Lesson Plan: Refugees

Established Goals:
This lesson presents an overview of where, why, how and in what conditions persons become refugees and internally displaced peoples (IDPs). The activity defines the terms for both groups and examines what conditions persons leave their homes and countries. Students will learn that refugees and internally displaced children face serious problems. Not only do they lose their homes and everything that is familiar to them, but sometimes they become separated from their parents. This lesson examines the fragility of refugees and internally displaced peoples and what international documents protect their human rights.

National Council for Social Studies Standards:

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Understandings:

Persons become refugees and internally displaced people's everyday around the world.

Complex situations lead to violence and conflict, which in turn causes refugees and internally displaced people to flee their homes and countries of origin.

Refugees and internally displaced peoples exist on all populated continents.

People's basic needs are considered rights that should be granted to everyone.

Essential Questions:

Define refugee and internally displaced people and describe what circumstances cause persons to flee their homes.

Identify how international documents like the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees protect refugees and internally displaced peoples.

Explain the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance the awareness of refugees and internally displaced peoples.

Identify the difference between refugees and internally displaced peoples.

Interpret factors that contribute to persons becoming refugees and internally displaced peoples.

Develop skills necessary to respect basic human rights.

Understand the abnormal conditions refugees and internally displaced persons face.

List the many dangers that refugees and internally displaced persons face.

Students will know:

Human rights vocabulary.

What is being done about this global problem?

International documents and the issues they address

The names of international organizations and non-governmental organizations that are working to help refugees and internally displaced persons

How to get involved

Students will be able to:

Respect others through exposure to another way of life different from their own.

Empathize with the plight of refugees and internally displaced children.

Differentiate between things that they want and things that they need.

Imagine what it is like to be a refugee or internally displaced person.
Equipment and Materials:
Computer with access to the internet.


Magazines, Poster Board, Glue and Scissors

Handout #1 Convention on the Rights of the Child

Note: To open handouts or save them to your PC, click on the link. Or right click on links and select “Save Target As” option.

Learning Activities

Activity 1:

1. The teacher hands out magazines and asks students to go through the pages and cut out things they think they need to live. Give student enough time to cut out ten different items each, or however many you think is adequate. Clean up magazines and scissors, but keep the piles of cutouts on the desk.

Ask the students to separate their cutouts into two different piles. One pile for NEEDS and another pile for WANTS. Based on the grade levels, the teacher might want to make two different color pieces of poster board, one labeled NEEDS and one labeled WANTS to help students divide the cutouts easier.

NOTE: Closely monitor the students to ensure that the NEEDS pile doesn’t have five pictures of food or five pictures of bottled water, etc. If necessary ask students to only choose one picture for food and one picture for water.

The teacher facilitates a group discussion by asking the following questions:
How did you determine what items should go into the NEEDS pile and what should go into the WANTS pile?
Is it easy to tell the difference between a WANT and a NEED?
How would removing these items from the NEEDS pile to the WANTS pile affect your life?
Now that you have had time to think about what the difference between your NEEDS and WANTS are there NEEDS that might be missing from your pile?
Are there people around the world or in your community who might not get their NEEDS met?

The teacher should record the answers to the below questions, summarizing answers if necessary. The students’ answers should be saved and displayed somewhere in the room to help remind them of this particular discussion. The teacher should ask the following questions:
-What is a NEED?
-What is a WANT?

NOTE: If the students don’t discover on their own that food, housing, medical services and education are all basic NEEDS than the facilitator should pose inquiries in order to help them realize the importance of the latter items.

2. Tell students to imagine that rebel troops have just attacked their town and are approaching the street where they live. They have to leave their homes immediately but can only take three things from their NEEDS pile. Tell the students that the roads are congested with other people
fleeing the violence, so cars and large carts cannot be used to transport items. Everyone will be walking so they should consider carrying light items. But they NEED enough supplies to live at their new temporary homes.

The teacher may also wish to create a natural disaster scenario where students have to make the same decisions.

Ask students to share what items they selected from the NEEDS pile. Correlate a list of items the students chose to bring on the board. The teacher facilitates a group discussion by asking the following questions:
Why did you choose these specific items?
Which items were most commonly eliminated from the NEEDS pile?
What were the most common items students chose to bring with them on their journey?
Do NEEDS differ for different people?
Were all of their NEEDS met?
Can you define a NEED more clearly now?

Explain that millions of refugees and internally displaced people have to make such choices when fleeing their homes. Unfortunately, refugees and internally displaced people are unable to plan their migration routes leaving them ill-equipped to face the incredibly difficult situation that lies ahead of them. Sometimes children leave their homes only with nothing but their dreams and aspirations for the future.

Activity 2:

1. Hand out copies of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 1989, world leaders decided that children under 18 years of age often need special care that adults do not. The Convention is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate a full range of human rights such as civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights for children.

The Convention is an international document negotiated by Member States at the United Nations. Every Member State of the United Nations has ratified (or adopted) the treaty except the United States and Somalia, who have only signed it.

The Convention offers a vision of the child as an individual and as a member of a family and community, with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development. By recognizing children's rights in this way, the Convention firmly sets the focus on the whole child.

Madeline Albright, the United States ambassador to the United Nations, signed the Convention in 1995. However, the United States Constitution requires that such documents receive a two-thirds approval by the Senate to be adopted. There are some articles in the Convention that the US Senate has yet to come to an agreement on.

Ask Students:
What is the difference between ratifying and signing a treaty?
Why do you think the United States has not adopted the Convention?

Answers can include:
a. Signing does not create a binding legal obligation but does demonstrate the State's intent to examine the treaty domestically and consider ratifying it. Ratification signifies an agreement by the state to be legally bound by the terms of the treaty.

b. Some US legislators feel that the provisions or certain articles of the Convention could interfere with the role of parents in their children's lives.
The Convention is the most widely supported international treaty because nations, organizations and individuals realize that the future of humanity is in the hands of our children.

2. Define the following terms:
Refugees are persons who have fled their homes and cannot return because they fear their life is in danger. People become refugees when one or more of their basic human rights are violated or threatened. The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees states that, “a refugee is a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.’

Many who are forced to leave their homes end up in refugee camps. Refugee camps often lack water, electricity, sanitation and health care. They are usually over crowded and unhygienic. Dhesheh refugee camp is one of the 59 Palestinian refugee camps built in 1948 where more than 11,000 Palestinian people live; 6,000 of the refugees are children. There are no playgrounds and there is one doctor for the camp who sees 272 people a day. In 3 hour shifts children go to one of the two schools in the camp.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Internally Displaced Peoples: There is not a universal definition for an internally displaced person (IDP) as there is for a refugee. IDPs remain in their country of origin, unlike a refugee who crosses a national border to seek safety. IDPs are forced to leave their home due to natural disasters and/or man-made disasters, but have not crossed international territories. IDPs may be trapped in an ongoing internal conflict without a safe place to stay. IDPs remain under the provision of the government of the country in which they reside as there are no specific international instruments pertaining to the protection of the internally displaced.

Share these facts with your students:
- There are approximately 10.6 million refugees in the world today.
- There are approximately 25.8 million internally displaced people worldwide (600,000 were displaced after Hurricane Katrina, 2005).
- 80% of the internally displaced people are women and children.
- 44% of refugees and internally displaced people are under the age of 18.
- 6% of refugees and internally displaced people are 60 years of age or older.

- Most refugees live in Asia and Africa:
  - Iran (1,355,000)
  - Pakistan (1,219,000)
  - The Gaza Strip (923,000)
  - The West Bank (665,000)
  - Syria (497,000)
  - Tanzania (480,000)
  - Thailand (405,000)

- Of all western countries, the United States accepted the highest number of refugees in 2004, approximately 244,200.
- In 2004 3 million people, 8,000 people per day, left their homes to seek safety in another country.


3. Article #9 states “States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will...” Ask students to identify and highlight which Articles of the Convention
protect refugees and internally displaced people.

**Answers are:** 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 37 and 38

Ask students to rephrase the Articles 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 37 and 38 for an in class discussion.

**Note to teacher:** Students should hold onto their copies of the Convention for further use during other “What's Going On?” lesson plans. It is recommended that you have students use the following initials next to each article that is violated for each topic they learn about from the “What's Going On?” series. (Child Soldiers (CS), HIV/AIDS (AIDS), Refugees (RF), Child Labor (CL), Landmines (LM), Girl's Education (GED), Indigenous People (IP), Northern Ireland (NI), Poverty in America (PA), Street Children (SC).

4. There are other documents that are also designed to protect such people such as the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The Convention is an international document that outlines the definition of a refugee, describes their rights as a refugee and the responsibilities of nations to refugees. Denmark became the first country to ratify the Convention; since then 140 states have acceded the Convention.

5. Ask students the following questions in a group discussion:
   - Are other countries responsible for taking in refugees?
   - Why would a country not want the burden of refugees?
   - What if refugees were forced back to the country they fled? What human rights would be violated?

**Activity 3:**

1. Children and women face serious problems when they become refugees or internally displaced persons. The traditional family structure of many refugees and internally displaced people is changed during or after they flee their homes. Husbands, fathers, brothers and sons who typically help care and protect the family frequently become absent as they are sent to fight in wars or seek job opportunities elsewhere. Ask the students to list some of the problems they think children and women might encounter without the protection of their homes and support of their male family members. What could happen to children when they are separated from their parents? What might happen to children if they don’t have all of the things they NEED to live because they had to leave their homes fast?

**Answers might include:**
   - Children might be forced to become a child soldier (see ‘What’s Going On?’ Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone)
   - Children might be forced into child labour (see ‘What’s Going On?’ Child Labour in Brazil)
   - Their lives are threatened as they cross violent borders
   - Risk getting sick from the unhygienic camps (HIV/AIDS, Cholera, Malaria)
   - Women and children might be separated from family, friends and community members
   - There might not be any schools for children to go to
   - They might lack food to maintain a healthy diet
   - They might feel unwelcomed in their new territories
   - Loneliness settles in when they are in unfamiliar territory amongst unfamiliar faces

Refugees and internally displaced people often see horrible suffering as they flee their homes and are exposed to many dangerous situations. The United Nations Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) works to protect refugees and internally displaced people from some of these life threatening scenarios.

2. Screen the documentary ‘What’s Going On?’ film, Refugees in Tanzania. In the heart of Africa,
Angelina Jolie works with children victimized by long years of civil strife. She introduces the Fataki children - Tutsis who live in a sprawling refugee camp in Tanzania.

3. Ask students to site examples of how the Fataki’s lives have changed. Ask the students to respond emotionally to the experience of the young people in the film.

4. Ask students to imagine what it might be like to live as a refugee or internally displaced person. What would their challenges and fears be?

**Activity 4:**

1. Ask Students who they think is responsible for helping refugees and internally displaced people.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established by the United Nations General Assembly on December 14, 1950. The agency is responsible for coordinating international action to protect refugees. UNHCR safeguards the rights and well-being of refugees all around the world.

The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees remains the cornerstone of refugee protection, but since then, UNHCR has launched a series of initiatives both to strengthen the treaty and find more permanent and safe solutions for the world’s refugees and internally displaced people.

UNHCR provides financial grants, food, tools, shelter, schools and clinics to help people get back on their feet. UNHCR also provides protection for refugees and internally displaced persons as they are often vulnerable to violence and rape.

In the past 50 years UNHCR has helped an estimate of 50 million people rebuild their lives. Currently the UNHCR has a staff of 6,540 people working in 116 countries aiding 19.2 million persons worldwide.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: www.unhcr.org

Young people around the world are also demonstrating their commitment to help refugees and internally displaced people. See what one class of sixth graders in Kansas has to say about refugees: link

1. Write a response to the lessons focus questions: What is the extent of the problem of refugees and internally displace people in the world today?

Answers should include: geographic distribution, number of refugees and internally displaced persons, hazards refugees and internally displaced people face, what the international community is doing to help and protect these people.

Submit your response

2. Research and report on UNHCR and NGO’s that are working to aid refugees and internally displaced people. Below are links and resources to help students investigate.

3. Have students write diary entries as if they were a refugee or internally displaced person.
Students should write about the reason they fled their home (non-fictional or fictional), what it was like to leave their community, what the journey has been like, what it is like to live in a refugee camp and what their concerns are for their future.

4. Have students respond in an emotional essay or journal entry to the following quote:

“We walked for days, for months, thousands of miles. We slept on the ground and often had to eat leaves to survive. People shot at us. Many boys were killed. What happened to my parents? I don’t know. But now we are here, to a new life. And I have seen snow for the first time.”

Quoted from one of the “Lost Boys of Sudan,” who resettled in the United States.

5. The class should form teams of 2-5 students. Each team should develop a ‘game plan’ for how they are going to help refugees and internally displaced people. Students should come up with the following:
   o Develop a group name and logo.
   o The group’s mandate and mission statement.
   o Long and short term goals for the group.
   o Find other organizations to collaborate with.

Come up with a PR campaign to inform the school and public about their mission and the issue.

See other student’s campaigns

Get Involved

United Nations Commissioner for Refugees
www.unhcr.org

USA for UNHCR includes a large number of educational resources that can be used for lesson plans.
http://www.usaforunhcr.org/educationalresources.cfm

World Refugee Day
http://www.un.org/dep/ts/dhi/refugee/

One
www.one.org

Human Rights Watch reports on refugees around the world and find out how to get involved on a local level.
http://hrw.org/

Amnesty International provides information on the human rights abuses refugees and internally displaced people find.
http://www.amnestyusa.org

International Crisis Group works to prevent crisis worldwide.
http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=2700&i=1

http://www.intrescom.org/

US Committee on Refugees and Immigrants protecting refugees, serving immigrants upholding freedom since 1911
http://www.refugees.org/

Refugees International a powerful voice for lifesaving action http://www.refugeesinternational.org/
InterAction is the largest alliance of U.S. based international development and humanitarian nongovernmental organization. 
http://www.interaction.org/

Respect Refugees is a refugee education sponsorship program http://www.respectrefugees.org/

Student Acting for Refugees STAR is setting up a group here for those students who are interested in promoting awareness of refugee issues, supporting refugees through community volunteer work and campaigning for refugee rights.
http://www.aucegypt.edu/academic/fmrs/Students_News/students_news.html

Learn More

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)
http://www.un.org/unrwa/

ReliefWeb is a project of the United Nations High Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). It contains information on emergency relief, including “complex emergencies” in Angola, Congo, Sierra Leone and Sudan.
http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc100?openForm

Beyond the Fire includes various text and audio stories of teenage refugees
http://www.itvs.org/beyondthefire/master.html

International Organization for Migration
http://www.iom.int/jahia/jsp/index.jsp

The International Rescue Committee is a non-profit, voluntary organization providing ongoing relief, protection, and resettlement services for refugees, women, and children.
http://www.theirc.org

The International Center in New York provides information and assistance to foreign visitors, the International Center has evolved into a dynamic center where immigrants, refugees, international students, and other newcomers to the United States.
http://www.intcenter.org

Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law is the center for human rights and constitutional law in Los Angeles. It is a non-profit organization that focuses its work on the civil and human rights of insular minorities including immigrants, refugees, children, and indigenous peoples.
http://www.centerforhumanrights.org

European Council for Refugees and Exiles is an umbrella organization of 80 refugee-assisting agencies in 30 countries working towards fair and humane policies for the treatment of asylum seekers and refugees
http://www.ecre.org/

El Centro Hispanoamericano purpose is to promote the rights and help meet the needs of immigrants
and refugees through affordable legal services, advocacy, social services, and community education.

http://www.elcentronj.org

Refugee Youth Project seeks to improve the lives of Baltimore’s youngest refugees by supporting their academic needs, and making their acculturation simple and meaningful. The Refugee Youth Project is an after-school program run by Baltimore City.

http://www.refugeeyouthproject.org

Refugees United to reunite families torn apart. Refugees United Org. has created a family link for refugees by providing a unique and intelligent search engine to find lost relatives.

http://refunite.org

Capacity Building Initiative: Immigrant and Refugee Organizations is an immigrant and refugee organization that exists to build the organizational effectiveness and resource base of area immigrant and refugees.

http://www.uwcentralohio.org/cbi

The Refugee Council is the largest organization in the UK working with asylum seekers and refugees. They give help and support, but also work with asylum seekers and refugees to ensure their needs and concerns are addressed.

http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Organisation for Eelam Refugees Rehabilitation (OfERR) was founded in 1984 with the main objective of assisting and rendering relief to Tamil refugees from Ceylon who had taken refuge in India.

http://www.oferr.org

Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) is the leading refugee organization in Oregon and Southwest Washington that invests in refugees and immigrants and enables them to become self-sufficient.

http://www.irco.org

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR) is a national organization composed of local coalitions of immigrant, refugee, community, religious, civil rights and labor organizations and activists.

http://www.nnirr.org

Community Outreach & Advocacy for Refugees is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to support locally resettled refugees in their efforts to rebuild positive, self-sufficient lives.

http://www.coarweb.org

Vive: An Organization for World Refugees is a non-profit organization that serves individuals and families seeking asylum in the United States or refugee status in Canada.

http://www.vivelacasa.org

Refugee Transitions helps refugees and immigrant women and their families become self-sufficient in their new environment primarily through a program of volunteers who teach English and practical life
skills.

http://www.autobahn.org/~reftrans/index.html

Refugee Resource Project Art Program is a collaborative effort between people detained by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) at Berks County Prison (BCP) and local volunteer artists.

http://www.rrpart.org

Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children works to ensure that refugees and displaced women, children and adolescents are given protection, encouraged to participate, and have access to education, health services and livelihood opportunities.

http://www.womenscommission.org

American Refugee Committee (ARC) is an international, nonsectarian, nonprofit, humanitarian relief organization that provides humanitarian aid to refugees and other displaced people.

http://www.archq.org

Refugee Women’s Alliance (ReWA) is a non-profit, multi-ethnic organization that provides responsive, culturally appropriate education, advocacy, and support services for refugee and immigrant women.

http://www.rewa.org

Sanctuary Refugee Foundation helps hundreds of refugees from many countries (mostly women and children) suffering in camps.

http://www.sanctuaryrefugeefoundation.org

US Committee for Refugees USCR defends the rights of all uprooted people regardless of their nationality, race, religion, ideology, or social group.

http://www.refugees.org

World Administration of Refugee Humanitarian Aid is an international non-profit, relief and development organization started in 1990 to help children orphaned by war, widows, the poor and the starving.

Immigration and Refugee Services of America IRSA acts to defend human rights, build communities, foster education, promote self-sufficiency, and forge partnerships through an array of programs.

http://www.refugeesusa.org

Rally for the Return of Refugees and Democracy in Rwanda (RDR) struggles for a Rwandese society managed without any kind of exclusion, based on freedom, justice, peace and respecting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

http://www.rdrwanda.org

Darfur Genocide talks about ways to stop the genocide in Darfur
http://www.dartugenocide.org/

Doctors without Borders provides medical help for refugees and internally displaced people.
http://www.msf.org/

Save Darfur

http://www.savedarfur.org/

Foreign Policy Studies examines the guiding principals on displacement

http://www.brookings.edu/fp/projects/idp/idp.htm

Women’s Commission for Refugees Women and Children contains many resources and quotes from teenage refugees.

http://www.womenscommission.org/

Books

Refugees Magazine.

http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/doclist?page=publ&id=3b5696144

Human Cargo: A Journey Among Refugees by Caroline Moorehead

Refugees by Catherine Stine

The Middle of Everywhere: Helping Refugees Enter the American Community by Mary Pipher

Refugees: Perspectives on the Experience of Forced Migration by Alastair Ager

Forced Migration and Mental Health: Rethinking the Care of Refugees and Displaced Persons (International and Cultural Psychology) by David Ingleby

The End of the Refugee Cycle?: Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction (Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, Vol 4) by Richard Black and Khalid Koser

Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World by Aristide R. Zolberg, Asth Suhrke, and Sergio Aguayo

Documents, Reports

Global Report 2005: was published June 2006. UNHCR’s annual review of the achievements and impact of its programmes worldwide during the previous year.


UNHCR Global Appeal 2005:


Refugee Protection in International Law: This new UNHCR publication brings together in one volume papers on key issues in the interpretation of the 1951 Convention, which were discussed in the second track of the Global Consultations.

Refugees by numbers 2005 Edition: is a statistical summary of refugees and who helps them.
The State of The World’s Refugees: is UNHCR’s special 50th anniversary edition, providing detailed, in-depth analysis of the plight of the world’s millions of displaced people.

http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/publ?id=3f098b4d4

Learning for a future: refugee education in developing countries


NGO Partnerships in Refugee Protection:

http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/partners?id=3bb0773ec

Report on UNHCR’s Relations with Non-Governmental Organizations (PARinAC), 15 August 1997:

http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/excom/opendoc.htm?tbl=EXCOM&id=3ae68d0c10

Review of UNHCR Implementing Arrangements and Implementing Partner Selection Procedures:

http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/research/opendoc.htm?tbl=RESEARCH&id=3ae6bd42c

Films

'The Lost Boys of Sudan’ www.lostboysfilm.com
'Neither Here Nor There'
'Waiting for Adnan'
'Remembering Srebrenica'
'Distance Light'
'Last Shelter'
'Winter Heat'
'England!'
'Gate to Paradise'
'Handful of Grass'

'Children of Tibet’ A remarkable story seen through the eyes of three children who risk their lives escaping Tibet across the Himalayas in search of a new life in India. A moving story of bravery and determination.

'Dying to Leave’ and ‘Human Cargo’ examines the dramatic increase in illegal smuggling of people, usually involving the voluntary passage of those in search of better economic or social conditions.

'I Remember 1948’ Palestinian elders share memories of the year they became refugee.

'In This World’ In a year when the Australian public have engaged in a very public debate regarding asylum seekers, prolific and versatile director, Michael Winterbottom returns with one of the most touching, insightful and socially relevant films of the year.

'Molly and Moborak’ Australians share their community with 90 Afghan refugees working at the local abattoir. Against a backdrop of occasional ignorance and hostility, these everyday Australians still believe in ‘the lucky country’: people like Tony Hewson who recruits the refugees, Anne Bell who organizes English classes and social activities, and Lyn Rule who offers them hospitality in her own home.

Radio Addresses
New U.N. Official Seeking to Help Refugees June 15, 2005 · Antonio Guterres, the new U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, talks about some of the challenges facing the United Nations, and his priorities as head of the refugee agency. Guterres is a former prime minister of Portugal.


Civil War in the Congo May 29, 2003 · In the Democratic Republic of Congo, brutal violence continues to take lives, and the outcry grows louder for some kind of international intervention. Join host Neal Conan and guests for a discussion about civil war in the Congo.


Angola - Child Refugees May 27, 2002 · Liane Hansen talks with Olara Otunnu, Special Representative to the United Nations Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict. Otunnu has returned from Angola, where he observed the situation confronting tens of thousands of child refugees of that country’s civil war.


Afghan Refugees October 20, 2001 · NPR’s John Burnett is in Peshawar, Pakistan where he’s been talking to refugees who have left Afghanistan.


United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees asked to Expand Mandate March 6, 2000 · Reese Erlich reports from Geneva that a controversial proposal by UN Ambassador Richard Holbrooke has been met with sharp opposition by international relief agencies. Holbrooke suggested that the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees expand its mandate to cover people fleeing military conflict within their own countries, not just those crossing international borders.


Albanian Refugees April 13, 1999 · NPR’s Jennifer Glasse reports from Brazda, Macedonia, on the refugee situation. International monitors say another three thousand refugees from Kosovo crossed into Albania today -- the largest influx in three days. There are still hundreds of thousands of displaced persons remaining in Kosovo -- reportedly trapped there by Serb forces for use as human shields against the NATO air assault.


Turkey Sets Iraqi Refugee Plan November 25, 2002 · Hoping to avoid a repeat of the refugee exodus following the 1991 Gulf War, Turkey plans to establish refugee camps in northern Iraq in case of a U.S. invasion of Iraq. The strategy is being criticized from both sides of the border. NPR’s Ivan Watson reports.


Kosovo Refugee Crisis. April 2, 1999 · NPR’s Tom Gjelten reports that the countries bordering Kosovo suggest that Serbian authorities there may be intent on expelling the entire ethnic Albanian population of that province. Relief agencies are bracing for an immense refugee crisis in the region. Here in Washington, the Clinton administration faces criticism that it did not properly anticipate the situation it now faces.