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Civil Society Solidarity Initiatives Supporting Migrant Refugees

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The number of refugees and internally displaced people has reached a peak since the end of World War II. Millions are on the move while others remain displaced for decades. In response, peacebuilding and conflict transformation approaches are focusing on agency capabilities with the support of civil society initiatives. Agency is seen as vital for a fair and just society.

This paper proposes a grounded discussion on more than 30 experiences in both developed and less developed countries of cooperative work supporting refugees and migrants, based on interviews and literature survey collected during a research project by this author for the ILO. At the time, the ILO, for their own work, requested this research to differentiate initiatives based on origin of the initiative, whether refugees were taking initiative on their own, or other civil society actors on their behalf, or together. The ILO paper per se will not be presented but the cases identified will be the thrust of analysis. Some of the cases will be brought on, updated. And the original ILO work is available upon direct request.

The proposal here is an analysis of the emerging patterns and linkages to theoretical frameworks, sometimes argued and built by the participants themselves. The main goal is to contribute to theoretical development to better understand the processes of agency in building sustainable development that is both inclusive and peaceful.

References:

Sanchez Bajo, C. 2016. "Cooperatives and Refugees". Unpublished mimeo. See two page summary based on findings and recommendations here:

https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/publications/WCMS_455734/lang--en/index.htm

Examples of other work done in the area (work, qualitative research):

Sanchez Bajo, C. 2019 Work and cooperatives: A century of ILO interaction with the cooperative movement, in Cooperatives and the world of work, chapter 1, Routledge, (<https://www.routledge.com/Cooperatives-and-the-World-of-Work/Roelants-Eum-Esim-Novkovic-Katajamaki/p/book/9780367250850>)

Sanchez Bajo, C. 2014. Introduction to Qualitative Research on Cooperative Enterprises, University of Winnipeg, Canada, slides presentation at the 2014 SSHRC ([casc-2014-research-design-presentation-by-claudia-sanchez-bajo.pdf](#))