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Introduction

When we think of the global refugee system, we tend to envisage international aid organisations delivering large-scale assistance to vulnerable populations, usually in camps. As people flee conflict or persecution and cross borders, the dominant picture is of UN agencies and international non-governmental organisations providing basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. This is certainly one part of the story, but it risks obscuring the many ways in which refugees collectively organise to help themselves and their communities.

Refugees engage in collective action and self-help across economic, political and social contexts. Economically, refugee entrepreneurship often leads to the creation of businesses, cooperatives or financial instruments. Politically, refugees may mobilise to contest homeland governments, protest inadequate assistance in exile or simply to ensure adequate representation in camps and cities. Socially, faith-based organisations, cultural associations and sports teams often proliferate among refugee communities. That refugees, like all human beings, have the capacity to help themselves and to collectively organise – what social scientists call ‘agency’ – is now widely recognised.

In spite of this, one area of striking neglect is the role that refugees play as providers of protection and assistance to other refugees. Rather than simply being passive recipients of assistance, they often organise among themselves, whether through formal organisations or informal networks, to support vulnerable members of the community. Formal international assistance is rarely sufficient to allow refugees to meet their basic needs, and so refugees themselves often provide alternative sources of support.

To take an example, the organisation Hope of Children and Women Victims of Violence (HOCW), based in Kampala, Uganda, was created in 2008 by Congolese refugees and a Ugandan pastor, and expanded through the support of international volunteers who raised funds and provided materials. Located on the outskirts of Kampala, the organisation provides various livelihood activities for both refugees and local Ugandans, as well as English lessons and programmes for children. The initiative began after women expressed the need to diversify their skills, as the only work the majority could find in Kampala was washing clothes; it started in 2013 with a tailoring programme, and now runs a range of programmes including arts and crafts, hairdressing, mushroom-growing and business skills training. An estimated 40 per cent of training participants at HOCW are Ugandans, encouraging interaction between refugees and the host community.

Below the radar, there are more than thirty refugee-led community organisations operating in Kampala. Many are formally registered and employ staff; others are informal networks and have relatively few resources. They are mainly based on nationality groups, although some assist across communities. They offer support within and beyond their

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communities in areas such as vocational training, counselling, youth engagement, access to credit and informal education.

But refugee-led assistance does not just occur in cities. In camps and settlements, formal provision is often inadequate, even though basic needs are in theory provided, and so refugee-led initiatives emerge in these contexts too. In the Nakivale refugee settlement in Uganda, the Wakati Foundation, run by Congolese refugee Alex, employs refugees through small-scale public works projects, building latrines and sports facilities such as basketball courts. The Foundation negotiates contracts with aid organisations and wealthier refugees, enabling it to also undertake voluntary work helping refugees across the settlement to build houses or community structures like churches. Wakati thereby represents a source of employment, vocational training and community development.

These examples are far from isolated. Refugee-led assistance and protection can be found in every contemporary displacement crisis, from Myanmar to Venezuela. They emerge in both emergency and protracted crisis situations. They encompass activities as diverse as education, health, livelihoods, finance and housing. Shanti Mohila ('Peace Women') is a group led by Rohingya women like sixty-year-old activist Khalunisa in the Kutupalong-Balukhali camps of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. It provides counselling services to hundreds of victims of sexual and gender-based violence. The Union Venezolana en Peru, created by Venezuelan politician Óscar Pérez, provides integration and legal support to 100,000 Venezuelans. The Project for the Legal Support for Syrian Refugees and Palestinians (PLSSRP), established in Beirut by Syrian lawyer Brahim al Qassem, has offered legal aid to refugees since 2013.

Despite these accomplishments, however, refugee-led organisations (sometimes referred to as refugee community organisations, or RCOs) generally receive little international recognition or support. UN agencies privilege formal 'implementing partners' and 'operational partners', and these are usually international or national NGOs, not refugee-led organisations. Small-scale, refugee-led organisations are often unknown to international policymakers and can rarely meet the accounting, auditing, vetting or compliance requirements to make them eligible for humanitarian funding.

International organisations like UNHCR routinely promote refugee 'self-reliance': encouraging refugees to live autonomously. However, self-reliance is predominantly viewed in relation to economic agency rather than political or social agency. While refugees' entrepreneurship and business leadership are widely encouraged, community and political leadership are greeted with more ambivalence. Political mobilisation is sometimes restricted by host governments unless it takes place within carefully choreographed contexts like refugee camp elections. Community mobilisation, meanwhile, has never been seen as an integral part of self-reliance.

In its 2018 Uganda refugee programme budget, for example, UNHCR allocated just over 1 per cent of its $480 million country budget to 'community mobilisation', its umbrella category for working directly with refugee and host communities. However, even such community mobilisation activities rarely provide refugees with the freedom to address the needs they themselves identify or to pursue their own scope of work; these activities are more likely to focus on trainings to 'sensitise' refugees in matters such as healthcare and hygiene. Therefore, despite explicit funding and programmes to engage with refugees, refugees remain persistently neglected as actors capable of providing protection and assistance. This lack of engagement stems from the top-down structure of humanitarian assistance, which generally privileges large, established international and national organisations over grassroots ones. The enduring perception is that refugees are people in need of help rather

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than people capable of providing assistance to others. In many field contexts, there remains widespread ignorance among humanitarian professionals about the existence of RCOs.

At the global level, the rhetoric around refugee-led organisations is gradually changing. At international conferences and summits, there is increasing recognition of the need to support refugee-led initiatives. The World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 placed a strong emphasis on 'localisation', recognising crisis-affected people themselves as important first responders in crisis. The leaders of refugee-led organisations were occasionally included in panels during the 2017 consultations for the Global Refugee Compact. In June 2018, the Refugee Council of Australia convened a Global Summit of Refugees in Geneva, alongside UNHCR's Annual NGO Consultations. Its aim was to build a 'new international movement for refugee-led advocacy'.

Meanwhile, a range of other networks and events, including Oxfam's International Refugee Congress held in Istanbul, the Refugee-Led Organisations Network based in Kampala and the Refugee Voices Network in Berlin have emerged to promote a greater voice for refugees within the global refugee system. In December 2019, the Global Refugee-Led Network (GRN) played an active and visible role at UNHCR's inaugural Global Refugee Forum. A smattering of NGOs – from the St. Andrew Refugee Service (StARS) in Cairo to the Finnish Refugee Council (FRC) in Kampala – now provide capacity-building programmes for RCOs. These initiatives share the central message that local people, both refugees and host communities, deserve a voice in debates relating to their own assistance and a seat at the table of global governance. Their varied geographical provenance demonstrates that the agency of refugees is now recognised around the globe.

But to what extent is this changed rhetoric enacted in practice? At an operational level, and in different field locations, how does the reality vary from country to country, from camp to camp or from city to city? When are the national representatives of UN agencies and international NGOs encouraging refugee-led organisation and when are they not? How do refugee-led organisations interact with formal refugee governance? When do refugee-led organisations receive recognition and support? How do refugees strategically navigate institutional barriers to creating organisations? Under what conditions do particular kinds of refugee-led organisations flourish and grow?

In this book, we aim to understand the role of refugee-led organisations within global refugee governance. We do so by taking an in-depth and comparative look at four sites in two countries in East Africa: Kampala and Nakivale (in Uganda) and Nairobi and Kakuma (in Kenya). Rather than assuming refugees to be simply passive 'beneficiaries' of governance, we explore their role as neglected 'providers' of governance. Rather than simply examining how refugees are symbolically included at the Geneva or New York level, we delve into the operational practice across specific field locations in camp and urban contexts, exploring what it tells us about traditional conceptions of the provider–beneficiary relationship within global governance. Ultimately, we seek to interrogate whether, and to what extent, refugees are significant actors within global refugee governance.

We focus particularly on how refugees organise to provide social protection, defined as activities designed to reduce populations' poverty, vulnerability or risk. These are areas that are traditionally state-led, but which, in a refugee context, cannot be provided by the country of origin or of citizenship and so are commonly transferred to an 'international protection' provider. National and international actors usually provide an important part of social protection, through ensuring safety and access to basic services. However, much more neglected is the role that refugees sometimes play as providers of social protection, whether they are formally recognised or not.

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This topic matters for the refugee system. It offers an opportunity to render visible a neglected group of providers of protection and assistance. Understanding when and how refugee-led social protection takes place may offer an opportunity to unlock a neglected source of additional assistance. In some cases, allocating resources to refugee-led organisations may even be more efficient than funding international organisations as intermediaries. Generally, RCOs function at far lower cost than international NGOs, and if they had access to just some of the resources available to international actors, it seems plausible that their capacities might expand beyond their current scope. Furthermore, recognising refugee-led social protection could be argued to have inherent value as a means to support the autonomy and dignity of refugees as people capable of self-governance.

However, studying refugee-led social protection also has implications for global governance more broadly. The refugee system represents just one example of a policy field characterised by a provider–beneficiary relationship. Health, development and humanitarian governance are analogous contexts. In each of these areas, recipients of aid are usually cast as objects of governance rather than subjects involved in shaping global governance. Despite this, from global pandemics to hurricanes, we have seen that affected populations often mobilise not just to help themselves but to offer vital assistance to vulnerable members of the community. In this regard, the supposedly 'global governed' cannot be assumed simply to be passive takers of global governance; they may be makers of the very global public goods that a given international regime was created to provide. Rethinking the role and position of the global governed represents an opportunity to challenge presumed hierarchies and consider alternative possibilities for more participatory forms of governance.

Research Questions

We begin with a puzzle. At the global level, there has been growing acknowledgement by international organisations of the role played by refugee-led organisations. Beyond the rhetoric of Geneva and New York, however, practice varies markedly. In some cases, refugee-led organisations proliferate and flourish, albeit usually under the radar, and in others they struggle to become established. In some cases organisation is through RCOs and in others it is simply based on informal networks. Some places are hotbeds of community organisation and other places are not. Across particular urban and camp contexts, RCOs vary in number, institutional form (for example, whether they are organisations or networks) and the degree of funding and recognition that they receive. Based on this starting observation, our central research question is: *what explains variation in the scale and scope of refugee-led social protection?* Put simply, when and where do refugees become significant organisational providers of social protection?

A range of alternative possible explanations exist. Variation could conceivably derive from the different institutional contexts that enable or constrain community mobilisation (structural explanations). Are international organisations or national governments creating a conducive environment for RCOs to formally register, establish partnerships, receive funding or access transnational networks? Variation might also derive from the refugee communities themselves (agency-based explanations). What role does culture and nationality play? Are some communities more positively disposed to particular forms of organisational development? How important are individuals, including through their ideas, networks, capabilities, preferences and personalities?

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Our first step is to describe what is happening empirically. Part of our contribution is simply to offer an in-depth look at refugee-led social protection and its interaction with global governance. However, describing is also a precondition for explaining. We therefore build our analysis around three main sub-questions, applied to each of our research sites.

First, *what is the institutional context within which refugee-led organisations operate?* Here, we aim to understand the position of key international organisations, NGOs and national authorities towards refugee-led organisations. What rules exist to allow the delegation of social protection tasks to RCOs? How are organisational statuses such as 'implementing partner' or 'operational partner' conferred? Are any pots of money or other resources made available to RCOs? What attitudes do international and national humanitarian staff have towards RCOs?

Second, *what does the landscape of refugee-led organisations look like?* At the moment, international organisations do not systematically map out refugee-led organisations in camps or cities. How many RCOs or social protection networks exist? What activities do they undertake? How many people do they serve? What are their organisational histories? What areas of specialisation are selected and why? How do activities vary across ethnic and national communities? Which organisations have access to funding and from whom? To what extent are RCOs part of wider RCO networks or umbrella organisations? Which organisations are formally registered or have a partnership status?

Third, *what kinds of interactions take place between formal governance and refugee-led organisations?* Here, we examine the practices of interaction between these 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' levels of governance. How do power and hierarchy shape interaction and mutual recognition? To what extent do UN organisation or international and national NGO staff have knowledge and awareness of RCOs? How are everyday interactions between the leaders and staff of RCOs and international and national organisations structured? To what extent are some RCOs able have greater degrees of access to international actors?

Beyond description, we then aim to offer an explanation for variation in relation to these three main sets of sub-questions. Why are some institutional contexts more open or closed to refugee organisations? Why do refugee organisations, individually and collectively, emerge in the forms that they do? What shapes the quality of the interaction between 'informal' refugee-led initiatives and 'formal' international organisations? The goal of asking these questions is to begin to build a theory of the conditions under which refugee organisations emerge and flourish (or do not).

Refugees, Protection and Governance

Our focus is the role of refugee-led organisations in global governance. There is currently relatively little research that looks at RCOs; even less that looks at them as providers of social protection; and virtually none that situates them within global governance. Nevertheless, three sets of literatures offer starting points for the development of our theoretical, empirical and methodological focus, and we aim to make a contribution to each. The three bodies of existing literature broadly relate to the population (refugee studies), activity (social protection) and organisational context (global governance). Here we identify how each one represents a valuable point of departure but offers an incomplete account of the phenomenon we are interested in.

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Refugee Studies

Work on refugees' agency has long been a central theme within Refugee Studies. Barbara Harrell-Bond's (1986) seminal critique of the humanitarian system sought to highlight how, far from being passive humanitarian subjects, refugees have capabilities. The dominant camp-based humanitarian model, she argued, risked creating long-term dependency and exerting unnecessary degrees of control over the lives of displaced populations. Drawing upon ethnographic work with Ugandan refugees in Sudan, she showed the dehumanising effects of top-down aid delivery when it is detached from basic rights and freedoms. She advocated instead for approaches based on self-reliance capable of restoring refugees' autonomy.

Subsequent work on refugees' agency has been diverse, and primarily focused on individual agency in a social context. It has highlighted the ways in which refugees make choices, despite their constraints. And the work covers a variety of domains, from development projects (Chambers 1986) to migration decision-making (Richmond 1994; Van Hear 1998) to decisions to repatriate (Hammond 2004) to retaining homeland connections (Kibreab 1987; Horst 2008) to asserting their claims for rights (Grabska 2006), much of it analysed through ethnographic case studies.

A significant and growing strand of this work focuses on refugees' economic agency, demonstrating refugees' capacity to help themselves economically. Karen Jacobsen's (2005) pioneering work on the economic lives of refugees provided a qualitative account of the many and diverse ways in which refugees work, make a living, and engage in exchange across camps and cities, often despite significant regulatory constraints. This has spawned a growing literature examining the complexity of refugees' economic lives and drawing attention to their capacity to be economic contributors to host societies (Werker 2007; Maystadt & Werwimp 2009; Krause 2013; Ruiz & Vargas-Silva 2015; Betts et al. 2016; Carrier 2016).

Most of the work on refugees' agency has focused on the individual level. However, in some areas, research has also emerged examining the community level; in particular, there is research on refugee-led organisation. On the one hand, there is work looking at refugees' capacity for political self-governance. For example, focusing on Burmese refugees in Thailand, McConnachie (2012) shows how several of the refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese border are part of a model of self-governance, embracing forms of legal pluralism within which rules, norms and their enforcement are shaped and determined by the practices of the community, co-existing with the national legal framework. On the other hand, research has also focused on refugees' transnational political mobilisation (Horst 2008; Van Hear 2016; Mylonas 2017; Jacobsen 2019). In particular, there has been a focus on refugee diasporas' mobilisation relating to conflict (Lischer 2005; Lyons 2007; Salehyan 2009), authoritarian transition (Betts & Jones 2017) and peace-building (Bradley, Milner & Peruniak 2019; Horst 2019; Milner 2019; Purkey 2019), mainly relating to the country of origin.

Within a European and North American context, there has been a growing body of literature on refugee community organisations, including with the aim of providing assistance to other refugees (Gold 1992; Zetter, Sigona & Hauser 2002; Zetter, Griffiths & Segona 2005; Hopkins 2006; Phillimore 2012). Broadening from a more general literature on migrant organisations (e.g. Cordero-Guzman 2007), this work has examined a range of questions and variables, including how community organisations shape integration and

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social inclusion (Hopkins 2006; Phillimore & Goodson 2008; Phillimore 2012) and how external policy shifts – including by central government or local authorities – affect RCOs (Zetter & Pearl 2000; Griffiths, Sigona & Zetter 2006; Bloch 2008).

Most of the literature relating to RCOs, though, has been undertaken in the Global North, and particularly in the UK. Similar analyses in non-Western contexts have not been undertaken. Indeed, what has been almost entirely missing from the literature is research on how refugee communities engage in organisational mobilisation across the developing world. Refugee-to-refugee community support has been a theme of the emerging literature on 'South-South humanitarianism' (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2015). For example, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2015) highlights how, in the Baddawi refugee camp in northern Lebanon, long-present Palestinian refugees welcomed and assisted Syrian 'new refugees' in acclimatising to the camp and obtaining basic necessities.

Meanwhile, a related literature has emerged looking at forms of civilian 'self-protection', including by internally displaced populations (Baines & Paddon 2012; Kaplan 2013; Jose & Medie 2015). That literature focuses in particular on how individuals affected by armed conflict engage in strategies to avoid direct threats to their physical integrity. While these works draw attention to the role of displaced populations as actors in the provision of protection, they stop short of theorising the diverse ways that refugees themselves engage in community mobilisation for assistance and protection in the Global South.

Social Protection

'Social protection' commonly refers to programmes and policies aiming to reduce populations' poverty, vulnerability and risk; these were traditionally state-led initiatives. The term has recently become common in international development, as well as among international agencies working to alleviate poverty, whether in collaboration with or in the absence of states. Refugees are an increasing target population for social protection programmes, yet the definition of social protection seems to vary particularly for them as compared to national populations.

Social protection in development practice is often understood as the support provided to enable access to goods such as healthcare and education, with these sectors perceived as beyond the remit of social protection itself. Most development banks work with variations on the following definition from the Asian Development Bank: 'social protection is defined as the set of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labour markets, diminishing people's exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to protect themselves against hazards and interruption/loss of income' (Asian Development Bank). The World Bank states: 'Social protection systems help the poor and vulnerable cope with crises and shocks, find jobs, invest in the health and education of their children, and protect the aging population' (World Bank). The policy debate has emerged alongside a growing academic literature on social protection within Development Studies (Holzmann & Jorgensen 1999; Devereux 2002; Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Barrientos & Hulme 2009; Barrientos 2011).

Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004) have offered a series of critiques of the ways in which social protection has been invoked within development policy and practice, positing what they call a 'transformative' approach to social protection. First, they identify the need to expand the definition, arguing that the definition of risk should be expanded beyond

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economic shocks to include a full range of social risks, including the structural causes of poverty. Second, they highlight the need to recognise a role for non-state actors: the state is not the only provider of social protection, and informal, collective and community level sources are important. Third, they outline a series of levels of intervention: protective, promotive, preventive and transformative forms of social protection, describing existing mechanisms that fall into these categories as either 'safety nets' or 'springboards'. For our purposes, a key insight of Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004, p. 8) is about the role of informal providers of social protection. They write:

> In poor countries, due to a variety of constraints that restrict the range of social protection services offered by the welfare state, the concept of social protection must be widened to include both private and public mechanisms for social protection provisioning . . . An important role exists for non-formal systems of social protection, for instance, those based on kinship and traditional institutions of reciprocity and dependency.

Indeed, other authors within the social protection literature have also highlighted the key role of informal community mobilisation. Davis and Baulch (2009) examine 'everyday forms of collective action' in Bangladesh, showing that the support provided by NGOs is minimal when compared to local community leaders who coordinate a range of responses to social protection gaps. Some of these ideas have subsequently been applied to the context of migration. Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman (2011) explore the challenges that migrants face in accessing social protection, given their distinctive lack of citizenship-based rights. While the book focuses on social protection as the primary responsibility of the state, it recognises the role of social networks as relevant when these formal mechanisms fail.

Du Toit and Neves also look at the role of informal social protection among migrant networks in South Africa. They highlight the role that social capital plays in ensuring access to community-based systems of reciprocal support, suggesting that 'these networks are partly made up of – and provide the underpinnings for – deeply sedimented and culturally specific discourses and practices of reciprocal exchange' (du Toit & Neves 2009, p. 3). Crucially, they avoid romanticising these informal structures, highlighting instead the role that wealth, power and social status play in mediating exchanges and access to support.

So, while this literature draws our attention to the role of informal networks in addressing social protection gaps, including for migrants, it leaves some important questions unresolved. First, there remains limited focus on refugees. The work that does exist on informal refugee networks' role in social protection remains focused predominantly on Europe and the United States (Zetter et al. 2005; Williams 2006; Allen 2010). The major exception to this has been an examination of the role of remittances as a form of informal social insurance within Somali refugee communities (Horst 2006; Lindley 2009; Carrier 2016). Second, the social protection literature as a whole lacks an account of organisational emergence, whether in terms of individual organisations and networks or clusters of organisations and networks. Even Sabates-Wheeler and Feldman's work on migrant-led networks (Sabates-Wheeler & Feldman 2011) tends to assume that the networks are pre-existing rather than examining their emergence. Third, existing work tends not to account for interaction with the wider institutional context. How do 'formal' and 'informal' or 'top-down' and 'bottom-up', interact, for example, and how do these interactions vary contextually?

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Global Governance

One of the distinctively original contributions of this book is to situate refugee-led organisations within the theory and practice of global governance. Most of the work on social protection either examines informal social protection in isolation from its wider institutional and political context or is simply concerned with its relationship to the state's provision of social protection.

In contrast, our specific focus on refugee-led social protection in the Global South requires consideration of the relationship to international institutions. This is because while social protection relating to development generally involves exploring interactions between states and citizens, social protection relating to refugees generally involves a three-way interaction – between state, international organisations and refugees. Moreover, in low- and middle-income countries that host the majority of the world's refugees, the relationship between international organisations and refugees may sometimes be even more salient to refugees' social protection than that between the state and refugees. This is because, in the refugee context, their country of citizenship is no longer a viable provider of social protection; and international protection is provided by a combination of host state and international community. In many host countries, governments allocate the bulk of responsibility for social protection to UN agencies and their NGO partners. These features make refugee-led social protection in the Global South analytically distinctive.

The global governance literature offers a useful starting point for considering the interaction between international organisations and refugee-led organisations. This is in part because it includes a focus on the role of non-state actors within forms of global collection action. In contrast to a purely intergovernmental focus, global governance is generally defined as encompassing all processes and activities that lead to collective action in relation to transboundary issues. Moving beyond International Relations' traditional focus on explaining inter-state cooperation, it is an area that now includes a focus on actors as diverse as international and intergovernmental organisations, NGOs, advocacy networks, firms, mayors, municipal authorities, legal associations, faith-based organisations, rebel groups and resistance movements, all of whom are recognised as shaping the rules and organisational responses to complex global issues.

However, within this context, refugees have rarely been recognised as actors within global governance. Work on International Relations and refugees has generally conceived of refugees as the 'problem' to be addressed through intergovernmental action. And yet, we know that refugees do mobilise to influence agenda-setting, negotiation, implementation, monitoring and enforcement of global rules and policies relating to refugees. They are actors in their own right within global governance. While some work has been undertaken examining how refugees mobilise to engage politically with international organisations (Betts & Jones 2017), there has been a lack of research on refugees' role in the direct provision of protection and solutions – the very same global public goods that the refugee regime ostensibly exists to provide.

Two areas of global governance literature are especially relevant. First, work on delegation examines how authority is sometimes devolved from governments, to international organisation, and sometimes downwards to NGOs (Abbott et al. 2015). Using Principal-Agent theory, (Hawkins et al. 2006) examine how international organisations are given a mandate to fulfil specific tasks by governments. However, such organisations sometimes acquire a degree of autonomy in how they implement their mandates because

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of 'agency slack', or the inability of a Principal to oversee all aspects of the organisation's work. Barnett and Finnemore (2004) use this framework to examine what they call 'organisational pathology' within UNHCR (i.e. why the organisation's preferences and behaviour sometimes do not align with those of its main donor states). While Principal-Agent theory is a parsimonious starting point for looking at relationships of delegation, it is too functional, linear and apolitical to capture the dynamics of delegation across levels of governance.

Tana Johnson's (2014, 2018) work builds upon and addresses some of these limitations. She focuses on the politics that take place at particular stages of delegation. Her early work focuses, for example, on how international organisations insulate themselves from state influence in order to preserve autonomy. Her subsequent work focuses on the next level down – how NGOs position themselves vis-à-vis states and international organisations to have greater influence and authority. Her contribution is important because it shows that delegation of authority, at all levels, is highly political, involving competing interests, power, hierarchy and contestation.

Work on delegation usually stops at the level of international organisations and international NGOs and remains centred on New York- or Geneva-level politics. There is, however, a rich empirical opportunity to go further downstream and consider how power and interests mediate interactions between international organisations, international NGOs, national NGOs and community-level organisations such as RCOs. Within the refugee and humanitarian contexts, for example, the practice of designating 'implementing partners' and 'operational partners' is inherently political and yet unexplored within work on delegation. Indeed, given that in these regimes over 90 per cent of staff numbers and resources are allocated at this level, this is far from a trivial dimension of international organisation.

Second, while global governance research tends to focus empirically on New York, Geneva and the headquarters level of international organisations, this is gradually changing. On a theoretical level, Amitav Acharya (2004)'s work on 'localisation' has had an important impact on the study of international institutions. He highlighted that the way in which particular international institutions operate in practice varies across regions, countries and local contexts, adapting to the particular norms, interests and power structures already present. Furthermore, as Betts and Orchard (2014) show, the implementation of global norms and standards is mediated through national and local politics, meaning that the same global structures can lead to different observed outcomes at an operational level. While these approaches offer a means of examining institutional practice at the local level, they are in some ways linear, top-down reflections, and risk sidelining a local agency, or feedback loops whereby that local agency shapes the behaviour and decision-making of international actors.

On an empirical level, there has been, in Vrasti (2008)'s words, an emerging 'ethnographic turn' within International Relations, with some authors drawing upon concepts and methods within Anthropology to explore local level political practice. In certain policy fields, notably peacekeeping, there has been a move towards using ethnography to examine international institutions' encounters with local actors and processes. Work on peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo provides a particularly nuanced role for interactions between the staff of international organisations and local actors, including the populations that interventions are intended to serve (Autesserre 2010, 2016; Baines & Paddon 2012; Campbell 2018; Von Billerbeck 2017). Within the refugee context, there has

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