



Editorial

Chloé Lewis and James Souter

Oxford Monitor of Forced Migration Volume 2, Number 1, pp. 5-6.

The online version of this document can be found at: www.oxmofm.com
Copyright for articles published in OxMo rest with the author(s). Materials may be downloaded, reproduced and circulated in entirety provided that the title, author and source (OxMo) is acknowledged.

Editorial

Contemporary forced migration is characterised both by its global character and its immense complexity. Despite attempts by Northern governments to contain forced migrants in their countries or regions of origin, forced migration continues to be a global phenomenon which straddles the divide between ‘North’ and ‘South’. And, given the myriad ways in which forced migration both shapes and is shaped by social, economic, political, cultural and legal forces, both an interdisciplinary and a multidisciplinary approach is vital for making sense of the complexity of forced migration.

Both this complexity and global character of forced migration are richly reflected in the range of articles on offer in this edition of the Oxford Monitor of Forced Migration (OxMo). In keeping with OxMo’s core ethos, our authors describe the predicaments and strategies of forced migrants in countries ranging from Uganda to Canada, Iraq to Australia, Israel to North Korea, and analyse the responses of governments, courts and international fora worldwide. Our contributors herald from a wide range of disciplines, from Anthropology to International Relations, presenting articles which range from more policy-relevant arguments to theoretical discussions of issues such as the structure-agency debate and the boundaries of belonging and citizenship. Before introducing this edition’s articles, we would like to express our gratitude for the very encouraging number of submissions from around the world, which reflects the current demand for OxMo as a forum for sharing ideas on issues and concerns falling within the ambit of forced migration. We hope to see this continued growth and commitment to the human rights of refugees and forced migrants reflected in our future issues.

The first two articles of our *Policy Monitor* complement each other particularly well, by shedding light on a largely under-discussed area within refugee and forced migration studies. In the first article, Chulhyo Kim assesses South Korea’s Refugee Act, which was passed in December of last year. While consciously seeking not to downplay the achievement which the Act symbolises on the part of refugee advocates, the author’s analysis draws attention to the diluted nature of some of the original provisions and the implications of this for the country’s Refugee Status Determination procedures in particular. Interestingly, this paper is almost mirrored by our second Policy article. Sheena Choi examines international responses to North Korea’s chronic food shortage, focusing in particular on China’s responses to North Korean refugees residing (irregularly) in the country. Finally, Patricia Ward illuminates the tangible implications of shifting donor interests for NGOs and Iraqi refugee communities as the plight of the latter progresses into an increasingly protracted phase. With particular reference to Iraqi refugees living in Jordan, her article offers insights into the challenges facing NGOs seeking to adapt to dynamic contexts and the implications of different responses for the protection spaces available.

This issue’s *Law Monitor* is characterised by heterogeneity, reflected in the regional, topical and disciplinary diversity of the four articles featured in this section alone. Our first article by Kate Ogg, offers a critical yet balanced legal analysis of recent developments in UK case law relating to Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) asylum claims. Louise Collewet provides readers with a rare insight into what she identifies as the ‘inhuman’ conditions faced by immigration detainees in the Bangkok Immigration Detention Centre (IDC). Adopting a ‘socio-legal’ paradigm, in contrast, Tess Hellgren challenges readers to reconsider the conventional binaries of ‘legality’ and ‘illegality’ in contexts of migration and forced migration alike. Drawing on the experiences of migrants residing in the United States and Denmark, Hellgren highlights the structural power of ‘legality’ in shaping the lives of migrants, while simultaneously emphasising the possibility of agentive responses. Finally, Katherine Karr’s article on ‘The Lost Children of Britain’ sent to former British colonies breaks away from the tendency within refugee and forced migration

studies to take a narrow and ahistorical focus on the present which has been critiqued by Philip Marfleet (2007) and Katy Long (2009).

In the *Field Monitor*, our two authors shed light on the situations of forced migrants at various stages of their journeys. While Julius Marete compares the predicaments of refugees in the Dadaab refugee camps with the few who are resettled to New Zealand, Valentina Hiegemann describes the factors and stressors which affect the educational performance of refugees in Cairo, Egypt.

In the *First Hand Monitor* we find Ahmed Khan's reflections on his own journey from 'refugee to Canadian immigrant and scholar', in which he weaves his personal narrative with broader questions of education, development and global citizenship. Unfortunately, we were unable to publish what we had hoped to be our second *First Hand* article, after it caught the attention of the Deputy Director of a prominent institution in the field of (forced) migration in Europe, and was subsequently withdrawn by the author.

Our *Academic Articles* contains analyses on both the micro- and macro-levels, encompassing both individual experiences of forced migration and institutional responses to it. Laurie Ljinders highlights the situation of Eritrean asylum seekers in Israel, who have faced severe torture and abuse by human traffickers en route, analysing the complexities of how such asylum seekers shape their narratives of suffering and violence when seeking to make sense of their experiences. On a macro-level, in contrast, Saskia Koppenberg asks where forced migrants stand in the migration and development debate, pointing to the exclusion of forced migrants from discussions at the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) despite their proven capacity to contribute to development. Lastly, Anna Shea surveys the situation of non-status people in Canada, drawing on political theory to argue that, despite their apparent alterity, such individuals contribute to the constitution of Canadian citizenship in various ways.

In drawing this Editorial to a close, we, as the incoming Co-Editors-in-Chief, would like to offer four very important thank you's. Firstly, we would like to thank our team of editors who have worked closely with authors to produce this edition. Secondly, we would like to extend our thanks to our contributors, without whom this edition of course would not have been possible. Thirdly, we would like to offer a huge thank you to OxMo's senior editors, and especially to the journal's founder, Tai Sayarath, for making her vision of OxMo a reality. We hope that in this edition we have managed to uphold and continue that vision. Finally, thank you to you, our readers, and we hope that you find this edition as engaging as we do.

Chloé Lewis and James Souter

Oxford, June 2012

References Cited

- LONG, K.** (2009) 'Early Repatriation Policy: Russian Refugee Return 1922-1924', *Journal of Refugee Studies* **22**(2): 133-154.
- MARFLEET, P.** (2007) 'Refugees and History: Why We Must Address the Past', *Refugee Survey Quarterly* **26**(3): 136-148.