Failure and Hope

In 2015, 60 million people were displaced by violent conflict – the highest since World War II. National and international policy prevents the displaced from working or moving freely outside the camps set up to “temporarily” house them. This policy has left the displaced with no right to work and move while they remain displaced for years, if not decades. Based on data on all 61 protracted displacement crises worldwide, fieldwork in seven conflict zones around the world, in-depth interviews with more than 170 humanitarian aid workers, government officials and refugees, this book systematically details the barriers to effective advocacy at every level of governance and shows that failure is the norm. Unlike many academic monographs, it goes further and proposes an alternative way forward that capitalizes on advances on social entrepreneurship, crowd-funding and micro-finance to improve the lives of those that have been forced to flee their homes to find safety.

Christine Mahoney is an Associate Professor of Public Policy and Politics at the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy and Director of Social Entrepreneurship at the University of Virginia. She studies social justice advocacy and social innovation. Her book Brussels vs. the Beltway: Advocacy in the United States and the European Union was the first large-scale comparative study of lobbying in the United States and the EU.
Failure and Hope

Fighting for the Rights of the Forcibly Displaced

CHRISTINE MAHONEY

University of Virginia
Contents

List of figures page vi
List of tables vii
Acknowledgments ix

1 Failure is the norm 1
2 Global attention to displacement crises 21
3 Explaining global attention: Geopolitics vs. advocacy 38
4 Frontline advocacy: Lobbying for refugee rights at the national level 66
5 Frontline advocacy: Lobbying for IDP rights at the national level 81
6 Frontline mobilization: Advocating for rights in displacement camps 101
7 An innovative global campaign for action 124
8 Conclusion 136

References 141
Index 149
Figures

2.1 EU and US role in displacement aid – NGOs page 22
2.2 EU and US role in displacement aid – contributions to UNHCR page 22
2.3 Displacement cases that received coverage by more than one news story in 2010 page 30
2.4 Displacement crises with at least five news stories in the Global North page 31
2.6 EU coverage – the Guardian, Le Monde and Suddeutsche Zeitung page 33
2.7 Comparison of share of the global agenda attention to the proportion of the global displaced population page 33
2.8 Global attention by region vs. scope of displacement by region page 35
3.2 Attention to displacement in Iraq and Afghanistan (2001–2010) page 41
3.3 Attention to displaced Palestinians page 41
3.4 Attention to displacement in Sudan (Darfur) (2001–2010) page 43
3.5 Attention to displacement from Tibet (2001–2010) page 44
3.6 Attention to displacement from Bosnia and Croatia (2001–2010) page 47
3.7 Attention to displacement from Somalia (2001–2010) page 49
3.8 Attention to displacement from Bhutan (2001–2010) page 51
3.9 Attention to displacement from Burma/Myanmar (2001–2010) page 54
3.11 Attention to displacement in Sri Lanka (2001–2010) page 60
3.12 Attention to displacement in Colombia (2001–2010) page 64
7.1 Proposed structure of fund flows depending on context page 131
Tables

1.1 Sixty-five global displacement crises with more than 10,000 displaced (as of 2015) page 6
1.2 Major refugee situations with UNHCR-aided camps more than 2,500 (as of 2008, during case selection) 14
1.3 Major IDP situations where the UNHCR is assisting (as of 2008 during case selection) 15
2.1 Major displacement situations (more than 10,000 displaced) year-end 2009 and whether there was any media coverage in any of the analyzed US or EU papers in 2010 28
3.1 Displacement cases with more than 20 news stories over the decade 40
6.1 Level of collective action among the displaced 110
Acknowledgments

I would like to first thank all the staff of the international NGOs and the UN agencies that so graciously granted me interviews; taking time from their life-saving work to talk with me about their advocacy on behalf of the displaced was critical to my understanding of the activities they engage in and the obstacles they face. Seeing what these aid workers deal with on a daily basis, in effort to relieve suffering and find solutions, was awe-inspiring. The endless hours I spent on planes, buses, rickshaws, tuk tuks, boda bodas and bicycles to conduct interviews was well worth the effort, it gave me insight into their struggles on the frontlines that would not have been possible from afar.

This project would also not have been possible without the financial support of the Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs at Syracuse University, the Maxwell Dean’s office at Syracuse University, and the Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy at the University of Virginia. Thank you for helpful recommendations on early drafts of the manuscript by participants at meetings of the European Consortium for Political Research, to colleagues Beth Leech, Herman Mark Schwartz and Craig Volden, and to the anonymous reviewers.

Thank you to a number of students at Syracuse University, whose interest in the project kept me moving forward, including: Mark Hibben and Angélica Suárez for research assistance, to Felipe Estefan for translation in Colombia, to Anirban Archana for fieldwork in Sri Lanka, and Beau Miller and Emily Rose for fieldwork in Nepal. Thank you also to Caitlin Carr, Sean Callahan and Genevieve Heckel at the University of Virginia for their meticulous research assistance collecting data on attention to these issues by the international community. Thank you to Anna Sofia Yurtaslan and Emily Laser for help with the content analysis of the new stories.

Thank you also to all the Karen, Karenni and Bhutanese children that I tutored in Syracuse, New York – they were a weekly reminder of the millions
of displaced citizens around the world that still have not found durable solutions and a constant motivator that we can and must speak out on their behalf.

Finally to my family, especially Ann Mahoney, Karen Mahoney and Karen Homer for being supportive when I continued to do fieldwork in places that were not the safest. To truly hear the voices of the vulnerable living on the frontlines, it is sometimes necessary to go to dangerous places.