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Primary schools
Much needs yet to be done in Guatemala

Climate change
Many issues remain unresolved after Paris agreement

WTO
What Nairobi summit has achieved and what it did not achieve

Global refugee crisis

Title: Refugees in Macedonia.
Photo: AP Photo/picture-alliance

Focus: Global refugee crisis

Misguided policies

Many people from Latin America try to get to the USA via Mexico. Both countries benefit from migration, but their policies focus on sealing off borders, reports **Virginia Mercado** of the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. Page 14

The task for this decade

Gerd Müller, Germany's federal minister for economic cooperation and development, assesses the challenges of the current refugee crisis and indicates how to solve the problems. Page 16

New protection for refugees

Europe is dismally failing to rise to the refugee challenge. It needs to redesign protection for refugees within the EU, argues **Karl Kopp** of the civil-society organisation Pro Asyl. **Ndongo Samba Sylla,** who works for the Dakar office of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation spells out why Africans find the distinction between political refugees and economic refugees absurd. Pages 19 and 22

Reduced to a number

Because of recurring violence, many refugees cannot return home for years or even decades. **Raphael Sungu** works for a humanitarian organisation and has witnessed how refugees in Kakuma camp in Kenya despairingly lose any sense of purpose in life. Life is very difficult for internally displaced people in Nigeria as well, writes journalist **Damilola Oyedele.** Pages 23 and 27

Tackling trauma

About 2 million displaced people of different faiths and from different countries live in the Kurdish region of northern Iraq. The Jiyan Foundation provides medical treatment, psychotherapy and social support. Katja Dombrowski discussed matters with the foundation's leader **Salah Ahmad.** Page 30

Overburdened and thoughtless

Pakistan has taken in the second highest number of foreign refugees worldwide. In view of many challenges – including a great number of internally displaced people – Islamabad is not fulfilling all its duties, according to **Waqqas Mir,** a High Court lawyer in Lahore. Page 33

Pursuit of happiness

Many academics leave Africa for Europe or North America because they struggle to find good jobs at home. Three Ugandans told German journalist **Isabella Bauer** about their experiences. Page 36

Editorial

Sealing Europe off is no solution

Though many European countries stayed aloof for a long time, the current refugee crisis is nothing new. The UN Refugee Agency UNHCR has been drawing attention to this global phenomenon for years. In 2014, the most recent year for which we have reliable data, some 60 million people lived displaced from their homes – more than ever before. In 2013, 8 million fewer had been affected, and ten years earlier, even 22 million fewer. More than half of the displaced were children in 2014.

Of the 60 million, 38 million were internally displaced persons (IDPs), who, though fleeing, stayed in their country. According to the UNHCR, Syria had the largest number of IDPs in 2014: 7.6 million. Colombia came second (6 million) and Iraq third (3.6 million). The numbers are set to rise given that an end to the conflicts in Syria and other places in the Middle East and North Africa is not in sight.

The influx of refugees Europe woke up to last year did not come out of the blue. War has been raging in Syria for five years. Civilians are helplessly exposed to violence. Afghanistan and Iraq are dysfunctional states, haunted by terrorist outfits such as ISIS or the Taliban. Lots of people have fled to neighbouring countries from Syria and Afghanistan, so Turkey, Pakistan and Lebanon now have the largest foreign-refugee populations worldwide. As things get worse in camps in Syria's neighbouring countries, the exodus to Europe gets stronger.

It is scandalous that UN agencies have lately suffered a lack of funding and even had to cut food rations. Life in the camps is becoming unbearable, but the people concerned see no future for themselves or their children back home. Hopelessness has consequences. Some youngsters start appreciating extremists and even join terrorist groups. ISIS and the Taliban know how to recruit fighters in camps. Many more people, however, try to get to Europe, a world region that looks like a paradise of peace and prosperity.

Europe, however, treats the refugees in a disgraceful way and does not offer a legal option of entry. Tens of thousands of people have died in the Mediterranean Sea since the turn of the millennium. In 2015 alone, some 3,700 drowned. When a large European public finally realised last year just how desperate the situation of displaced people is, Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel declared that refugees are welcome in Germany. This stance earned her international respect. Earlier, German civil society had begun to make impressive voluntary efforts to accommodate refugees in a sense of human solidarity and decency.

As the influx of refugees has not stopped, however, Merkel is now facing headwinds – even within her own party. Some demand her government should close borders and define a maximum number for refugees who may come to Germany. For good reason, Merkel argues that such measures would violate human rights.

All European governments must now assume responsibility. They tend to tell their counterparts from developing countries that human rights must be respected. Obviously, the EU must respect them too. If its members shy from doing so only because the requirements are demanding, their credibility in Africa, Asia and Latin America will be further eroded. Such a stance, moreover, would do nothing to motivate the Muslim allies Europe needs in the fight against terrorist forces.

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School worries in Guatemala

Journalist **Patricia Galicia** assesses why almost 20 % of Guatemala's children do not go to school and discusses the rise of private schools with **Carlos Aldana,** a former deputy minister of education. Indigenous communities in particular are marginalised. Pages 40 and 41

"We are running out of time"

A new global climate agreement was concluded in the UN context in Paris in December, but many important issues remain unresolved. Hans Dembowski discussed matters with **Thomas Loster,** director of Munich Re Foundation, who has been observing climate negotiations for 20 years.
Page 42

Debate

Zataari/AP Photo/picture-alliance

Scrambling against decline

Old tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran are reintensifying. By executing a leading Shia cleric, Saudi Arabia has recklessly fanned the flames, argues **Maysam Behravesh.** Page 46

picture-alliance/dpa

Global Monitoring Report

Education for all not achieved

In 2000, 164 governments agreed on the "Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All" (EFA). It was an ambitious agenda to reach six education goals by 2015. The most important target was universal primary education which also became one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Despite considerable progress, education for all was not achieved, as the EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) shows. Altogether, the EFA initiative is rated as a qualified success.

The authors of the report, that was commissioned by UNESCO, criticise that EFA lost global attention once the MDGs became the dominant development agenda. "The result was excessive emphasis on universal primary education," they write. While this target was more applicable to the poorest countries, other nations found it less relevant. According to the findings, the focus on universal primary enrolment meant less attention to other crucial areas such as education quality, pre-school care and adult literacy.

Nonetheless, the GMR acknowledges that there has been tremendous progress since 2000. The number of children and adolescents who were out of school has fallen by almost half. The monitoring of education progress has also improved. According to the GMR, the greatest progress was achieved in gender parity, particularly in primary education. However, gender disparity still exists in almost a third of the countries for which UNESCO has data.

There are shortfalls in other areas too. The authors state: "Overall, not even the target of universal primary education was reached, let alone the more ambitious EFA goals, and the most disadvantaged continue to be the last to benefit." Education remains under-financed because only few governments prioritise education in national budgets. Moreover, donor governments have reduced aid to education since 2010 and not sufficiently prioritised the countries most in need.

Stagnating enrolment ratio

The achievement of universal primary education is considered the most important EFA indicator. While the global pri-

In northern Bangladesh, NGOs operate floating boat schools that move from one area to another, providing classes to children who do not have access to other schools.

mary enrolment ratio increased from 84 % in 1999 to 91 % in 2007, the indicator has since stagnated. It is estimated to reach 93 % in 2015 at best. Dropping out of school remains an issue: in 32 countries, mostly in sub-Sahara Africa, at least 20 % of children enrolled are not expected to reach the last grade. By the 2015 deadline, one in six children in low and middle income countries who should have completed primary school were expected not to have done so. In total numbers, almost 100 million children are concerned.

The problem of out-of-school children is becoming increasingly concentrated in conflict countries. Thirty-six percent of out-of-school children are living in conflict zones, especially in the Arab region, and the proportion is growing.

The report team found that the most disadvantaged people are still furthest from achieving universal primary completion. They estimate that children from the richest quintile of families were five times more likely to attain full primary education in 2010 than those from the poorest quintile. That ratio had only slightly improved since 2000. Gender, location and ethnicity also had an impact on access to school.

According to the GMR, major efforts must be made to prioritise disadvantaged and marginalised children in the next decade, particularly children with disabilities and those living in disaster situations. Furthermore, the commitment to school access must go along with a focus on learning and relevance. Improving quality could ensure that public education systems become a vehicle for upward mobility, especially for disadvantaged people. Finally, the authors call for stronger action on financing across the board.

Katja Dombrowski

Link:

EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015:
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002322/232205e.pdf

Education for All goals

Six internationally agreed education goals aimed to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015.

Goal 1: Expanding and improving comprehensive early-childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Goal 2: Ensuring that all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

Goal 3: Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.

Goal 4: Achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

Goal 5: Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

Goal 6: Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Decent conditions and fair wages

In Myanmar, the garments industry is booming. After decades of isolation, the country's economy is opening up, and global players have started sourcing from its factories. While investments are welcome, and garments production is powering economic growth, the workers are hardly benefiting from this trend.

Lynn Bo/picture-alliance/dpa

Garment worker in Myanmar.

In 2014, an average of two new garments factories opened every week in Myanmar. The industry now comprises almost 300 factories, with a workforce of nearly 300,000, of whom 90 % are young women. Global retail brands like Gap, H&M, Primark and Adidas are among the buyers.

According to research done by Oxfam last summer, garments workers are stuck in poverty in spite of working up to 11 hours per day, six days a week. The experts assessed 22 factories in industrial zones in and around Yangon, the country's economic capital.

In September 2015, a minimum wage of $83 a month was introduced – the lowest minimum wage of any garment-producing country in the world apart from Bangladesh with $ 68 per month (see Asadullah and Wahhaj in D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2016/01, p. 32 ff.). Oxfam considers the setting of a minimum wage an important benchmark, but the results of its recently published report "Made in Myanmar" suggest that the sum is not enough for workers to cover their and their families' basic needs. Almost half of all workers surveyed are trapped in debt and report that they borrowed money to pay for basic items.

Safety was another big concern. More than one in three workers reported that they had been injured at work. Many were afraid of factory fires, saying that building exits were often blocked or even locked.

According to the findings, workers face verbal abuse by supervisors, who often put pressure on them to work faster. Almost one in four workers was forced to do overtime, sometimes unpaid. A number of respondents reported working through lunch breaks and into the night to meet excessive production targets.

Weak rule of law, poor regulation and the lack of respect for workers' rights compound the dismal labour conditions in Myanmar's factories, the authors state. If those conditions do not improve, they expect serious accidents, social unrest and human-rights violations. Oxfam calls on international brands and their suppliers to safeguard workers' fundamental rights and to make sure they can earn a decent living for themselves and their families.

Therefore, international sourcing companies should:

- publish the locations of supplier factories to enable independent monitoring of work conditions,
- support suppliers to ensure that workers receive regular training and information,
- ensure that supplier factories can afford to pay legal wages and even facilitate wage bargaining to raise wages above the minimum level,
- ensure that delivery times do not require workers to do excessive overtime,
- develop long-term relationships with suppliers so that they can plan for a long-term workforce, and
- stop or at least strictly limit the use of short-term contracts in supplier factories.

Manufacturers and sourcing companies should:

- recognise the right of independent trade unions and employers to engage freely in collective bargaining, including bargaining on wages at the factory level,
- provide regular training for workers on occupational health and safety as well as fire/electrical safety,
- allow and support the formation of workers' health and safety committees,
- develop mechanisms for workers to anonymously report safety hazards to managers, and
- create accessible, effective and efficient mechanisms for addressing workers' grievances.

In Myanmar, the garments industry is just starting to grow. According to Oxfam, decision makers and business leaders have a choice: they can either allow the country to become the next low-cost, exploitative and unstable manufacturing location; or they can learn from other low-income countries' mistakes and make industrial growth fair and inclusive right from the start.

Katja Dombrowski

Link:

Made in Myanmar: Entrenched poverty or decent jobs for garment workers?
https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/bp209-made-in-myanmar-garment-workers-091215-en.pdf

Water as a weapon

In the eyes of the terror militia ISIS, water is of great strategic relevance in the areas it occupies in Iraq and Syria. ISIS uses the resource to enforce its rule and as a weapon to fight enemy troops.

Tobias von Lossow of Germany's foreign-policy think tank SWP has published a study on how ISIS is using water resources in a world region that is known for water scarcity. He argues that conquering major dams on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers is an important component of the militia's expansion strategy, just like conquering oil fields. Dams allow the Islamists to control the water resources.

Photoshot/picture-alliance

A Kurdish fighter protecting the Mosul dam.

In 2014, ISIS gained control of almost all important dams in the two-rivers system in northern Iraq, the author writes. The fighting was heavy, and the militia could not hold on to all of them. However, several important dams – for instance near Falluja, Samarra and Ramadi – are still under ISIS control.

ISIS is trying to use the water resources for military purposes, von Lossow writes. He sees three options: cutting water supply, flooding areas or contaminating drinking water. According to the SWP scholar, ISIS is doing all of this. In both Syria and Iraq the extremists are reported to have blocked the water supply for municipalities, towns and entire regions. One example was the predominantly Christian town of Qaraqosh in northern Iraq. It was virtually isolated by ISIS in June 2014. The author also gives examples for flooding incidents. One was when ISIS closed river locks after conquering the Falluja dam in April 2014 in order to submerge areas upstream and disrupt agencies of the Iraqi government. Moreover, he reports that ISIS fighters contaminated drinking water in the Balad District south of Tikrit with crude oil.

Von Lossau points out that water can serve as a military means, for instance when areas are flooded to block enemy troops from advancing. Control of the indispensable resource, moreover, is useful for putting pressure on enemies. It accordingly caused global concern when ISIS took control of the Mosul dam in August 2014. Half of Iraq's electricity generation depends on this dam. Had ISIS demolished the dam, moreover, the resulting flood wave would have destroyed Mosul and caused serious damage in Baghdad, 400 kilometers downstream.

According to von Lossow, the UN is concerned about ISIS making military use of water, but cannot do much about it. Typical UN means such as ostracism, appeals and sanctions do not have an impact on the fundamentalist militia. So far, only the armed forces of the anti-ISIS coalition have been able to make a difference. Air strikes have several times helped the Iraqi army and Kurdish militias regain dams, as was the case in Haditha in 2014 and again in 2015. In a similar way, Iraqi and Kurdish forces depended on massive western air strikes when they took control of the Mosul dam.

The "water weapon" is quite effective, the author states, but nonetheless, there are limits to its application. As ISIS wants to establish a caliphate, it needs to provide public services – including water supply. Accordingly, it cannot destroy all water infrastructure. Moreover, the terrorist organisation needs water to produce and process the crude oil it sells to raise funds. In von Lossau's view, ISIS lacks water-management expertise, so it is forced to rely on the local utilities' staff.

The author's conclusion is that ISIS has raised the strategic use of water to a new level. Its approach is said to be "targeted, systematic, logical and flexible at the same time." *Sabine Balk*

Link:

Von Lossow, T.: Wasser als Waffe: Der IS an Euphrat und Tigris (Water as a weapon: ISIS on the shores of Euphrates and Tigris – only available in German)
http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/aktuell/2015A94_lsw.pdf

Many dimensions

Syria used to be one of the Middle East's most stable countries. Today, it is being torn apart by civil war. A recent publication elaborates what the reasons are, who the main conflict parties are, and why the crisis is so hard to resolve.

The Syrian turmoil started in 2011 when protests arose against the repressive regime of Bashar al-Assad, writes Samer N. Abboud in his book "Syria". He is a professor at Pennsylvania's Arcadia University and is from a Syrian-Lebanese family.

His book describes how Assad increasingly suppressed al kinds of independent political and societal activism. One result was that, when activists rose up, there were no civic options for them to organise and demand political change, he argues. The protests spread all over the country and turned into a decentralised, comparatively unorganised movement. The regime responded by using brutal force and announcing marginal reforms in order to show good intentions. Abboud states that the regime's stance was obviously unacceptable to the protest movement. Many members of the opposition were forced to leave the country; others took up arms.

However, the attempt to form a political opposition abroad and topple Assad with support from the international community lacked legitimacy in Syria, according to the author. The Free Syrian Army (FSA) was founded by soldiers who had deserted Syria's armed forces and tried to unite the opposition. Abboud points out that the FAS failed to do so due to disputes over leadership as well as lacking financial and other support. The international community did not agree on any strategy concerning the insurrection, and ever more fighters left the FAS to join more radical and better-equipped extremist militias. Due to support from private persons in the Gulf region, these militias have stronger capacities and provide better social services, Abboud writes.

Other attempts to unite the opposition failed as well. According to Abboud, regional powers such as Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia played a destructive role by turning the Syrian conflict into a proxy war, while countries like Russia and Iran similarly fed the conflict by lending support to Assad. As all of these countries pursue their own geo-strategic interests, the militias they fund fight one another. Abboud's conclusion is that the initial protest movement was absorbed by a war economy, war politics and cross-border patronage.

AA/picture-alliance/dpa

International campaigns against ISIS are adding to Syrian troubles: this school in Aleppo was destroyed by Russian air strikes.

As the humanitarian crisis escalates in Syria and the spread of ISIS is causing ever more people to flee, the international community is under increasing pressure to act. In Abboud's view, however, the tentative attempts to stop the war by holding peace conferences (Geneva I and II) were bound to fail, especially since the international community never managed to involve all relevant conflict parties.

What started as a demand for political change has thus turned into a multi-facetted conflict with international dimensions. Nonetheless, the initial motivations live on, Abboud argues. In his eyes, a new kind of civil society is emerging from mutual support in families and neighbourhoods with Syrian activists assuming many different roles. According to the scholar, some have created new organisations, others are giving the protest movement a voice by working as citizen journalists. Some are contributing to setting up medical services and schools, while others are de facto serving governmental and administrative functions in areas where the Syrian state has collapsed. Such experiences, the professor demands, must be used for the country's eventual reconstruction.

The more the conflict becomes a proxy war, however, the worse the chances become that Syrians will solve their problems themselves – as they must. According to Abboud, only Syrians can resolve the crisis. Those who want to support a peace process must therefore tackle the conflict's many dimensions, he states. And the cruel war on civilians must stop as soon as possible.

Dagmar Wolf

Reference:

Abboud, S. N., 2016: Syria. Cambridge: Polity Press.

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Soldiers doing maintenance work on a US Air Force Drone in Kandahar, Afghanistan in December 2015.

Military affairs

War technologically transformed

The way wars and armed conflicts are waged is changing. Drones and robots are becoming ever more important.

Many scholars perceive conflicts as a disruption of the globalisation processes, but Teresa Koloma Beck of Berlin's Humboldt University Berlin disagrees. She argues that, in the eyes of local people, it is the other way round. When international forces intervene, local people are suddenly confronted with foreign troops and organisations.

According to Beck, context matters. In Angola, for example, international intervention was conducted in a post-conflict setting with the goal of peacekeeping. Beck has observed that it fostered a positive notion of globalisation. In contrast, when a military intervention is supposed to stop an on-going conflict, the impact may be an escalation of violence, and the people affected will resent the foreign forces. Beck considers Afghanistan an example, and argues that the globalised world is often experienced as a system of hierarchy and asymmetry. Because of the tense security situation, members of the international forces stay segregated from the local people, compounding the problems.

States used to be the main actors in classical wars, but according to Conrad Schetter of the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), conflict parties increasingly rely on networks. In the era of globalisation and the internet, propaganda is becoming ever more important, especially in social-media networks. Legitimacy in the eyes of the public is an important resource.

After the unsuccessful and costly interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, western governments are now shying away from deploying ground forces in conflict-torn countries, as Max Mutschler of BICC points out. Their citizens don't want countrymen to die in war, especially as the strategic goals are typically not achieved.

Accordingly, the fight against ISIS in Iraq and Syria is conducted with air and drone strikes today. Military interventions are undergoing a technological transformation, with robots replacing human beings. Niklas Schörning of the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) says that a growing number of countries possess military robots. These gadgets allow them to conduct war from a distance and reduce casualties among their own troops. According to him, non-state groups have begun to use short-range handicraft-style drones, which are technologically less advanced than those of regular armies, but devastating nonetheless. Simplified drone technology thus provides a cheap means for non-state groups to attack state opponents.

At a BICC-organised conference in Bonn in October, Schörning warned that "unmanned warfare" may lead to an "era of clandestine intervention". He calls for stricter rules and criteria regarding the use of unmanned systems. Robots and drones can decouple modern warfare from geographical dimensions and distract public attention, as citizens tend to worry most about the safety of their nation's soldiers.

When there are "no boots on the ground", moreover, the abuse of civilian people's rights and the need for humanitarian action often stay unnoticed. The latest example of important global media attention is Madaya. This Syrian town is besieged and people were starving. After their suffering attracted global attention, a humanitarian mission became possible since conflict parties worry about their public image.

Floreana Miesen

Nowadays: Scrimping and saving

In India, as in many other countries, government-run schools do not have a good reputation. Accordingly, a wide range of private schools are flourishing. Many parents scrimp and save in the hope of enabling their children to have a better future.

Rahul goes to a private school located in a well-to-do suburb of Kolkata. His father is a helper in a small shop in North Kolkata while his mother cooks at other people's houses. They struggle to make ends meet. Nonetheless, they opted for a private school that teaches in English when Rahul was young.

Today, Rahul is in grade 5, and his father needs a bank loan to keep Rahul in that school. They also pay for private tuition to help Rahul keep pace with his classmates from better economic backgrounds.

Roopa works as a cook for five households in North Delhi. Her three children were educated in a state-run school. Her oldest daughter, Gauri, has two children and sends them to a private school where she pays 1400 rupees per month. That is the equivalent of about € 200 euros – and India's average income in 2013 only amounted to the equivalent of € 1100 euros. Gauri must live hand-to-mouth in order to pay the fees, but she feels it is worth it "if the children have a better future."

These instances are not unique. As India's economy has expanded over the past few decades, an increasing number of poor parents have begun to set aside money in order to send their children to private schools. They hope that will get them better job opportunities and help them to escape poverty. Many people who send their children to government schools, moreover, have begun to pay for additional private tuition. The understanding that education matters in life has spread wide.

According to India's constitution, education is compulsory and free for all children in the age group six to 14 years. Education is provided by both the public and private sector. Irrespective of economic class, the reputation of state-run schools is not good however. Reasons include the absenteeism of teachers, poor infrastructure and the emphasis on local Indian languages.

"Knowledge of vernacular languages is important, but in order to find a good job in India one needs to be fluent in English," says Mayuresh Banerjee, an IT professional who studied in a government school but wants his children to go to a missionary school. There is a wide range of private schools – some are not very expensive, while others charge substantial fees.

Not all people deem private education necessary, however. Surendar Kumar, an auto-rickshaw driver in Delhi, says: "I could only afford to send my children to a government school but I think they did pretty well for themselves. I agree that I tried to ensure that they got some additional tuition but I really believe that if a child wants to study then they can study in any environment."

In our column "Nowadays", D+C/E+Z correspondents write about daily life in developing countries.

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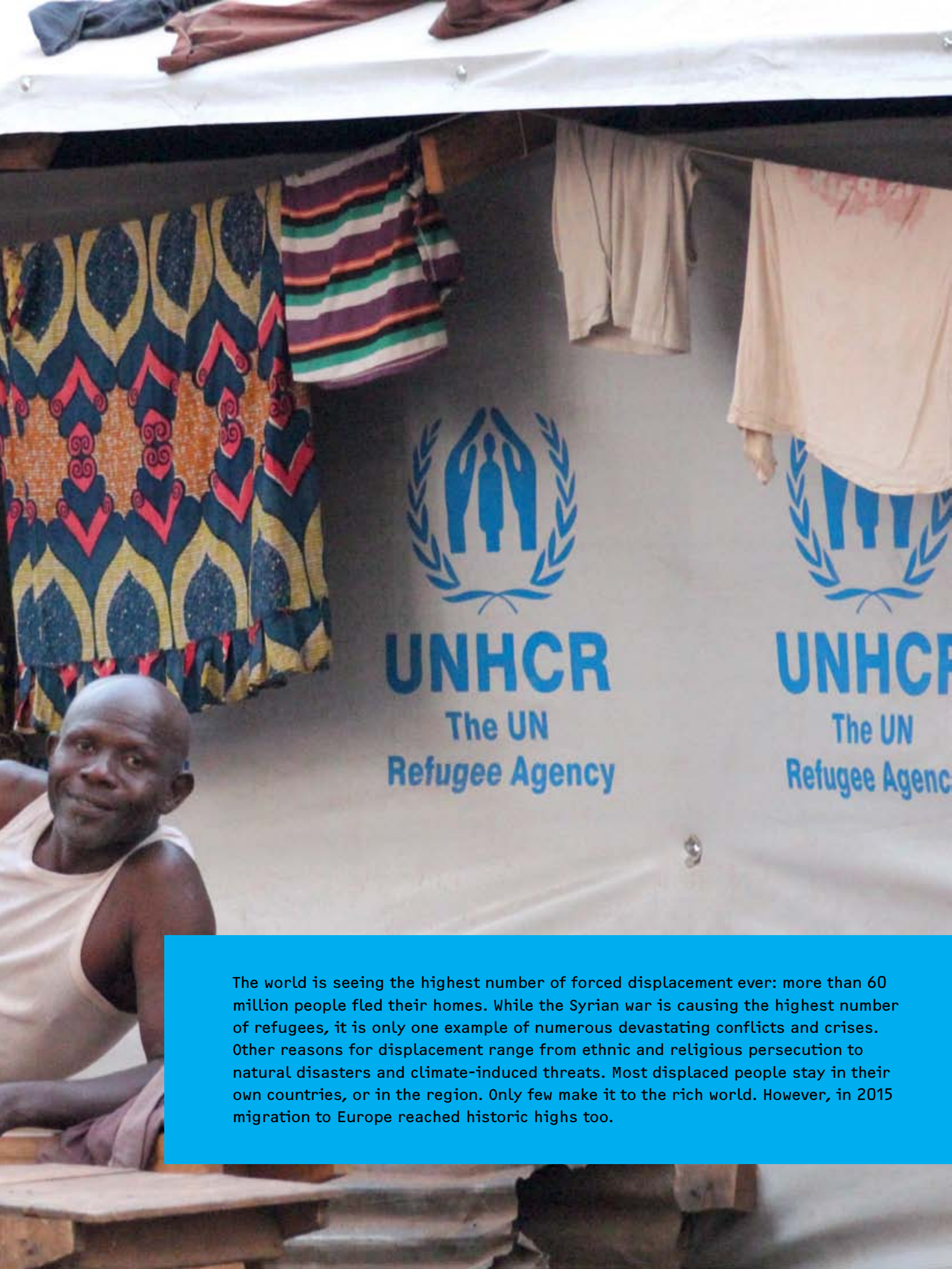
A man rests in the IDP camp Centre Jean XXIII in Bangui, Central African Republic.

Global refugee crisis

Jürgen Bätz/picture-alliance/dpa



The world is seeing the highest number of forced displacement ever: more than 60 million people fled their homes. While the Syrian war is causing the highest number of refugees, it is only one example of numerous devastating conflicts and crises. Other reasons for displacement range from ethnic and religious persecution to natural disasters and climate-induced threats. Most displaced people stay in their own countries, or in the region. Only few make it to the rich world. However, in 2015 migration to Europe reached historic highs too.

A journey fraught with danger

As a neighbour of the United States, Mexico has become a transit country for many Latin Americans. In their eyes, Mexico is what separates constant armed conflict back home from the dream of a better life in the north. Mexico and the US benefit from the migration flows, but the migration policies they have adopted are mainly geared to exclusion.

By Virginia Mercado

For Mexican and Central American people, who have no money and no papers in Mexico or Central America, being smuggled into the United States often seems to be the only way to escape poverty and violent conflict. Many try their luck and offer "coyotes" – people traffickers – large amounts of money to take them to the supposed paradise. In many cases, they spend their entire life savings.

According to Oxfam, around 65 % of the Latin Americans who live in the USA are from Mexico, but less than a quarter of them have US citizenship. The migrants are mostly from poor rural regions where levels of education are low. Wages in the US are up to eight times higher than in Mexico.

The Mexican state profits from migrants' remittances to their families. The Banco de México estimates that remittances account for about 1.8 % of annual gross domestic product (GDP). But the US benefits too. According to the 2013 Yearbook of Migration and Remittances published in Mexico by BVVA Bank and CONAPO, government agency, Mexican workers without residence permits generate around four percent of the USA's GDP.

A century of migration

Immigration to the United States from Mexico has a long history, and US policy has often been contradictory. On the one hand, the USA comfortably relies on the constant supply of cheap workers who are not entitled to any social-protection benefits. On the other hand, policy makers want to be considered protectors of jobs for US citizens, so they take a tough stance on immigration. The Mexican government, for its part, has so far proved unable to improve living conditions. Many people still feel the need to go abroad in hope of finding the prosperity they desire.

In the 1920s, North American farmers led a recruitment drive targeting workers in Mexico. The employment conditions were not good. Workers' had to pay for the expenses of being brought in from Mexico, and they were not allowed to leave the United States until that debt was paid off.

Demand for foreign labour lessened somewhat over the next decade, but it picked when the US economy grew fast after World War II and prospered. Once again, the USA adopted contradictory policies. The "Bracero" programme was launched to supply farmers in the USA with temporary Mexican workers, but the border was placed under increasingly tight military control. This trend of sealing off the border is still evident today.

In the mid-1960s, Mexican labour ceased to be indispensable for the North American economy, but a mutual pattern had been established and Mexican immigrants continued to be employed north of the border. The flow of migrants only slowed down in one single year, 2009, in response to the great recession in the course of the global financial crisis. Many Mexicans who lived in the US found themselves forced to turn home.

On the other hand, brutal fighting between drug gangs and security forces has haunted Mexico in recent years. Several ten thousands of people have been killed, and masses were forced to leave their homes. As "mara" gang violence is rife in Central America too, many people there long for a safer place to live as well.

Indeed, the number of Central Americans who try to get to the USA through Mexico is high. Their journeys are fraught with danger and certainly no pleasure trips.

Perilous journey through Mexico

Figures published by Mexico's National Migration Institute show that the number of Central Americans transiting Mexico peaked in 2005 and 2006, then

Maung

Police officers with arrested illegal immigrants near San Diego, California.

decreased and stabilised in the years through to 2010, when 140 thousand of these "events" were counted. The main countries of origin are Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. Although more than 90 % of the migrants are adults, the number of minors has also risen in recent years. In many cases, they are youngsters who want to flee from violence and a life with no prospects. Most of them travel alone.

One of the risks they run in Mexico is encountering abuse by and corruption of officials. According to the magazine Letras Libres, Central American as well as Mexican migrants all too often become victims of unlawful detention, robbery and extortion. There are links to rampant corruption. In the United States, the most frequently reported human-rights violations are unlawful detention, isolation, beatings and insults, many of which probably have a racist background.

However, offences committed by officials on both sides of the borders are not the only risk refugees face. On the contrary, many are completely at the mercy of criminals, especially in places like Guerrero, Michoacán, Veracruz and Estado de México.

Alejandro Solalinde, a Catholic priest who campaigns for migrants' rights and runs a migrant hostel called "Hermanos en el camino" in Oaxaca State, is appalled by such criminal violence. However, he also fiercely criticises the Mexican government for persecuting and mistreating Central-American migrants. He points out that an unknown number of people have disappeared or been abducted by drug cartels and expresses anger because of such crimes.

Many other civil-society groups in Mexico similarly work to help Central-American migrants. One notable example is Las Patronas, a group of housewives in the state of Veracruz. They established their organisation to help people travelling on the notorious freight train known as "La bestia" (The Beast). Despite not exactly being well-off themselves, they cook meals and hand them out to exhausted travelling migrants. They have been doing so for years without financial support. They consider what they do their Christian duty.

National security policy

On both sides of the US-Mexican border, migration policies have so far been confined to sealing borders and strengthening military presence, supposedly for the sake of national security. But there is no sign of things improving. Living conditions in Mexico are not getting better, and the desperation that prompts so many people to migrate is still rife.

The Mexican government's main concern seems to be that the flow of remittances from the USA might dry up. At any rate, much-vaunted economic reforms introduced by President Enrique Peña Nieto after taking office in 2012 have not borne fruit. Disposable incomes seem to keep shrinking, the middle class is increasingly impoverished, and the agricultural sector is being neglected completely. The distribution of wealth is strikingly unequal. Violence due to organised crime is ever-present and causes fear.

The dream of a better life in the United States is fuelled even more by the media. Compared to life in Mexico, the images presented in movies, TV series and music videos have an almost irresistible allure, and that impact is not much different in Central America. ←

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The task for this decade

Gerd Müller, Germany's federal minister for economic cooperation and development assesses the challenges of the current refugee crisis and indicates how to solve the problems.

By Gerd Müller

The crisis in Syria is the most visible crisis – but not the only one – that has contributed to the rapid rise in the number of displaced people worldwide. Just recently, for example, I visited Eritrea. This isolated country in north-eastern Africa is the origin of the largest number of African refugees arriving in Germany – last year there were 25,000 new arrivals from Eritrea. The country is facing a youth exodus. The main push factor is the national military and non-military service, into which young men and women are conscripted for de facto indefinite periods.

Be it Eritrea, Afghanistan, Syria or South Sudan – the people leaving their home countries have one thing in common: they feel that they no longer have a future in their home country. They are fleeing from conflict and war, from terrorism, violence and discrimination. Poverty and unemployment and the consequences of climate change – floods, droughts, famines – are also factors that cause people to look for a fresh start somewhere else.

Refugee flows are not going to stop any time soon. Reducing them will be the dominating issue on the agenda this decade. We need to invest in those places where the problems originate, because otherwise the problems will come to us.

We are ready to tackle this challenge. I have shifted funds in our budget and secured additional funding. This year, we will be able to make commitments for about 3 billion euros' worth of new projects: direct assistance for refugees, support for host communities and action to address push factors. We are focusing on countries and regions that are the origin of large numbers of refugees coming to Germany, whether it is Syria or the Middle East, North and East Africa, Nigeria, Ukraine, the Balkans, Pakistan or Afghanistan.

Employment drive

A survey of 1,200 Syrian refugees conducted by UNHCR in Greece last year shows us clearly where our focus must be. It is primarily young, well-educated people who are leaving Syria. The decision to stay in the first host country they reach or to move on to another EU country depends, to a major extent, on whether they can find a job. That is why it is so important to provide employment opportunities in host countries. Even though more than a million refugees came to Germany last year, we must not forget that the vast majority of refugees stay in the countries next to their home country. They usually do not have access to the job market there.

In order to change that, I am implementing a "Middle East Employment Drive" this year, with a view to giving refugees and local people job opportunities, for instance through cash-for-work programmes in Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan. These programmes will benefit as many men and women as possible, be it through simple jobs building roads and structures or through work as teachers, childcare workers, nurses and doctors. The programmes will improve local infrastructure and spark economic development. And above all, they will enable refugees to provide for themselves again.

Focus on host countries

In Jordan, I have seen for myself what it means for the country to be hosting Syrian refugees. There are now about 630,000 Syrian refugees in Jordan – that is almost equal to 10 % of Jordan's population. Some 80,000 refugees are living in Zaatari – a camp which, in the medium term, we need to develop into a city with good basic infrastructure. However, most refugees are living in host communities in northern Jordan. In some communities, the population has doubled within just one year. Most local people are helping the refugees as best they can.

But the large number of refugees also means major challenges for host communities. Water supplies must be secured in what is a water-scarce region to begin with; refugees require housing, schools, food and health care.

We consider it important to assist both refugees and local people in order to prevent tensions. For example, if we improve the local water supply and health services for the entire community, people's willingness to assist refugees will increase.

In Jordan, Germany has already helped to supply 800,000 people with water and 200,000 people with

Axel Heimken/picture-alliance/dpa

German civil society is supporting refugees: mostly volunteers take care of children in a daycare centre in a tent near Hamburg's central train station.

Axel Heimken/picture-alliance/dpa

electricity. And Germany has helped 15,000 people in Iraq to find employment. In Lebanon, Jordan, the Palestinian Territories, Turkey and northern Iraq 520,000 children are able to go to school again.

I can see positive signs that the current negotiations might lead to a cease-fire in Syria. We need to start making plans for the country's reconstruction now. This will be a huge effort – for Syria's people, for its neighbours and for us, the international community. Much of the country has been destroyed. Its urban infrastructure lies in ruins.

We are ready to expand our infrastructure projects to include Syria just as soon as the time for reconstruction has come. In the short term, we will need meas-

Grabowski/Photothek

Gerd Müller visiting a refugee familiy in a camp in Lebanon.

ures to ensure people's sheer survival. Then schools will have to be built and vocational-training facilities and jobs will have to be created. Syria will need efforts to spur economic development, infrastructure investments and new institutions. Use will need to be made of the great potential of the people who have fled from Syria. I will therefore give special support to refugees preparing to return to Syria, for example by providing loans to help them build a livelihood. But such a "Marshall Plan" will not only be needed for Syria but also for the liberated areas of Iraq.

More solidarity

In order to bring the refugee crisis under control, Europe and the international community need to take joint action. Unfortunately, we are currently also witnessing a crisis of solidarity. In the past few months, Europe has put up a poor show – and this is partly due to the fact that the division of responsibilities is not clear. That is why I am calling for an EU special representative for refugees. That representative will require adequate staff, powers and funding, and he or she will have to present, as quickly as possible, a strategy for dealing with the refugee crisis. We also need a ten-billion-euro EU infrastructure fund for all countries that are hosting refugees – from the Middle East all the way to Sweden.

But it is not only Europe but also other countries and regions that are not doing enough. It is scandalous that United Nations aid programmes (UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP) do not have enough funding to meet the most basic needs of the displaced people. Germany increased its support last year to a level of about € 700 million, and we will provide at least the same amount again this year.

Within Germany, I am also counting on strong partners from the non-governmental sector. For example, we will be working with crafts and trades and retail federations in order to provide vocational training placements for 1,000 young refugees. The focus is on trades that will also be urgently needed later for the reconstruction effort in the refugees' countries of origin.

Strong partners in Germany

Many NGOs, faith-based organisations, foundations and private initiatives are working hard to help the refugees. To mention just one of many courageous efforts, support is being provided in cooperation with Misereor and the Jiyan Foundation (see interview page 30 f.) to help refugees from Iraq and Syria who have been severely traumatised.

I also want to increase the support that my Ministry is providing for German municipalities' efforts for development. After all, a municipality knows about all the things that municipalities in developing countries have to do in order to meet refugees' needs: set up hospitals and schools, manage waste, treat wastewater and provide drinking water. And above all, they know about setting up responsive, decentralised administrative bodies – a key factor for reconstruction.

But the governments in the countries of origin, too, need to shoulder their share of the responsibility – for instance by fostering the rule of law, fighting corruption and supporting civil society.

Whenever I visit a country, I urge the government to do its part to help resolve the refugee challenge. And I do not shy away from thorny questions, such as human rights problems in Eritrea.

Development policy – peace policy

The current challenge is placing new demands on development policy, with a new dimension. Civil society players have been making outstanding contributions. All governmental and civil society decision-makers must have realised by now, if not before, that in addition to all the current responses we also need to give development policy a major boost, as development fosters peace.

We are faced with huge challenges. The New York summit at which the SDG agenda was adopted and the Paris climate summit have pointed the way for a fair partnership between countries and nations, for the protection of our planet and of the global climate.

In this new world, in our global village, all things are connected. If we do not take determined action now, the current refugee crisis will be but the beginning of a huge upheaval. ←

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At rock bottom

"Europe is not in good shape," said Jean-Claude Juncker, the president of the European Commission, in his state of the union address to the European Parliament on 8 September 2015. After the deep rifts that occurred during the so-called euro crisis, the EU is now torn by dramatically escalating internal conflict as a result of the refugee crisis – to the detriment of people seeking asylum.

By Karl Kopp

Since summer 2015, the "worst refugee crisis since World War II" (UN refugee agency UNHCR) has been perceived as the greatest challenge of all for Germany and Europe. The 28 member states' unwillingness to accept asylum seekers with dignity and solidarity has plunged the EU into an existential crisis. Europe is betraying values such as liberty, equality and respect for human rights, including those of minorities.

The dismal refugee policy currently pursued by the EU reveals – as if under a magnifying glass – how it has always been: beating back refugees on Bulgaria's and Greece's borders with Turkey, degrading treatment of asylum seekers in EU-financed detention centres and squalid migrant camps have been the order of the day in the EU for years. The abuse has been accepted by the EU member states, in some cases with complacency. Above all, it has not been systematically penalised by EU institutions.

Now, with the so-called communalisation of asylum law, the failures of the past are all becoming visible. The fact is that there is no common European asylum system, even though the EU states have been working on one since 1999. The system of protection that exists in the EU is no more than a raggedy patchwork. A common asylum law that complies with human-rights principles is a long way off.

The long and deep-rooted crisis in European asylum policy is reflected by the so-called Dublin system, which largely assigns responsibility for examining asylum claims to member states on the EU's external

Police operation against human traffickers at the border between Germany and Poland.

ZB/picture-alliance

Geisler-Fotopress/picture-alliance

The Moira refugee camp at the Greek coast.

borders. Old ways live on: Europe is quick to agree on new exclusion rules but is hopelessly divided when it comes to accepting refugees.

In the case of Syria, a modicum of foresight would have sufficed to anticipate that neighbouring states would run out of protection capacity. Five years after the slaughter began, asylum seekers are abandoning hope of an early return. Four million live in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan under conditions that range from difficult to atrocious. Humanitarian aid in the main host countries is chronically under-financed. The UN organisations are repeatedly compelled to reduce the refugees' food rations.

Despite civil war in Syria since March 2011, a mass exodus from Iraq in the face of ISIS terrorism, Libya's slide into civil war, the catastrophic situation in Afghanistan and Somalia and the repressive dictatorship in Eritrea, Europe thought it could remain an onlooker in the task of accommodating refugees. In 2015 at the latest, that attitude became obsolete.

Right to life with reservations

"How many more deaths? A European sea rescue system now!" Pro Asyl voiced that appeal to the European Parliament as far back as summer 2014. The human-rights organisation explicitly demands the creation of a European sea rescue service and legal, non-dangerous routes for refugees in order to stop people dying on Europe's external borders. That demand shows how radically refugee work has changed: it is a matter of life or death! In 2014, for example, 150,000 refugees were rescued by the Italian navy's Mare Nostrum operation, but more than 3,500 boat people died. Instead of that operation being expanded, Mare Nostrum was superseded at the end of October 2014 by a European "light" version called Operation Triton.

Headed by the EU border guard agency Frontex, Triton had a far smaller budget. It also covered a radically reduced area. The consequences were predictable: fewer rescues mean that even more people die. The operation became an exercise in end-of-life care. It was not until April 2005, when more than a thousand people died in the central Mediterranean Sea within the space of a few days, that the international outcry rose to a pitch that forced the EU heads of state and government to take action. They raised Triton's budget and extended its operational area, putting its capabilities back on a par with Mare Nostrum.

Even though more lives have been saved since then, people continue to die. Which is why many rescue missions, even today, need to be secured by civil society. Initiatives like Sea-Watch, Médecins Sans Fron-

Dead refugees

The refugees come mostly by sea, undertaking perilous voyages. In 2015, Italy and Greece registered over a million boat people; in the same year, 3,700 men, women and children died in the Mediterranean Sea and in Turkish and Greek waters. A total of 856,723 refugees arrived in Greece's Aegean islands – around 800 people lost their lives during the crossing.

More than 90 % of asylum seekers fled from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. On Italian soil, 153,600 boat people landed in 2015. On the route that leads there, 26 % of asylum seekers come from Eritrea, eight percent from Somalia and six percent from Sudan – only five percent are Syrians.

Because EU member states offer no legal, non-dangerous routes for refugees, people seeking asylum in Europe risk their lives. Greece (in 2012) and Bulgaria (in 2013/2014) have successively – and virtually hermetically – sealed their borders with Turkey. The deadly toll: at least 30,000 fatalities have been registered on Europe's borders since the year 2000. *(kk)*

tières and Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS), which all have rescue vessels in operation, are doing invaluable work – as is the Alarm Phone for Boat People in Distress at Sea – helping people where European governments fail to meet their humanitarian obligations.

But even for those who survive the crossing, the ordeal continues after their arrival on Europe's shores. As the UNHCR stated on 4 September 2015, "they face chaos and suffer indignity, exploitation and danger at borders." Since July 2015, the public has been able to observe the refugees' suffering in daily live broadcasts from the Greek holiday islands of Lesbos and Kos, from the Greek-Macedonian border and along the entire route through the Balkans. The humanitarian disaster has been fully documented: exhausted people, many of them children, are still heading for the heart of the EU – homeless, with no medical care and no secure food supply and enduring appalling hygiene conditions. Daily appeals to get help to the dispossessed, voiced by initiatives, human-rights organisations and the UN, have gone unheeded.

Greece more or less opened a corridor across the country but failed to arrange humanitarian assistance along it. There was no fast and concerted disaster relief effort by the EU and no ad hoc initiatives by member states to spare asylum seekers the long march to freedom and allow them to travel legally. It was left predominantly to private initiatives to secure the refugees' survival along the route.

Blueprints from Brussels

On 9 September 2015, the EU Commission grandly presented a "comprehensive package of proposals which will help address the refugee crisis that EU member states and neighbouring countries are facing." Another 120,000 people in clear "need of international protection" were to be relocated, especially from Greece and Italy, to other EU members within two years – on top of the emergency redistribution of 40,000 refugees that had been previously agreed. Plans were also announced to make return policy more effective and to strengthen Frontex's mandate in return operations. The British newspaper The Guardian summed up: "Juncker talks of welcoming refugees, while turning Europe into a fortress."

On 22 September 2015, EU member's home ministers approved the proposal to relocate 160,000 asylum seekers – most of them from Greece and Italy – to other EU member states. Some member states, however, disagreed. The EU has since been trying to rebuild consensus by emphasising attempts to keep refugees away. The pressure on Greece to seal off borders keeps rising. Moreover, policymakers are wooing Turkey in the hope of its authorities stopping refugees from moving on.

The EU also wants to register and initially host asylum seekers in Greece or Italy at so-called hotspots. Hotspots and the emergency relocation mechanism are supposed to supplement the long-failed Dublin system for allocating responsibility for asylum applications and keep it artificially alive.

In a situation where only a few EU countries accept substantial numbers of refugees, there seems to be no alternative to these concepts. In actual fact, however, they are unrealistic and highly problematical from a human-rights perspective. Hotspots in Greece and Italy – and elsewhere if escape routes change – will not end the misery on Europe's periphery. Instead, they pose lots of unanswered questions with the frightening prospect of new detention centres being created to hold refugees for a long time to come.

The idea is to use the hotspots to relocate refugees with a good chance of gaining asylum, which currently means people from Syria, Iraq and Eritrea if they apply for asylum at the hotspot. However, the approach says nothing about how other refugees with similar needs and right to protection should be handled – for example, refugees from Afghanistan. And what about those whose applications are rejected in "rapid screening"? They are to be swiftly deported from the "waiting zones" in an EU-financed Frontex operation. By mid-January, however, a mere 322 people were actually able to move on to other European countries. At this speed, it would take 196 years for all to relocate.

In pursuit of its deal with Turkey's authoritarian regime the EU is keeping silent in regard to Turkish violations of human rights and refugee's rights. The hope that, with some EU support, Turkey will serve as a safe third country where refugees can be expected to stay, is doomed to fail. Turkey systematically abuses fundamental rights such as the freedom of the press, and the government has recently been fanning the flames of its domestic armed conflict in Kurdistan. Sooner or later masses of people are likely to flee from that region.

The call for a change in refugee policy is growing louder. At the same time, though, populist and racist movements are gathering strength all over Europe. If there is to be any way out of Europe's current existential crisis, a "coalition of the willing" now needs to be swiftly formed to reorganise protection for refugees in Europe. The key to that lies in Berlin. With her clear and powerful message – "If we have to apologise for showing a friendly face in emergencies, then that is not my country" – the German Chancellor signalled that Germany has a responsibility. Europe has to accept that moral responsibility as well. ←

Links:

EU on addressing the refugee crisis:
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5596_en.htm

Pro Asyl on EU refugee policy (only available in German):
http://www.proasyl.de/de/news/detail/news/grenzen_dicht_puffer_drumherum_die_ergebnisse_der_eu_verhandlungen_im_ueberblick/

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Ostrich policy

People who are suffering political and cultural violence tend to vote with their feet. The same goes for those suffering economic violence and ecological devastation. This is a fact that the EU should understand.

The distinction the EU makes between "refugees" (Syrians, Afghans, Iraqis, Libyans et cetera) and "economic migrants" (West Africans for example) may be legally founded, but it is morally dubious. It only makes sense if one accepts two questionable premises:

- the idea that, at the international level, when it comes to rights protection, those suffering political and cultural violence should enjoy privileged moral status compared with those who are victims of other types of violence; and
- the idea that the economic violence billions of people suffer is not a global issue, but only the responsibility of the respective national governments.

Many young Senegalese who try to reach Europe in makeshift boats used to work as fishermen. They basically take this suicidal decision because industrial-scale fishing trawlers from Europe have destroyed their livelihoods in Senegal. The EU should note that its fishing subsidies are therefore what must be considered a cause of flight from Senegal. The fish catch that local fisherman bring ashore has dwindled dramatically. This is why many dispossessed young people from Senegal risk their lives in a sea adventure rather than enduring guaranteed economic and social death at home.

The same can be said of many West African farmers. Agriculture typically provides livelihoods to at least 60 % of African countries' populations. EU subsidies for European farmers and the push for import liberalisation is negatively affecting the sector.

Migration is linked to global dynamics. Most people from West Africa who "chose" to migrate illegally to Europe do so because they lack economic opportunities directly or indirectly, and all too often, EU policies and EU corporations play a role. Making matters worse, climate change, which is caused by western nations, not African ones, is compounding problems of poverty south of the Sahara.

Poverty, moreover, triggers fanaticism and political violence. We know that the Islamist terrorism of Ansare Dine, Boko Haram, ISIS et cetera is linked to people's lack of prospects.

It is unacceptable that the EU wants its goods and capital to move freely to West Africa, but it doesn't want the unskilled and semi-skilled people of West Africa to cross borders freely as well. The kind of globalisation it is promoting is lopsided and unfair. The EU wants to benefit from international exchange without having to bear the social and ecological costs.

In the face of current global challenges, including the migration issue, what African people expect from Europe is not official development assistance, which tends to fail dramatically without delivering sustainable progress. What we need is concerted efforts to build a fairer world trade system, to curb the huge illicit financial flows suffered by the continent and to tackle the looming climate crisis. The big question is: will the rich world muster the necessary political will? It does not look like it.

dem

Senegal's traditional fishing communities cannot compete with subsided EU businesses.

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Frozen lives

If strife lasts long, people who have fled from violence cannot return home after a short stay abroad. They become long-term refugees, and camps become their permanent homes. Kakuma Refugee Camp in Northwest Kenya houses over 180,000 people. They have food and shelter, but they lose any sense of purpose. The longer they are in exile, the more their desperation grows. For young people, the only exit strategy is education.

By Raphael Sungu

At sunset, young refugees stroll along the Kakuma-Lokichoggio road which leads from the camp to the South Sudanese border about 130 kilometres away. The scene looks pleasant, but the youngsters actually live with dashed hopes. They lack opportunities and face a stiff competition for the slim chances of ever leaving the camp.

Kakuma Camp is bigger than many Kenyan cities, but life here is very different. Masses line up to collect food rations. There are not enough jobs and not enough schools (see box, p. 25). Thousands of people have absolutely nothing to do. Their lives become monotonous routines without ambitions, hopes or dreams. This is especially true of young people: they are about to start their life, but have only limited possibilities of taking their fate into their hands and become independent adults.

In theory, people are only supposed to live in the camp for a few months and then return home or be resettled to third countries. In practice, they stay in Kakuma for ten years on average.

Many refugees lapse into depression. The loss of dignity, identity and sense of belonging kills their

South Sudanese refugee turned film student in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya.

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Too many people have nothing to do.

Sprague/Lineair

spirit. They would like to do something to improve their fate, but they have no options. Long-term refugees are particularly prone to be depressed.

People who flee persecution, violence and death typically expect to return back home very soon. Only once they have arrived at a refugee camp, do they realise that their old life is over, and whatever position they may have held is lost. In the camps, they are no longer individuals. They lose their dignity (see box, p. 26). A case number is their new identity.

Precarious schools

The adults in the camps often cannot accept their fate of being reduced to an object of charity. The youth, however, are eager to embark on their life's journey, which is strictly confined by the camp. Education is the only path out – but it is a more difficult path than it would be in any normal town.

Kakuma has various educational facilities for children. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) funds 20 primary schools, and the local community runs a community-based school. However, only about 45 % of the children of primary-school age were enrolled in 2012, according to the UNHCR. Classes have up to 200 pupils in primary schools. On average, secondary-school classes have 80 students. A survey done by the UNHCR, the Windle Trust Kenya and the Lutheran World Federation in 2014 showed that about half of the camp's children still did not attend school. Moreover, schools tended to teach over-age learners.

Students who go to school are expected to study the Kenyan curriculum and learn in English and Kiswahili. Many children don't know these two languages, and the curricular content does not fit the environment they are familiar with. A recent study in the Journal on Education in Emergencies concluded: "The paucity of financial and material resources, restrictive curriculum and language policies, and a lack of access to teacher training amount to a crisis in refugee education in Kenya."

Nonetheless, students in Kakuma tend to get better grades in exams than the average student in Kenya. For instance, a girl from Angelina Jolie Primary School – the school is named after the American movie star who sponsors it through the UNHCR

– scored 418 marks out of a possible 500 marks in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE).

As a rule, those refugee children who go to school tend to study very hard, because they know that good marks are their only chance of leaving the camp. What they need is one of the highly coveted scholarships.

Dashed hopes

Kakuma Camp is managed by the Department for Refugee Affairs (DRA). This Kenyan government agency is working with – and is supported by – the UNHCR. But many other charitable organisations are present in the camp as well, covering certain issues like education.

The Windle Trust Kenya manages various scholarship programmes, supported by World University Service of Canada, the UNHCR, DD Puri Foundation and the German Albert Einstein Foundation, providing some 40 scholarships for gifted refugees to study at universities and colleges in their host country or their country of origin. For Canadian-funded scholarships the age limit is 25 years, for German-sponsored ones 28.

The competition for scholarships is merciless. Every year, hundreds of students in Kakuma apply for these scholarships which the Windle Trust can award. Students may apply up to three times. Most do not get one of those precious scholarships. Their hopes of leaving the camp are dashed, once and for all.

A depressing camp in Kenya's northwest

Kenya has one of the largest refugee populations in the world. The East African country hosts over 600,000 registered refugees and asylum seekers. They are mostly from Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Eritrea, Burundi and Uganda. The majority of refugees in Kenya live in the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps. It is estimated that more than 50,000 refugees and asylum seekers live in Kenya's urban areas.

Kenyan society has recently become more suspicious of refugees, especially Somalis. The reasons are terrorist attacks perpetrated by the Al-Shabaab militia, an Islamist outfit from war-torn Somalia. After a spate of violence in 2013 and 2014, the Kenyan government issued a directive that all refugees in Nairobi and other cities must return to the camps in Dadaab and Kakuma. In urban areas, refugees frequently face harassment by the police if they are found without requisite documentation or authorisation.

Kakuma Camp was set up in a semi-arid area in Kenya's northwest in 1992. Most refugees are people from South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia. They fled because of decades-long conflicts in their home countries.

The camp is a city of endless rows of identical simple buildings. More than 180,000 people from over 21 nationalities were registered as residents as of November 2015. Most have been in Kakuma for years, awaiting resettlement to third countries. The agencies that work in the camp do not offer enough jobs for everyone, and those who are employed are paid in simple tokens. Kenyan law does not allow refugees to engage in business or gainful employment unless they renounce their refugee status and seek to work as expatriates who must pay taxes.

Of the people in Kakuma, about 58 % are minors. They belong to age groups that need to go to school or get vocational training. However, the camp only offers insufficient education opportunities. Depriving young people of such opportunities means that there will be no peace dividend should they at some point in time be able to return to their parents' homes. On the contrary, deprivation of opportunities can perpetuate conflicts when frustrated youth decide to join violent militias, as could be seen with Afghans who grew up in Pakistani refugee camps and were later recruited by the Taliban.

According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), 70 % of all refugees worldwide are long-term refugees, who are displaced from home for more than five years. Many of them have no documents, so they belong to no state. Each year, countless children are born to grow up in refugee camps. The biggest groups are Afghans living in Pakistan and in Iran, but there are also hundreds of thousands of Somalis and South Sudanese living in various East African countries. Palestinians and Sahrawi refugees are even internationally considered to have hereditary refugee status.

Millions of people worldwide live in what UNHCR calls "protracted refugee situations". The term's definition is that the refugee needs have changed considerably over time, but neither the UNHCR nor host governments have capacity to address those needs fully, especially developmental. The refugees are thus left "in a dependent state years after their arrival in the host country", as Christine Cheng and Johannes Chudoba of Princeton University put it. "A refugee's needs in protracted situations are very different from the needs UNHCR is accustomed to addressing during an emergency response," Cheng and Chudoba add. Typically, human security has to be provided first, and then essential needs must be addressed. These include not only food and shelter, but also education, employment, training, health care and access to credit. In far too many places, these matters are not taken care of fully. *(rs)*

When students are told that they have been rejected, Windle Trust staff members witness heart-wrenching scenes. Some students get angry and demand to know why they have not been selected. Others are utterly devastated, like a young Somali girl who cried: "What can I do now? If I don't get out of this camp, I will soon be married off. But I've been to school, I know there is a world out there that I want to be part of and explore, not be a housewife tied down by retrogressive cultural practices. I want to marry when I am able to give my children a life better than what I am going through. I have worked so hard for this! All my hopes were on this scholarship, just to get out of the camp."

Some break down crying, others become suicidal. A young man from South Sudan said: "Tell me, what will I do with myself, what is there for people like me? I have tried this for the third time in three years and unfortunately failed in all attempts. My fear is that I will soon die of hopelessness in this camp, away from my country and be buried with all my dreams, hopes and aspirations. I want an opportunity to give me half a chance at life, I want to have an education, a job, wife and kids, but not like this, not here!"

It is an enormous burden to see all these bright young people being denied any opportunity to develop their talents and minds. Humanitarian aid workers are witnessing an entire generation living "frozen lives", but cannot help. Michelle Bellino from the University of Michigan recently assessed educational opportunities in Kakuma. In her conclusion, she mentions the "tragedy that renders talented human beings into a perpetual life of destitution."

As new humanitarian crises emerge around, funding opportunities for educational scholarships are getting fewer. Accordingly, the outlook is getting even darker for the "old case load" in Kakuma.

The donor governments must do much more in support of refugee camps. It is unacceptable that 50 % of the young generation do not get a formal education at all. And it is equally unacceptable that those who do make the effort still lack opportunities. Host countries like Kenya do not have the means to solve the problems on their own.

Sometimes, Western governments promise long-term refugees visas, but then the political situation changes, and the visas are cancelled. In 1999, for instance, a large group of Somalis in Dadaab Camp were selected for relocation to Kakuma and possible resettlement in Western countries. After the terrorist attacks on September 11th 2001, however, the visa procedures became much more stringent for most countries. Some have become less enthusiastic about refugees from East Africa. The hopes of these people were shattered. Today, 14 years later, many are still in the camp.

Links:

The Windle Trust:
http://www.windle.org
World University Service of Canada (WUSC) – Student Refugee Programme:
http://wusc.ca/
Albert Einstein Foundation (Deutsche Akademische Flüchtlingsinitiative – DAFI):
http://refed.org/

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Losing one's dignity

Many refugees make long journeys through dangerous terrain to the Kenyan refugee camp Kakuma. They suffer hunger and thirst and are exposed to cold, heat, heavy rains and brutal sunshine. On the run, many cannot change clothes or take showers. Some experience traumatising violence. But all want to guard their human dignity.

The denial of such dignity in the camps is a harrowing experience. People whose lives have been turned upside down must line up for basic provisions such as blankets, toiletries and food. When they first arrive at the reception centre to be registered, one can tell that some were previously influential people, perhaps government officials, but their weather-beaten suits, ties and shirts do not mean much in the camp. They no longer stand for any position or personal authority.

The situation is stressful for all persons concerned, including the aid workers. An international staff member recalls a man who arrived in the camp with children, and was giving everybody a difficult time. He did not manage to line up properly and was irritable. Our witness says: "I realised he was not angry at us – he was angry at the world, he was angry at what had made him this undignified person, reduced to queuing up to be fed by strangers. I found myself at the brink of crying; I felt his helplessness myself."

The staff member says: "When I started to work here, I thought that refugees are just irritable, unappreciative complainants who are generally hard to understand." He goes on to say that he made a conscious effort to talk to the people and understand their individual background and life stories. This was when fear gripped him because the refugees' fate was "something that could happen to anyone." Realising this made him think of his wife and children and "feel the deepest empathy for suffering fellow human beings." *(rs)*

picture-alliance/dpa

IDP camp in Borno State.

Refugees in their own country

Boko Haram has been terrorising north-eastern Nigeria since 2009, killing more than 10,000 people and displacing 2 millions. Conditions in the camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) are tough. While attacks continue in some regions, others are safe, and several hundred thousand refugees have already returned home.

By Damilola Oyedele

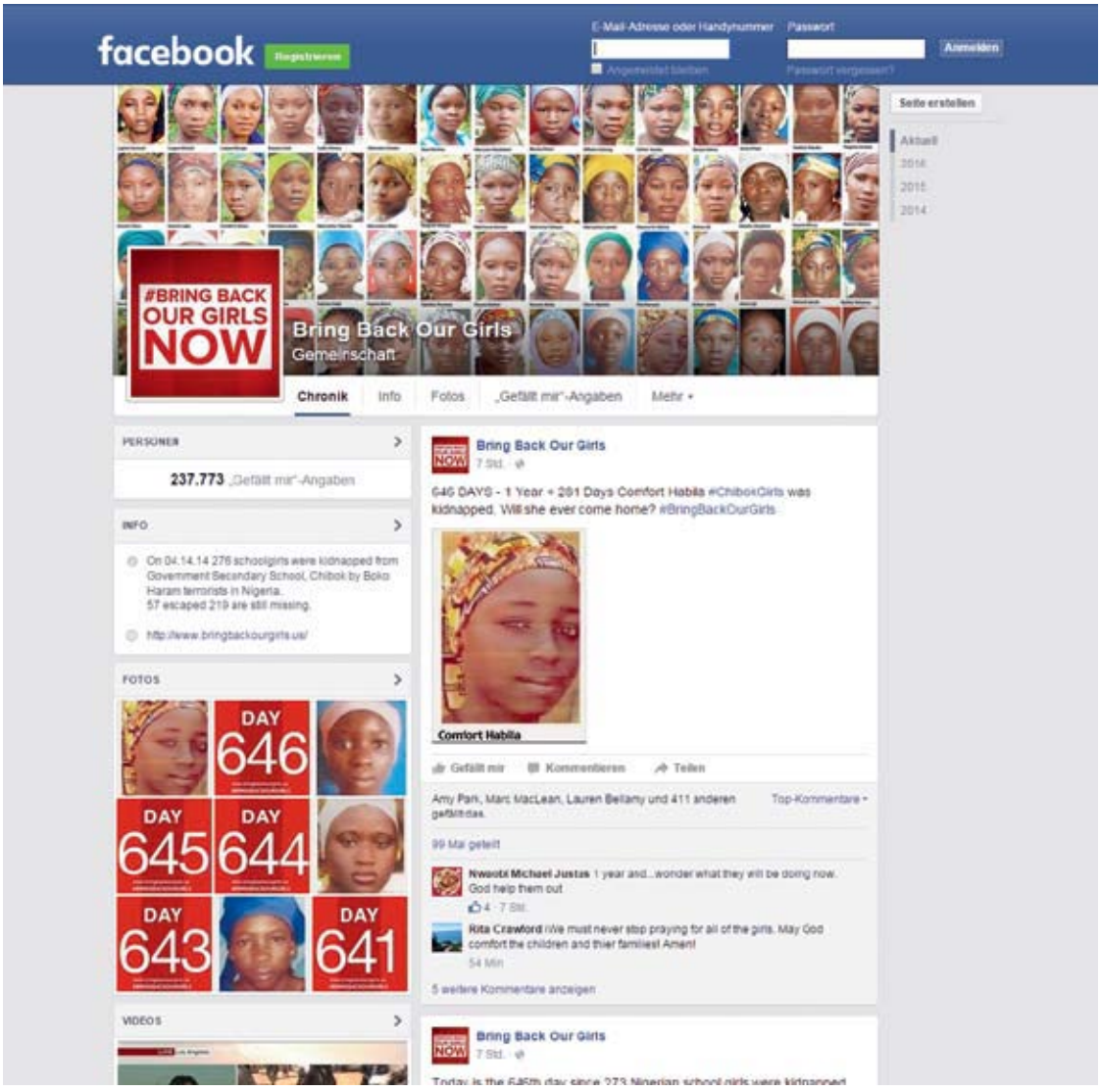
Atine's life seemed easy sailing about a year ago. The girl from Baga in Borno State was in her last year of primary school. Her father worked at a local factory where catfish is smoked before it is transported for sale to other parts of the country. Her mother was a housewife who looked after her four children and was pregnant again.

Residents of the town were aware of the terrorist group Boko Haram. But the family had a sense of safety – after all, the headquarters of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF), an international force of soldiers from Nigeria, Niger and Chad, was stationed in their town. The Joint Force was established to deal with cross-border security and also helped combat Boko Haram.

Atine's world crashed in January 2015 when Boko Haram attacked the town, killing residents, razing homes and forcing survivors to flee. "The men were shot at sight, my father included. My older brother also died. We ran away, trekking for days in the bush, and eventually found our way to Maiduguri. My mother miscarried because of the stress," she says in Hausa, her native language.

Atine and her mother now live in a camp for IDPs in Kuchingoro, which is part of the Abuja agglomeration. Unfortunately, the camp, which is home to almost 800 people, is not a formal one designated by government. Like several other such camps in Abuja, internal refugees who had nowhere else to go started it on empty patches of land.

It is evident that the camp is unplanned; makeshift homes are constructed with roofing sheets, tarpaulin and plastic wraps. The sanitary condition is deplorable: toilets are unavailable, and residents defecate in



Screenshot: https://www.facebook.com/bringbackourgirls

The victims of the 2014 mass kidnapping in Chibok have not been freed.

plastic bags they dispose in refuse heaps nearby. The stench is awful. A single borehole serves the water needs of the residents.

From a similar camp in Oronzo, also in Abuja, several young boys troop into the city every day to find work and earn some money. Hassan, 14, says he does menial jobs at a local market nearby, for which he earns a pittance: "I carry loads for people at the market, some days I earn 500 naira (about $ 2.5) and on good days I make 1000 naira." He says a friend of his convinced someone to teach him carpentry, and adds: "I hope that artisan will take me on too, so I can learn a vocation." He says he cannot afford to go back to school.

Formal camps

While the camps in Abuja are informal, the government has set up several camps for those displaced from – or within – the six states most affected by the violence: Borno, Bauchi, Yobe, Taraba, Gombe and Adamawa. There are four official camps in Yola, Adamawa State, while there are two in Damaturu, Yobe State. In Maiduguri there are about 28 camps. Informal camps, which are regarded officially as "camp-like sites", sprang up all over the states affected and in neighbouring states.

The official camp in Gombe State has been closed down again as the people were resettled. According to Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari, at least 2 million people have been displaced by the activities of the terrorist group, with more than 10,000 people killed in the past six years. The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) set up by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in collaboration with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) identified 1,818,469 registered IDPs displaced by insurgency in Nigeria in its December 2015 report. Borno State has the highest number of IDPs with 1,434,149 .

Eight percent of the IDPs live in camps while the others reside with host communities, friends and

relatives across the country. More than half of the IDP population are children. The DTM has identified 78 camps and camp-like sites. Most of the camps are located in schools and government buildings. Life in the formal camps is hard, however, especially because they are overcrowded.

Toilet facilities in 47 camps are reported to be in bad conditions while only 19 camps have good toilet facilities. In ten camps, the toilets were declared to be not usable. The DTM Nigeria Report Round VII of December 2015 identified malaria to be the most prevalent health problem followed by fevers, coughs, diarrhoea, malnutrition, respiratory tract infections and skin diseases. Thirty-two camps do not have a waste disposal system, and 63 do not have good drainage systems. The report noted open defecation in 52 camps.

In early 2015, an undercover reporter from the International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR) reported grim tales of rape and human trafficking in some of the camps. Girls were being raped by fellow IDPs, and children being sold for as little as $ 250. The government set up an investigative panel, which said that two girls "might have been raped" but that there was no substantial proof to establish the allegations .

The DTM report of October 2015, on the contrary, took note of reports of exchange of food or goods for sex in four camps, while in six camps, children were involved in forced labour and begging. In eight camps, physical and emotional abuses of children were reported. There have also been reports of arrests of NEMA officials for selling relief materials meant for IDPs. Despite the presence of security officials at the camps, two explosions killed more than ten people in two camps in Yola, Adamawa State. Allegedly, Boko Haram militants disguised as IDPs and entered the camps.

Compared with formal camps, informal camps are more dependent on charity. Several NGOs, corporate organisations, individuals, donor agencies and faith-based organisations donate food and medicine. They do voluntary humanitarian work and provide services including health checks and counselling.

IDPs only have limited access to education facilities however. In the worst hit states, many schools have been closed for more than 18 months. According to UNICEF, more than 1200 schools were attacked by Boko Haram since 2009. It made international headlines when Boko Haram kidnapped 276 girls from a school in Chibok, Borno State, in April 2014. The victims have not been liberated. For obvious reasons, many students and teachers shied away from the few schools that managed to stay open.

According to the DTM report, children have access to education in 40 of the 76 formal camps. In the camps outside the troubled areas, NGOs volunteer to teach children. In Kuchingoro camp, where Atine lives, the Australian government has donated chairs and desks for the pupils who learn in classes set up under trees for shelter. Volunteers from the women's group of ECWA, a faith-based organisation, teach pupils. Christ Tabernacle Church, another faith-based organisation, has provided about 250 school uniforms. Studying in the open, however, means that classes cannot be held when it rains or when it gets too hot.

In November, the government reopened hundreds of schools across the northeast, but attendance remains low. Boko Haram attacks still occur although a regional offensive made up of troops from Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger has largely weakened the terrorists and reclaimed most of the territories they occupied in the northeast. The government also set up a Victim Resettlement Fund to assist IDPs.

NEMA spokesman Sanni Datti says the government's assistance extends to IDPs who live outside the formal designated camps. "Because they are registered, even though they live in host communities, we distribute welfare items to them too. Their most basic need is food, but we also provide non-food items such as clothing, beddings and others," he said. NEMA cooperates with several NGOs and donor agencies to provide vocational training for IDPs.

The government recently announced plans to begin winding down the camps and to resettle the IDPs. It also promised to rebuild infrastructure that has been destroyed. But while many refugees want to return to their homes, they are concerned about the security situation. Moreover, the region's economy is in shambles.

According to the DTM, some 320,000 IDPs have returned to northern Adamawa State. The security situation has improved thanks to increased military presence in the area. In August, about 10,000 Nigerians who had sought refuge in Cameroon were repatriated: some have returned to their communities in Adamawa, while some were relocated to IDP camps in Borno State.

Atine yearns for a normal life again, but does not want to return to Baga: "I will be too scared because my father and brother were killed there. Maybe we can move out of this camp and find somewhere near Abuja to live. I just want to leave this place, there are too many people," she says.

Link:

DTM Nigeria Report Round VII:
http://nigeria.iom.int/sites/default/files/dtm/01_IOM%20DTM%20Nigeria_Round%20VII%20Report_20151223.pdf

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“It is possible to build a peaceful society”

Iraq’s autonomous region of Kurdistan is home to approximately 2 million refugees from various backgrounds and religions. Since 2005, the Jiyan Foundation for Human Rights has been providing medical, psychotherapeutic and social support to survivors of torture, persecution and violence. Katja Dombrowski discussed matters with Salah Ahmad, the Foundation’s founder and president.

Interview with Salah Ahmad

The Jiyan Foundation helps refugees and victims of violence in Kurdish northern Iraq. What refugee groups have come to your region?

Kurdistan has taken in many people who experienced persecution in southern and central Iraq. They include many Sunnis and Christians, for instance from Baghdad or Basra, refugees from Mosul, which ISIS controls, and of course a large number of Syrians. We also have refugees from Iran and Turkey, specifically Kurds and dissidents. Kurdistan is the only safe area in the region, and the Kurds have done their best to accommodate these people.

How many refugees are there?

Officially there are 1.8 million refugees in Kurdistan, though some say that we have over 2 million – with a population of around 5 million. This influx has obviously overwhelmed the Kurdish government. Kurdistan is fighting a war with ISIS. It is also experiencing serious financial difficulties, which are being exacerbated by low oil prices. The UN is playing a large role in caring for the refugees, and so are organisations like ours.

When did the refugees arrive in Iraqi Kurdistan, and why were they forced to leave their homes?

Until 2003, Iraq was ruled by a dictatorial regime that was controlled by the Ba’ath party. The Ba’athists destroyed everything in sight, including their own people. The Americans then committed the serious error of liberating the country without appointing a head of state. The result was gang warfare between armed groups and a wave of terror that has still not ebbed off. In 2006 and 2007 alone, 150,000 to 170,000 civilians were killed. Nouri al-Maliki, the former prime minister, wanted to crush the Sunnis. That’s why there are so many Arab refugees in Kurdistan. Then came the ISIS terrorist militia. Thousands had to flee from Mosul and the surrounding area: Yazidis, Shabaks, Kaka’i, Chris-

tians and even Muslims. There are 14 or 15 religious groups who have lived in that region for thousands of years.

The fate of the Yazidis in particular got a lot of attention in western media. Why was that?
The Yazidis have a history of being persecuted and are worst affected by ISIS's attempted genocide. ISIS militants captured the Yazidi city of Sinjar as well as numerous villages, decapitated many people and abducted a large number of women. That was a traumatic experience.

What are living conditions like for refugees in Iraqi Kurdistan?
The camps are well equipped. The UNHCR provides food, electricity and water and organisations like the Jiyan Foundation offer medical and psychological care. Over 90 % of children go to school either inside or outside the camps. Refugees are also allowed to work. At the moment, however, it is very cold. We don't have enough heaters and people are freezing in their tents.

Do some refugees live outside the camps?

Jiyan Foundation

Many people in northern Iraq have experienced trauma. Survivors of the genocide perpetrated against Kurds by Iraq's Ba'ath regime under Saddam Hussein.

Yes, those people who are doing well enough financially can rent a house. They make up maybe 10 to 15 % of refugees and tend to be Iraqi Arab. The Syrians are also very well integrated. They work hard and don't have a language barrier to overcome; most Syrians in Iraq are Kurds who speak the same dialect as we do. Many have found jobs.

Which refugee groups does the Jiyan Foundation focus on?
We work with everyone – the Jiyan Foundation doesn't take background or religion into account. Anyone who needs help is welcome and all the services we offer are free. The Jiyan Foundation operates nine trauma centres and is currently building a therapeutic garden for women and children who were victims of violence and need a place to find peace. We have 145 employees in Kurdistan, including psychologists, psychotherapists, psychiatrists, physicians, social workers and physical therapists.

Are you the only organisation offering trauma therapy in the region?
No, there are several others. But we have been here for 10 years and have grown our organisation systematically. I opened the first Centre for Trauma Therapy in Kirkuk in 2005; I had to spend 15 months on site. Then we were asked if we could set up two more centres in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah. Now we have nine. We also train therapists. Twenty of our employees recently completed training to become trauma therapists.

How are all of these activities financed?
The Jiyan Foundation depends on international funding and donations. The most important donors include Germany's federal government, the EU, the UN and faith-based organisations like Misereor. We also cooperate closely with the Berlin Center for the Treatment of Torture Victims, where I myself have worked for many years. The Center supports us through professional exchange, joint projects and German infrastructure.

What does your work with refugees look like in practice?
We offer therapies for different target groups, for instance minorities, women and girls and children and youth. In order to provide our services, we travel not only to refugee camps, but also to women's shelters, prisons and orphanages. Our mobile teams travel to remote regions that don't otherwise have access to psychological care. Our goal is to provide people with the support they need to once again live normal lives. In therapy sessions, for instance, we tell people that they won't achieve anything through hatred or a desire for revenge. Victims feel these emotions very acutely. After all, many have experienced severe injustices. We go to schools and make it clear to young people that boys and girls are equal – we try to communicate an understanding of equal rights. There is a lot of violence in the schools, so we must show teachers how to deal with difficult children. We work with parents as well to help them understand why their child is behaving this way. This programme has been so successful that we have a waiting list for schools. Some parents have also become our patients because they recognise that we are able to help them. Everything we do is aimed at creating a peaceful society.

Is that possible at all while ISIS is carrying out violence, expulsion and repression in northern Iraq?
I think it is, as long as we don't give up. Of course, things are very difficult, but we are becoming more hopeful every day. ISIS is being beaten back and some areas have already been recaptured. The refugees hope that they will be able to return home. You can sense that they feel they have prospects for their future, which is also evident in the fact that people are getting married and having children in the camps. Thanks to therapy and trauma work, relationships within families have significantly improved. Families whose interactions were previously dominated by violence and conflict now live peacefully together.

You work with people from a variety of different religions, many of whom were persecuted because of their beliefs. What role does religion play in your work?
In our work, all members of all faiths operate as one team. I have never asked someone what religion he or she belongs to. It does not matter. We all have the same right to live here. When we work with our target groups, we also bring different religions together. Some groups are made up of three nationalities and religions. And people really benefit from that arrangement! Of course, we address religious repression and spell out, for instance, that ISIS does not represent the true Islam.

You yourself are Kurdish, come from Kirkuk and have experienced persecution and displacement. Was that why you decided to work with refugees?
I was politically active during the reign of Saddam Hussein and had to leave the country in 1981. As a refugee, I ended up in Germany, where I found asylum. I know the psychological traumas that many victims of torture experience. After I became a psychotherapist, I was able to help hundreds of people. Following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, I saw an opportunity to help people in Kurdistan. We filed applications for funding, until we finally got support from the US State Department. I very much hope that we can continue our work for several years to come. Only through peace work, which we are performing alongside our therapeutic services, is it possible to build a peaceful, democratic society.

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Links:

The Jiyan Foundation on the web, on Facebook and on Twitter:
http://www.jiyan-foundation.org
http://www.facebook.com/jiyanfoundation
@JiyanFoundation

AA/picture-alliance

Afghan refugees sit outside their homes in Islamabad.

Afghan unrest affects neighbour

Pakistan has the second-largest refugee population in the world, and the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) is growing too. The country is fighting internal militants and facing many huge challenges. Islamabad is not living up to all domestic and international obligations.

By Waqqas Mir

Before the current Syrian refugee crisis, Pakistan had the highest numbers of refugees worldwide for many years. Now Turkey tops the list, according to the statistics of the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR, and Pakistan comes second with 1.5 million registered and an estimated 1 million unregistered refugees. Most of them are from Afghanistan.

The influx of refugees into Pakistan started in 1972. It has varied over time, depending on the level of stability and violence in Afghanistan. The Soviet invasion in 1979 caused the highest number of refugees: at that time, around 3 million Afghans came to Pakistan.

Pakistan's generosity in receiving Afghan refugees is rooted in history and generally acknowledged. The country that accepted millions of Muslim migrants from India in 1947 as citizens was ready to offer refuge to an overwhelmingly Muslim population from a war-torn neighbouring country. The general consensus is that, with only few exceptions, constitutional rights apply to non-nationals within the country as well as to citizens.

Such generosity has a serious downside. Islamist extremism has fostered militancy in refugee camps, with many young fighters returning to Afghanistan, and others joining and boosting extremist groups in

Mohammad Sajjad/picture-alliance/AP Photo

Militant insurgents are causing bloodshed – a university near Peshawar was attacked on 20 January.

Pakistan. In this regard, the idea of Pakistan being a nation of South Asian Muslims has had painful consequences (see Maryam Khan in D+C/E+Z 2015/05, p. 26 ff.)

Open job market, schools and hospitals

Afghan refugees enjoy freedom of movement in Pakistan, and the huge informal economy offers them job opportunities. Today, more than 70 % of the refugees live in rural and urban host communities rather than in camps. Many have gravitated to Karachi, the commercial capital. This city has a big Pashtun population, and Pashtu is spoken on both sides of the shared border. Afghans have now bolstered this Pashtun population of Karachi, with an impact on polarised politics in the metropolis. Ethnic tensions haunt our multi-ethnic country, and they are especially evident in Karachi. Sadly, recurring violence between various ethnic group has haunted the city.

Pakistan grants Afghan refugees access to public schools and hospitals. However, refugees routinely face police harassment. They find it very difficult to rent properties moreover. Especially at times of increased socio-political strife, the refugee population

State authorities fail citizens

Pakistan's two richest provinces, Punjab and Sindh, expressly refuse to host internally displaced persons (IDPs), citing security concerns and lack of resources. Their approach clearly violates the human right of freedom of movement, which is appreciated by Pakistan in principle. In 2012, the central government even had an argument with the provincial governments over who was responsible for supporting IDPs. The tensions revealed an underdeveloped sense of federalism and a lack of institutional mechanisms to address emergencies.

When the 2012 floods hit, Punjab, the country's largest province, had not even constituted a Disaster Management Authority – even though a national law of 2010 demanded that such authorities be established at federal and provincial levels. Another shocking example of governmental unpreparedness was a lengthy debate among state agencies concerning militant uprisings. Officials disagreed on whether a security operation was a "disaster" as defined by law. Some argued that flood-affected IDPs were entitled to protection, but those fleeing from internal strife were not.

The human-rights situation of IDPs in Pakistan remains grim. The UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998) are routinely flouted or ignored. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reports that minorities have been moved between locations arbitrarily, and that the freedom of religion is often disregarded. After being displaced, for instance, a Hindu community was reportedly denied the lease of land. The reason was that the host population did not want a non-Islamic temple in their area.

Multiple reports by aid organisations, moreover, highlight the lack

is demonised. Many Pakistanis blame Afghan refugees for weapons and drugs trafficking.

The impact of the large refugee population on Pakistan's economy is significant. Pakistan is quite poor; the per-capita GDP is the equivalent of only about $ 1,200. Nonetheless, masses of refugees move around the country and are free to compete for limited resources such as land, water, energy and jobs. In 2010, the UNHCR reported that refugees contributed "to accelerated wear and tear of roads and canals and a significant increase in the consumption of fuel and fodder resources." At the time, no other country was bearing such a heavy refugee burden as Pakistan, according to the UNHCR.

There have been repeated calls for expelling Afghan refugees. The official policy, however, is that Afghan refugees' return will only happen voluntarily as long as they have themselves registered by the National Database and Registration Authority.

To ensure that all refugees are given what they deserve, Pakistan requires continuous support from the international community – but, at the same time, the international community must put pressure on the country to act appropriately. Amidst Pakistan's war against militants, the protection of refugee rights is not necessarily a top domestic priority.

Floods and militants displace people

Problems are compounded by a great number of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Their numbers have grown fast in the past decade. Floods played a major role, and so did security operations in the northwest. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), floods displaced close to 14 million people in Pakistan between 2008 and 2013.

Currently there are more than 1.5 million registered IDPs in Pakistan. The actual number is thought to be much higher though: an estimated 500,000 IDPs are unregistered.

Only around 40,000 IDPs live in camps established by the government. The overwhelming majority lives with host communities in the frontier province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), a semi-autonomous region in the northwest. They place immense strain on the resources of poor communities there.

On the one hand, IDP issues have spurred the Pakistani state, civil society and media to engage in the rhetoric of helping fellow nationals. On the other hand, Pakistan is an ethnically diverse country, and xenophobia about IDPs swallowing up jobs and resources has reared its ugly head. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan considers ethnicity-based violence a serious concern. Indeed, IDP rights are often neglected (see box below).

Civil-society groups from Pakistan and abroad regularly criticise the central and provincial governments for failing to stay informed about the evolving needs of IDPs' and safeguarding their rights. It is true that Pakistan does not have the financial means to take care of all IDPs on its own, so the international community and Pakistani civil society have an obligation to help. At the same time, they must put enough pressure on the Pakistani state to ensure that it lives up to its domestic and international obligations. ←

of effective care for pregnant women and those with special needs. More than 70 % of IDPs are estimated to be women and children. Children who are separated from their parents most often do not receive the counselling and support they require.

Women who head households find it difficult to register officially because the domestic registration regulations assume that every family is headed by a man. Furthermore, the authorities demand to see a valid computerised national identity card (CNIC) for registration. The snag is that hundreds of thousands of women in conservative rural areas have probably never left their homes to get CNICs. This is a blatant example of gender discrimination and violates human rights, human dignity and respect for family life.

IDPs in urban communities struggle to find jobs. Local authorities routinely communicate urban residents that they should not hire people who have fled from tribal areas. IDPs are largely excluded from participation in the political process – whether as voters or candidates. One reason is that voters' lists are not kept up to date. Another reason is that many IDPs have lost their identity cards and other documents, which also means they are disenfranchised when it comes to returning home and resettlement.

It is ironic, to put it mildly, that the Pakistani state tends to treat Afghan refugees, almost all of whom are Sunni Muslims, more generously than IDPs. Issues that contribute to this state of affairs include the fact that some IDPs belong to religious minorities and that government agencies in Pakistan tend to be overburdened, underfunded and, all too often, dysfunctional. *(wm)*

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Looking for happiness abroad

Not all Africans making for the west are fleeing from armed conflicts in their home country. Many academics are leaving Central and East Africa because they hardly find jobs there. In Europe and North America, on the other hand, some academic qualifications are in short supply. A growing number of Catholic priests, for example, come from countries of the South. Africans with relevant skills are also sought for social occupations like nursing. But not everyone finds happiness in the west. Three people who left Uganda told D+C/E+Z about their experiences.

By Isabella Bauer

Faihda Dede Ombasa lives in Arua, a town of simple mud huts and houses with corrugated iron roofs in north-western Uganda. During the civil war in the late 1970s, Faihda received a scholarship and became the first girl from the area to have the opportunity to move to Vermont in the USA and acquire university entrance qualifications there. She was anxious at first, but everything went well: "I was surprised by the warmth and sincerity of the welcome I received," she recalls.

An elderly couple took her under their wing and became her new family. Rural Vermont seemed the perfect place for her: "I liked the town and the people, with their liberal views and their belief in fairness, equality and freedom."

But before long she discovered that the society around her also had a darker side: "I was so surprised to find poverty there and people who were homeless. And I obviously soon learned that being black there means being inferior."

Another scholarship took Faihda to New York, where she studied social work. She stayed there as a social worker, supporting vulnerable young people. The first trip home to Uganda marked a watershed: "In 1991, I came for the funeral of my elder sister, who had died of AIDS. Within a very short time, I knew that I would move back to Uganda. I suddenly realised that I no longer wanted to live in that country." And so, just a few years later, she returned to the place where she had grown up.

Her parents were overjoyed – also by the fact that she would soon present them with a grandchild. However, the child's father, who is Ugandan, did not leave the USA to join Faihda as he had promised. As a single parent, Faihda had no place in society, so she agreed to become the second wife of a man in the neighbourhood. She still lives with him and his first wife today.

Shortly after the birth of her daughter, Faihda joined the team of governmental development programme. Her foreign experience proved useful: "My second parents in the States had introduced me to a totally different set of values. They turned me into a confident, bold woman." She tried to modernise the rural communities around her: "It was important not to be judgemental about social conditions. Gradually and with great respect, I tried to sensitise people to change. After all, they are my own people."

Faihda continues to work for various Ugandan and foreign organisations today. Her heart is always with ordinary people. To a young woman who wants to go west as she did herself her advice would be: "Don't think the streets in the west are paved with gold. You need to work hard to achieve anything – three times as hard as a local person. Try to make something of yourself. And never forget where you come from."

Positive experiences

From an early age, Irene Dawa strived to become able to make her own decisions. For a woman who grew up in Uganda, she has an extraordinary story to tell: "I went to Europe to do a master's degree in peace studies. Then I spent various periods in the USA, Sudan and South Sudan as well as the Caribbean. Everywhere, I had incredible experiences." She adds, however, that in western countries, people would often not believe that a well-educated, independent woman could be from a developing country. "They expected me to be looking for a better life in the west, to be a supplicant," she says.

Bauer

Faihda Dede Ombasa (left) and Irene Dawa both gathered work experience in the west and later returned to their native Uganda.

She made lots of positive discoveries in the west as well: "When I went to Europe for the first time, I was amazed to find that total strangers were willing to help me," she says. From those days as a student in Austria, she still has many friends all over the world. She meets them on assignments as an adviser to international organisations. She is a committed women's rights activist, and specialises in conflict management and refugee issues. Most recently, she worked in a huge refugee camp in Uganda, on the border with South Sudan, where most of the refugees come from.

It is not always easy to move between different worlds. "When I come home to Uganda, I'm overjoyed to see my father and have a chance to speak my own language. But we also often argue – because my time abroad has made me very self-assured," she says. "I am accustomed to taking my own decisions. At home, others want to decide for me and plan how I should spend my money, but I no longer accept that." She insists that the family consult her about everything that affects her.

Irene Dawa still has many ambitious plans for the future. She recently established her own aid organisation and has applied for a PhD programme in England. Her aim is to run a large women's rights organisation in order to promote educational and development opportunities for women.

Her advice for other young women wishing to move to the west is: "First of all, think seriously about why you want to leave your country. Then stick to the path you choose – because you can easily go astray in other countries if you don't know what you are looking for. Respect the culture of the people and absorb what you feel is good for you."

Open future

Father Joseph Adriga (not his real name) prepares the Sunday service in his parish in western Germany. It is a routine task. The Ugandan clergyman has served as Catholic parish priest in Germany for nearly ten years.

Bauer

Arua, the home town of Faihda Dede Ombasa.

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It all started with an ecclesiastical doctoral studies grant: "My bishop suggested that I should do a doctorate in Germany and I went along with that. I was being groomed at the time for a senior position in the diocese." At the time, Father Joseph had already been to Germany a number of times on seminars.

He has vivid memories of discussions with Joseph Ratzinger, who later became Pope. Of course, exchange with other African priests was intense as well: "We always said that dogmatic theology may well be good in a western context, but life in Africa does not work like that. We discussed the issue for nights on end."

When he started ministering German parishes while pursuing his doctoral studies, Father Joseph found he had to adjust quite a bit. The biggest difference was speaking in almost empty churches. "I was shocked to find that people don't go to these wonderful churches, and that more and more parishes are being merged. That is something we priests struggle to come to terms with," he says.

On the whole, however, he enjoys working and living in Germany. "I am needed here as a priest. And I have a secure income – unlike in Uganda, where I am always dependent on the collection, on people giving me something even though they don't have much themselves." He sums up: "Here, the church takes care of me."

What he misses is the company of friends and family. He says, loneliness is actually a very common problem in the west: "People here have everything, except commonality". So he looks forward each year to the summer vacation he spends back home – even though people there express constant demands that he should support them financially.

Values at home in Uganda and Germany, in his second home, also differ in other areas. Those differences can make pastoral duties difficult: "In the beginning, I mainly listened," he says. "In time, I came to understand that it is always about lending support and that even things we don't understand are resolved in prayer." Whether he will stay in Germany for good has yet to be decided. He will be allowed to stay as long as he is doing his PhD. After that, the decision rests with his Ugandan bishop.

Joseph is worried that he may no longer be accepted at home, that he will be regarded as someone who has set foot in immoral Europe and lost African values and the true faith. In that case, the only option would be to switch to a German diocese – for good.

His advice to a young African colleague would be: "Going away can be life-changing. At some point, it may be very difficult to go home. You should bear that in mind." ←

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Guatemala's social problems

In Guatemala, children are required to attend six years of primary school, which they can do free of charge. In addition, state-run education programmes have the right ambitions: they aim to provide school meals, an inclusive environment, intercultural education and teaching materials. But implementation has been extremely slow, and nationwide problems like poverty, corruption, violence and racism all have a negative impact.

By Patricia Galicia

In Guatemala, the constitution guarantees the right to education. Six years of primary education are compulsory. Primary school is the only form of school that the state is required to provide to all children free of charge. Nevertheless, approximately 245,000 boys and girls between the ages of seven and 12 do not go to school at all. Unfortunately, the percentage of school-age children who do not attend school has significantly increased over the past several years, rising from 5.5 % in 2006 to 19 % in 2015. According to a recent study, children from low-income families are particularly likely to stay home, especially if they live in rural areas and belong to indigenous communities.

Tribune

In contrast to secondary schools, most primary schools in Guatemala are state-run. Since 2005, over 1,500 new state primary schools have been registered. However, the share of private schools is gradually increasing and currently stands at 14.7 % (see box, p. 41).

Whereas private schools are usually located in cities, public-sector schools are often the only primary-education institutions that can be found in rural areas, where the population tends to be indigenous. Rates of poverty and malnutrition are high. One out of every four boys and one out of every three girls has to work in addition to going to school.

Free – but still too expensive

The Peace Accords that put an end to Guatemala's 36-year civil war in 1996 committed the state to invest more in education. Accordingly, the government spent around 2.8 % of its budget on education in 2013. Half of that money went to primary schools in order to cover the cost of instruction, subsidise school meals and pay for teaching materials.

However, bureaucracy and widespread corruption have foiled many good plans. Textbooks and teaching materials often don't arrive until the end of the school year – if at all. The school meal programme is another example of failure. Every child is supposed to get a balanced breakfast and lunch in order to prevent malnutrition and improve attention in the class rooms. School meals matter to poor families in particular. However, the funds are disbursed much too late, and the amounts tend to be too low. Many schools only offer meals sporadically. In other cases, the food that they receive does not meet the official quality standards.

Despite the fact that a programme exists to provide a free education, school is expensive for poor children. Up until a few years ago, parents had to pay an annual registration fee. It has been scrapped, but schools still ask for "voluntary contributions" to pay for repairs, drinking water, computers, increases to teachers' salaries and security services to protect the building. Parents also have to pay for school uniforms and supplies.

Many families with a large number of children choose one child they send to school so at least one will get primary education. Others decide to send some of them to school for short periods so each will learn to read, write and perform basic

Gudrun Lux

Not every school in the countryside is so well equipped: primary school pupils carrying school desks in Guatemala.

arithmetic. These skills are useful in the eyes of subsistence farmers.

Thousands of children have to walk long distances to school or use unsafe public transportation that often takes them through dangerous areas.

Overworked teachers, crime and natural disasters

Especially in rural areas, teachers are often overworked. In 2014, teachers at private schools taught an average of 15 pupils per class. Teachers in public-sector schools taught 26, whereas on the outskirts of cities they sometimes had over 40. In some rural schools, a single teacher has to teach three different age groups at the same time and act as the head of the school. They also do not have enough teaching materials, particularly when it comes to subjects like sports and art. In the last decade, the government cut the education budget and introduced temporary employment contracts for teachers. As a result, selection and hiring processes now take significantly longer, leaving some classes with no teacher at all for lengthy periods of time.

The school buildings are also frequently in disrepair. In poor regions, classrooms are often only built of corrugated metal walls, and the teacher's desk consists simply of a few bricks stacked on top of each other. In some cases, each pupil has to bring along a bucket of water in order to flush the toilet. Earthquakes, landslides and floods have caused major, irreparable damage to many school buildings. As a result, the affected pupils are deprived of classrooms indefinitely.

Computer labs have yet to be set up in schools. The challenges are especially tough in areas that lack electric power. But even schools that do have computers often do not have funds for maintenance, internet connections and trained IT teachers.

Private primary schools on the rise

The number of private primary schools in Guatemala has risen slowly but significantly over the past 10 years. The result is more social inequality. This development can be blamed above all on the declining quality of public-sector schools, says Cecilia Garcés, an education specialist for the Population Council. She faults the media, politicians and representatives of the business community for treating education as a service rather than a human right. Another issue, according to Garcés, is that many families do not send their children to private schools because they think the quality of instruction is superior, but because they want their children to make friends with children from wealthy families. They also appreciate the prestige of sending their children to an institution that most people think must provide a better education because parents are paying, Garcés continues. As a result, the gap between rich and poor is growing wider and wider.

If politicians do not invest in education, they will not be able to create an educational system that facilitates social mobility. Patricia Galicia discussed this issue with Carlos Aldana, the former technical deputy minister of education.

To what extent is the expansion of private schools increasing inequality among Guatemalans?

Having the right skills improves people's chances on the labour market. But the knowledge and skills that children are acquiring in schools vary. State schools in particular are falling short of the mark by focussing on traditional subjects.

In order to participate in the world of work as well as politics and society, people need to have access to – and must know how to use – media and communication technologies. In this respect, public-sector schools are not properly preparing pupils. This shortcoming is making the digital divide wider and means more hurdles for many pupils when they want to enter the labour market.

Political participation is easier for people who have achieved a higher level of education. Political inequality is growing because some segments of the people gather in private schools.

How are these issues impacting poor and indigenous pupils?

Pupils' ethnic and economic backgrounds still fundamentally determine how successful they are at school. Poverty exacerbates exclusion in education. For instance, poor nutrition has a negative impact on the neurological abilities of young children. Since poverty is particularly widespread in rural areas, indigenous children are primarily affected. What's more, these children are often not taught in their native language. Many of them are enrolled in school but do not complete the school year or finish on time, meaning that they don't learn the most essential skills. The right to education for all is a great achievement. It should not be limited as a result of poverty or child labour. Nevertheless, many children and young people in our country do not take advantage of their right to education.

How can one ensure that everyone will exercise their right to primary education in a country like Guatemala?

In policy discussions and budget planning, bilingual instruction in Spanish and one of the 24 indigenous languages has to become a priority because it promotes inclusive education. That means that instruction in pupils' native languages has to be guaranteed. We need more bilingual and truly intercultural teachers who are not simply acting as interpreters. Well-trained teachers have to work together with indigenous peoples and their organisations to develop a national strategy for inclusive education. It is also important that we do not simply talk about gender equality in the classroom. Strategies and methods have to be developed that promote this cause so women and men will eventually be equally capable of exercising their right to education. We need strategies for the classroom, where an atmosphere of respect and integrity should prevail. But we also need strategies for other areas of the educational system as a whole, involving families and organisations for instance.

Cancelled lessons are yet another problem. Teachers frequently go on strike in response to unstable employment conditions and delayed payment of wages. School buildings are sometimes used as polling places or emergency shelters for victims of natural disasters. Consequently, the required 180 days of instruction that ought to make up the school year do not actually take place.

Schools recurrently close when criminals demand protection money and threaten pupils and teachers that otherwise they will use violence. Violence is omnipresent in Guatemala. Pupils have even been murdered at school. Classes are cancelled when such things happen, and some children never return to school out of fear for their safety.

Good goals, poor implementation

According to the national curriculum, schools should promote gender equality, inclusion and respect for indigenous peoples. They are supposed to teach students to become responsible citizens and create a culture of peace. Approximately 10 years after the curriculum was approved, however, teachers have still not received the appropriate training and do not know how to implement these goals in the classroom.

Children from indigenous families have to become part of a school system that is not based on their communities' world view. It does not uphold their cultural values, pays little attention to their history and does not take into account their socio-economic situation. In addition, teachers often fail to address indigenous peoples' contribution to society. Although it is a national goal to offer bilingual and intercultural education, there are still very few teachers who can teach both in Spanish and in one of the 24 indigenous languages.

"There are many teachers who are actually indigenous themselves, but they can't write correctly in their language and can't use it to teach," explains Zoila Tot, a Q'eqchi' whose children attend their village's government-run school. "They prefer to teach in Spanish because they are afraid of being discriminated against. There is a lot of racism. People think children are getting an inferior education if they are taught in a Maya language. But the children are the ones who suffer: many of them have to repeat the first grade or end up leaving school altogether. Their families then see school as a waste of time and money."

All of these factors reduce educational success. According to a study from 2014, sixth-graders only reached 40 % of the reading abilities and 44 % of the mathematics skills they should have acquired at that time. The right laws are in place, but much remains to be done. ←

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Interview

"We are running out of time"

A new global climate agreement was concluded in the UN context in Paris in December, but many important issues remain unresolved. Hans Dembowski discussed matters with Thomas Loster, director of Munich Re Foundation, who has been observing climate negotiations for 20 years.

Interview with Thomas Loster

The Paris agreement is the first to address the losses and damages caused by global warming. At the same time, it states that the rich nations which contributed to the phenomenon most are not liable. Does this stance make sense?
Well, the people in charge at the secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have been looking into this matter for quite some time. It is impossible to provide precise monetary figures for losses and damages. Of course it makes sense to take stock as accurately as possible, and it seems plausible to ask those responsible for past and maybe even current emissions to pay compensations. I think, however, that the decision-makers worry that such a stance would cause countries such as China or the USA to drop out from the UNFCCC process. And that would not help the climate at all. The word compensation is highly controversial in debates, and that was the case in Paris too.

Insurance can compensate for damages, and that was discussed in Paris as well. But are insurance schemes really feasible in very poor countries? Don't people there spend their incomes on daily needs and shy away from investing in protection against damages that may never occur?
Insurance policies cannot cover all kinds of risks, including the accelerated rise of sea levels or the long-term dwindling of glaciers. These are slow-onset events that will almost certainly affect huge regions, and it is once more impossible to quantify the potential damages in monetary terms. From an actuarial point of view, this kind of risk cannot be spread over many shoulders. If, however, you are thinking of draughts, storms and floods, insurance policies do make sense. I am involved in the Munich Climate Insurance Initiative (MCII). We have designed an insurance product for people living on Caribbean islands with very low incomes. The insurance covers what they need for their livelihoods in the event of extreme storms or floods. The price for one insurance policy approximately equals the price of four lunch meals. Interest in this kind of climate insurance is growing, not least also among policymakers, because

Dave Hunt/AP Photo/picture-alliance

Small island states in the Pacific are in serious trouble already: typhoon damages in Vanuatu.

it can serve adaptation to climate change.

The Paris agreement expresses the ambition to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees on average. To achieve that, action is needed immediately. Nonetheless, the voluntary contributions to climate protection that governments pledged to make will only be reassessed in five years with an eye to making these "intended nationally defined contributions" more stringent. What does that mean?

This is indeed a serious issue. We know that some countries – for example small island states in the Pacific – are in serious trouble already, and they will have to cope with massive damages even if temperatures reach the 1.5 degree limit. Hence, the ambitious goal makes a lot of sense, but it is hardly reachable in physical or technological terms.

Even approaches such as geo-engineering won't help. A much debated method is carbon capture and storage (CCS), which is about capturing CO_2 and depositing it underground. A great idea is to use bio mass for energy production and store the emitted carbon. Ultimately, this would even lead to negative emissions. I'm afraid, however, that we simply won't get societal and political acceptance for this approach internationally. The same must be said of other proposals to modify the atmosphere to fight global warming.

We are running out of time, as the German Advisory Council on Global Change (WGBU) has pointed out convincingly again and again. The Paris agreement makes time lags likely, and that causes a serious problem. Just to achieve the 2.0 degree level, we would have had to have started reducing emissions yesterday. The more time goes by, the more our chances for effectively stopping climate change will dwindle.

The industrialised countries have once more promised to make $ 100 billion per year available for climate mitigation and adaptation in developing countries from 2020 on. That sum includes private-sector investments, which, by definition, are not controlled by governments. What must we expect?

Those $ 100 billion are nothing new, that sum has been discussed and published for years now. There are lots of intentions and pledges, but we'll only know the real figures in the end. The funds that have been transferred to the so-called Green Climate Fund so far are not overwhelming. Actually, I also do not yet really see huge private-sector contributions, though governments are quite keen on them. Private-sector investors become active when they expect profits, that is the nature of the game. In regard to public-private partnerships, we need sensible approaches on both sides, and on top, we need stamina. At the moment, there is more talking than action.

The agreement does not mention "decarbonisation", but decarbonisation is what climate protection is about.

Yes, it is true: without decarbonisation we won't achieve anything, we will neither stay within the 2.0 nor the 1.5 degrees limit. To make a relevant difference, the global economy will have to become carbon-neutral sometime between 2050 and 2070. This goal looks most ambitious considering today's emission levels. The good news is that the issues of decarbonisation and divestment from fossil-fuel businesses have moved up on the agenda. Should governments fail to limit global warming, the private sector can prove itself worthy. I hope that will happen, though the Paris agreement does not tackle this issue in detail.

My impression is that, after Paris, just as many questions remain open as before Paris. What tangible progress was made?

Well, my points might sound rather pessimistic so far, but: I insist that the result of COP21 is a major success. The euphoria at the end of the summit may have been a bit exaggerated. The agreement must yet be implemented, and it includes a lot of rather vague "countries should" clauses. But consider what would have happened if Paris had not led to a result or if governments had backed off in the end. The entire negotiation process of the UNFCCC would have been put in question. Your readers will probably recall that the Copenhagen summit was a huge failure despite large expectations. To discontinue the UNFCCC process would have far-reaching consequences for everyone. Climate summits are a bit like peace talks. Even though partial results may not be satisfying, things would be far worse if there were no negotiations at all. So in spite of all the criticism I have expressed, I consider Paris a true success.

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At a crossroads

The WTO summit in Nairobi late last year achieved important new trade agreements. The multilateral organisation is in crisis nonetheless, and its Doha Development Round looks like a dead-end street.

By Hans Dembowski

Biennial ministerial summits are the World Trade Organization's (WTO) main decision-making forum. Decisions require consensus. Since achieving consensus among more than 160 nations is difficult, the WTO did not make much progress in recent years.

The summit in Nairobi in December, however, was different. Several small, though relevant deals were made, and disagreement on the future of the Doha Development Round was made explicit. The Doha Round is the negotiation process that was started 14 years ago in Qatar. It was supposed to improve opportunities for poor countries. It is unlikely to be continued since open disagreement in a setting that requires consensus indicates the lack of a clear mandate to keep going.

On the other hand, some progress was made. For instance, it was agreed that WTO members can grant least-developed countries (LDCs) preferential market access for services for another 15 years. It has similarly been made easier to grant them preferential market access for processed goods.

Another new agreement reached in Nairobi concerns information technology (IT). Tariffs will be removed on 201 products, including high-tech semi-conductors, magnetic-resonance imaging machines and video game consoles. The goods concerned make up about 10 % of global trade, according to the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, a non-governmental organisation that monitors the WTO and publishes the influential newsletter "Bridges".

The IT agreement will make electronic goods cheaper. It may help to reduce the digital divide which separates those people who have access to computerised systems from those who do not. However, the LDCs do not play a major role in the global IT trade so the developmental impact will probably not be big.

Agriculture progress

The most important new agreement concerns agriculture. Three crucial elements are:

- Export subsidies will be eliminated by 2020, and the use of other types of export instruments, such as credit or food aid, will be limited more stringently than so far.
- There will be a safeguard mechanism allowing developing countries and emerging markets to raise tariffs temporarily in response to high food price volatility. The details must yet be agreed.
- Developing countries will be entitled to hold public stocks of farm goods for safeguarding sufficient supply at affordable prices. Permanent rules must yet be defined, but temporary rules exist and have been extended.

These issues are of great developmental relevance. Agriculture subsidies severely distort global trade. Huge, high-tech farms in rich nations benefit from government support, while smallholder farmers in poor world regions must do without. They struggle to compete. Export subsidies and other kinds of export promotion have compounded the problems. All too often, farmers in poor countries are crowded out of domestic markets and reduced to subsistence farmers, if they do not give up agriculture altogether.

The new agreement states that export subsidies will be phased out this year. There are a few exceptions, but those exceptions must end by 2020. Export credits will henceforth be limited to 18 months rather than 24 months. Advanced nations are now committed to refrain from in-kind food aid wherever it hurts local and regional markets, moreover, and the extent to which their agencies may sell food-aid supplies in order to raise funds for development projects will be limited too.

These steps are valuable. The downside, however, is that agriculture subsidies in the developed world still distort international trade. When the Doha Round was started in 2001, developing countries had expected more concessions – and sooner. What has happened since is subsidy policies have changed in the prosperous world.

The EU, for example, used to subsidise farms per produced litre of milk, bushel of wheat or kilo of pork. Now it subsidises farms according to the land they use. The more hectares a farm has, the more support it gets. Accordingly, its access to credit for major investments becomes easier too. This policy means that big farms grow ever bigger, while small farms are discontinued.

Doha disappointment

Trade negotiators from disadvantaged world regions, however, had wanted the Doha Round to improve matters for farmers in their countries. The shift from product-related to land-related subsidies in rich countries has made a difference, but not the big difference expected. Therefore, a strong sense of disappointment in regard to the Doha Round prevails among developing countries and emerging markets.

One thing the governments of developing countries and emerging markets liked about the Doha Round was that it did not include a list of issues that governments of rich nations wanted to tackle. These issues are called the Singapore issues and they include the rights of investors, competition rules and government procurement. In Doha, the developing world opposed putting these issues on the agenda in fear of losing policy space needed for catching up with established economic powers.

picture-alliance/dpa

Roberto Azevêdo, WTO director-general, and Amina Mohamed, Kenya's foreign minister, want to keep the show on the road.

In order to get an agreement, the EU and the USA finally agreed to launch a round of negotiations that did not include the Singapore issues. They wanted to send a signal of global unity at the Doha summit, which took place only a few weeks after the 9/11 terror attacks. However, it soon became clear that neither the EU nor the USA were really willing to forsake these issues.

Indeed, their efforts to put them on the WTO agenda again failed, and they began to show ever growing interest in bilateral trade deals which included the Singapore issues. The most prominent bilateral deal is the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) which was agreed by 12 governments last year, but must still be ratified by national legislatures. Another one is the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) on which EU and US negotiators are still working.

Both TTP and TTIP are highly controversial. One worry is that they will not only undermine the WTO, but development-friendly bilateral trade agreements as well (see Theresa Krinninger in D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2015/12, p. 5, or Clara Weinhardt et al. in D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2015/08, p. 34 f.). The reasoning is that, once the USA, EU and Japan are covered by these deals, all other nations will have to accept those rules. After all, these economies are especially important. Another worry is that TTP and TTIP may grant excessive rights to foreign investors and thus thwart national policy making (see Alan Robles in D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2015/07, p. 40).

Leaders in emerging markets, moreover, are fully aware of US President Barack Obama stating repeatedly that the idea of TTP is to define global rules and not leaving matters to countries like China. They resent being excluded from decision making for obvious reasons.

The most important aspect, however, is that a multilateral trade regime would serve all parties by providing comparatively simple rules for all parties involved. A host of bilateral agreements, on the contrary, leads to "spaghetti bowl" complexity, as Jagdish Bhagwati, a prominent economist, has often argued (see for instance D+C/E+Z 2011/12, p. 452 ff.). A complicated setting with many different rules, depending on what country exports go to, serves the business of trade lawyers, whom the poorest partners involved can hardly afford.

Where we are now

World trade is a most complex issue. Views diverge on where the WTO stands now. Joseph Stiglitz, the former chief economist of the World Bank, has expressed regret about the end of the Doha Round and blames the rich nations – in particular the USA – of egotism. According to Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, on the other hand, the phasing out of export subsidies for agricultural goods and easier market access for LDCs add up to meaningful progress. Both stances make sense.

The comment of the Financial Times was that it had been high time to discontinue the Doha Round. One reason it gave was that emerging markets have grown so fast in the past one and a half decades that it does not make sense to consider them developing countries anymore. Indian newspapers, on the other hand, expressed frustration. The background is that trade opportunities for LDCs have indeed improved in the past decades, whereas the outlook for most middle-income countries has not improved that much since the WTO was established in 1995.

It is interesting to consider the recent decisions from the perspective of the WTO's self-interest. By brokering new deals, it has proven that it is still a relevant institution in spite of the Doha gridlock. Some critics had argued that only its trade-dispute settlement system, which can punish countries for not sticking to WTO rules, mattered anymore.

By agreeing to disagree in Nairobi, however, the WTO has managed to inch forward on making rules. This is what probably mattered most to Roberto Azevêdo, WTO director-general, and Amina Mohamed, who is a former WTO staff member and hosted the summit as Kenya's foreign minister. ←

Link:

Bridges – International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development:
http://www.ictsd.org/bridges-news/bridges/overview

Scrambling against decline

Old tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran are reintensifying. By executing a leading Shia cleric, Saudi Arabia has recklessly fanned the flames.

By Maysam Behravesh

Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr, whom Saudi Arabia executed on 2 January 2016, was a prominent and high-ranking Shia cleric in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province. The population of this oil-rich province is reportedly predominantly Shia. Nimr was born in one of its villages in 1959.

He left to study religion in Iran in 1979. That was when the Islamic Revolution toppled Iran's Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and brought to power a Shia revolutionary regime. Nimr returned to Saudi Arabia in 1994 to become the most influential faith leader of the country's Shias.

He was critical of the Saudi royalty and particularly of how it treats the Shia minority. He insisted on non-violence, but supported Iran's post-revolutionary principle of governance called the "Guardianship of the Jurisprudent", which puts the supreme leader in charge of ultimate decision-making. However, Nimr was quite critical of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad and his suppressive policies against opponents. Iran supports Assad.

Zataari/AP Photo/picture-alliance

Lebanese Shias are angry about the execution of Nimr al-Nimr.

Debate

Nimr's execution has domestic and international implications. They concern the sectarian Sunni-Shia strife invoked by the Saudi regime to consolidate its authority at home and project power abroad. It also needs to be seen in the context of the geopolitical rivalry between the kingdom and its arch-enemy Iran, which is evident in civil wars in Syria and Yemen as well as other conflicts in the wider Middle East.

In the eyes of the Saudi leadership, Iran's recent rapprochement with the west is worrisome. Last year's agreement on banning nuclear arms and lifting sanctions has boosted Tehran's standing.

The execution of Nimr has sent a clear message to Saudi Arabia's Shia minority that dissent is not tolerated. At the same time, it was meant to provoke Iran. The Saudis hoped that Iran might respond in a way that would help them to rally Arab allies and slow down, if not reverse, the ongoing shift in the regional balance of power.

Indeed, hardline protesters soon stormed the Saudi embassy in Tehran and set it ablaze. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani condemned such action, but the event provided what the Saudis had wanted: an opportunity to play the victim and mobilise Arab fears.

Riyadh severed diplomatic ties with Tehran and successfully encouraged Bahrain, Sudan and Djibouti to follow suit. Moreover, Saudi Arabia pledged Somalia aid worth $ 50 million if it cut diplomatic relations with Iran – which Somalia did.

Trita Parsi, the head of the US-based National Iranian American Council, sees a new recklessness in the foreign policy of King Salman and his son Muhammad, the defence minister. In this perspective, the Saudi approach looks like the frenzied reactive-aggressive scramble of a sectarian state that is facing regional decline.

The acrimony between Iran and Saudi Arabia is old. It goes back to the pre-revolutionary era when Iran's Shah was the west's gendarme of the Middle East, which is predominantly Arab. Iran held the upper hand over its Arab neighbours in military and economic terms.

The rivalry became obvious to everyone and intensified after Iran's revolution. Issues of religious ideology suddenly mattered, and sectarian differences added to the problems. Arab countries considered Iran an emergent Shia powerhouse that was keen to export its revolution, subvert the Sunni old guard and revise the regional order.

To contain revolutionary Iran, Saddam Hussein, Iraq's authoritarian leader, started war in 1980. Back then, he was supported by the west as well as Saudi Arabia. The attritional war went on until 1988 and caused terrible suffering. Iranians have not forgotten, moreover, that a clash between Shia demonstrators and Saudi security forces claimed the lives of over 400 people during the Hajj pilgrimage in 1987. Most of the dead were Iranian.

Western leaders know that Iran and Saudi Arabia must be on board if international talks to deliver peace to strife-torn Syria and military campaigns against the ISIS militia are to succeed. Whether Saudi Arabia shares their priorities is an open question. In the meantime, Iran's people are delighted that economic sanctions have been lifted.

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A pan-regional crisis

Burundi has been sinking ever deeper into unfathomable chaos since President Pierre Nkurunziza's controversial re-election in the summer. Violent attacks reoccur. The state order has collapsed. The media and civil society are being suppressed.

By Gesine Ames

In most cases, the perpetrators of violence are not identified. The use of government force is becoming ever more stringent, and armed groups are responding in kind. Daily life has become unbearable. Sexualised violence is increasingly common – and it serves strategic purposes. The government does not investigate human-rights abuses.

For humanitarian agencies, work has become ever more difficult. In November, the home ministry froze the bank accounts of 10 non-governmental organisations. The editorial offices and the broadcasting stations of independent media have been closed and largely destroyed. Over 230 000 people have fled to neighbouring countries.

These Burundian events indicate that the crisis will rock the entire region. The temptation to stay in government office by illegitimate means is great in all neighbouring countries. The irony is that Burundi proves undeniably what risks are involved in undermining constitutional principles for the sake of clinging to power. Constitutions must be respected as sets of rules that safeguard societal peace and political stability. Power-hungry individuals and their cronies must not be allowed to use them as personal tools.

In spite of international and regional criticism, Nkurunzia is staying his course. International sanctions and the freezing of aid money have not made a difference. On the contrary, he is intentionally opening wounds and pitting population groups against one another. It bears repetition that we are witnessing the result of presidential recklessness rather than a clash of ethnic groups.

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) has, for the first time, authorised the deployment of MAPROBU, a peacekeeping force with 5000 troops. Nkurunziza's response was that he will not tolerate a "foreign invasion". To actually start the mission, the AU needs a two-thirds majority of member governments. It is uncertain whether and when such a majority can be mustered without Burundi's consent.

AP Photo/picture-alliance

Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni did not achieve much in peace talks in Entebbe in December.

In the meantime, tensions are growing in neighbouring Rwanda. The two governments accuse one another of causing disorder and providing rebels with safe havens. Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni has tried to broker compromise between Burundi's government and opposition, but not accomplished much so far. Museveni himself is controversial, however, as he had his country's constitution changed to abolish term limits and stay in power. In many people's eyes, he thus lacks credibility.

At the same time, Burundi's government is showing very little interest in compromise. It cancelled a round of negotiations in early January after a meeting in Entebbe on 28 December proved fruitless.

Hopes are now pinned on Tanzania, one of the region's political and economic heavyweights. Former President Jakaya Kikwete had sided with Nkurunziza. It remains to be seen, however, what approach John Magufuli, the new president, will take. He was elected according to constitutional provisions.

Regional pressure on Burundi's government, which lacks a legitimate mandate by the electorate, must certainly increase for a peaceful solution to be found. Burundi's political opposition and civil society must be involved in a meaningful way, moreover. This is not simply an African affair, the entire international community must pay attention. A joint strategy of the East African Community and the AU is indispensable, but the EU and the UN must play their part too. Coherent action will be essential for a monitoring and protective mission to be sent to Burundi in cooperation with the AU. There must be an end to daily repression and killing.

Debate

To prevent further crises in the region, moreover, it is crucial to tackle the issue of constitutional changes in favour of individual leaders. Clear standpoints are needed right from the start, and policymakers must act in accordance with them. The political and humanitarian crises we are witnessing now are not one nation's domestic affairs – they may trigger mayhem across the entire world region.

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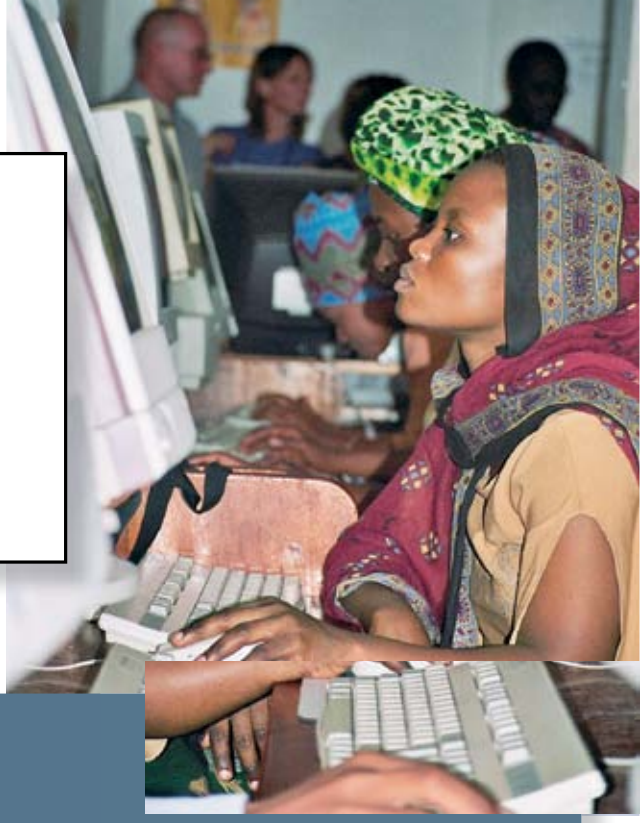

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