

THE SOCIAL BULLETIN

Volume No. 1 :: Issue No. 8 | October, 2020



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Published By



A Wing of



FROM CEO's DESK

It's been 9 months since we first went into the lockdown. The Covid pandemic has proved to be a difficult time for all of us, more so for organizations trying to stay afloat. As the world is returning to normalcy, DevInsights is back with the much awaited moment of launching the 8th edition of the newsletter, The Social Bulletin. DevCommunion was forced to recede into a hiatus as an outcome of the pandemic but we are back, recharged and renewed.

In the 8th edition of our newsletter 'The Social Bulletin' for the month of October, we are trying bring your attention to an important theme of global peace elucidated into different contexts. The first section gives you a brief on the structure that the newsletter would follow. We kick off with iterating how the NEP 2020 resembles the Gandhian idea of education of Nai Taleem. We try to point to instances where the resemblance is uncanny and critique that were brought forth then and if they continue to be valid today. What follows are a series of articles that discuss covid and the prevalence of civil unrest as a norm across the world today; an elaborate piece on progressive refugee policy of Uganda and a war documentary on the ever war ridden country of Colombia. The themes hold all the more importance today as the world celebrates the 151st birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The final section of the newsletter showcase the pictures from the field that DevInsights had conducted during the Covid pandemic in the month of August. It goes on to reiterate the inevitability of the return to normalcy promoting Covid appropriate behaviors.

We love hearing from our readers on their views and concerns.

Happy Reading!

From Gandhi's Ideas to National Educational Policy, 2020

We are at a critical juncture today seeing an increasing concentration on skill based education. There is a greater move to revive learning based vocational training and obtaining industry specific skills. On Gandhi's 151st birthday, we explore through this article the Gandhian idea of vocational training labelled as Nai Taleem wherein he is linking curriculum with skill development in conjecture with industry needs.¹



Mahatma Gandhi, during the early years in life realised the pivotal role that education plays determining the socio-economic progress of the individual and the direction of the progress of the society as a whole. Gandhian principles of craft-centered education works towards addressing the imbalance in our education by relying on the concept of skilling. Gandhi focused on incorporating manual and production work in basic education to bridge the gap from education to employment and entrepreneurship.² Gandhi's conception of education as founded in Nai Taleem resides in philosophy founded on two pillars i.e. Truth and non-violence. Thus, he not only focuses on the spiritual salvation of a man, he is cognizant of the material dimension and requirements of life. He aimed to make people self-sustainable which would eventually translate into a self-sustainable society. Self-sustenance philosophy of education for individuals over the age of fourteen years aims at imparting education while curbing the problem of unemployment. The basic education that Gandhi envisioned looks at establishing a social order

that is free from injustice and violence irrespective of a person's caste, class and gender. The kind of basic education (Nai Taleem) that Gandhi propagated in the pre-independence era would have cultivated the man to understand his social reality and realise his potential within the economic framework to which he would contribute.

This is to say that education would not create jobs but vocational training for industry specific skills would make it likely for the individual to get a job.^{3 4}

Gandhi's moral idealism is reflected in his idea of education wherein he prioritises the development of moral capacity over intellectual capability through the use of education. The Nai Taleem under Gandhi's vision looked at making education free and universal for all children in the age group of 7-14 years of age. However, the scheme highlights portions that indicate that Gandhi was against research, the British system of higher education etc. Gandhi was also critiqued for providing an education system that advocated for child labour. Academicians and many alike critiqued Gandhi for a system of education that forced children in child labour camouflaged as educational training.

Many notable attempts have been made by governments post-independence to promote Nai Taleem. In 1978, the Ministry of Education limited the scope of Nai Taleem to only crafts related work which was to be covered through socially useful productive work. We find the genesis of National Policy of Education and

¹ Accessed at: <https://www.nationalskillsnetwork.in/mahatma-gandhi-on-craft-centric-education/>

² Bala, S. (2005). GANDHIAN CONCEPTION OF EDUCATION-ITS RELEVANCE IN PRESENT TIMES. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 66(3), 531-548. Retrieved October 20, 2020, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41856147>

³ Young India, 23 March 1922, p. 166

⁴ M. K. Gandhi, From Yeravda Mandir (Ahmedabad: Navjivan Publishing house, 1935), pp.8-9

Programme of Action of 1986 puts immense importance to early childhood care, Universal elementary education, vocationalisation of education, equality of women in education and adult training. This was later included as 'work and education' section of National Curriculum Framework, 2005 highlighting the need for knowledge acquisition through skill formation. Nai Taleem remained at the centre of the education but could not be integrated into mainstream education till recently. The reasons for delayed incorporation of Nai Taleem into mainstream education had to do with how it was perceived by people.

Vocationalisation of education is seeing a circling back in the form of National Education Policy, 2020. NEP 2020 (as is commonly called) was passed in July under the aegis of Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. NEP 2020 places great importance on vocational training wherein it has been proposed that "at least 50% of the learners who are going through schools and higher education shall have the exposure to vocational training". The exposure will begin in the early years of middle and secondary school and will get further integrated during higher education through vocational crafts, such as carpentry, electric work, gardening, pottery etc.⁵ Some of the

remedies offered in NEP 2020 that make the revival of Gandhi's Basic Education are"⁶:

NEP 2020 aims to operationalize the education policy reforms that the document highlighted in the decade of 2030-2040 imparting in the children of 21st century the skills of creativity, multilingualism, social responsibility. It also acknowledges the need of creating a comprehensive ecosystem of education where community can contribute to the best of their abilities and teachers can gain the prominence that they once help. The similarities laid down by NEP for vocational training definitely show how relevant are Gandhi's ideas on education even today as it attempts to bring some of them in the current education system. While NEP 2020 highlights some useful point for reform, corruption and lack of financial resources hinder smooth policy implementation. The future of NEP 2020 relies heavily on political will and recognition of merit. There is a greater need of teacher training programmes, a good recruitment system in place and a focus on teacher preparation.⁷

- Manika Tomar

⁵ Accessed at: <https://corporate.cyrilamarchandblogs.com/2020/09/nep-2020-vocational-education-fuel-for-the-indian-demographic-dividend/>

⁶ NEP 2020: Vocational education needs structural changes in the labour market. Access at: <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/nep-2020-vocational-education-needs-structural-changes-labour-market/>

⁷ A critical look at NEP-2020 : The recognition of merit would be the key to reconstruct Indian education. Accessed at: <https://www.telegraphindia.com/opinion/a-critical-look-at-nep-2020/cid/1788788>

A Wave of Diseases and Civil Unrest



It is clear that 2020 has made everyone familiar with pandemics. Pandemic is a wave of an infectious disease that have higher reproductive potential and spreads across different regions in a short span of time. Pandemics are known to increase morbidity and mortality and causes vast economic, social and political disruptions across the globe. Evidence shows that the likelihood of pandemic has increased over the years with time from one pandemic to the subsequent one shortening as we move along. The penetration of travel across continents and integration of global markets has only accelerated the spread of diseases across geographical areas.⁸

As the Spanish Flu pandemic started to ease off in 1919, it left millions dead and the economy in distress along with racial breakouts across the world. Many have come forward to draw parallels between 1919 and 2020 and rightly so with the kind of resonance that exists between the past and the present. However, one distinction remains. The increased commodification of goods and services in the world today led to economy in tatters faster than ever. Racial outbursts, police brutality and increased segmentation in the society left us at such a fragile stage wherein a percentage increase in unemployment rate can directly affect the

violence and the unrest that a country experiences.

One of the most commonly cited remark about the spread of infectious diseases is that it treats us all equally. It has been made clear that it doesn't, be it medically, economically, socially or psychologically. Covid-19 has accentuated the pre-existing social conditions wherever it arrived. While we may be in the later stage of a pandemic at this point in time, the hint of social turmoil is not at bay. Social unrest marked itself seen much before SARS-CoV-2 began its journey in 2019. According to the global protest tracker by CEIP, there have been about 100 large anti-government protests since 2017 spanning globally.⁹ From riots in first world countries like France to demonstrations in third world countries like Bolivia, Sudan and India, around 20 uprising have toppled leaders around the world.

COVID pandemic has provided governments around the world with the opportunity to dampen the effect of the riot prevailing conditions as people have been moved into forced lockdowns. Behind the doors of quarantined households and locked economy are hungry, unemployed, paranoid and sick with built up tragedy and trauma. The pressure will erupt, one way or another. Not everyone can afford to quarantine themselves in their Hamptons estates

⁸ Jones K E, Patel N G, Levy M A, Storeygard A, Balk D., and others. 2008. "Global Trends in Emerging Infectious Diseases." *Nature* 451 (7181): 990–993.

⁹ Accessed at: <https://carnegieendowment.org/publications/interactive/protest-tracker>

or work from home. The pandemic has put a magnifying glass on pre-existing economic inequality across countries and within countries. For instance, in India millions of migrant laborers walked back home during the initial few weeks of the lockdown because of the loss of their jobs overnight, no means to support themselves in big cities and poorly mandated lockdown. While millions of people stayed home and found ways to engage themselves in various activities, many Indians in the summer of 2020 walked back home and many American returned to work because of debt pileup. Majority of those that were disproportionately affected by the pandemic were engaged in precarious employment i.e. blue collar jobs with no social security in place and a complete absence of health insurance and savings. The presence of class distinction among blue collar jobs can't be ignored. As people move out to earn, they risk of getting infected and bringing the infection home with them is always in the sight. The ghettoization of certain areas paired with unhygienic conditions affected people at the lowest strata disproportionately. Coronavirus is coursing fastest through neighborhoods that are cramped, unhygienic, stressful and bleak.

Even in countries with no/low racial segregation, the impact of Covid is felt more in certain neighborhoods than others. Factors contributing to such trend relate to population density, better municipal infrastructure, average income levels, education, apartment size, nutritional habits, prevalence of domestic abuse, drug abuse etc. For instance, high-income households in India have almost triple or more the living space than the bottom decile.^{10 11} It becomes difficult to practice social distancing for a family with one or more working member where there is only one room to sleep in. The International Labor Organization in a report it published in April 2020

hinted that coronavirus will affect the incomes of around 1.25 billion people wherein 195 million jobs will be lost worldwide.¹² The concentration of people adversely affected by the pandemic already belong to the lowest strata of the society. As the situation worsens, the prevalence of alcohol and drug abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, criminal activities etc. accelerates and grips the country in an unending cycle of poverty and unemployment and loss of income due to health obligations. This is not to say that returning the earlier level of production and work would dampen the effect that Covid that brought forth. The anger and bitterness will find their outlets. This may even result in radical movements that emerge from the spark of bitterness that the great pandemic of 2020 leaves behind. This is clearly an ultimatum for everyone who rejects populism. Covid has proved that we need to think harder, boldly but pragmatically about the underlying issues that have been highlighted in the pandemic to move upwards and onwards on issues of gender parity, economic and social inequality, lack of public health infrastructure, better management of pandemic lockdowns etc.¹³

While the framework provided highlights the reasons and prevalence of civil unrest that generally accompanies global pandemic such the SARS-CoV-2, it would be timely to know that the concentration of such unrest has magnified over the years. This might be an outcome of the presence of mass-media, the faster rate of movement of false information, out-migration of workers across geographies, intensive commodification in the world among many others.¹⁴ While this is not an exhaustive list, it definitely highlights the problematic areas acting for us as a wake-up call.

-Manika Tomar

¹⁰ Accessed at: <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-04-11/coronavirus-this-pandemic-will-lead-to-social-revolutions>

¹¹ Fearon J D, Laitin D D. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97 (1): 75–90.

¹² ILO: COVID-19 causes devastating losses in working hours and employment

¹³ Arimah B C. 2010. "The Face of Urban Poverty: Explaining the Prevalence of Slums in Developing Countries." In *Urbanization and*

Development: Multidisciplinary Perspectives, edited by Beall Jo, Guha-Khasnobis Basudeh, Kanbur Ravi., 143–64. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

¹⁴ Cohen N J, Brown C M, Alvarado-Ramy F, Bair-Drake H, Benenson G A., and others. 2016. "Travel and Border Health Measures to Prevent the International Spread of Ebola." *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) Supplements* 65 (3): 57–67.

Can refugees have same entitlements as citizens of the country: case study of Uganda's progressive refugee policy?

The world is witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record. An unprecedented 79.5 million people around the world have been forced from home by conflict and persecution at the end of 2019. Among them are nearly 30 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18. There are also millions of stateless people, who have been denied a nationality and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, employment and freedom of movement. World have been forced from Nearly 73% of refugees are hosted by neighbouring countries. The top five hosting countries include Turkey (3.6 M), Colombia (1.8 M), Pakistan (1.4 M), Uganda (1.4 M), and Germany (1.1 M)¹⁵.

The state of refugees in their host countries

Refugees are defined and protected in international law. The 1951 Refugee Convention is a key legal document and defines a refugee as:

“someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.”

The large majority, 84%, are hosted by developing countries (i.e. low and middle-income countries), some of them among the poorest countries in the world. Refugees are often perceived as a burden for the host country, putting pressure on public budget and service provision. Many refugees are living in host countries with limited economic growth and levels of development, and hence limited resources to cope with direct and indirect costs induced by refugees. South Sudan, Chad and

Uganda face the largest refugee populations as a share of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Eight out of the top ten countries with the highest share of refugees in relation to their GDP are located in Africa, and several of them are among the poorest countries in the world. Hosting significant numbers of refugees have

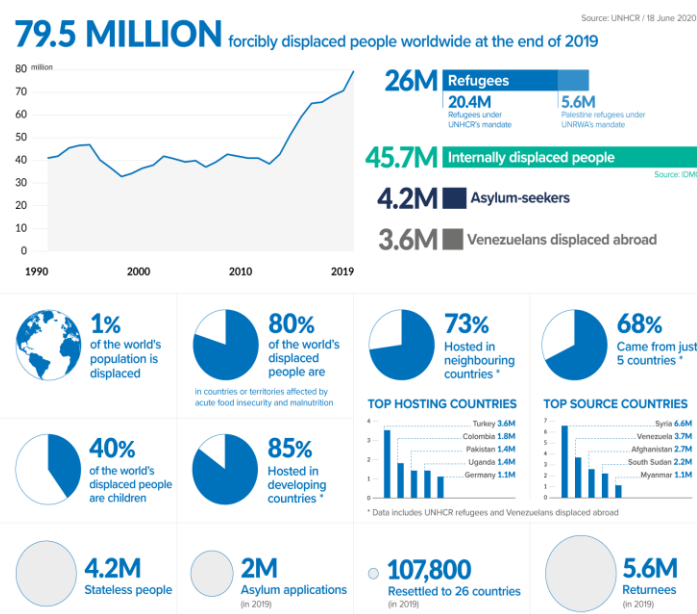


Figure 1 Glance at basic statistics related to refugees

both economic and social impacts for host countries. A prevailing view is that refugees imply a net cost on economic and social development in the host country. Refugees can positively contribute to host countries' economies through several channels. They can bring skills and contribute to the human capital stock, as well as stimulate trade and investment. Refugees may also create employment opportunities, and attract aid and humanitarian investments in, for example, infrastructure, which would benefit refugees as well as the society as a whole. On a macro perspective,

¹⁵ <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

refugees stimulate consumption, if for basic necessities. This triggers a supply response, with consequent investments in retail trade and transport and a boost in GDP (European Commission, 2016).

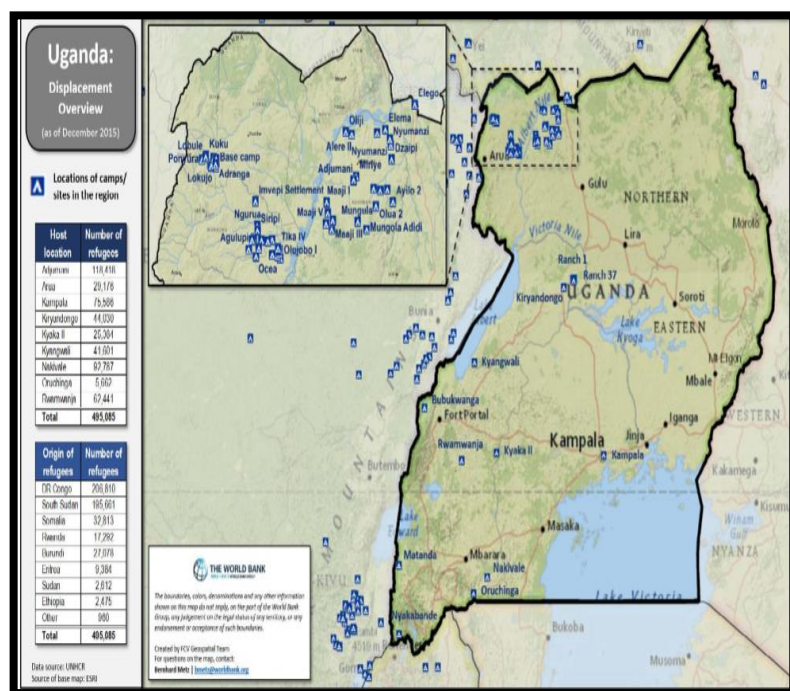


Figure 2 Uganda Displacement Overview (Source: World Bank, 2016)

The first and immediate responsibility of a host country is to ensure provisions of basic amenities, such as food, water, decent housing facilities, etc. However, the governments of host countries refrain to mainstream refugees in their socio-political and economic law and order due to the fear of violence and destruction of public order. As a result, mass violations of human rights take place in the refugee camps located at places with sub-optimal living conditions. Is it really difficult to treat refugees as world citizens (if not as respective country's citizens)? Uganda's progressive refugee policy will give you an otherwise opinion.

Uganda's progressive refugee policy: the way forward

1. Uganda's history of hosting refugees

Since 1959, Uganda has generously and continuously hosted refugees and asylum

seekers. Since its independence, approximately 161,000 people per year from neighbouring countries have sought refuge in Uganda, mainly because of persistent conflict and instability in their home countries, especially the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, South Sudan, and Burundi. Uganda has a long tradition of hosting refugees. Before its independence, the country hosted European refugees fleeing conflict and violence. Soon after the end of the World War II, the British colonial administration offered refuge to thousands of Polish nationals. Some were resettled in various parts of Uganda; others moved to Tanzania and even Australia. Uganda hosted refugees from other European countries, including Germany, Italy, Yugoslavia, Hungary, France, and Malta (Jallow et al. 2004). In 1955, after the collapse of the Anglo-Egyptian condominium of the Sudan, the Anyanya rebellion (the First Sudanese Civil War) led to the influx of

80,000 Sudanese refugees into Uganda. These early refugees were largely and spontaneously settled in northern Uganda, with some heading to urban centres like Kampala and Jinja, where significant communities of Sudanese Nubians were already residing. Seventeen years later, in 1972, following the Addis Ababa Accords, most of the Sudanese repatriated to Sudan. The second major influx of refugees took place in 1959 when about 80,000 refugees came from what was then the Belgian United Nations mandate Territory of Rwanda. To accommodate these refugees, the first gazetted refugee settlement was established in Oruchinga in south-western Uganda. Following the independence of Uganda in 1962, refugees from the newly independent states of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo continued to flow. As of December 2015, there were over 477,187 refugees and 35,779 asylum-seekers in Uganda, hosted in nine districts predominantly located in the northern, southern, and south-western regions of the

country. The district of Adjumani hosts the most refugees—23.8 percent of the total refugee population, followed by Nakivale and Kampala district.

2. Uganda's refugee law, policy framework and development initiatives

The policy framework under which Uganda offers protection to refugees and asylum seekers is lauded as one of the most generous in the world. Refugees and asylum seekers are entitled to work, have freedom of movement, and can access Ugandan social services, such as health and education. Further, under this policy, refugees are availed with identity documents, such as Identity cards, birth, death, marriage, and education certificates. As a policy, all refugees living in settlements are provided with an agricultural plot on which to cultivate crops. Refugees can own property, lease land, and generally harness their commercial and professional expertise without interference. Because of these factors, Uganda offers refugees their best chance for self-reliance. Uganda's door is open to all asylum seekers. It is lauded for having one of the best refugee law and policy regimes in the world (Owing and Nagujja 2014)¹⁶. According to Jallow et al. (2004),¹⁷ "Both in policy and practice, there is a conducive environment for refugees in Uganda which deserves recognition." Uganda has emerged as a country possessing a very receptive climate for refugees and "the place where the rest of the world can learn something about the treatment of refugees" (Faigle 2015). It is recognized that while Uganda is experiencing an ongoing "silent emergency" due to a "slow but steady" refugee influx, especially from the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and more recently, Burundi, it has nevertheless kept its asylum door open to all

seeking refuge within its borders, a posture which Die Zeit has characterized as being both "generous and exemplary" (Faigle 2015)¹⁸.

It is worthwhile to trace Uganda's evolution of refugee laws and policy framework. The first colonial era law made no distinction between ordinary aliens and refugees. The Aliens Registration and Control Act, enacted by the British Colonial Office in 1949, contained draconian provisions for the handling and controlling of all aliens in Uganda, regardless of whether or not they were refugees¹⁹. For over four decades, the Control of Aliens Refugees Act of 1960 served as the principal domestic legislation regarding refugees, until the enactment of the 2006 Refugees Act. Today, the legal regime for the protection of refugees in Uganda is multi-tiered, comprising three essential dimensions: (1) international conventions and declarations, (2) regional agreements, and (3) national legislation and regulations.

After being admitted as a member of the United Nations, Uganda began the process of agreeing to a number of international and human rights instruments. In 1976, it acceded to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees²⁰, complementary instruments that are universal in scope and constitute the legal foundation for the global protection regime for refugees. Uganda, as a major asylum country and a new Organization of African Unity (OAU) member, actively participated in the debates and negotiations leading to the drafting and conclusion of the 1969 OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa²¹. The convention builds on existing international protection architecture and seeks to address

¹⁶ Owing, E., and Y. Nagujja. 2014. "Caught Between a Rock and a Hard Place, Challenges of Refugees with Disabilities and Their Families in Uganda." In *Crises, Conflict and Disability: Ensuring Equality*, edited by D. Mitchell and V. Karr, Routledge.

¹⁷ Jallow, T., J. Tourn  , A. Mwesigye, H. Schierbeck, F. Kasahura, R. Mayanja et al. (2004). "Report of the Mid-term Review: Self-Reliance Strategy (1999–2003) for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua and

Adjumani Districts, Uganda." United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Government of Uganda

¹⁸ Faigle, P. 2015. "Die Landgabe." ZEIT Online (May 27).

<http://www.zeit.de/feature/uganda-fluechtlinge-land-schenkung>

¹⁹ http://www.statehouse.go.ug/sites/default/files/attachments/Constitution_1995.pdf

²⁰ <http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.html>

²¹ <http://www.unhcr.org/45dc1a682.html>

aspects and challenges related the protection of refugees that are specific to the African continent and that, as a result, may not be adequately addressed in existing global refugee protection instruments. The main contribution of the OAU convention is its broadening of the international legal definition of the term “refugee” to include all persons externally displaced due to armed conflict as well as those fleeing political persecution and domination. The OAU convention also recognizes the right to seek asylum, and stresses that the granting of asylum, being essentially a “peaceful and humanitarian act,” should not be regarded as an unfriendly act by another country. It prohibits refugees from engaging in subversive acts or activities that are likely to cause tensions among OAU member states, whether by use of arms, through the press, radio or internet.

Rights and obligations of refugees

The 2006 Refugees Act and the 2010 Refugee Regulations embody key refugee protection principles and freedoms. They are derived directly from the international and regional refugee instruments that Uganda ratified without entering reservations. The 2010 regulations were not only crafted to operationalize the provisions of the 2006 Refugees Act, but also to supplement the same with new and novel provisions where there were gaps. As a result, they contain a number of provisions that are radical, progressive, or innovative such as property rights and access to land, access to employment, freedom of movement, freedom of association, non-discrimination and equality before law.

3. Factors that influence the generous policy framework

The openness and generosity of local Ugandan communities toward refugees is partly related to the fact that many Ugandans have themselves been refugees or internally displaced at one

time, including people in government positions (Jallow et al. 2004)²². Even Uganda’s current President Yoweri Museveni fled to Tanzania in the 1970s and lived there as a refugee. Another factor often cited regarding the openness of Uganda is the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic affinities between Ugandans and many of the refugees from across the border. A question commonly raised is: why does Uganda not seem to suffer from “asylum fatigue syndrome” as other countries often do when faced with chronic refugee inflows, even ones of shorter duration and magnitude? Indeed, Uganda continues to maintain an open door policy and, over time, has established what is widely considered to be a liberal and excellent record as a country of refuge. Observers seeking to explain this unique and outstanding humanitarian record have advanced a number of possible reasons such as the shared ethnicity among communities living along all of these countries’ borders is another important contributor, with nearly half of Uganda’s 64 constitutionally recognized indigenous communities having become administratively divided from their kith and kin by the colonial borders.

Limitations

The Ugandan refugee policy is impressive but limited in one important way. The most impressive aspects include: (1) having an open door policy to all asylum seekers regardless of nationality or ethnicity; (2) granting refugees relative freedom of movement and the right to seek employment; and (3) providing each family of refugees with a plot of land for their exclusive (agricultural) use.

- a) But while the legal framework provides generous support for the integration of refugees, it does not provide a permanent solution for those who can neither repatriate nor be resettled in another country. People in this situation remain refugees in Uganda

22 Jallow, T., J. Tourn  , A. Mwesigye, H. Schierbeck, F. Kasahura, R. Mayanja et al. (2004). “Report of the Mid-term Review: Self-Reliance Strategy (1999–2003) for Refugee Hosting Areas in Moyo, Arua and

Adjumani Districts, Uganda.” United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Government of Uganda

for life, a fate also shared by their children and even their grandchildren, who have no hope of obtaining citizenship. Refugees can, however, vote and be elected at the village level per Section 46(3) of the Local Government Act and the constitution.

- b) Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995, implicitly excludes refugees from becoming Ugandan citizens, whether by birth or by registration. Theoretically, a refugee could obtain citizenship by naturalization under Article 13 if the parliament enacted a law permitting it, but politically, this has not been done. And while it is possible in principle for refugee “foundlings and adopted children” to attain Ugandan citizenship per Article 11, the constitution denies refugees who are born in Uganda and their children citizenship by registration if the “mother of his or her parents or any of his or her grandparents was a refugee in Uganda.

Conclusion

Although Uganda is lauded with most progressive refugee policy in the world, a shift in the philosophy of refugee assistance is also crucial: refugees should be viewed as economic

actors in charge of their destiny (development approach) rather than as beneficiaries of aid (humanitarian approach). One of the key aspects behind Uganda’s success is the social cohesion in the host communities and refugee communities, the World Bank and UNHCR assessment reports highlight that citizens of Uganda perceive ‘special privileges’ (as accorded to refugees and asylum seekers in 2010 act) as the state favouring refugees above its own citizens. The classic situation that many host countries face today or have faced previously. An important limitation of an otherwise progressive refugee policy and legal framework relates to the inability of refugees to acquire Ugandan citizenship regardless of how long they remain in the country. This leaves many refugees in a protracted refugee state when the durable solutions of return or resettlement are not possible. This reiterates that although refugees can be treated as ‘humans’ by certain states with the help of progressive law and order framework, but the governments of these respective states will persistently refrain them to be their ‘country’s citizens’.

-Sakshi Nigam

Columbia: The long road for peace after the Civil war



Documentary: Columbia: The long road for peace after the civil war
 Director: Uli Stelzner
 Production: Deutsche Welle
 Year of release: 2018

Year 2016 marked the beginning of a new era in the history of Columbia. After 52 years of Civil war, the Colombian government and Revolutionary Armed forces of Columbia (FARC) came to an agreement of peace on various conditions. The cold-blooded civil war took many lives, displaced many families, and destroyed the livelihood of lakhs of Columbians. The official statistics show that it took 2,22,000 lives, 25000 disappeared and displaced 5-7 million people.²³ These bizarre statistics shed light on the havoc the civil war has created. This documentary 'Columbia: The long road for peace after the civil war' filmed the dramatic events of 2016 and the implementation of the peace treaty after signing the peace agreement. Uli Stelzner, the German film director captured the events by interviewing various people including farmers, FARC members, paramilitary forces, journalists, and the victims of the cold-blooded civil war. DW produced the documentary and it was released in 2018 and grabbed attention nationally and internationally.

The quest for peace

The documentary begin by setting an atmosphere of peace in the capital city of Columbia, Bogota in 2016. It was the day where the historical treaty is going to be signed after five decades. Crowds gathered to see the signing of the peace accord

between Juan Manuel Santo, Ex- Columbian President, and the FARC leader. The affected farmers and the victims of war were hopeful that the treaty would create peace and quality of life in Columbia. The FARC members who were watching the signing of the treaty were hopeful that the treaty will justify all those movements they have done for the poor and oppressed and create a new world where there are equal rights for the poor and oppressed. The treaty is signed and it was put in public for voting. If the referendum gets more than 50% votes, the peace treaty will become legitimately valid.

The beginning of the documentary nicely captured the long-lasting need of the Columbians to have peace in their land. The documentary portrayed the street gathering, slogans, and posters calling for the need for peace in the country even though political tensions were rising in Columbia regarding accepting or rejecting the peace agreement. The right-wing conservative party strongly urged the people to not vote for the peace treaty and tried to convince the people that the FARC organization has to be punished legitimately and do not submit to their peace plea. Shocking every advocate of peace in the land, the referendum for peace treaty gained

²³ World Report 2019: Rights Trends in Colombia. (2018, December 20). Human Rights Watch
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/colombia>

51% support to reject it. The result was shocking for many citizens who called for peace for decades.

One of the interesting aspects of the documentary is that it successfully portrayed the emotions of victims of civil war and the quest for peace. The interview with the farmer 'Gilberto Guerra' is notable in the documentary, where he took the entire audience through the tragic life during the war. Being displaced seven times from his land, he is helpless and urging the government the people to reconsider the peace treaty. By portraying him, the director took the audience through the lives of seven million who faced somewhat similar experiences like Guerra in their life due to the civil war. At this point, the director became successful in putting the thought of the need for peace in the minds of the audience even though the other side of the coin, the conservatives were voting against it. But the shocking result of the referendum was overturned by the students of the country who organized mass rallies and protests for signing the peace treaty in the country. The slogan "Women you did not bear your children for war" was echoed in the streets of Columbia. And finally, the treaty was signed and the hope of peace gathered momentum in the life of the Columbian people. The documentary can be divided into two parts from this moment; one before the referendum got accepted and the future implementation of the peace treaty as promised.

Implementation of the peace treaty

From here, the director takes the audience to the political conflict and confrontation with the peace treaty that has been signed. The conservative party won the elections in 2018 and the peace process comes again under mounting pressure. The new



Figure 3: people march in the Colombian capital, Bogotá, on 19 October. They are demanding an end to killings of local leaders, and calling on the government to protect their land ownership and implement the 2016 peace agreement

constraints put on the special jurisdiction for peace and truth was the first step taken by the conservative party to ideologically prevent the peace process. The documentary has taken a deep analysis of why the conservatives put to hold the peace treaty process implementation after the treaty had been signed. The clauses of the peace treaty approve the political participation of FARC, integration to civilian life, and most importantly land reforms. When FARC opposes the industrialization of agriculture and imperial rule, the conservative party embraced the industrialization and corporate real estate.²⁴ This ideological conflict along with the disagreement with the political participation of FARC members made the peace process stagnant and the victims are becoming hopeless about the peace treaty. Land reforms were the final hope of every victim and peasants who lost their lands and other entitlements due to the war. The documentary captured the anecdotes of victims that gives the audience a taste of hopeless life even after the peace treaty is signed. From this point, the documentary shifts focus towards various organizations like media, paramilitary organizations,

²⁴ Colombia's Uribe presents proposals for peace accord changes | Reuters. (n.d.). Retrieved October 30, 2020, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/uscolombia-peace-uribe-idUSKCN12B02L>

government officials, and academia to gather their opinions about the peace treaty and civil war. The difference of opinion between government organizations and media and academia brought new meaning to the existing tensions for implementing the peace treaty. Rather than accusing the FARC, media and academia takes a dig at paramilitary forces and the present conservative government for delaying the implementation of the peace treaty. They criticized unjust killing of opposition party members and peace activists over the period under the rule of conservatives and for trying to destroy the very nature of peace established through the peace treaty.

To conclude, the documentary highlights that the road for peace in Columbia is long. The conflict of

interest between various actors made it much more difficult to attain what was aspired by the poor and oppressed victims of the civil war. It also portrayed the emotions, needs, and aspirations of the people and various organizations in terms of attaining peace and creating a new nation. At some point, the audience may feel that the documentary is inclined towards the interests of FARC and victims of the civil war by not considering the statements and viewpoint of the ruling government and the organizations within it. But, from a holistic viewpoint, the documentary provided insights for embarking peace everywhere and avoid the future spoils and turmoil of war.

-Jithu Paulson

Photograph Corner



Kickstarting fieldwork during Covid-19 pandemic. Field investigators, at DevInsights, are trained to practice Covid appropriate precautions. This includes distribution of Covid kits and face masks to investigators and community members. Field investigators are also insured for the period of the field study as a precautionary measure.

Letter to the Editor

Hello DI Team,

It's been a while since I heard from DevCommunion. I have a regular reader of social bulletin and have always enjoyed reading the previous editions of the newsletter. Looking forward to read more articles that are always food for thought.

Sharon Pradeep
M.A Mass Communication
Pondicherry University

Editorial Team

Shivangni Vishwakarma
Manika Tomar

Content Contributor

Mr. Jithu Paulson
Ms. Manika Tomar
Ms. Sakshi Nigam

To read our previous editions, click [here](#)

DevInsights Pvt. Ltd.

Delhi, India

Add: B-46, GF 1, Sector 63, Noida, Gautam
Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh
PIN - 201301
Tel: +91 120 421 7386
Email: info@devinsights.co.in
Mon - Fri: 9:30 - 18:00

Chennai, India

Add: No. 5, Thayanbhan Homes, 6th
Street West, Adambakkam, Chennai,
TN - 600088
Tel: +91 120 421 7386
Email: info@devinsights.co.in
Mon - Fri: 9:30 - 18:00