

# The Economic Life of Refugees

By Karen Jacobsen

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## The Economic Life of Refugees By Karen Jacobsen


- \*Contains an overview of refugee experiences stressing the active roles they play in shaping their lives
- \*Proposes a model for a policy that increases refugees' ability to support themselves

Popular images of refugees depict thousands of traumatized people pouring across borders, congregating in camps where relief agencies try to meet their health and food needs in and outside camps. This book explores the economic life of refugees in protracted situations in a variety of settings: in camps, in urban areas and in third countries in the West.

In *The Economic Life of Refugees*, Karen Jacobsen stresses that refugees fleeing violence and persecution are economic actors. She explores how some of the innovative ideas influencing migration theory can be applied to the study of refugees, and the ways in which humanitarian programs can support their efforts to pursue their livelihoods.

This book is intended for undergraduates and graduate students, practitioners in the field, libraries, NGOs and anyone seeking to learn more about understanding refugees and the response of organizations trying to help them. Written with elegance and passion, *The Economic Life of Refugees* is destined to be a classic work of activism as well as social science.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"*The Economic Life of Refugees* provides an ideal introduction to an aspect of human displacement that has been ignored in much of the existing literature. Focusing primarily on Africa, the book provides a vivid analysis of the way that refugees seek to construct new livelihoods in exile, and provides some valuable recommendations with regard to the way that humanitarian and development agencies could support those efforts more effectively."

"The ways in which refugees and other forced migrants pursue livelihoods has been curiously under-researched until relatively recently, and Karen Jacobsen has produced a useful primer drawing together well the disparate strands of work in this field. The overall purpose of the book is to explore forcibly displaced people as economic actors... this volume contains much rich local level material in which lies its strength...if this volume prompts more researchers and practitioners to explore key issues surrounding livelihoods among forced migrants, it will have more than served its purpose".

#### About the Author

Karen Jacobsen leads the Refugee and Forced Migration Program at the Feinstein Center at Tufts University and is also a Visiting Associate Professor at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Her work experience has included consultancies in refugee camps in East Africa. She was a journalist in Zambia for two years (1979-80) during the Rhodesian war.

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