

Higher Education for Displaced Women
A defense against human trafficking

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INTRODUCTION

| “Their time is up.”

Thus spoke Oprah Winfrey at the 2018 Golden Globe Awards, of women who do not dare speak up against powerful, dangerous men (“Read Oprah,” 2018). In the United States and elsewhere we are reckoning with the systemic disregarding of women, with a flood of #MeToo declarations and reports of serial sexual harassment. Even among the most privileged and powerful people in the world, among the wealthiest and most famous, women are subjected to the force of domineering men. Globally, it is the most disadvantaged women who feel the gender/power differential the most: the abuse inversely grows as women’s power lessens. And though the most vulnerable populations around the world include both men and women, women’s diminished status compounds any negative effects of poverty and situations of emergency. Displaced women are some of the women most disadvantaged: forgotten or attacked by their state, expected to care for children and family, physically vulnerable in transit, unable to access education, and at-risk of being trafficked.

There are currently 68.5 million displaced people, roughly half of whom are women and girls (UNHCR, 2018b; Medecins Sans Frontieres, 2018). The focus of this paper is the role higher education can play in protecting this population from gender-based violence and human trafficking. But before discussing how education can be a solution, we must understand the human trafficking problem, the current state of education for displaced women, and the ways in which displaced women are at risk of violence.

The paper will work through each of these sections before arriving at the remedies higher education proposes and will end with successful programs and potential next steps.

One natural question is why this paper examines higher education and not education generally. Lower levels of education are incredibly important: they instill fundamental knowledge and facilitate cognitive development (Shafiq, 2013, p. 1). And it would be impossible to reach higher education without the foundation lower levels of education provide. However, higher education possesses benefits primary and secondary education do not. In regard to the hopes held for displaced people in the future, higher education is a necessary ingredient. For example, if we want to move toward a world where NGOs employ people directly connected the work they are doing, we need to bring those future collaborators to the table. This kind of connection is not forged through primary or secondary school but through higher education.

The danger of writing this paper specifically about displaced women is that it may allow for other papers, ones that supposedly discuss displaced people as a whole, to exclude women entirely. Doreen Indra (2008) in *Not a “Room of One’s Own,” Engendering Forced Migration Knowledge and Practice* writes, “To permute Virginia Woolf’s phrase, forced migration discourse may now increasingly allocate a ‘room of their own’

to women and men wanting to discuss women's issues, but most of the rest of the house remains genderless space" (p. 5). This paper is meant to bridge the gap between the room of women's own and the rest of the house by writing over the "genderless" discussion of displacement with one that focuses on women. We must both dedicate research and discussion to female-specific topics and actively include women in the "genderless" conversations, ensuring that conversations not primarily focused on women still include them.

Human Trafficking

The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto (adopted in 2000) defines human trafficking as

"the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs" (U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, 2004, p. 42).

At its core, human trafficking, also called "modern slavery," is the act of exploiting vulnerable persons, and it can look different depending on the act (e.g. recruitment, transport), the means through which it is performed (e.g. threat of force, deception), and the purpose (e.g. labor, sexual exploitation) (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d.).

Although the most well-known form of human trafficking is sexual exploitation, forced labor/labor exploitation is the most prolific type of trafficking: 64% of trafficking victims were exploited for labor in 2016 (International Labour Office, 2017, p. 29). Labor exploitation victims are 40% women and 60% men; sexual exploitation victims are 98% women and 2% men ("Who is Being Trafficked," 2014).

Human trafficking is lucrative work for traffickers: sexual exploitation alone brings in \$99 billion annually ("The Profits," 2014). Forced labor exploitation produces \$43.2 billion in profits, and domestic servitude produces \$8 billion ("The Profits," 2014). To put these numbers in perspective, Microsoft Corporation only reached \$100 billion in annual revenue this year (Lynley, 2018).

Current Status of Education for Displaced Women

As of December 2018, virtually no data has been collected or published on the number of displaced women pursuing higher education. The percentage of displaced people of all genders enrolled in higher education is around 1%, compared to a global rate of 37% (The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2018a, p. 25). Though the gender distribution of displaced people in higher education remains unrecorded, if the gender inequality trend in primary and secondary education continues into higher education, which is likely, women are a minority of that 1%.

Of the refugee population in Kenya, there are 7 girls for every 10 boys in primary school and 4 girls for every 10 boys in secondary school (UNHCR, 2018a, p. 15).

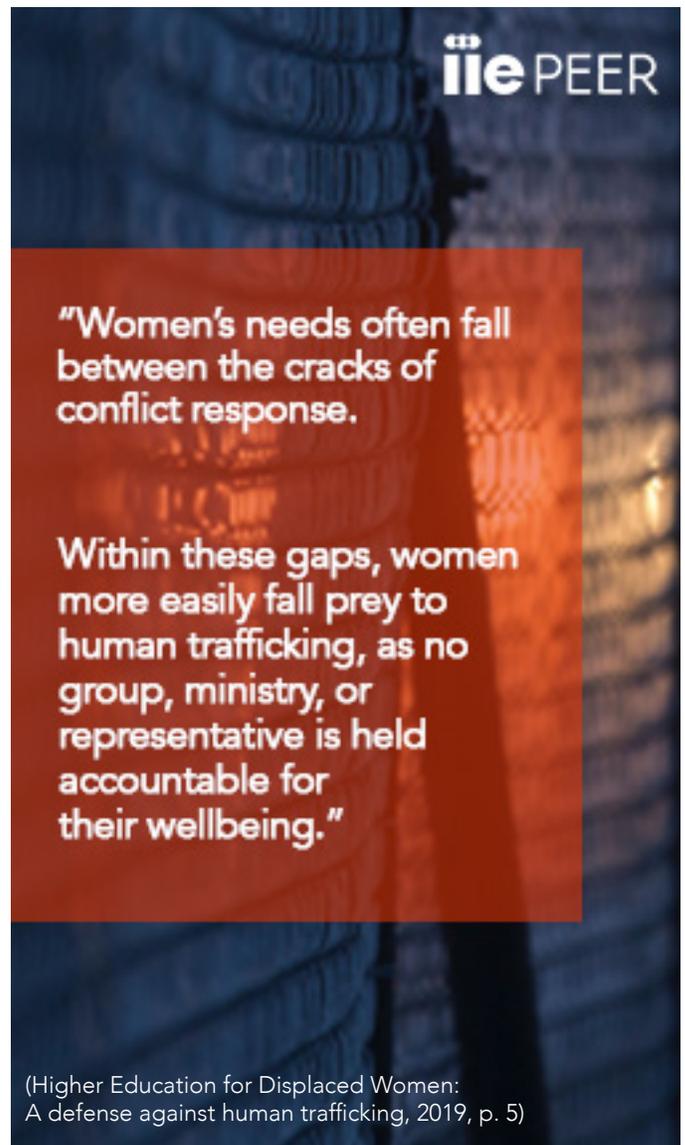
If the trend of dropping 30 percentage points as compared to the boys' attendance were to continue, there would be only 1 girl for every 10 boys in higher education in Kenya. That would mean the 1% statistic would indicate that .91% of displaced men and .09% of displaced women are enrolled in higher education. When gender is considered in that 1% figure, at least in Kenya, it drops from an already-low 1% to a mere .09%. Additionally, in pre-conflict Syria, gender parity in universities had nearly been reached; now, displaced Syrian women are three times less likely to attain higher education than their male counterparts (Jusoor Syria, 2015).

Globally, women are receiving an inferior education to men. Of the 792 million illiterate adults in the world, almost two-thirds are women (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2010, p. 12). This disparity in education has a number of origins, but conflict is certainly playing a role in the decreased access to education for women.

A report by UNICEF (2002) lays out the possible barriers to girls' education, which are exacerbated in conflict areas. The barriers, presented in three categories—household- and community-level barriers, school-level barriers, and policy- and system-level barriers—could prohibit people of all genders from attending school, but each contains a "gender dimension" that intensifies the barrier experienced by women and girls. Added is a column that denotes the "displacement dimension" of barriers to education. Though these barriers describe the challenges girls face in attending primary and secondary school, they are significant in the discussion of higher education: if displaced girls drop out of school when

they are young, they will never even entertain the possibility of higher education. A holistic approach to female education is needed to increase women's attendance at the university level; their access to university matters little if they do not complete their education prior to that point.

According to UNHCR (2018a), only two-thirds of refugee children enrolled in primary school reach secondary school (p. 13). This chart helps explain why that is true: any potential obstacle to a child's education is compounded if that child is female, and compounded further if that girl is displaced.



Household- and community-level barriers

Barrier	Gender Dimension	Displacement Dimension
Direct costs of schooling (e.g. school fees, supplies, clothing, and shoes)	If there is a choice between sending a son or daughter to school, the son will usually be shown preference.	Conflict can disrupt a family's finances, making the cost even greater.
Indirect costs of schooling ("opportunity costs")	Traditional division of labor has girls working in the home.	Conflict can disrupt a family's finances, making the financial opportunities forsaken for education more necessary.
Attitudes and practices (e.g. "traditional, cultural or religious beliefs; gender stereotypes; lack of knowledge on benefits of education; gender-differentiated child-rearing practices")	Early marriage and other aspects of patriarchal societies can result in girls' education holding low priority.	
Health-related issues	Girls are more likely to care for their families; girls receive less food than boys.	Within conflict areas, the likelihood of health problems increases. A displaced child may have little access to healthcare.

(UNICEF, 2002)

School-level barriers

Barrier	Gender Dimension	Displacement Dimension
No school close to home	Girls are less likely to be permitted to attend school if the distance is long and there are issues of safety.	Those issues of safety magnify when within a conflict area.
Poor-quality learning environment (e.g. overcrowding, lack of sanitation, violence)	A lack of sanitary supplies or bathroom at all can force girls to stay at home during menstruation. Girls are more subjected to sexual violence in multi-gendered bathrooms, prompting them to stay at home to avoid bathroom violence.	Armed conflict or natural disaster can destroy school buildings.
Poor-quality learning processes (e.g. untrained teachers, poor school management, inflexible school calendar)	Girls are pushed into nonprofessional courses that do not lead to higher education. Nonflexible calendar may exclude girls who have competing obligations, such as caring for their families.	The running of schools during conflict can suffer managerial, teaching, and attendance setbacks.

(UNICEF, 2002)

School-level barriers

Barrier	Gender Dimension	Displacement Dimension
Insufficient national budgetary allocations to primary and secondary education	Competition for education access usually means boys receive the few spots that exist.	Budgeting for displaced people's needs (if the budgeting exists) is allocated more toward immediate relief concerns than education.

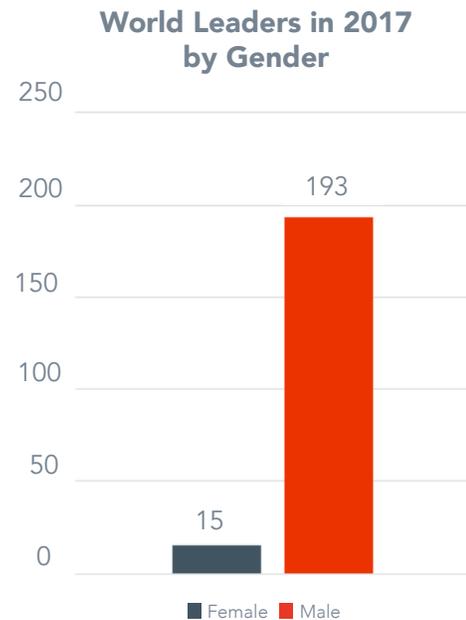
(UNICEF, 2002)

Factors that Put Displaced Women at Risk of Gender-Based Violence and Human Trafficking

Little representation or direct funding Women and girls, regardless of the state of conflict around them, are born with a heightened chance of being forgotten by their government, as they have little representation in those governments. In March 2017, there were only 15 female world leaders in office, representing fewer than 10% of the 193 UN member states (Geigler & Kent, 2017). Though this lack of female representation does not necessitate a lower quality of life for women worldwide, it does display the absence of women's power at the international level (a macro-version of that found at the local level), which stipulates that the people leading most countries are those who do not know a woman's lived experience nor the oppression that shapes it and may not have the awareness to seek it out.

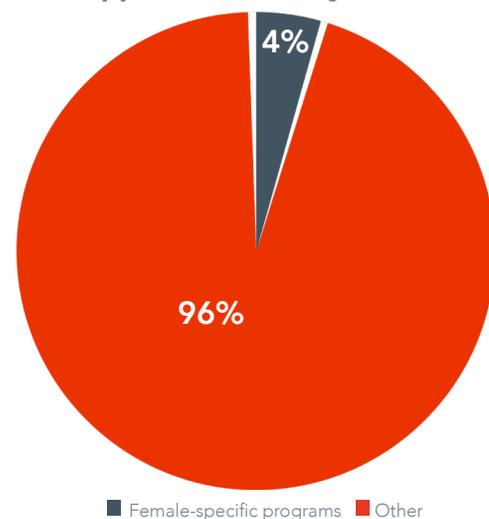
In addition to representation, funding toward women's specific needs and groups is also lacking. In 2014 only 4% of projects in UN inter-agency appeals were targeted toward women and girls, and in 2015 just 1% of all funding to fragile states went to women's groups or ministries (UN Women, 2016). Without pointed attention and funding, women's needs often fall between the cracks of conflict response. Within these gaps, women more easily fall prey to human

trafficking, as no group, ministry, or representative is held accountable for their wellbeing.



(Geigler & Kent, 2017)

Projects in UN Inter-Agency Appeals in 2014 by Focus



(UN Women, 2016)

TRANSIT

Refugees, asylum-seekers, and externally displaced people must cross borders and often travel long distances in search of safety. Movement is a defining factor of displaced people's experience, and it puts women at great physical risk. Desperate to flee conflict and lacking funds to pay for expensive transport to areas of safety, women are made extremely vulnerable to men seeking to exploit them for sex in exchange for advancing their journey away from home.

The International Order of Migration (IOM) Italy Chief of Mission, Federico Soda, said of women crossing the Mediterranean, "During the trip they were repeatedly raped or forced to prostitute themselves in near slavery condition... Many of them had to swear an oath to repay the money for the trip in a voodoo ceremony,¹ a psychological manipulation that sometimes makes it difficult to persuade them that they don't need to pay off the 'debt' to their exploiters" (2014). And the violence continues after arrival: in 2016, IOM estimated that of the 11,000 Nigerian women arriving by sea that year, about 80 percent of them were likely to be victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Italy or in other countries of the European Union (2017, p. 9).

One 20-year-old woman from Syria said of her experience in transit, "The smuggler was harassing me. He tried to touch me a couple of times. Only when my male cousin was around he did not come close. I was very afraid, especially that we hear stories along the way of women who can't afford the smugglers who would be given the option to sleep with the smugglers for a discount" (Amnesty International, 2016).

In cases such as these, women are forced into sexual situations just by their attempt to reach safety. In situations of an exchange—for instance, giving into sexual advances made by smugglers in exchange for travel—the act may appear to be a choice, but sex coerced as payment or to neutralize blackmail is still sexual abuse.

REFUGEE CAMPS

Refugee camps, inherently created in times of crisis, are not set up to meet women's safety needs. The camps can be breeding grounds for trafficking and sexual violence, and there is not even a de jure framework to prevent violence or punish aggressors (Wilson, 2011, p. 6). Reem, a 20-year-old Syrian woman reported, "I never got the chance to sleep in settlements. I was too scared that anyone would touch me. The tents were all mixed and I witnessed violence... In the camps we are so prone to being touched, and women can't really complain and they don't want to cause issues to disrupt their trip" (Amnesty International, 2016). Even with the dangers of travel, Reem and other women like her prefer to stay moving to avoid the men who lurk in refugee camps.

Not all refugees live in camps. Urban refugees, who live in cities rather than camps, are safer from such dangers as military incursions and directed sexual abuse. However, urban refugees, particularly women, face unique dangers: dispersed without much identification, they are difficult to provide direct aid to; and searching for a job in a new city with no supportive structures looking out for them, they are more at-risk for human trafficking, especially that which involves labor exploitation (Wilson, 2011, p. 6).

¹ This ceremony can involve the mixing and drinking of the victim's clothing, blood, hair, and fingernails; it is used to push the victim to comply with her trafficker lest curses befall her family (D'I. & Erasmus, 2018).

INFORMAL JOBS

According to UNICEF (2018), of the 1 billion young people who will enter the workforce in the next 10 years, more than 90% of those in developing countries will enter work in the informal sector, within which “low or no pay, abuse and exploitation are common.” Formal jobs are even less accessible to the most disadvantaged girls. This data does not even mention displaced people, who, cut off from their work and schools, are far more likely to resort to informal jobs that do not require much training, particularly if there is a language barrier. Both men and women are at risk of abandoning their work and educational aspirations for the pay of informal work in the throes of conflict, but women are far more likely to be subjected to violence in their informal work.

According to a University of Nebraska conducted report titled *Trafficking Risks for Refugees*, “prostitution is sometimes one of the only ways refugee women and their families can make money” (Wilson, 2011, p. 8). The report goes on, “and the voluntary nature of such labor is questionable when there is no alternative source of sustenance.” This second statement is crucial because it highlights that only a smudged line exists between the informal (and often illegal) job sector and violent exploitation.

Urban refugees looking for work are at high risk for this labor-based exploitation. The frequent inability of urban refugees to access legitimate work opportunities in their new setting can result in the emergence of more illegitimate and dangerous options (Wilson, 2011, p. 8). One example of this exploitation is the case of Ishtar, a Syrian woman who fled to Palestine, where she met a friendly man who brought her to Amman, Jordan (Harper, 2014).

After three months of treating Ishtar well, he forced her to work in bars and “illegal activities,” and then coerced her into signing a marriage certificate with “certain conditions” (Harper, 2014). Ishtar’s husband then began taking all the money she made (Harper, 2014).

Many human trafficking victims, such as Ishtar, do not go into sex trafficking but are fed into systems of labor exploitation. Urban refugees are at greater risk to be trafficked for labor than their permanent resident neighbors because the offered wages are often unacceptably low for established residents.

These wages may still be higher than those of jobs urban refugees saw in their home country and are therefore more appealing (Heyzer, 2002, p. 7). As noted by the Executive director of the UN Development Fund for Women, Noeleen Heyzer (2002), in an address titled *Combating Traffic in Women and Children: A Gender and Human Rights Framework*, “most trafficked workers have low levels of education and may be illiterate in the national language, so they are unaware of the existence of minimum standards or of the means of enforcing them” (p. 7). She adds that trafficked workers are also often unaware of their rights in the workplace and of the means to enforce those rights. Of these at-risk workers settled in new countries, “women and children are especially vulnerable because they are most likely to be illiterate and uninformed, and have been conditioned by gender relations in their home culture to passively accept whatever conditions are offered” (p. 7). This last sentiment of women’s learned passivity is problematic, as it incriminates these “home cultures” in one sweeping generalization.

Education as a solution

However, the trend of women's increased vulnerability stands. While Heyzer does not specify that these risks are felt by displaced people, they can be inferred as applicable, for displaced people experience the same disadvantages of little or disrupted education, illiteracy in the local language, and unawareness of the human rights they are owed.

It is clear that displaced women face particular dangers. In the informal job sector, in transit, and in both refugee camps and urban areas, they are subject to high risk of gender-based violence and trafficking. These women are often uneducated or taken out of school at the onset of conflict—young women and girls in conflict-affected areas are 2.5 times more likely than their counterparts in areas of peace to be out of school (UN Women, 2016). Yet while these conditions of exposure to violence and lack of education are often seen as correlated, they are not frequently enough seen as, respectively, a problem and potential solution. Women who pursue education rather than abandon it for more immediate offerings of money or safety (informal jobs, staying at home away from dangerous roads and men, etc.) are safer from violence and trafficking in the long-term.

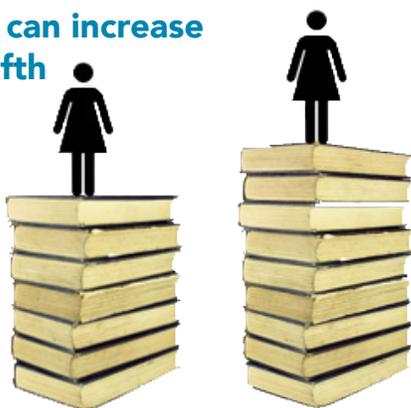
Higher education does not in itself grant safety and protection from human trafficking. It increases women's access to higher-paying jobs, generates awareness of one's human rights and how to avoid exploitation, and promotes a more educated next generation. Together these benefits work multilaterally to protect women from human trafficking.

INCREASED INCOME

Perhaps the most significant benefit of higher education for women is the influx of economic opportunities it can bring. Not only are there more jobs for better-educated women, but those jobs are higher-paying. UNESCO research shows that a woman's earnings can increase by one-fifth by just one additional year of schooling (UNHCR, 2018a, p. 15).

Higher education specifically is an important part of this achievement of better jobs. While primary and secondary education are both crucial in improving women's livelihoods and ought not to be discounted, higher education provides further employment opportunities. In labor-surplus countries, primary education alone does not grant advancement; secondary and higher education is required for desirable jobs (Heyzer, 2002, p. 15).

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(UNHCR, 2018a, p.15)

Women with lesser financial means are far more likely to experience violence and/or trafficking. As discussed above, it is often situations of economic desperation that place women in danger of exploitation. Human smugglers trick or force women into trafficking when they cannot pay for transportation; displaced women who resort to prostitution do so because they have no other source of income (Ahlen, 2006, p. 11). It cannot be denied that increased income has a fundamental impact on displaced women's safety. Higher education helps them attain it. One woman named Madobe—born in Kenya to Somali parents, a mother of six, and reportedly one of the best in her online class—said, "Mostly I don't rest... It is challenging, but there will be a future. The only future I have is education" (Gikandi, 2018). Madobe's comment draws attention to the reality that higher education is not an easy or luxurious alternative to going straight to work (in the home or elsewhere) but that it is worth its difficulties for the future it unlocks

OTHER INDIVIDUAL BENEFITS

Increased income is the most obvious benefit of higher education for displaced women, but there are also intangible effects education can have on women's safety. Women who are educated in caring for their and their family's health and safety are more able to do so. In Indonesia, the vaccination rate of children whose mothers have at least a secondary education is 68%, while the vaccination rate of children whose mothers do not have at least a secondary education is only 19% (UNESCO, 2010, p. 19). In Burkina Faso, mothers with secondary education are twice more likely to give birth in health facilities than mothers without secondary education (UNESCO, 2010, p. 21).

According to UNESCO (2010), education plays a role in giving women "more control over how many children they have" (p.14). The same report states that women's fertility rates are reduced by 10% after one extra year of schooling (p.14). Although this argument can lead to one powered by eugenics advocating to lower the birth rate of impoverished and/or displaced women, that road can be averted by looking at the word "control." Women ought to have control over how many children they have – whether that be none, one, or many. Higher education provides women with the financial circumstance and the sex education they need to achieve this control.

Educated displaced women who have learned about the human rights to which they are entitled are better-situated to take humane jobs and avoid the traps of traffickers looking for cheap labor. And women who are educated in the language of their host country are especially advantaged to by-step suspicious activity. Higher education can provide displaced women with the tools and skills they need to stay safe.

COMMUNITY-FELT BENEFITS

Higher education clearly has an impact on the wellbeing of displaced women, yet it would be shortsighted to say that education's rewards stop at the individual. At the community level, higher education of displaced female populations generates female empowerment. Mona Eltahawy in her book *Headscarves and Hymens: Why the Middle East Needs a Sexual Revolution* (2016) writes that when people ask her how they can best help women abroad, she replies, "help your own community's women fight misogyny. By doing so, you

help the global struggle against the hatred of women” (p. 29). Consequently, displaced women who attain education, by actively overcoming the barriers that face them, contribute to the global advancement of all women.

Educated displaced people can also contribute to resolving conflict in their home countries and rebuilding affected areas. The introduction of a 2010 issue of the Canadian journal *Refuge* titled *Higher Education for Refugees* stresses that higher education contributes to the development of a “critical consciousness” of refugees, one that lower levels of education have less ability to shape (Dryden-Peterson & Giles, 2010, p. 5). This critical consciousness can lead displaced people to become the solutions to the very conflicts that triggered their flight.

In situations of conflict, higher education often takes a back seat, yielding to more immediate issues of relief (e.g. food, housing, and primary education). But this pattern has revealed itself to be untenable as the average amount of time someone spends displaced has soared. (The oft-mentioned statistic of 17 years being the average time spent in a refugee camp is narrow and not wholly true; the actual average of time spent displaced is unknown, but is claimed to fall anywhere between 5 and 26 years (White, 2015).) It is understandable that vital needs should be prioritized, but with this length of time and breadth of variation within displacement, “Band-Aid” solutions addressing only matters of life and death are not enough. Indeed, this response is equivalent to keeping one’s head above water, as opposed to swimming toward the shore. We must see education for displaced peoples through a greater lens

so that we do not generate a lost generation of uneducated displaced people and further conflict.

It is crucial to see higher education, especially for women, as an investment rather than a luxury. As discussed above, higher education generates more income for displaced people, it increases the health, safety, and empowerment of displaced women, and it provides the resources and skills for its graduates to make meaningful change around conflict. It must not be put off; it must be regarded as the assumed—not conceivable—next step after primary and secondary education.

Successful programs & recommendations

The barriers that exist for displaced students seeking higher education mimic in some ways those outlined above for students of primary and secondary school. Largely, financing one’s education when family finances have been depleted due to conflict is a major deterring factor. Within higher education, tuition is not the only cost. There are costs such as room and board, visa and transportation fees if the university is outside of a student’s current country, and unexpected costs of emergencies, medical and otherwise. Other challenges facing displaced students include a possible language barrier, a lack of understanding of the education system in one’s host country, and universities’ difficulty in recognizing the merit of students without access to grades and documentation (Streitwieser, Loo, Ohorodnik, & Jeong, 2018, p. 2).

But hope is not lost for displaced students in education. International organizations are working to connect displaced people with higher education through online platforms and scholarships. The Institute of International Education's Platform for Education in Emergencies Response ([IIE PEER](#)) is one such organizational response. IIE PEER is an online platform, offered in both English and Arabic, on which displaced students can find undergraduate and graduate scholarships, language learning opportunities, online courses, and resources. Students may pursue opportunities in a range of countries, regardless of whether they are already situated there. IIE PEER also awards travel grants of up to \$2,000 to Syrian students who need financial assistance in reaching their future institution.

The Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative ([DAFI](#)) is a UNHCR-run program established in 1992 that provides scholarships to undergraduate refugees in their country of asylum (UNHCR, 2017a, p. 2). DAFI also provides mentoring, language classes, and other types of support to their scholars (UNHCR, 2017a, p. 2). Students must attend an institution within their host country, and they must hold refugee status. In 2016 through the DAFI program 4,652 students were supported in 37 countries (UNHCR, 2017b, 7). Women hold 44% of the scholarships, with wide variation between countries: in 13 out of 37 DAFI program countries, women received the majority of the scholarships, but in eight of the countries, women received fewer than one-third of the scholarships (UNHCR, 2017b, 7).

[Jusoor Syria](#), an organization that supports higher education specifically for Syrian students, runs a scholarship program titled

"100 Syrian Women, 10,000 Syrian Lives," with the goal of bringing more Syrian women to study in the United States and Canada (Jusoor Syria, 2015). Applicants must be either Syrian or Palestinian refugees in Syria and may apply for undergraduate or graduate studies (Jusoor Syria, 2015). 100 Syrian Women, 10,000 Syrian Lives is a much narrower program than either of the two described above. With the particular focus on Syrian women, it excludes other groups to intentionally lift up Syrian women. Considering the gender gap of displaced students in higher education, scholarships allotted solely for women may be just the direction organizations need to move toward to close that gap.

Efforts to increase displaced women's access to higher education would be incomplete without also focusing on girls' access to primary and secondary education, as only those who complete the earlier levels of education can work towards university and beyond. A case study conducted by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) in Guinea and Sierra Leone reveals a successful support structure that serves to keep girls in school: female classroom assistants (Bott, Morrison, & Ellsberg, 2005, p. 6). The International Rescue Committee (IRC) initiated the Classroom Assistant program in an effort to combat teachers' sexual manipulation of their female students (Bott et al., p. 6). The classroom assistants act as a liaison between students and their teacher, particularly in the handling of grades; the less direct contact the teacher has with his students, the less opportunity there is for sexual exploitation, i.e. demanding sex for higher grades (Bott et al., p. 6). While protecting the students from abuse is a

large part of their role, the assistants are also present to perform jobs that, though seemingly small, help to combat girls dropping out: tracking students' attendance, counseling students, and generally fostering "girl-friendly learning environments" (Bott et al., p. 6). Classroom assistants must have completed their education at least through grade nine, which, in addition to ensuring that they have learned the class material, provides examples to girls of younger grades of older girls who have persisted in their education (Bott et al., p. 6). The assistants are encouraged by the IRC to attend evening classes and further their education (Bott et al., p. 6).

To encourage these displaced primary and secondary school students to continue in their education is a necessary part of raising the number of displaced women in higher education. It would be beneficial to implement this female classroom assistant program in as many refugee camps as it is possible to do so. While the program does not satisfy the need for more female teachers in the classroom, it does help fill that gap in situations of emergency, when qualified female teachers can be hard to find (Bott et al., p. 6).

All these efforts—IIE PEER, DAFI, Jusoor's 100 Syrian Women, 10,000 Syrian Lives, and IRC's female classroom assistants—help lift women up, bringing them closer to higher education and farther from the dangers of human trafficking that trap less-educated women. To continue promoting higher education for displaced women, organizational responses ought to have programs or opportunities designated for women, so that we may move closer to gender parity within education. Furthermore, we should encourage the development and support of programs such

as IRC's classroom assistants that address girls' barriers to primary and secondary education. Both responses are necessary to promote displaced women's attainment of higher education.

Finally, the necessary next step is the collection of more data on displaced women within higher education. It is unthinkable that we should continue with the current dearth of information. To serve a broader purpose, the collection of female-specific data sends the message that women's needs are deserving of their own research and acknowledges that oppression and hardship do not stop at just one identity (i.e. someone is not just a woman or just displaced, etc. but comprises multiple facets of identity). To fulfill a more immediate purpose, female-specific data would help organizations and governments understand what and where the need is. It would allow for more accurate reports to be written and better-suited responses to conflict situations in the future. 

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