Xenophobia toward Refugees and Other Forced Migrants

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Executive

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World Refugee Council research papers are policy documents commissioned by the Council from world-renowned experts to help inform the World Refugee Council and its final recommendations. The measures and concepts in these documents do not necessarily reflect the views of the World Refugee Council.

About the Author

Sarah Deardorff Miller consults on issues of forced migration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), think tanks and academic institutions. Sarah has recently carried out evaluations and research for the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the World Bank, and also adjunct teaches for Columbia University, American University and the University of London. She has published various books and articles on forced displacement, including a recent book on Syrian displacement and another on the role of the UNHCR in protracted refugee situations. She has worked with refugee-focused NGOs in Tanzania, Thailand, Switzerland and the United States, working on everything from local integration to resettlement case management. She has also conducted research on refugee-related projects in the Middle East (Jordan, Lebanon and Syria), Asia (Thailand and Burma), and Africa (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda). She holds a doctorate in international relations from Oxford University (St. Antony's College), as well as a master of science degree in forced migration from Oxford, a master of arts degree in the social sciences from the University of Chicago and a bachelor of arts degree in history, Spanish and international service from Valparaiso University. She currently lives in the New York area with her husband and two children.

Executive Summary

This paper considers xenophobia in the refugee context. While the United Nations focuses on improving the global response to refugees and migrants through the development of global compacts and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, xenophobic rhetoric continues to grow amid states that sow fear and distrust of refugees. Xenophobia can be found across the globe and can negatively affect refugees and other forced migrants — in some cases, putting their lives in danger. Xenophobia can thwart political action aimed at increasing responsibility sharing and better coordination, particularly in large-scale and protracted displacement situations.

A need exists for greater clarity on what xenophobia is — including how it differs from racism and nativism — and about how it relates to and impacts forced migration. There is also a need to examine the best ways to overcome the many complex aspects of xenophobia, because efforts to counter them, if not well handled, can backfire on refugees and other migrants.

This paper thus first explores the definition of xenophobia and then examines its various expressions as described in refugee-focused literature. It also considers initiatives carried out to combat xenophobia and provides some lessons and recommendations that emerge from research on xenophobia. For example, recommended actions include holding governments more accountable for their failures to protect people's rights; identifying and fighting against policies that incentivize xenophobic behaviour; recognizing that pro-migrant programming can backfire; identifying political actors who promulgate xenophobia and choosing interventions carefully; and seeking greater collaboration and creativity among different actors working to combat xenophobia.

Introduction

The rise of populist, nationalist governments has boosted hate speech and xenophobic rhetoric. From Hungary to the United States, a number of political actors in power have resorted to anti-refugee/anti-immigrant stances that promote fear and distrust of foreigners. In some cases, leaders are expressing complete denial of any need to respond to refugee crises around the world, insinuating that most asylum seekers' claims are bogus and tearing down the basic notion that one has the right to flee for safety.

Ironically, these political positions come at a time when the United Nations is working for extensive reforms to increase responsibility sharing among states and other actors responding to refugee situations. These efforts are meant to specifically address protracted and large-scale displacement and to build on the momentum of the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the upcoming global compacts on refugees (through final consultations) and migration (awaiting formal adoption).

The dissonance between many populist anti-refugee regimes and UN efforts to improve the response to displacement is palpable, but perhaps demonstrates why now, more than ever, there is a need to better understand and combat xenophobia toward refugees. Indeed, anti-migrant/refugee rhetoric is rampant around the world. As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated in his report in 2016, "xenophobic and racist responses to refugees and migrants seem to be reaching new levels of stridency, frequency and public acceptance" (United Nations General Assembly 2016, para. 40).

In light of this challenge, this paper examines xenophobia in the refugee context. It begins by reviewing definitions of xenophobia that are offered by the existing literature. It then considers the roots of xenophobia and how it is often exhibited, before examining key issues and challenges to overcoming xenophobia. It then outlines where successful attempts have taken place and offers some lessons and recommendations for effectively addressing xenophobia.

What Is Xenophobia?

Xenophobia[1] can be found in every corner of the world (Coenders, Lubbers and Peer 2004; Crush and Ramachandran 2009; Geschiere 2009). It can be defined as "attitudes, prejudices and behavior that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity."[2]

Oksana Yakushko (2009, 44) notes that the term has historically been used to refer to a fear of outsiders but more recently has been "linked with ethnocentrism, which is characterized by the attitude that one's own group or culture is superior to others."

Xenophobia is different from nativism,[3] which John Higham describes in the opening of his book *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925* (quoted by Yakushko 2009, 44), as, in the American context, "an intense opposition to an internal minority on the grounds of its foreign (i.e., 'un-American') connections. Specific nativist antagonisms may and do vary widely in response to the changing character of minority irritants and the shifting conditions of the day; but through each separate hostility runs the connecting, energizing force of modern nationalism. While drawing on much broader cultural antipathies and ethnocentric judgments,

nativism translates them into zeal to destroy the enemies of a distinctively American way of life."[4]

Xenophobia also differs from racism, which "has been typically associated with prejudices against individuals found on a socially constructed notion of groups' differentiating visible phenotypical markers, such as skin color" (ibid., 48). Further, "xenophobia targets specifically those individuals who are foreigners in a particular community, often regardless of their visible characteristics or visible differences with the native individuals" (ibid.).[5]

What Spurs Xenophobia?

Xenophobia is often connected to a belief in a hierarchical world order, where one sees one's own nation-state as superior to others. It is "a multidimensional and multi-causal phenomenon… intricately tied to notions of nationalism and ethnocentrism" and is often associated with times of economic and political instability (ibid., 44-45). Yakushko writes that "prejudice against immigrants can offer an emotional outlet for fear when both the internal and external affairs of a country are unstable" (ibid., 45). Other literature (in the areas of group conflict theory and integrated theory of prejudice, social hierarchies and justification of social order) indicates that xenophobia is rooted in competition for access to limited resources (ibid., 46-47).

A key point in understanding xenophobia toward refugees and other forced migrants is the distinction

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1   See www.humanrightsfirst.org/topics/xenophobia.

2   See International Labour Office (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (2001, 2).

3   Other related, but not equivalent, terms of intolerance include autochthony, ethnocentrism, xeno-racism, anti-immigrant prejudice, immigration-phobia and ethno-exclusionism. There is disagreement among scholars on what exactly xenophobia entails — does the term refer to feelings of intense dislike, hatred or fear of others, or only to the expression of visible hostility toward strangers, or to individuals versus the collective? For more, see Misago, Freemantle and Landau (2015, 17). Interestingly, "Europeans tend to talk about 'xenophobia' while Americans tend to talk about 'racism'" (Horn 2015).

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4   Yakushko (2009, 44) notes that some scholars prefer to use "nativism" rather than "xenophobia" because it is perceived to be a more neutral word ("xenophobia" can imply the presence of fear or prejudice). She continues: "However, even those scholars who use the term *nativism* usually highlight the negative implications of nativist attitudes (Fry, 2001; Perea, 1997). Because these attitudes are not neutral, *xenophobia*, as a term, seems to more clearly indicate the presence of attitudinal and behavioral hostility toward nonnative individuals. Moreover, the term *xenophobia* is commonly used by social psychologists, human rights organizations, and the United Nations to describe anti-immigrant sentiments. Thus, the term *xenophobia* may be most appropriate for naming and understanding prejudices toward recent immigrants to the United States" (ibid.).

5   Yakushko also notes that xenophobia is different from racism because the two are "influenced by different historical realities…factors that contribute to racism are based on histories of subordination, slavery, colonialism, and segregation.…Xenophobia is typically related to times of economic and political instability or imbalance that result in the migration of large groups of people across borders as well as to the host community's reaction of feeling threatened by the newcomers" (ibid., 49).

between restrictive or exclusionary government policies and the sentiments of the general population (Horn 2015). While acts motivated by xenophobia can be carried out by specific individuals or groups within society, they may have broad popular support or complicity from the wider public, as opposed to individual hate crimes, which may not represent the broader public sentiment (but could be motivated by xenophobia). Wider support or complicity may, in turn, be a consequence of the actions of, or statements made by, political leaders. It has been argued that "government officials and political leaders often make xenophobic pronouncements that shape or reinforce public opinion and behaviour; public servants deny 'outsiders' access to services they are entitled to; law enforcement agents are particularly known for extortion, harassment, arbitrary detention and selective enforcement of the laws while 'members of the public' often engage in, or condone, collective violence against foreigners" (Misago, Freemantle and Landau 2015, 18).

Xenophobia can also be highly localized. It has been found that while one municipality may welcome migrants, a neighbouring municipality may violently oppose the arrival and integration of migrants. Physical space, culture, gender, race and ethnic makeup, as well as class composition and the histories of migrants and propagators, are all important factors that determine the prevalence of xenophobic beliefs among segments of society. Those who view outsiders as a threat may have other political, social or economic grievances. They are also more likely to feel excluded or marginalized themselves.

Xenophobia may also emerge with increasing urbanization, as a result of increased competition for limited space and services and increased opportunities for direct confrontation (ibid.). Likewise, growing population mobility can be another ingredient for xenophobia, and politics, above all, can be a natural trigger. Xenophobia can thus thrive in places where there are leadership vacuums, competition between groups, lack of trust, absence of rule of law (mob justice), and where there are local authorities that are complacent about illegal practices (ibid.). Interaction and contact theory also indicate that those who are marginalized or excluded in their own communities, or who at least perceive themselves to be excluded, may be more prone to adopt xenophobic beliefs (Deiss-Helbig and Remer-Bollow 2017).

Expressions of Xenophobia: Rhetoric, Action and Impact

Xenophobia can express itself in a "broad spectrum of behaviours including discriminatory, stereotyping and dehumanizing remarks; discriminatory policies and practices by government and private officials such as exclusion from public services to which target groups are entitled; selective enforcement of by-laws by local authorities; assault and harassment by state agents, particularly the police and immigration officials; as well as public threats and violence…that often results in massive loss of lives and livelihoods" (Misago, Freemantle and Landau 2015, 17). Yakushko notes that xenophobic rhetoric often portrays immigrants as criminal, lazy and uneducated (2009, 50). Hosts may demand that they assimilate to their culture, leading to isolation and confusion in immigrants' sense of cultural identity (ibid.).

Some argue that xenophobia is tied to material, political, cultural or social motivations, and often "exploits differences based on spatial, linguistic or ethnic origins" (Misago, Freemantle and Landau 2015, 17). More specifically, xenophobia can manifest itself in both physical and psychological ways, including the murder of non-nationals, assaults targeting foreigners, looting and vandalism of foreign-owned businesses, robbery, arson attacks, burning of property, intimidation and threats, or eviction notices (ibid., 18). Xenophobic rhetoric or actions may also intersect with racism to serve as "interrelated and mutually supporting forms of oppression" (Yakushko 2009, 47).

Examples of xenophobic rhetoric and actions toward refugees and other migrants are regrettably easy to find. South Africa has well-documented cases of attacks on refugees and other migrants, including the extreme violence of 2008, which included the killing of a Mozambican national, who was beaten, stabbed and set alight (Mohamed 2018). According to the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa, the May 2008 attacks — mostly on migrants — ultimately left "62 dead, 670 wounded, dozens raped, [and] more than 100,000 displaced. Millions of Rands worth of property was also looted, destroyed or appropriated by local residents in just over two weeks" (cited

in Misago, Freemantle and Landau 2015, 20-21). In Australia, policies that place asylum seekers in detention are often underpinned and accompanied by the desire to preserve "white Australia," and have even been promoted explicitly by politicians who are against multiculturalism (Davidson 2016). Hungary is another prominent example, which saw fear-mongering and anti-migrant messages during recent political campaigns that have been characterized as xenophobic. One commentator noted that "not only is the Hungarian government whipping up negative and hostile sentiment against asylum seekers and migrants, it is also making life as difficult as possible for those trying to enter the country" (Gall 2016). Other accounts recall the xenophobic platform that put Prime Minister Viktor Orbán in power, or the series of events and political choices that left hundreds of migrants stranded at a Budapest train station in September 2015 as they tried to reach other European countries.[6] Reports out of Kenya include xenophobic attacks on Somali refugees in Nairobi, including police harassment and robberies (Jesuit Refugee Service 2013). Likewise, in the United States, xenophobic rhetoric has increased under President Donald Trump's administration, most notably with the "Muslim ban," or the halting of travel to the United States of people from several predominantly Muslim countries. Other rhetoric, including then-candidate Trump's calling Mexicans "rapists" during the 2016 presidential campaign, as well as his well-publicized anti-refugee comments and policies, have also stirred anti-immigrant sentiments and hate crimes in the United States (Council on American-Islamic Relations 2018). More recent reports in Latin America also note attacks against refugees from Venezuela who have sought refuge in neighbouring countries (Fieser and Bristow 2018).

The global impact of xenophobic rhetoric and acts, in particular in the context of forced migration, is troubling. First, countries with politicians that embrace xenophobic rhetoric and acts toward refugees and other migrants do not exist in a vacuum; words and actions are seen by other countries, and in some cases can embolden others with nativist tendencies to also turn on refugees and migrants within their borders. The anti-refugee rhetoric from the United States, for example, and the drastic curtailment of the US refugee resettlement program, could affect how willing other countries are to resettle refugees. Likewise,

the anti-refugee sentiments within the European Union have been building since the influx of Syrian refugees in 2016 and the recent terror attacks in Europe. Xenophobic rhetoric and actions in countries such as Hungary cannot entirely account for increased anti-refugee sentiments elsewhere in Europe, but do provide fodder for neighbouring countries to consider similar approaches (Gall 2016). At the very least, xenophobia in a population makes adopting policies of responsibility sharing more difficult. Indeed, as a population grows increasingly anti-foreigner/refugee/migrant, its leaders are less likely to have the latitude to consider helping refugees anywhere in the world, let alone on their own soil (United Nations 2016).

Successful Approaches to Combatting Xenophobia

A number of approaches have been used to combat xenophobia toward refugees and migrants. Global figures, including former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and current UN Secretary-General António Guterres, have spoken at length about the importance of tolerance and the need to combat xenophobia (for example, see Guterres 2014). In 2001, the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action was adopted at the World Conference against Racism, which embodied a "firm commitment of the international community to tackle racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at the national, regional and international level" (Durban Review Conference 2009). Likewise, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, and other civil society actors have promoted programs that foster peaceful co-existence and tolerance through social dialogue, awareness campaigns and other public events. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in South Africa has also introduced educational materials in schools in an attempt to promote a better understanding of refugees and other migrants (Rulashe 2015).

However, some approaches that might seem beneficial to combatting xenophobia can also backfire. For example, Loren Landau and Tendayi Achiume (2016) argue that localization is one important way to alleviate xenophobia and that

sweeping international initiatives may not be entirely effective. They write that "condemnation from the outside is rarely effective for leaders who scorn the international system" (ibid.). In light of this, they argue that grassroots initiatives and locally led activities might be more effective than broad, far-reaching international programs that focus on state commitments.

In addition, interaction and contact theory would indicate that meaningful interactions between host and newcomer populations can help overcome misperceptions and stereotypes. Similarly, double integration — not just integrating refugee and immigrant newcomers, but also people from other segments of the population who have been excluded because of systemic barriers, such as their geographic location or access to economic opportunities — has been suggested as a way to overcome views that can lead to xenophobia (Dempster and Hargrave 2017). Yakushko (2009) also notes that advocacy by majority members on behalf of minorities and immigrants can facilitate change among majority members.

Above all, as Jean Pierre Misago, Iriann Freemantle and Loren B. Landau (2015) report, political will and sustained and coordinated interventions are needed to address the roots of xenophobia. In the context of Southern Africa, Jonathan Crush and Sujata Ramachandran (quoted in ibid., 29) argue that a lack of progress in combatting xenophobia can be explained largely by the unwillingness of countries to admit that they even have a problem. Cash-strapped NGOs and civil society organizations attempt to fill the breach with piecemeal programs that have some local impact but often put them on a direct collision course with the authorities. In other countries, the effectiveness of anti-xenophobia measures is compromised by the crisis-driven nature of the response. Once the crisis is over, as in South Africa, enthusiasm for addressing the causes begins to wane. In situations where xenophobic attitudes are deeply entrenched and pervasive, there is no quick fix. A sustained and coordinated response over a considerable time period may be necessary.

Research has suggested that programs aiming to address xenophobia should have concrete metrics and indicators to assess their impact and success. For example, one such indicator could be a reduction in the number of violent attacks motivated by xenophobia, rather than references to vague notions of "changing public attitudes" (ibid.).

One example of a program that has successfully reduced instances of xenophobic violence against refugees and migrants is Ukraine's "Diversity Initiative."[7] Launched in 2007, it coordinated domestic and international NGOs and agencies to assist victims, encourage more active government engagement and promote a coordinated response from government and civil society actors. It emphasized advocacy, increased accountability and law enforcement. It also pushed for adoption and enforcement of hate crime legislation, a move that led the government to begin addressing the problem in a more systematic way. The initiative also benefited from strong engagement from the UNHCR and the IOM, as well as a diverse network of grassroots human rights and community organizations, and support from foreign embassies, in addition to national and local authorities. Hate crimes increased again when key actors' commitments to the initiative dwindled.

Lessons and Recommendations

More generally, recent research on anti-xenophobia programs suggest some common elements of best practice, as follow.

Putting the Politics Up Front

Programs need to hold governments accountable for failures to protect people's rights. Other states, the United Nations and regional bodies can improve accountability structures and build on civil society, NGO and other humanitarian or development responses. These efforts should include holding leaders publicly accountable for statements that contain xenophobic rhetoric or that could instigate xenophobic acts. This push might include advocating for a mechanism whereby the OHCHR could publicly comment on leaders' and states' policies, rhetoric and actions that exhibit xenophobia, as well as regional and national platforms (including those that link to international legal frameworks) whereby the OHCHR and other human rights bodies could highlight and respond to xenophobia and

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7   See, for example, IOM (2018).

intolerance. Changes should also include a greater role for civil society groups and NGOs that promote human rights, in particular for those that focus on youth (Durban Review Conference 2009).

Moreover, states should not be the sole actors responsible for overcoming xenophobia. As NGOs have pointed out, full dependence on member states and global condemnation are starting points but might not lead to practical solutions. Rather, encouraging grassroots campaigns that work with local authorities and leaders, such as the We Are One Humanity program, may lead to better results in overcoming xenophobia (Distasio 2016).

Linking with Transnational Advocacy Networks and Rights Organizations

This tactic can also be an effective way to hold governments and others accountable (Keck and Sikkink 1998). In cases where the state is unwilling to address xenophobia, linking with a transnational network that combats xenophobia may exert pressure on the state.[8] However, as Landau and Achiume have argued (2016), linkages with transnational advocacy networks must end with localization if they are to get at the roots of xenophobia within a population. In other words, linking with transnational advocacy networks might be a useful approach for local groups to get the attention and influence policy change at the state level but might not change the attitudes of those within the population — for that, localization is an important element.

Taking Aim at the Incentives for Xenophobic Behaviour

Rather than focus on attitudes, which are unreliable predictors of behaviour, programs should look at the motivations that trigger violent behaviour, such as law enforcement and accountability mechanisms. Programs should target the instigators, political entrepreneurs and local leaders who capitalize on distrustful climates and who make political or economic gains from discrimination and violent exclusion of "outsiders." Focusing on these drivers is a way to deal with root

causes of these behaviours, such as marginalization and exclusion, rather than just their consequences.

Recognizing that Pro-migrant Programming Can Backfire

These programs can isolate migrants or minorities within the host population by reinforcing existing boundaries and fuelling tensions. Landau and Achiume (2016) write that "heavy-handed anti-xenophobia campaigns aimed at protecting the rights of foreign minorities risk drawing them out into the open, enhancing their visibility, and making their foreignness the issue where it might not have been." Emphasizing that these groups have international allies can build resentment and anger among disadvantaged citizenry who feel forgotten and excluded. Balanced reporting and programming that does not emphasize extremes (for example, migrants as criminals or the gifted/prodigy migrants) is critical.

Emphasizing Shared Humanity

Writer Jacques Mushaandja (cited in Distasio 2016) notes that to combat discriminatory attitudes, shared humanity must be highlighted without undermining diversity. In South Africa, he noticed a "link between lack of interest in shared histories and the presence of xenophobia in individuals, communities and the nation as a whole" (ibid.). The work of emphasizing connections includes acknowledging shared histories, for example, to achieve greater unity without demonizing others (Distasio 2016). Canada's World Mosaic Project is one such initiative promoting unity among communities.[9]

Addressing Bias through Media Campaigns

Media campaigns may also help to better combat xenophobia and negative narratives that the public might attach to. For example, Canada's Heritage Minutes, produced by Historica Canada,[10] is a collection of short dramatic films that show a significant person or event in Canadian history and air on television, in cinemas and online. Historica Canada recently aired a Heritage Minute about a

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8   Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1998) argue that these networks can create a boomerang pattern of influence by deploying four main tactics: information politics, symbolic politics, leverage politics and accountability politics.

9   See www.facebook.com/worldmosaicproject/.

10   Historica Canada, also the publisher of *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, is an independent national charitable organization that aims to "build awareness of Canadian history and citizenship" through various educational programs. See www.historicacanada.ca/about.

family that fled Vietnam and came to Canada in the 1970s,[11] which could help to remind Canadians of their history of welcoming refugees (Dunn 2017); such creative projects serve as a model for other public educational campaigns. The International Centre for Policy and Advocacy's Reframing Migration Narratives Project and the New Migration Narratives Project in Germany also seek to inform the public about diversity and inclusion.[12]

Targeting Relevant Actors and Choosing Interventions Carefully

Programs should avoid solely treating the symptoms and instead address the causes of conflict. Initiatives such as community dialogues and cultural and sport festivals can bring people together, but are usually one-off events and may not be effective in reaching those responsible for violence motivated by xenophobia. These types of initiatives are valuable, but they do not address the political economy of violence within communities. Likewise, if they are not handled well, these initiatives can also become politically charged and divisive. Instead, consistent, meaningful interactions are needed to prevent violence that is motivated by xenophobia in the first place.

Recognizing There Is No One-size-fits-all Solution

It is important to recognize the specific sources of violence in particular contexts. Responses need to recognize specific triggers, targets and forms of discrimination, and then be tailored accordingly.

Looking for Connections between Anti-xenophobic Efforts and Other Priorities

In the context of the global compacts and the New York Declaration, it is also important to consider how anti-xenophobic efforts can be tied into other priority areas, including local integration, self-reliance and livelihoods. Indeed, these are key focus areas for the global compacts moving forward (as well as for development actors, such as the World Bank), and policies that affect integration and access to livelihoods are also obvious avenues for combatting xenophobia; societies where migrants

are able to work and be self-reliant, as well as where they are more fully integrated, are less likely to see the marginalization and grievances toward migrants that can lead to xenophobia. There might also be important links relating to research on urban (versus camps/settlements) displacement and on how initiatives to combat xenophobia might vary in these contexts. Indeed, refugees interact differently in urban settings with their hosts than they do in camp or settlement settings. Levels and types of integration — for example, the competition for jobs, interaction between different groups, and involvement in politics, education and health care services, as well as access to other important spaces for exchange and interaction — are different in cities than in rural areas.

Prioritizing Coordination and Collaboration

Coordinated and collaborative approaches are key. There are many actors working on anti-xenophobia initiatives, but they need to work more closely together to avoid redundancies and inefficiencies in program delivery.

Conclusion

Generally speaking, those who study forced migration and those who advocate for solutions to forced migration spend little time studying xenophobia. This paper has aimed to address that gap by examining xenophobia in the refugee context, first by considering definitions of xenophobia vis-à-vis other terms, including racism and nativism, and then by looking at the roots of xenophobia, which include not only political, social and economic grievances and uncertainty, but also competition for scarce resources and the belief that one's own nation-state or group is superior to others. The paper then reviewed some expressions of xenophobic rhetoric and actions, and their impacts, before considering key issues and challenges in overcoming xenophobia. The use of localized approaches (rather than international, state-led initiatives or global campaigns) emerges from the literature as particularly important.

Looking at successful attempts in combatting xenophobia provides lessons and suggests recommendations for those engaged in

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11 See "'Boat People' Refugees" at www.historicacanada.ca/heritageminutes.

12 See www.icpolicyadvocacy.org/reframing-migration-narratives.

research and advocacy. The recommendations range from ways to hold states and individual leaders accountable to the strategic use of media campaigns and improved coordination at international, national and local levels.

The backdrop of the global compacts makes the moment ripe for further discussion on how to reduce xenophobia and increase responsibility sharing in refugee situations. Likewise, the prominence of political regimes that draw on xenophobic rhetoric and even encourage xenophobic actions means that finding new ways to reduce xenophobia is more important than ever.

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About CIGI

We are the Centre for International Governance Innovation: an independent, non-partisan think tank with an objective and uniquely global perspective. Our research, opinions and public voice make a difference in today's world by bringing clarity and innovative thinking to global policy making. By working across disciplines and in partnership with the best peers and experts, we are the benchmark for influential research and trusted analysis.

Our research programs focus on governance of the global economy, global security and politics, and international law in collaboration with a range of strategic partners and support from the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, as well as founder Jim Balsillie.

À propos du CIGI

Au Centre pour l'innovation dans la gouvernance internationale (CIGI), nous formons un groupe de réflexion indépendant et non partisan doté d'un point de vue objectif et unique de portée mondiale. Nos recherches, nos avis et nos interventions publiques ont des effets réels sur le monde d'aujourd'hui car ils apportent de la clarté et une réflexion novatrice pour l'élaboration des politiques à l'échelle internationale. En raison des travaux accomplis en collaboration et en partenariat avec des pairs et des spécialistes interdisciplinaires des plus compétents, nous sommes devenus une référence grâce à l'influence de nos recherches et à la fiabilité de nos analyses.

Nos programmes de recherche ont trait à la gouvernance dans les domaines suivants : l'économie mondiale, la sécurité et les politiques mondiales, et le droit international, et nous les exécutons avec la collaboration de nombreux partenaires stratégiques et le soutien des gouvernements du Canada et de l'Ontario ainsi que du fondateur du CIGI, Jim Balsillie.

About the World Refugee Council

There are more than 21 million refugees worldwide. Over half are under the age of 18. As a growing number of these individuals are forced to flee their homelands in search of safety, they are faced with severe limitations on the availability and quality of asylum, leading them to spend longer in exile today than ever before.

The current refugee system is not equipped to respond to the refugee crisis in a predictable or comprehensive manner. When a crisis erupts, home countries, countries of first asylum, transit countries and destination countries unexpectedly find themselves coping with large numbers of refugees flowing within or over their borders. Support from the international community is typically ad hoc, sporadic and woefully inadequate.

Bold Thinking for a New Refugee System

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is leading a consensus-driven effort to produce a new Global Compact for refugees in 2018. The World Refugee Council (WRC), established in May 2017 by the Centre for International Governance Innovation, is intended to complement its efforts.

The WRC seeks to offer bold strategic thinking about how the international community can comprehensively respond to refugees based on the principles of international cooperation and responsibility sharing. The Council is comprised of thought leaders, practitioners and innovators drawn from regions around the world and is supported by a research advisory network.

The WRC will explore advances in technology, innovative financing opportunities and prospects for strengthening existing international law to craft and advance a strategic vision for refugees and the associated countries.

The Council will produce a final report grounded by empirical research and informed by an extensive program of outreach to governments, intergovernmental organizations and civil society. The Council aims to have concluded its work by early 2019.

À propos du Conseil mondial pour les réfugiés

Il y a en ce moment dans le monde plus de 21 millions de réfugiés, et plus de la moitié d'entre eux ont moins de 18 ans. En outre, de plus en plus de personnes sont forcées de quitter leur pays natal et partent à la recherche d'une sécurité, et elles sont alors confrontées aux limites importantes qui existent quant aux possibilités d'accueil et à la qualité de ce dernier. À cause de cette situation, les réfugiés passent maintenant plus de temps que jamais auparavant en exil.

En ce moment, le système de protection des réfugiés ne permet pas de réagir adéquatement à la crise des réfugiés d'une façon planifiée et globale. Quand une crise éclate, les pays de premier asile, les pays de transit et les pays de destination finale se retrouvent sans l'avoir prévu à devoir composer avec un grand nombre de réfugiés qui arrivent sur leur territoire, le traversent ou en partent. Et le soutien fourni dans ce contexte par la communauté internationale est en règle générale ponctuel, irrégulier et nettement inadéquat.

Des idées audacieuses pour un nouveau système de protection des réfugiés

Le Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés (HCNUR) dirige des efforts découlant d'un consensus et visant à instaurer un nouveau « pacte mondial pour les réfugiés » en 2018. Mis sur pied en mai 2017 par le Centre pour l'innovation dans la gouvernance international (CIGI), le Conseil mondial pour les réfugiés (CMR) veut compléter ces efforts.

Le CMR vise à proposer une réflexion stratégique audacieuse sur la manière dont la communauté internationale peut réagir de façon globale aux déplacements de réfugiés, et ce, en se fondant sur les principes de la coopération international et du partage des responsabilités. Formé de leaders, de praticiens et d'innovateurs éclairés provenant de toutes les régions du globe, le CMR bénéficie du soutien d'un réseau consultatif de recherche.

Le CMR examinera les progrès techniques, les occasions de financement novatrices ainsi que les possibilités pour ce qui est de renforcer le droit international et d'y intégrer une vision stratégique pour les réfugiées et les pays concernés.

Par ailleurs, le CMR produira un rapport final fondé sur des recherches empiriques et sur les résultats d'un vaste programme de sensibilisation ciblant les gouvernements, les organisations intergouvernementales et la société civile. Son objectif est de terminer son travail au début de 2019.