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A Sanctioned Living: Life of a Refugee

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ABSTRACT

A living being's basic requirement for a humane life is ascertainment of human rights providing safety and a dignified life. In the absence of any of these elemental components, the living life becomes a bane. Throughout the history, the refugee crisis has been an ever-present critical point of humanitarian welfare. With the ravages of time, the problem of humanitarian aid has come under visible crisis. With the distinguishable change in needs of the time, variable challenges have arrived owing to the changes in the factors causing it in the first place. Protracted wars, conflicts have been of the primeval causes of it, but the change in climate and environment have been the triggering factors in recent times to have caused great exodus. Focusing on the root causes of the refugee crisis, the underlying effects and offsetting the triggers in the places of origin can be ways of diminishing it. Creating peace building strategies amongst the countries and conflicting communities to mitigate uneventful mishaps from initiating and creating contingency plans in sensitive situations and areas. Creating a strong communal bond amongst the host community and refugees to help them blend in and bring in a feeling of belongingness. Taking responsibility and burden sharing by the developed countries is the way out in neutralizing the overexploited resources of the developing countries. It is the sensitization on a humane level that needs to be done to regulate and promote increased solidarity and a sustainable approach towards this international crisis.

A living being's basic requirement for a humane life is ascertainment of human rights providing safety and dignified life. In the absence of any of these elemental components, the living life becomes a bane. Throughout history, the refugee crisis has been an ever-present critical point of humanitarian welfare. With the ravages of time, the problem of humanitarian aid has come under visible crisis. With the distinguishable change in needs of the time, variable challenges have arrived owing to the changes in the factors causing it in the first place. Protracted wars, conflicts have been one of the primeval causes of it, but the change in climate and environment have been the triggering factors in recent times to have caused a great exodus. The Status of Refugee Convention, 1951 was the earliest of International instruments, to recognize the predicament and get a plan of action ready for antagonizing it.

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UNHCR has come way beyond in tackling the crisis and providing a solution for it through the Global Compact on Refugees. With its efforts to channelize the resources available to the developing countries, the United Nations has made singular huge contributions in determining the causes and providing a well-rounded solution for it. By the end of 2018, 70.8 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations among them are nearly 25.9 million refugees.² With the ever-increasing human war and conflicts, such staggering figures are anticipated where the work of UNHCR volunteers becomes ever so important. Right from focusing on the root causes of the refugee crisis, the underlying effects and offsetting the triggers in the places of origin can be ways of diminishing the upheaval. Making the refugees independent and self-reliant by education, skill development and increase the ways of promoting voluntary, safe and dignified repatriation in possible cases can be ways of working on it. Bringing equality and equal treatment to the refugees in getting opportunities for a better living can incorporate them into the existing society. Creating peace-building strategies amongst the countries and conflicting communities to mitigate uneventful mishaps from initiating and creating contingency plans in sensitive situations and areas and providing freedom to the naturalized refugees in living a dignified life can be a few of the ways. Creating a strong communal bond amongst the host community and refugees to help them blend in and bring in a feeling of belongingness. Taking responsibility and burden sharing by the developed countries is the way out in neutralizing the overexploited resources of the developing countries. It has to be internalized by the international community that it is not a single nation problem, but the international community and other stakeholder's crises that share the common bounty of the nature that affects them and their humanity equally. It is the sensitization on a humane level that needs to be done to regulate and promote increased solidarity and a sustainable approach towards this international crisis.

The causes of such mass exodus have to be recognized in every region. The radical causes usually are one or the same everywhere but how the actions, causes and, effects manifest are completely dependent on the local cultural, economic, political and sociological influences. The lack of interest of a nation to harmonize two communities, as seen in the Rohingya refugee crisis, which was in consequence of a serious military clampdown on Rohingya Muslims, an ethnic minority in Myanmar leads to such lag; or the political turmoil and inefficiency to control high crime rates, hyperinflation, shortages, violence and persecution as

² Figures at a glance, UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency (Oct. 9, 2019, 12:09 AM), <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>.

being experienced in Venezuela, which has caused great upheaval in the South American continent, creating mass exodus from the country to all the nearby states of Bolivia, Mexico making their way up to the North American continent facing severe hostilities and persisting through it in order to search for a safer life. The likes of unrest in the country of Yemen, caused by civil war uproot the lives of hundreds of people daily. The pain and misery caused by the armed conflict and militia violence in the Central African countries of South Sudan, Sudan, Congo, Ethiopia, and the Central African Republic are unthinkable. The inefficiency and unavailability of standard healthcare in controlling serious plagues as that of Ebola affect the communities altogether in countries, as being experienced by Congo, South Sudan, Ivory Coast, etc. cause people to migrate looking for better chances of survival and safer living conditions. Even on reaching the destination countries there is no guarantee for the humane treatment of the refugees. There is a need for a certain standard of treatment mandate for such refuge seeking individuals. International organizations need to come up and take the responsibility of peacebuilding in these war-torn regions with a highly volatile atmosphere. There has to be more accountability on the nation's part to create and maintain peace and avoid hostilities. The Kampala Convention, the regional convention for the African Union is one of the exemplary instruments which shares a common vision of providing durable solutions and adopt measures to avert hostile situations. The host countries play a major role in incorporating the refugee population into its system to provide inclusivity and accessibility to resources. The national policy planning of the host countries has to take into account the sensitivity and standards of refugees to plan policies and include them in it. Usually, migrants seek refuge in the neighboring countries of their country of origin. The host countries can help with promoting de-escalation of tension and help offset triggers. Peace-building amongst the refugees and their country of origin owing to the impact and sensitivity of the causal factor has to be undertaken. International Organization for Migration is an intergovernmental organization that ensures humane management of migration, international cooperation on migration along with the search for practical solutions to migration problems and provides humanitarian assistance³. Such institutions assist nations and provide guidance on migration policies and assist host countries in planning it. The international community has to take the responsibility of improving the states and other stakeholder's responses in combating any crisis, be it a natural disaster or a human conflict.

Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, stated that “hundreds of thousands of civilians in northern Syria are in harm’s way. Civilians and civilian infrastructure must not be

³ About IOM, IOM UN Migration,(Oct 16, 2019, 9:56 PM), <https://www.iom.int/about-iom>.

a target". With the recent escalation of war and conflict in northeast Syria, UNHCR has been working unrelentingly to provide refugees arriving in the nearby countries of Iran, Jordan, etc. with the basics of food, clean water, and shelter. According to UNHCR, the escalation of conflict in northern Syria risks causing more human suffering and adding new displacement to what is already the largest displacement crisis in the world. With the continuous onslaught of human rights in such war-affected areas, there is an urgent requirement of intervention by International organizations along with the war afflicted nations to adhere to International Humanitarian Law, coupled with access for aid agencies for the people affected by it. There is a need to call on national and international governments to come to a point of understanding. UNHCR, the United Nations Refugee Agency has provided continuous support to the refugees, internally displaced people and host countries in all the form required. There is a need to provide for protection and assistance to those in need, mostly women and children. Continuous support is required for the migrants and refugees who undertake the perilous task of escaping the conflict in search of a better life. Providing basic healthcare facilities for refugees and migrants at various camps and settlements has to be undertaken for them.

The most occurring problem faced by such people is the lack of proper documentation. Most of these refugees bear the tag of being "stateless", a burden passed on to the generations of refugees. Even after refugees reach the destination there is no guarantee of appropriate treatment for them, no mandate on national or international, for that matter pledge the security of asylum seekers. Provide the asylum seekers with shelter, clothing, food and the necessities for a humane life. States having the status of host countries should analyze the conditions of the refugees at par with the needs of their citizens. Providing recognition of their status can help them integrate into an alien society, thus shaping and rebuilding their lives. Hundreds of thousands of people carry on the tag of being stateless. Various international organizations like Mercy Hands along with UNHCR, identify and assist individuals to get a citizenship. This way the rights of an individual are ascertained and enable them to acquire the virtues of being a legitimate citizen.

Acclimatization of refugees-

The rights and the standing dignity of all the migrants should be protected who are caught up in situations of crisis all over the globe. Confronting this new complex challenge is very difficult indeed, and this cannot be done until and unless international organizations, countries and the private sector all come together in innovating, to help all parts of the community. It comes up as a responsibility upon the host countries to look into the well-being

of the refugees and the asylum seekers. It can only be subsided by relevant efforts from the state actors in incorporating migrants into their national systems by addressing the language barrier, bringing access to risk management and recovery mechanisms. Migrants usually face a lot of discrimination in the host countries owing to their limited language capability, limited or no knowledge of the surrounding environmental conditions along with no accessibility to a trusted source. A cohesive society has to be built on the principles of promoting inclusivity and harmony. Refugees need to feel accustomed to the new environment to pursue a living and living a hopeful life.

Education-

Education is the key that helps an individual realize their dreams and potentials to the full extent. For refugees, education is the key tool that can help them manifest the life they dreamt of in the country of their origin. With the overlapping of all the trauma and exhaustion from migration, education is the major tool that can help refugees drive and fuel the cycle of life. It is what can equip them with the necessary skills and create opportunities for them. The importance of education cannot be emphasized upon more which can provide them with a hopeful future. It is through education that refugees can be made self-reliant and capable of living a meaningful as hoped on by any individual. It is through this medium that more inclusivity and reliance can be enforced in the host communities in acknowledging the fact that refugees to require the basic means of living. For most of the refugees, education is much more than a basic requirement. In today's world where the refugee numbers are unprecedented and which keeps on increasing at an alarming rate, the funding which usually comes from volunteers and humanitarian aid groups, falls short, making education strike off from the list against the necessities of food, clothing, and shelter in addition to basic healthcare. Over 90 percent of refugees now live in the developing world; more than half are displaced for more than four years; fifty-one percent of refugees are children and are five times more likely to be out of school than non-refugee children; and many refugees are hosted by communities that are also struggling with their development challenges – weakened infrastructure, food insecurity and limited access to quality health care, among others. Consequently, these communities also need our support.⁴ In such dire conditions, it the help of developed nations that is required, in more than one way, either economic or political in addition to humanitarian aids.

⁴ Frank Bousquet, Doing things differently to help refugees and their host communities, World bank blogs(Oct.10, 2019, 3:39 PM), <https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/doing-things-differently-help-refugees-and-their-host-communities>.

Opportunity building, life skills, and equality-

The worldwide refugee crisis is a harsh current reality. With enormous global efforts to minimize the current global catastrophe, it has no coming down owing to the current worldwide economic and humanitarian crisis. Efforts can only be put to minimize its effect on the lives of people displaced or currently living under it. Resources can be directed towards helping refugees becoming more self-reliant and independent and finding a new means of living a dignified life. The host countries play a major role in rebuilding the lives of the refugees. By harnessing the human resources of the migrants and creating new economic opportunities for them, they can be skillfully integrated into the host community, making them independent and less reliable on state aid. Rather than becoming a burden on the host country, feeding off of the aid assisted living; it makes them a productive part of the society, contributing significantly to the betterment of the host community. The integration of the refugees into the host society is the key to providing a fulfilling and satisfactory living for the refugees. Refugee inclusion is important to allow refugees to thrive and not just survive. Cecilia Jimenez Damary, UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, quoted, "One's human rights do not end when they cross borders.", which has to be the serving motto for all the host states. Refugees often make extraordinary journeys to escape the hostilities of their motherland, on their arrival to the host countries; they usually want to make the most of it. By providing them with ample opportunities, adequate resources and freedom of legitimate expression, refugees can prove themselves of great service and help to the host communities. Seeking help from various international aid organizations and NGOs, like International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations body for refugees, the UNHCR, host countries can build up on the available human resource with aid and assistance from such organizations. Refugee inclusion in local communities is the key to developing a diverse society. Enrolling refugee and migrant children into the national schooling system has to be promoted for giving them an equal and discrimination-free learning environment. There is a need to diversify social circles, avoid prejudice and be more inclusive.

Assistance to the host countries-

One of the most fundamental strategies of securing safety for refugees is providing them with a haven, a place fulfilling their necessities. Host countries all around the world have been extending the most sacrificial help possible. 80 percent of world refugees are hosted by

developing countries⁵. Out of the top ten refugee-hosting countries, Germany is the only developed country alongside other low income and middle-income countries like Jordan, Turkey, and Bangladesh, etc. There has to be international cooperation and cost-sharing among the countries to reduce the burden from any one country from bearing all the costs of humanitarian aid. The maximum proportion of refugee population originates from third world countries ridden in severe human conflict, undergoing natural or human-induced crisis and disaster, with severe shortages and lack of means for fulfilling human needs. The policies framed by the government, in the country of origin alongside that in the host countries have to take into consideration the most marginalized communities, who are on the frontline of getting affected by it. In the context of humanitarian aids, the world is divided into donor countries, most of the industrialized countries which provide financial and technological help to the receiving countries or the host countries, providing shelter to the refugees. Usually, the expenditure by the host countries in providing resources to the refugee population is overlooked owing to its insignificance when compared to what comes from developed countries. There has to be a creation of balance in quantifying such needs and requirements.

Climate change and the refugee crisis-

Climate change is set to be the cause of the greatest refugee crisis in the times to come. With the increase in climate change patterns, refugees are the ones to be affected the worst by these changes. With war and conflict-induced displacement, climate change is going to affect the refugees in the worst way possible. With no means and knowledge of prevention and its mitigation, refugees will have to bear the brunt of this climate change. There is an urgent need to address climate change through ambitious planning and action. The conventional methods of coping and resilience will be losing its feasibility until traditional methods are switched with more efficient and innovative methods of tackling the issue at hand. There is a need for more environmentally friendly, sustainable refugee centered programs to be able to fight climate change while supporting and strengthening the refugee community. Diversification of financial aids among different social strata, especially to the ones on the frontline of the climate crisis is the way of preventing an additional burden on already overstretched resources of financing international organizations. All the key stakeholders, the governments, the international organizations, the public sector, the private sector, all need to step up and realize their plans into actions, complete with international cooperation to uplift the most weighed down and lacerated community.

⁵. The world's refugees in numbers, Amnesty International, (Oct 19, 2019, 3:17 PM), <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/refugees-asylum-seekers-and-migrants/global-refugee-crisis-statistics-and-facts/>

Encouraging the displaced and refugee populations for repatriation can be a daunting challenge in itself but ensuring safe and voluntary repatriation is a task in itself. Countries with a considerable refugee population can encourage and provide for ways of repatriation for communities seeking it. Migration is a long and arduous process that many go through, realizing and tackling the root of the problem is the way it can be provided a solution with. All around the globe conflict, scarcity, natural calamities take away innumerable lives and cause populations altogether to be displaced and live without a safe abode. Providing access to safe and legal pathways of migration can significantly reduce risks involved. Countries around the world with highly porous borders account for a large number of failed attempts by individuals into prosperous countries in search of better opportunities or simply to escape the brutal hostilities of war and crime. Better reception of refugees in the host countries and refugee friendly policies are required in order to pacify the refugee crisis the world is facing right now. United Nations human rights committee ruled that people who flee because of climate change should not be returned to their country of origin if their basic human rights would be at risk. This historic decision comes in the case of *Teitiota vs. New Zealand*. With climate change contributing to the fragility and conflict, more and more people all over the world are at a risk of displacement until the restitution of order of nature. The judgment underscores the importance of countries taking action to prevent or mitigate against harm associated with climate change, which obscurely in future force people to escape creating big international obligations. Greece, as it has been receiving large number of refugees via the sea route rolled out a plan to install large floating barriers on its sea borders in order to reduce the influx. This however includes- but is not limited to situations where climate change and disasters are intertwined with conflict and violence. There has to be valid refugee status given to migrants fleeing the adverse effects of climate change and natural disasters.

There is a global responsibility to respect the rights of all people on the move, regardless of their status. With the promotion of solidarity and integration in society, the lives of the people uprooted can be fostered with a meaningful life. Providing them with a chance to contribute to society and live a dignified life can pave the way further to incorporate and integrate them into society. There is a need to set up new agenda and introduce a holistic issue sensitive approach and formulate solutions that are just, equitable, effective and sustainable.
