Return of refugees and Peace – Investigating the relationship in South Sudan

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What is the problem and for how long?

• South Sudan is in war with itself forcing people into repeated displacement to neighboring countries as refugees.
• Displacement and return have alternated since 1955 like pendulum in South Sudan.
• Every Peace Agreement provides for return of refugees even when the conflict is not resolved.
• 300,000 refugees were returned from 2005 to 2010 but over 1,000,000 were displaced from 2013 to 2017- many of them were repatriated before.
• Obvious implications are resource wastage, donor fatigue, lack of trust for conception of future returns to South Sudan

The Research Focus

The focus of the study is on causal, mutual and State – Citizen relationships.

Why investigate Return – Peace relationship?

• Globally it is assumed that return of refugees and peace are linked
• Nearly everyone assumes that peace building causes return while Aid workers believe that repatriation is important Peace
• Two previous research that only analyzed cause-effect relationship between the two events concluded that refugee repatriation and peace building don’t affect each other.
• This promoted refugee repatriation even when conflicts are not completely resolved like in South Sudan and now in Somalia.
• In light of the repeated displacements it is important to explore the relationship between the two events to provide a holistic picture
• It is also key to determine if the previous findings are still valid.

How to investigate?

• This research examines cases of refugee repatriation to three high return states of South Sudan between 2000 and 2017.
• In-depth interviews will be held with various calibers of people on the various types of relationships between repatriation and peace building.
• Focus Group discussions will be held with refugees and returnees to seek the opinion of the vulnerable population.

What result do we expect?

• This study is exploratory and diverse opinion will emerge.
• All available relationships identified by the respondents will be highlighted in the final result.
• Analysis based on the three puzzle questions will be conducted to identify any causal or mutual or state-citizen relationship.

Why is the study important?

• Locally it bridges the critical literature gap in South Sudan
• Globally it is relevant for conceptualizing future returns

References


What are the specific objectives?

• To find out Influence of repatriation on peace building
• influence of peace building on repatriation
• To analyze the nexus between the two events

Figure 1: Pendulum of Displacement and Refugee Repatriation

Figure 2: Analysis of refugee repatriation – Peace building relationship

Figure 3: Photo of Civilians running away from fighting (Left) – Malakal Feb. 18, 2016 by Justin Lynch/AF/Getty Images and Armed forces bring weapons to civilian area Nov. 3 2016 by Ludovica L.

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1955 – 1972: First Civil war
1972 - 1982: First Return
1983 – 2005: Second Civil war
2005 – 2010 Second Return
2013 – Now Third Civil War