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Refugee and Disaster Definitions

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Plight of Refugees

- ◆ Flight from violence underlies most refugee population movements
- ◆ Refugees' need for assistance is greater than needs of victims of natural disasters
- ◆ People fleeing conflict need assistance longer than if fleeing natural disasters
- ◆ Return to normality is more difficult after conflict than after natural disasters

Humanitarian Response

- ◆ Increasing difficulty in gaining access to people displaced by conflict.
- ◆ No guarantee of neutrality for humanitarian actors.

Humanitarian Response

- ◆ Humanitarian imperative to assist emergency affected population
- ◆ Humanitarian aid used as an alternative to difficult political decisions

Causes of Conflict

- ◆ Usually man-made or man-inspired, as a result of political actions
- ◆ Conflicts may have underlying natural roots, such as famines or floods

Defining Complex Humanitarian Emergencies

- ◆ Multiple contributing factors
- ◆ Conflict often present with collapse of civil order
- ◆ Excess mortality and threats to life
- ◆ Population lacks access to basic needs—food, water, health care, protection

Definition of Asylum

- ◆ *Asylum*—protection, refuge, security
- ◆ Concept at least 3,500 years old
- ◆ Found in many cultures
- ◆ Enshrined in Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Definition of Asylum

- ◆ Strict interpretation of persecution
- ◆ Bureaucratic hurdles to granting asylum

History of Refugee Policy

- ◆ **League of Nations (1921)**
 - Helped persons in danger return to homeland
- ◆ **United Nations (1951)**
 - UNHCR established with protection mandate
 - Convention on refugees ratified
 - Defined refugees

UN Definition of a Refugee

- ◆ A person who has left country of origin because of “well-founded fear of persecution” due to
 - Race, religion, nationality, political opinion, membership of a social group
- ◆ A person who is unwilling to return to country of origin due to fear

UN Definition of a Refugee

- ◆ A person of no nationality
- ◆ No forcible return to country where persecution may occur: *Nonrefoulement*

OAU Convention (1969)

- ◆ Expanded UN definition of refugees to include those fleeing conflict from
 - External aggression
 - Collapse of civil order
- ◆ Assured asylum and repatriation without prejudice

Cartagena Declaration (1984)

- ◆ Basis for asylum includes those fleeing widespread human rights abuses

“Persons of Concern”

- ◆ Persons not covered by existing definitions
- ◆ Given UN protection by Security Council or Secretary General
 - Kurds in Iraq
 - Civilians in Bosnia

Internally Displaced Persons

- ◆ Flee for same reasons as refugees
- ◆ Do not cross an international border—
outside UN mandate
- ◆ Limited access for assistance because of
sovereignty issues
- ◆ At increased risk of continued abuse

Economic Migrants

- ◆ Late 20th century phenomenon
- ◆ 120 million persons live outside country of birth or citizenship

Economic Migrants

- ◆ 100 countries classified as having major inward or outward population movement
- ◆ U.S. and Europe spend \$9 billion on asylum management annually
 - May have between 10 and 30 million illegal immigrants

Distinguishing Refugees from Economic Migrants

- ◆ Increasingly difficult as reasons for flight are multifactorial
 - Many push \leftrightarrow pull factors
- ◆ Evidence of persecution may be unavailable
- ◆ Industrialized states may not recognize
 - Generalized violence
 - Breakdown of civil order
 - Internal conflicts

Persons Not Covered by UN Refugee Mandate

- ◆ Criminal elements
- ◆ “Subversive elements”
- ◆ “Hostages”
- ◆ Victims of natural disasters

Persons Not Covered by UN Refugee Mandate

- ◆ Economic migrants fleeing economic privation
- ◆ “Eco-refugees”

Who Looks after Refugees

- ◆ State—responsible for its own citizens
- ◆ Host country—poor, resources limited
- ◆ UN—not an implementing agency
- ◆ Non-governmental organizations are implementing partners of UN
 - For example, CRS, CARE, IRC, ADRA, MSF

Who Looks after Refugees

- ◆ Members of the Red Cross Movement

Who Looks after Refugees

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 - National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies
 - International Federation of Red Cross/Red Crescent Society coordinates all national societies
 - International Committee of Red Cross assists wounded in conflict situations

What Happens to Refugees

- ◆ *Repatriation*—return to home of origin
 - Must be preceded by political change
- ◆ *Integration*—less common unless similar culture or language
- ◆ *Resettlement* in a third country—no longer an option after Cold War

Consequences of International Migration

- ◆ Asylum has become more difficult
 - Persons with legitimate claims rejected
 - Or returned to transit country
- ◆ Search for new approaches in “migration management”
 - Visa requirements, interdiction at sea, “fast track procedures”

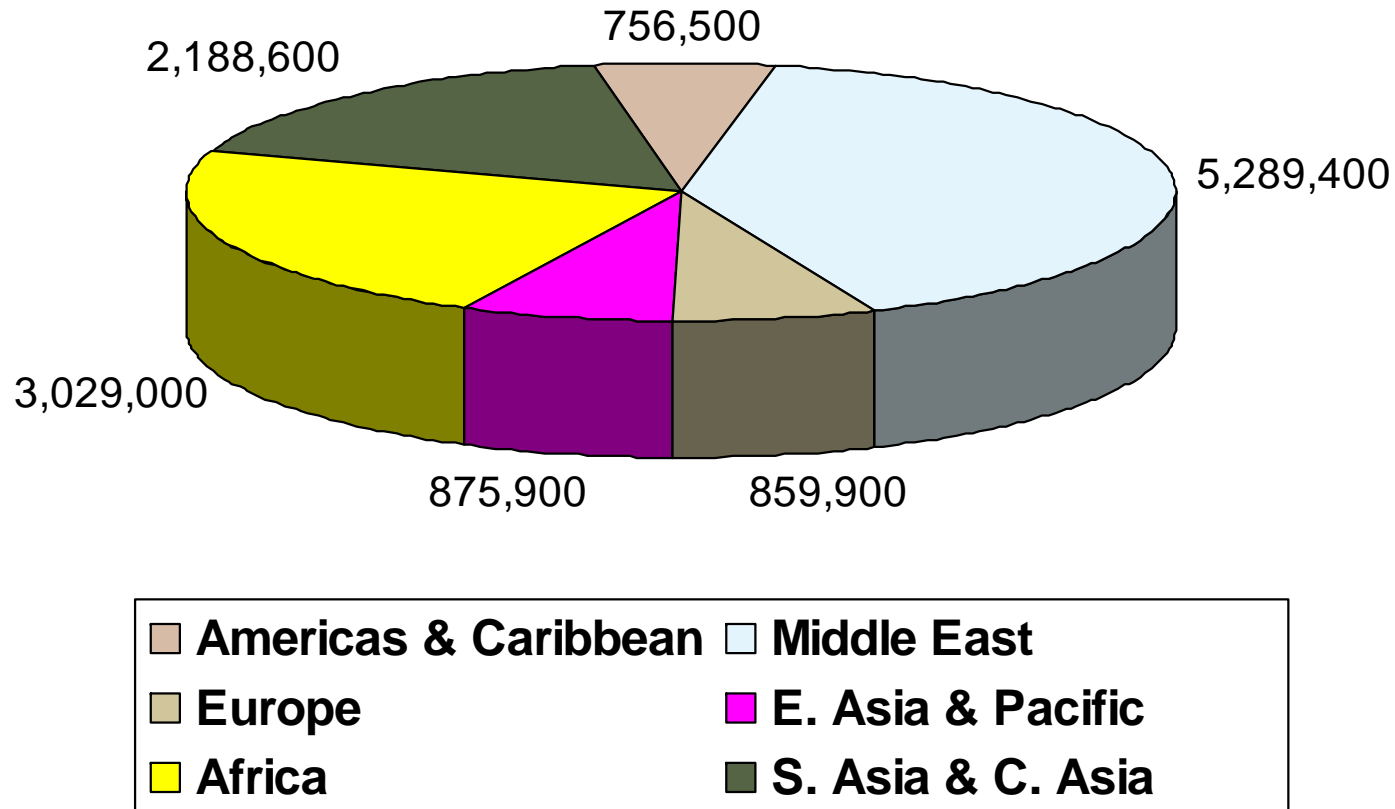
Refugee Numbers

- ◆ Counting of refugees is difficult because
 - Refugees don't want to be counted
 - Host governments don't want international attention to internal problems
 - Humanitarian community may not want to intervene
- ◆ Difficult to assist without denominator since cannot make estimations

Final Underlying Principle

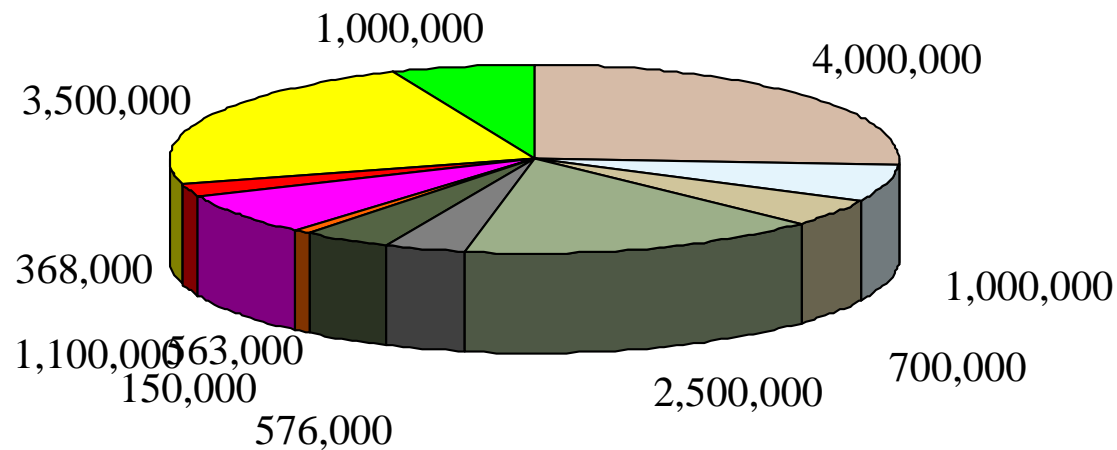
- ◆ Everything about refugee situations is political
- ◆ Politics determine origin, maintenance, and resolution

Where Refugees Are in 2002



Data from: World Refugee Survey 2003, U.S. Committee for Refugees

Internally Displaced Persons *in 2002*



Voluntary Repatriations

To	From	Number
Afghanistan	Iran & Pakistan	1,800,000
Angola	Congo-Kinshasa, Zambia & Others	80,000
Burma	Bangladesh & Thailand	1,760
Burundi	Tanzania	50,000
Central African Republic	Congo-Kinshasa	15,000
Croatia	Yugoslavia & Bosnia	11,000
East Timor	Indonesia	32,000
Eritrea	Sudan	20,000
Iraq	Iran	1,145
Kazakhstan	Uzbekistan & Others	16,000

Data from: World Refugee Survey 2003, U.S. Committee for Refugees

Ratio of Refugee to Host Country Population

Host Country	Ratio of Refugee Pop. to Total Pop.	Number of Refugees
Gaza Strip	1:2	879,000
Iran	1:30	2,209,900
West Bank	1:3	607,800
Lebanon	1:11	409,000
Guinea	1:46	182,000
Yugoslavia	1:30	353,000
Liberia	1:51	65,000
Djibouti	1:27	23,000
Nepal	1:181	132,000
Zambia	1:40	247,000
Sudan	1:114	287,000
Tanzania	1:72	516,000
Pakistan	1:95	1,518,000
Uganda	1:112	221,000
Japan	1:19,538	6,500
Mexico	1:25,500	4,000

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Data from: World Refugee Survey 2003, U.S. Committee for Refugees Continued

Voluntary Repatriations

To	From	Number
Liberia	Cote D'Ivoire & Sierra Leone	20,000
Namibia	Botswana	1,000
Nigeria	Cameroon	8,000
Rwanda	C-Kin, Tanzania, Burundi	30,000
Sierra	Guinea, Liberia & Others	90,000
Somalia	Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya	20,000
Sudan	Uganda	2,000
Tajikistan	Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, others	1,100
Yugoslavia	Germany, Switzerland	3,100