on case studies from Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Germany.



Presentations

Conflict-sensitive employment: doing things differently in fragile and conflict-affected settings

Rabia Nusrat

In her presentation, Rabia Nusrat affirmed that promoting economic development is key in defining how societies make progress. This is true globally, but especially in conflict or fragile settings. In such situations, employment opportunities need to be created in way that is sensitive to conflict. Governments and investors must work together to maximise the labour market's contribution to peace and stability. Drawing on the example of Afghanistan, Rabia outlined the challenges that the government faced in building a productive economy that created jobs for young and low- or unskilled workers. She concluded that the private sectors as well as donors have a role to play in contributing to conflict-sensitive employment opportunities in Afghanistan.

Job creation in complex contexts: challenges from post-war Sri Lanka

Dr Udan Fernando

Dr Udan Fernando spoke about the challenges around job creation in complex contexts – in particular, Sri Lanka. In his presentation, Udan described how the state faced challenges in creating jobs in a fast-changing liberal economy. Young people were reluctant to engage in agriculture or construction, and instead sought 'white-collar' jobs abroad. In addition, the civil war in the country, from 1983 to 2009, led to persistent economic discrepancies amongst the population. Coupled with rising inequality, these have represented compounding challenges for the country. Udan counselled that policies must be created that consider the experiences of different segments of the labour market. Awareness on the part of supply and demand actors in the labour market is the first step to achieve this.

Large-scale displacement of civilians during the three decades of civil war in Sri Lanka and the challenges of resettlement

Dr Murugesu Ganeshamoorthy

The three decades-long civil war in Sri Lanka led to large-scale displacement of civilians. Resettlement strategies are currently coordinated by a dedicated [ministry in the country](#), and official government statements assert that the majority of displaced peoples are now re-settled. However, in his presentation, Dr Murugesu Ganeshamoorthy, noted that more research on displacement must be undertaken to fully comprehend the gravity of the problem and to verify the government's claims.

Integration of refugees and migrants in Europe: the German labour market

Eva Degler

In her presentation, Eva Degler discussed the integration of refugees and migrants in Europe – in particular, in the German labour market. One of the biggest challenges Germany has been facing as a host to a high inflow of humanitarian migrants concerns the provision of employment opportunities. It is high on the political agenda in Germany, but there are nonetheless many challenges in achieving it.

It takes an average of 20 years of residence in an EU country before employment levels for refugees are at a similar level to those of their counterparts in the native population. Challenges include the reliance on formal qualifications, which can differ between countries, expectation of strong language skills, and bureaucratic hurdles for employers. Eva explored some of these challenges in her presentation, as well as proposing policy responses that could be promising in terms of facilitating labour market integration of refugees in Germany. Suggestions included mechanisms to recognise foreign qualifications and assess informal skills, expanding language and training programmes, providing better support to potential employers in the hiring phases and beyond, and creating more flexible integration programmes.



Rwandan refugee camps

Session co-chairs

Dr Anh Tran, Coventry University

This case study session on refugee camps in Rwanda was joined by three panellists: Anna Okello, Jelte Harnmeijer, and Denyse Umubyeyi. During the session, the panellists discussed the [Global Plan of Action for Sustainable Energy Solutions in Situations of Displacement](#). This action plan calls on governments and international leaders to contribute to the achievement of [Sustainable Development Goal 7: 'energy for all'](#). In humanitarian situations, access to food, water and sanitation, health, and shelter and protection all require energy access. During the discussion, key questions were advanced around four key themes:

1. Policy, advocacy, and host country resilience
2. Innovative finance
3. Technical expertise, capacity building, and training
4. Data, evidence, monitoring, and reporting.





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For more information, including eligibility,
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