

# THE SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FORCED MIGRATION

A Multi-Media Educational Tool

Summer 2020

## Migration and Gender-Related Issues: Sexual/Reproductive Health and Violence in Forcibly Displaced Populations

**Target audience:** advanced and lifelong learners

**Keywords:** gender, violence, health, humanitarianism

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[This image](#) is an artistic depiction of gender-based violence. The hands indicate the silence that (tragically and too often) follows sexual violence and reproductive health conversations; they also allude to the physical violation that accompanies sexual and gender-based violence.

Sexual and reproductive health and violence is a historically stigmatized and silenced issue. Although massive strides have been made to bring attention and funding to these subjects since the delineation of reproductive health as a right at the [1994 UN conference on Population and Development](#) in Cairo, it is nonetheless a pertinent and sensitive matter with persisting need for change. Barriers to

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reproductive health and instances of sexual violence are especially exacerbated in situations of violent conflict and forced migration. Access to reproductive health in refugee camps is strained by logistics and cultural taboo; sexual violence is a reality which has been normalized as a part of the “refugee experience.” As a senior (male) UNHCR official working in a refugee camp in Australia explained, “[rape] happens so often to these women that they get used to it, sort of expect it” (Pittaway and Bartolomei). Furthermore, fear of extreme retaliation from perpetrators, law enforcement, and/or the survivor’s own community leads to very low reporting rates (for all genders), continuing both silence and stigma.

It may seem that the most efficient way to “solve” or alleviate these colossal issues is through humanitarian and NGO reports for donors, or perhaps academic works; i.e. through identifying and detailing quantifiable gaps and ways to close them. While there is logistic truth to this statement, it has the ability to desensitize us to a highly personal experience; it is important to be in continuous consultation with and awareness of the stories of those around whom discussion revolves but often excludes. And while a substantial amount of ethnographic research—with findings based on interviews with those affected—exists, the relayed “refugee experience” is still controlled by and filtered through a western researcher. Therefore, as you peruse the following sources, please keep in mind the gravity of the information, the individuals behind the statistics, and the context in which the findings are reported and ingested.

\*Sensitive content warning: Many of the sources below include discussion and portrayals of sensitive topics including (but not limited to) sexual violence, exploitation, torture, and abuse.\*

## INTRODUCING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND GAPS THEREIN

Mia Foreman, “[Improving Reproductive Health Services for Forcibly Displaced Women](#),” *Population Reference Bureau*, January 21, 2013

Liesl Schanbel and Cindy Huang, “[Removing Barriers and Closing Gaps: Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for Rohingya Refugees and Host Communities](#),” *Center for Global Development*, June 5, 2019

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[Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Needs in Emergencies, Inter-Agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crises, n.d.](#)

- For more information from the same source, visit the following website which includes quick links to webinars, teaching models, and articles related to adolescents and reproductive health: [Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health | Inter-Agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crises](#)

Sandra Krause, "[Reproductive Health Care in Crises Has Come a Long Way, But There's More to Be Done](#)" (Podcast), December 8, 2016

## SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

"Before the 1990s, sexual violence in war was, with rare exception, largely invisible. If not invisible, it was trivialized; if not trivialized, it was considered a private matter or justified as an inevitable by-product of war, the necessary reward for the fighting men." Rhonda Copelon, [Gender Crimes as War Crimes](#), *McGill Law Journal* (2000), 220

Jane Freedman, "[Sexual and gender-based violence against refugee women: a hidden aspect of the refugee "crisis"](#)," *Reproductive Health Matters* (June 7, 2016)

[Syria's women fear sham marriages and rape](#)(Video), Channel 4 News, 2013

Cody Wofsy and Katrina Eiland, "[Jeff Sessions' Illegal Attacks on Asylum Seekers](#)," *American Civil Liberties Union*, August 7, 2018

Eileen Pittaway and Linda Bartolomei, "[Refugees, Race and Gender: the Multiple Discriminations against Refugee Women](#)," *Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group*, August 1, 2001

Emily Ausubel, "[An Untold Story: The Need to Address Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Refugee Boys](#)," *Kennedy School Review*, October 22, 2019

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## Yes, I Am (2019), Tucheke Movie Productions

- This film, as the attached website indicates, was created by refugees in the Nakivale camp in Uganda. It is intended to be viewed by other refugees and to serve as a conversation starter on issues of sexual exploitation and violence, instances of which many of the film's creators have experienced. This is not necessarily an enjoyable film to watch; scenes that are meant to start a conversation might strike some viewers as questionable, unpleasant, or not the obvious choice. In other words, it is not a film that conforms to western film standards, and it is for this reason that I chose to include it. The conversation surrounding sexual health is a conversation largely catered to the humanitarian, donor, and academic communities, less so to the refugee community itself. This film tells a story that highlights the voices of individuals as opposed to using them to support an academic theory or attract donations. It might also give insight as to how topics of sexual violence and health are presented to adolescents in forced migration contexts (although this is not a basis for generalizations- one experience/example by no means speaks for them all).

Common Threads Project, "The Fabric of Healing: Story Cloths by Survivors of Trauma, War and Gender-Based Violence," (2020): virtual exhibit featuring various artists

Home: a poem by Warsan Shire (Video), 2017: video of Shire reading her poem