

Intersections of time, emotion and language in young Congolese and Somali refugee experiences in Uganda: impacts on arrival and everyday futures

Rising refugee populations are of significant concern in regions where mounting tensions have led to outbreaks of insurgency due to political, economic, religious, ethnic and social pressures. Further, protracted displacement has become the norm in areas suffering sustained conflict. Uganda is host to significant refugee populations as the largest hosting country in sub-Saharan Africa, with young people accounting for the majority of displaced persons now growing up in situations of protracted crisis. This paper discusses the complex intersection of time, emotions, and language in young refugees' journeys and the impacts on their experiences of arrival and for the creation of new everyday futures.

Drawing on in-depth youth-led qualitative research with 40 young Congolese and Somali refugees in Uganda, the paper conceptualises the connections between time, emotion, language and relations through processes of moving, waiting and adapting across borders. Developing ideas that forced migration disrupts a sense of belonging, alongside Wood and Waite's (2011:201) assertion that a sense of belonging is 'a dynamic emotional attachment' to place; the paper explores young people's stories shaped by violence, trauma, risk, stigma and discrimination towards the creation of new identities and futures of belonging. The paper concludes by suggesting that the emotional experiences of displacement are also temporal journeys, dis/connected in a myriad of ways across borders and to new places through language, relations and networks of support.



**Professor Lorraine
van Blerk**

Lorraine van Blerk is Professor of Human Geography at the University of Dundee and Honorary Professor at the Children's Institute, University of Cape Town. Lorraine has been undertaking co-produced and participatory research with young people for over 20 years addressing inequalities in their lives. She currently leads projects on youth homelessness and refugee youth transitions to adulthood. In 2021 she was awarded the title of Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in recognition of her work on social justice.

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