



Editorial Note

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The *Journal on Education in Emergencies (JEiE)* publishes groundbreaking and outstanding scholarly and practitioner work on education in emergencies (EiE), defined broadly as quality learning opportunities for all ages in situations of crisis, including early childhood development, primary, secondary, non-formal, technical, vocation, higher and adult education.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

BY SARAH DRYDEN-PETERSON, JO KELCEY, AND S. GARNETT RUSSELL¹

This issue of the *Journal on Education in Emergencies (JEiE)* is dedicated to Dr. Caroline Waruguru Ndirangu, who passed away in September. Dr. Ndirangu, a beloved member of the education in emergencies (EiE) community, was dedicated to expanding access to quality education for refugees and other marginalized young people. A lecturer at the University of Nairobi in Kenya, Dr. Ndirangu was a cofounder of the world's first EiE master's program. Her warmth, quick smile, and habit of humming songs throughout the day were characteristic of her approach to life and to her work, as was her unwavering hope of bringing educational opportunities to all children. Dr. Ndirangu was a model of the kind of researchers we strive to be. She observed students and teachers closely, talked with children in ways that made them feel free to be themselves, and, with her open and kind way of listening and understanding, always asked hard but important questions. We know that Dr. Ndirangu would have delighted in the focus and content of this issue of *JEiE*.



With the highest number of displaced people since the aftermath of World War II, the world is currently witnessing an unprecedented refugee crisis. At present there are 70.8 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, including 25.9 million refugees who have crossed international borders and thus are entitled to protection from international agencies (UNHCR 2019). In this special issue on refugees and education, the first of two parts, we showcase research on important developments in the field of refugee education across several regions, including the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa.

In this first part of the special issue, we present four research articles, one interview, two field notes, and three book reviews. Three themes emerge within this range of contributions that are central to the current state of the field of refugee education. First is an emphasis on historical analysis as a method for understanding contemporary efforts in refugee education more fully. Second is attention to the actions and decisions of organizations, teachers, and bureaucracies,

¹ Sarah Dryden-Peterson, Jo Kelcey, and S. Garnett Russell served as special guest editors for this issue of *JEiE* and contributed equally to its development and production. They are listed in alphabetical order.

and how they mediate the schooling experiences of refugee children and young people. Third are the efforts made in the research articles and field notes to address how responsibility for the education of refugees is shared (United Nations 2018). The contributing authors describe and analyze who guides the structures and content of the education of refugees, both historically and in the present, and how they came to these roles. In so doing, they begin to untangle the essential questions of who shares responsibility for meeting refugees' educational needs and how they do so, both of which are central to current developments in the global governance of refugees and have immediate and long-term implications for how refugee education is designed and experienced.

The first two articles directly address the history of refugee education in two distinct geographic locations and conflict contexts. In “‘Incredibly Difficult, Tragically Needed, and Absorbingly Interesting’: Lessons from the AFSC School Program for Palestinian Refugees in Gaza, 1949 to 1950,” Jo Kelcey examines the origins and experiences of a school program for Palestinian refugees in Gaza that operated from 1949 to 1950. With access to archival records from multiple actors, Kelcey identifies key ways this early example of formalized refugee education confronted dilemmas that are similar to refugee education today. She focuses in particular on the short-term humanitarian thinking that guided education planning; the consistent funding shortfalls that left actors vulnerable to donors' political objectives; and the contentious and ever-evolving nature of the relationships between educational approaches and the political context in which education takes place—in this case, between Palestinian refugees, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, and the Israeli state—including its geopolitical position. Through these examples, Kelcey demonstrates that, while rhetoric in the field of refugee education often situates Palestinian education as “exceptional,” it offers many lessons for contemporary approaches to refugee education.

In her article, “Asking ‘Why’ and ‘How’: A Historical Turn in Refugee Education Research,” Christine Monaghan similarly explores historical lessons for policy, practice, and research in refugee education. Monaghan considers the history of education in Kenya's Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps through her interviews with refugee teachers and students, and with UNHCR staff members. She gives particular attention to why various policies and practices were designed and implemented in different time periods and how they were understood by various actors, both at the time and upon later reflection. While this form of analysis is common in refugee studies more broadly, Monaghan posits the value of historicizing education. She encourages conducting more of this kind of historical

analysis to promote lasting change in refugee education, in particular critical and transformative teaching and learning in refugee settings.

The next two articles in this issue examine the roles of various actors in the global refugee regime and how they shape the experiences of refugees across different contexts. In her article, “Bureaucratic Encounters and the Quest for Educational Access among Colombian Refugees in Ecuador,” Diana Rodríguez-Gómez analyzes data from her interviews with civil servants, NGO staff members, and Colombian refugees living in Quito, Ecuador, to uncover barriers to school access. She finds that, despite progressive national-level policies and a constitution that guarantees the right to education regardless of migratory status, the enactment of official and unofficial rules by civil servants working in bureaucratic state systems have stymied access to education. By focusing on how Ecuadorian public servants and refugees navigate education systems and administrative structures in order to implement policies, Rodríguez-Gómez underscores the persistent yet largely hidden barriers refugees face when trying to access quality education.

In “When the Personal Becomes the Professional: Exploring the Lived Experiences of Syrian Refugee Educators,” Elizabeth Adelman explores the identities and pedagogies of Syrian teachers working with Syrian refugee students in Lebanon. Situated within her broader analysis of 42 interviews with Syrian educators, Adelman provides a detailed portrait of two Syrian teachers working in non-formal schools in Lebanon. Her findings demonstrate the tensions inherent in how teachers negotiate their personal identities and professional experiences, and how these negotiations impact the goals of the education they provide to their students, as well as their own sense of well-being. Adelman demonstrates that, while teachers are expected to provide academic and psychological support to refugee students, including “teaching hope,” they are “personally experiencing hopelessness” and must reconcile the challenges of displacement as they navigate their dual roles as refugees and educators.

In an interview titled “Teachers in Forced Displacement Contexts: Persistent Challenges and Promising Practices in Teacher Supply, Quality, and Well-Being,” Ozen Guven talks with Mary Mendenhall, Sonia Gomez, and Emily Varni about the challenges faced by teachers of refugees.² Drawing from their background paper for the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report, they present a typology

² *JEiE* introduces the interview article format in this issue. This new section enables EiE scholars and practitioners to share valuable observations and insights from their work in a pared-down and highly accessible format. Readers who would like to suggest an idea for a published interview are encouraged to email their proposal to the Editorial Office.

of teachers that can help guide professional training and support. After outlining the different needs of host community/national teachers, internally displaced teachers, and refugee teachers, they identify practices and policies that could strengthen support for teachers working in displacement contexts. This includes adding more teachers to reduce overcrowding in classrooms, providing training on instructing in multi-age classrooms, and building social cohesion, as well as addressing teachers' own psychosocial needs while supporting their work with students on the same issues.

In the two field notes for this issue, the authors highlight refugees' educational experiences at two different stages, early childhood education and higher education. Kelsey A. Dalrymple, in "Mindful Learning: Early Childhood Care and Development for Refugee Children in Tanzania," shares findings from an assessment of the Little Ripples program for Burundian refugee children ages three to five who were living in Tanzania. The program used mindfulness techniques as part of an integrative approach to supporting refugees' social and emotional well-being. Through a mixed-methods data analysis, Dalrymple finds that the program was an effective tool for managing students' behavior and creating a supportive learning environment. However, more research is needed to understand whether and how these approaches can be sustained over the long term. In "Access to Higher Education: Reflections on a Participatory Design Process with Refugees," Oula Abu-Amsha, Rebecca Gordon, Laura Benton, Mina Vasalou, and Ben Webster share their findings from the participatory design process of a program to support access to higher education for Syrian refugees. Findings from the participatory process highlight the challenges of inclusion and of ensuring full participation across participants' different characteristics and genders, as well as the difficulties of sustainable and long-term engagement in education programs. However, the results also showcase the benefits of using a participatory design process to design programs for beneficiaries.

The book reviews in this issue provide an inspiring glimpse into current scholarship in the EiE field that resonates with the theme of this special issue, and with ongoing dilemmas in the field of refugee education. Aislinn O'Donnell reviews *Muslims, Schooling and Security: Trojan Horse, Prevent and Racial Politics* by Shamim Miah. She explores the book's analysis of the "Trojan Horse controversy" in Birmingham, UK, and demonstrates how Muslims have been "othered" and securitized in schools. O'Donnell appreciates the deep discursive analysis of the book, which surfaces the ways state-sponsored counter-terrorism interacts with education governance and what the consequences are for teachers and students. Rachel D. Hutchins reviews *International Perspectives on Teaching*

Rival Histories: Pedagogical Responses to Contested Narratives and the History Wars, edited by Henrik Åström Elmersjö, Anna Clark, and Monika Vinterek. She explores how the book addresses the perennial question, “How do, or should, teachers pedagogically engage with rival histories?” The book includes ten case studies, which are bounded by theoretical introductions and conclusions that connect pedagogic approaches with epistemological orientations to history. Hutchins appreciates the use of Seixas’ typology of history teaching—a “best story” approach, a “disciplinary” approach, and a “post-modern” approach—throughout the volume, which offers a productive framework for scholars and educators. In the final book review, Caroline Ndirangu—whose life we celebrate in this special issue—reviews *Developing Community-Referenced Curricula for Marginalized Communities* by David Baine. Ndirangu demonstrates that the book provides a needed foundation for the field of refugee education, which is grappling with how refugee youth experience education in national education systems. Ndirangu points in particular to the role Baine’s “community-referenced curriculum” approach could play in meeting the individual and collective needs of refugee youth through what they are taught in school.

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