

Gilman Foreign Policy in Focus: Refugees & Migration Virtual Seminar Series

Seminar 3: Exploring Experiences of Refugees and Migrants through Case Studies



Amali Tower

Founder and Executive Director, Climate Refugees

Amali Tower is the founder and executive director of Climate Refugees, a human rights organization working to promote the rights and protections of those displaced by climate change. Having worked for numerous NGOs, the UN Refugee Agency and the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, Amali has extensive experience working with refugees and forcibly displaced persons in urban, rural and encampment contexts. She has resettled refugees, campaigned for refugee and asylum protections and written and passed U.S. legislation to curb immigration detention. Amali holds a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, a BA in International Development Studies from UCLA, and an International Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance from Fordham University. She is also a member of the World Economic Forum Expert Network in migration, human rights and humanitarian response.



Mark Okello Oyat

Co-director, Dadaab Response Association

Mark Okello Oyat is a Ugandan refugee residing in Dadaab, Kenya. He has taught refugee students of different levels, such as pre-primary, primary, secondary and university. All these he has done while in the encampment. He holds Masters-in-Education from York University, Toronto, Canada. Currently, he is the East Africa regional representative of the Tertiary Refugee Students Network (TRSN). Mark is also the Director of the Dadaab Response Association, a refugee-led organization. The community-based organization has been at the forefront of knowledge production, as insider researchers/scholars from the encampment. This is the link to some of their online publications: <https://carleton.ca/lern/learn-with-lern/publications/dadaab-response-association/>. Mark also co-authored with other scholars articles found in Forced Migration Review Magazine, issues 60 and 70 (<https://www.freview.org/issue60> and <https://www.fmreview.org/issue70>).





Sahra Ismail

Co-director, Dadaab Response Association

Sahra Mohamed Ismail is Somali by nationality and was born in Somalia. She is one of the refugees who stayed in Dadaab camps since its inception in 1991 and grew up in Dadaab refugee camps, especially Dagahaley. For all those years Sahra never thought of returning home one day. She worked for Care International in Kenya as Deputy Head Teacher in 2012-2015. Despite all the challenges she had encountered in achieving higher Education in the Refugees. Finally, Sahra was given the chance of joining BHER Program, (Borderless Higher Education of the Refugee) from INSTEP-program and, received her Bachelor of Arts, Majoring in Geography from York University, Toronto, Canada and currently Sahra is a graduate with a Master's Degree in education at York University and as well a co-director of refugee led organization in Dadaab.



Tania Bulakh

Senior Manager for Europe, National Endowment for Democracy

Tetiana (Tania) Bulakh is a Senior Manager for Europe at the National Endowment for Democracy. In this capacity, she oversees over 150 projects that support civil society, human rights defenders, and independent media in Eastern Europe.

Tania's interests include civic mobilization, grassroots movements, and media activism. Her expertise and knowledge in the field of conflict-driven displacement and Ukraine have led her to write and present widely on these topics.

Prior to joining the NED, Tania worked with the UN agencies in Ukraine, such as the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF). She holds a PhD degree in Socio-Cultural Anthropology from Indiana University Bloomington, where she just completed a dissertation on internal displacement, citizenship, and humanitarian aid in Ukraine. Prior to this, she earned her M.A. in Anthropology from Indiana University Bloomington as a Fulbright Scholar. Tania also graduated from the National University of "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy" (Kyiv, Ukraine), where she obtained B.A. and M.A. degrees in Theory of Literature and Comparative Studies.

