

The Wealth of Refugees: How Displaced People Can Build Economies

Friday, May 28, 2021 | 12:00PM - 1:30PM PT

Will be held via Zoom (This Event May Be Recorded)



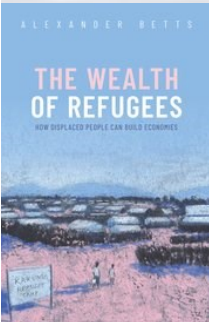
Author: Alexander Betts

Alexander Betts is Professor of Forced Migration and International Affairs, Senior Fellow in Politics at Brasenose College, and Associate Head of the Social Sciences Division at the University of Oxford. He served as Director of the Refugee Studies Centre between 2014 and 2017. His research focuses on the politics and economics of refugee assistance. In addition to ten other books, he is co-author, with Paul Collier, of *Refuge: Transforming a Broken Refugee System*, which was named by the *Economist* as one of the 'Best Books of 2017'. He is a World Economic Forum Young Global Leader, was named by *Foreign Policy* magazine in the top 100 global thinkers of 2016, and by Thinkers50 as an emerging business influencer.



Discussant: Samuel Bazzi

Samuel Bazzi is Associate Professor of Economics at GPS, UC San Diego. research lies at the intersection of development economics and political economy, with a focus on how individuals and nations adapt to the challenges of diversity in a global world. He is particularly interested in understanding the barriers to labor mobility, how migration shapes culture, and how policy can mitigate the adverse effects of diversity. Bazzi has regional expertise in Southeast Asia with a particular focus on Indonesia.



We live in an age of displacement. Refugee numbers are increasing due to a proliferation of fragile states, and this problem will be exacerbated by climate change and the legacy of COVID-19. And yet, rising populist nationalism has undermined the political willingness of rich countries to accept migrants and asylum seekers. Given these contradictory trends, how can we create sustainable refugee policies that can enable displaced people to live in safety and dignity, while operating at scale? Alexander Betts' new book, *the Wealth of Refugees*, draws upon a decade of original qualitative and quantitative research to offer practical solutions. Focusing on refugees in camps and cities in Africa, it identifies approaches that can be effective in improving the welfare of refugees, increasing social cohesion between refugees and host communities, and reducing the need for onward migration. The book argues that the key lies in unlocking the potential contributions of refugees themselves. They bring skills, talents, and aspirations and can be a benefit rather than a burden to receiving societies. Realizing this potential relies upon moving beyond a purely humanitarian focus to fully include refugees in host country economies, build economic opportunities in refugee-hosting regions, and navigate the ambiguous politics of refugee protection.

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