Temporary Shelter and Relocation Initiatives

Perspectives of Managers
and Participants

Maik Müller (ed.)

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Content

Foreword

Global protection programmes and shrinking spaces in many societies seem to be inevitably interdependent as the declining of pre-political spaces appear to be increasing and people who are active in civil society may suffer from restrictions and threats. To preserve and strengthen these pre-political spaces the Martin Roth-Initiative was founded as a joint project by ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen) and the Goethe-Institut.

In close collaboration with a network of national and international (cultural) institutions, the Martin Roth-Initiative promotes and supports endangered art and cultural workers as well as other civil society actors. It protects artists and cultural workers who are committed to freedom of the arts, democracy and human rights in their home country, by enabling them temporary residence and scholarships in Germany or third countries.

Though there is an active range of protection programmes worldwide and while an increasing number of shelter initiatives are available, not a lot of research exists on the various aspects of protection programmes. Therefore, the Martin Roth-Initiative also comprises such research on and networking with the protection programmes, to contribute insights and examples of good practice.

The present study sheds some light on protection programmes, contributes to formulating the challenges that these initiatives are faced with and seeks solutions. The authors of the studies present both the point of view of the managers of such programmes and show the perspective of the beneficiaries, based on interviews with coordinators and participants. What do shelter and relocation programmes add towards enhancing civil-society initiatives and critical cultural scenes? How can the effectiveness of these programmes be measured and possibly improved? Which accompanying measures are particularly effective to enable a meaningful stay and a safe return?

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Abstract

A vibrant and functioning civil society needs spaces to express itself in a variety of ways and opportunities to unfold. However, shrinking civic spaces are more and more to be traced not only in the global South, but everywhere, i.e. also in the global North. Many groups are affected, such as human rights activists and artists, and the declining of pre-political spaces takes many forms. Threats, intimidation, deprivation of the opportunity to practice one's profession and thus no way to earn a living are some of them. These restrictions come not only from the state, but can also come from the civilian side, i.e. by non-state actors. To assist these activists more and more protection programmes have been developed in recent years. These protection programmes have been available since the 1920s, mostly for endangered scientists. Though, especially since international programmes have addressed this special question (such as the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1998) more protection programmes have been launched. The present study written by experienced authors and submitted by the Martin Roth-Initiative examines the protection programmes from different angles in order to contribute to increasing the effectiveness and best practice. The authors of the study present the point of view of the programme managers and from the perspective of the beneficiaries, based on interviews with managers and participants.

I. Introduction *by Martin Jones, Alice Nah and Patricia Bartley*

In recent years, there has been a significant growth in the practice of relocating human rights defenders (HRDs) and others seeking to enjoy their fundamental rights who are at risk. While initially conceived of as a form of refugee protection, these "temporary international relocation initiatives" (TIRIs) now offer a wide range of types of protection to various groups of individuals at risk. But beyond the immediate safety that temporary relocation can provide to individuals at risk, it can also serve as an expression of international solidarity and has implications for both the communities from which individuals are relocated as well as the new host communities in which they find safety.

1. Context of temporary relocation

This project seeks to interrogate the emerging community of practice with a view to identifying good practices, opportunities for expansion and strengthening of temporary relocation and challenges facing civil society organisations supporting temporary relocation. Three important phenomena provide important context to the understanding and analysis of temporary relocation: (i) the shrinking of civil space, (ii) the development of international protection regimes, and (iii) the expression of international solidarity and pursuit of transnational activism within the human rights movement. These three phenomena help explain the growth of interest in temporary relocation and provide background for some of the core tensions within relocation including tension between protection and return and those in relocation and their sending and host communities.

Firstly, the phenomenon of shrinking civic space (also known as "shrinking space for civil society") has been identified as a significant issue facing practitioners in the policy and practice literature for more than a decade (Cernov 2017). The United Nations has gone so far as describing shrinking civic space as an "existential threat" to democracy and human rights (Kiai 2013). While some critics of the discourse of shrinking space have rightly pointed out that it is not a new phenomenon, the increasing frequency and range of mistreatment of actors within the civic space have raised global concern about its consequences for the enjoyment of human rights (Transnational Institute 2017). Shrinking civil space affects not only archetypal human rights activists but also other actors and professions which might not self-identify as pursuing human rights work, including creative professionals. UNESCO has expressed concern about attacks against journalists[1] and

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[1] UNESCO maintains an observatory on journalists killed in the exercise of their profession. Resolution 29 ("Condemnation of violence against journalists"), adopted at its General Conference (29th Session) in Paris in November 1997, marked the start of its formal attention. More recently, the 26th session of the

artists.[2] Largely in response to the threats posed to human rights defenders and others, a "multi-level protection regime" (Bennett et al. 2016) has developed (within the broader human rights regime described below), providing a wide range of tactics for protection to those at risk. Security protocols at the organisational level, national institutions and networks for the protection of defenders at risk, and regional and international processes reviewing and pressing for improvement of the situation of human rights defenders are all elements of this emerging regime of protection practices. TIRIs are one protection practice and have been identified by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders as a good practice in protection (United Nations 2016: 72ff). He notes that

> "[s]tructured relocation initiatives that allow defenders to continue their work while away, help them to forge links with host communities, provide support for their families and allow for flexibility in their duration of stay help defenders to manage the uncertainty, isolation and challenges of relocating elsewhere." (United Nations 2016: 73)

The Special Rapporteur also called on states to create and support TIRIs and to recognise that asylum might be the only path to more permanent protection.

Secondly, the emergence of TIRIs occurs alongside the elaboration of a number of international protection regimes, including the regimes for responding to human rights violations more generally and protecting refugees. The noted emerging protection regime for human rights defenders is one of a number of protection regimes that have emerged over the last decades in an effort to provide a framework for an international response to human rights violations. The international refugee regime and international human rights regimes are two prominent examples of the elaboration of norms and institutions to address particular types of human rights issues. In the past half century, these regimes have developed institutions (including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) and norm building and

Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for Development and Communication (IPDC) in March 2008 charged the Director-General with providing an analytical report on the basis of responses received from member states concerned, including updated information on the Director-General's condemnations of the killing of journalists since 2006. These reports are produced every two years.

[2] UNESCO's 1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist and its 2005 Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions provide an institutional foundation for the protection of artists at risk. Its 2015 annual report noted that while 237 attacks on artistic expression had been documented in 2014 "threats to artistic freedom are under-reported in comparison to threats to journalists and other media professionals. This leads to a limited picture of the true scale of the challenge to creative free expression, in particular the physical threat to socially engaged artists and practitioners" (UNESCO 2015: 189). The organisation is developing programming and further legal instruments to further support artists at risk, in collaboration with artists' advocacy organisations such as Freemuse.

enforcing processes (including the Universal Periodic Review process of the Human Rights Council and the deliberations and adoption of the Conclusions on International Protection of the Executive Committee of the UNHCR). The institutions and processes of these regimes have created new avenues for advocacy and remedies for rights violations. The very understanding of "human rights defender" that is at the centre of TIRIs has been developed within and through the processes of the international human rights regime.

The emergence of these international protection regimes is important as the protection provided by TIRIs must be understood within this broader historical and political context. The protection offered by TIRIs is both reinforced and constrained by these regimes, for example at both extremes, by providing a platform through the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders for highlighting to the international community the situation of human rights defenders but also by creating a regulatory regime concerning "refugee" protection that potentially limits how, where and for who temporary relocation can occur.

These other regimes have faced challenges and adopted solutions that may instruct and guide future development of TIRIs and the broader protection regime for human rights defenders and artists at risk. There is a variation amongst TIRIs: the oldest predate the emergence of these protection regimes while the most recent exist as part of a response to their emergence. Indeed, some TIRIs explicitly link themselves to these larger protection regimes, by hosting only individuals qualifying for refugee protection or seeking to pursue advocacy through the international human rights regime as part of relocation. For example, some of the participating cities in the International Network of Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN) host only resettled refugees and the Ubuntu Cities project of Defend Defenders in Africa explicitly seeks to allow those relocated "continue their [human rights] work in a safe working environment".

Thirdly, TIRIs are an expression of international solidarity within the human rights movement. The expression of international solidarity has been both a justification of and a key tactic of the international human rights movement since its inception. Many prominent human rights organisations narrate their creation and their purposes in terms of expressing solidarity with the survivors of human rights violations (often elsewhere).[3] International solidarity highlights the importance of human rights violations anywhere to us all and an important, if not always deliberate, consequence of relocation is the reinforc-

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[3] See for example Peter Benenson's account of his rationale for the founding of Amnesty International expressed in his ""The Forgotten Prisoners" (The Observer, 1961) that helped to launch the organisation.

ing of this message to the host community. The concept of solidarity also highlights the role and impact of relocation on host communities.

The international solidarity of the human rights movement is mirrored in other forms of solidarity, including professional solidarity (amongst lawyers and academics, for example) and artistic solidarity (amongst creative professionals). The focus of some TIRIs on particular professional or practice communities is based upon such forms of solidarity. While in relocation, individuals often continue to pursue their activities as part of a transnational community, further reinforcing the sense of an international community upon which international solidarity is based.

2. Diversity of the community of practice

As will be apparent in the analysis of issues arising in temporary international relocation, there is a wide range of temporary international relocation initiatives as measured in a variety of variables: age, size, as well as length and location of relocation. This section will review the community of practice, identifying key variables in the various "models" of relocation, and trace its development. It will close by noting the various other variables that affect the diversity of practice within practitioners of relocation and surveying the existing, limited literature available on TIRIs.

2.1 History of temporary international relocation initiatives

The oldest identified TIRI is the Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA), which grew out of the Academic Assistance Council, which began in 1933 by giving refuge to German scientists and educators fleeing the Nazi regime. With the development of human rights organisations, many international human rights organisations developed *ad hoc* programmes of support for activists "in exile", though most prioritised support for preventative and in-country interventions (GHK 2012: 10). An overwhelming majority of relocation initiatives post-date the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders (1998) and many of the smaller relocation initiatives have been founded within the past decade. In 2012, an EU-funded study estimated that "fewer than 200" human rights defenders were hosted in TIRIs within the EU on an annual basis (GHK 2012: 22). Although the increasing financial support of the EU to TIRIs through the EU Human Rights Defenders Relocation Platform has provided more consistent funding, there is no evidence that, within the EU, a significantly greater number of human rights defenders have been hosted.

However, globally, recent years have seen a significant expansion of relocation activities in the global South. European based networks of relocation initiatives, including ICORN and Justice and Peace's Shelter City programme, have established a growing number of local host cities in the Global South, including Central Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In addition, other regional human rights organisations such as Forum Asia have sought to formalise and expand their ability to protect human rights defenders from within their region. Defend Defenders (previously the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project) and the Pan Africa Human Rights Defenders Network have devoted growing levels of attention to temporary relocation, culminating in its recent launch of the aforementioned Ubuntu Cities project whereby defenders at risk can be hosted in sub-regional hubs.

Yet, large parts of the global South remain underrepresented in the community of practice, notably Asia and the Middle East. This may be a product of geography-specific factors (such as the lack of a common regional language in Asia, creating a barrier to easy relocation) and the difficulty of securing protection in neighbouring states (the relatively few stable, accessible states with sufficient civic space in each region).

Albeit in a more limited manner, the artistic community over the last decade has turned its attention towards the relocation of artists at risk, in large part due to the pioneering work of freeDimensional (reborn as ArtistSafety.net) and Freemuse. Temporary international relocation initiatives for specific types of defenders have also emerged, particularly scholars at risk.

A significant development in recent years is the emergence of networks of relocation initiatives, perhaps not surprising given the network-based practices of early actors such as CARA. ICORN and Shelter Cities have emerged as large, increasingly global actors in temporary relocation. The former has more than 70 sites of relocation in Europe and the Americas. The latter has 14 sites of relocation in Europe, Central Asia, Africa and the Americas. As will be discussed below, the network model potentially provides support and expertise to new sites of relocation and coordinates screening and selection of participants.

Despite the expansion of capacity globally in the international relocation of defenders and artists at risk, much relocation is self-organised outside of all of any formal TIRI. The United Nations has observed that many of the people on the move who have been displaced and counted amongst the world's 25 million refugees are human rights defenders (United Nations 2018). Even within the support available to human rights defenders at risk, a majority of funding is provided for self-directed "emergency" grants. In practice, a significant percentage of such funding is used for self-planned relocation, both within and outside of a defender's country.[4] In this respect, the predicament of those seeking to protect human rights defenders and artists at risk parallels that of those responding to the global refugee crisis: the formal programmes of protection support a select minority of individuals at risk and can at best leverage that protection for the broader benefit of others at risk who must protect themselves. The policy and academic literature on refugees notes the "self-reliance" of refugees (McConnachie 2019) and the pursuit of a "fourth" (self-directed) durable solution (Long 2014).

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[4] One organisation which partakes in both in-country emergency grants and organised relocation estimated a majority of the former (the budget for which dwarfs the organised relocation budget) is used for self-directed relocation.

2.2   Models of temporary international relocation initiatives

The community of practice managing temporary international relocation initiatives is diverse. As a result, it is difficult to determine a "model" of relocation that is appropriate for the full breadth of the community. While there are a range of variables that affect the operational management of relocation, there are three overarching variables that have a deeper impact on the structure and aims of relocation: (i) the nature of the host organisation, (ii) the role of relocation within the host organisation, and, (iii) the type of individual who is supported in relocation. Each of these key variables will be explored and examples given in sequence.

Firstly, a wide range of host organisations manage relocation initiatives. The biggest divide is between mixed state and non-state hosts and solely non-state hosts. Although the present report was unable to find examples of purely state-run relocation initiatives[5], there were several examples of close collaboration between government agencies and civil society organisation partners. The Martin Roth-Initiative (MRI) is itself one such example. Even when independent from the state, many initiatives have very close relations with the state in order to facilitate visas and fund relocation, this particularly true of programmes in the Netherlands, Ireland and Spain which receive significant support from their national governments. Beyond collaboration with national governments, many relocation initiatives involve close collaboration with local authorities. ICORN is the archetype of such collaboration with many of its local host organisations being local government (usually working in close collaboration with local chapters of PEN); a similar model of partnership with local authorities has been adopted by some of the Shelter Cities.[6]

Within the more common, solely non-state hosting arrangements, a wide variety of civil society organisations host individuals at risk, ranging from universities (Centre for Applied Human Rights at the University of York; the Iwalewahaus of the University of Bayreuth) to non-governmental organisations of various scales (locally Casa Xitla in Mexico, regionally Defend Defenders in Africa, internationally Front Line Defenders) to art galleries (ArtistSafety.net and Artists at Risk). Although much relocation is self-organised and relies upon individuals, the nature of managed temporary international relocation initiatives requires an institutional host.

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[5] It may be that state-run programmes of relocation are invisible as relocation initiative as they are either considered as "refugee resettlement" programmes with an indefinite (rather than temporary) length or are otherwise dealt with through a state's immigration control regime (and likely, as a result, do not focus exclusively on human rights defenders and artists at risk).

[6] PEN is an international non-governmental organisation with local chapters. PEN was founded in 1921 and is dedicated to freedom of artistic expression.

Interestingly, within clusters or networks of relocation initiatives such as ICORN or the Shelter Cities there can be a variation in the nature of the host organisation. Some sites of relocation may be managed through close collaboration by the state (for example, with staff within local government) while the hub of the network may be solely civil society. The differing types of host organisations within such networks may result in differing expectations of and capacities for relocation.

Secondly, relocation may play a varying role within host organisations. Some host organisations exist solely to manage relocation (Artists at Risk), whereas others pursue a much broader range of activities (Freedom House, University of Dundee). With the latter, a few organisations may pursue a wider range of activities but solely activities focused on risk (or on the violations which relocation addresses). For example, Front Line Defenders runs a small programme of relocation (for rest and respite) within an organisational focus on the protection of human rights defenders. The role of relocation within an organisation can have a broad effect on the nature of relocation, influencing funding cycles and available staffing as well as other forms of support or activities that may be available during relocation. For example, the interviews revealed that organisations that otherwise dealt with the issue of risk or protection of defenders were much more comfortable (and arguably more successful) in managing return arrangements.

Thirdly, relocation initiatives may focus on particular types of individuals. One particularly clear way in which the community of practice defines itself is whether the participants in relocation are "human rights defenders at risk" or "artists at risk." As will be discussed below, the simple contrast between these two terms belies multiple, contested, and overlapping interpretations. While a single community of practice in relocation of at risk individuals is developing, the organisations serving one or other type of participants have different networks of support and the managers of relocation initiatives serving each type of participant starkly different backgrounds. Despite the often mentioned observation that the two groups are "different", the general consensus during workshops of coordinators was that the categories often obscured too many similarities: "[We] talked about the importance of people's sense of their identity [and] the reality that we're probably all both human rights defenders and artists."[7]

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[7] Notes from Berlin Workshop hosted by the Martin Roth-Initiative, 15 November 2018.

Within the broad identities of defenders and artists, relocation initiatives may focus on a particular type of human rights defender (for example, scholars, Scholars at Risk) or a particular type of artist (for example within the relocation network run by the Artists at Risk Connection different organisation support different types of artists). Inevitably, the type of participant in relocation will deeply affect the programming and support available during relocation.

2.3 Other variables affecting the practice of temporary international relocation

Beyond the key variables of nature of the organisation, role of relocation, and type of person relocated, a wide range of other factors affect the delivery of temporary relocation. Size of programme, length of relocation, the geographies of relocation, and the broader goal of relocation all vary considerably within the community of practice. As subsidiary variables, many of these are also affected by the key variables (and therefore correlate with particular models of relocation). For example, the size of the relocation programme will usually be larger in organisations focusing more exclusively on relocation. Each of these subsidiary variables will be addressed in sequence.

Relocation initiatives vary in terms of size. The largest relocation initiatives are networks of relocation cities, including the Shelter Cities managed by Justice and Peace Netherlands and the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN). While these initiatives may host dozens of individuals per year overall, they may host only a single person at any given site of relocation. The majority of relocation initiatives host fewer than ten individuals per year, though this number may be soon out of date given the youth of many relocation initiatives and the generally upward trend in numbers relocated by each programme. Within broader networks of relocation, individual partners may host as few as a single individual once every few years. The size of the programme affects a number of aspects of programme delivery, including notably the level of expertise of (and ability to respond to) the psycho-social issues raised by relocation.

Relocation initiatives vary immensely in length of relocation with the shortest lasting a week or less and the longest up to two years. Comparing length is made more difficult by the fact that some relocation initiatives offer repeated relocation to the same individual (a series of international relocation periods), and others offer ongoing support and visits after return or relocate individuals with no prospect of return (begging the question of when "relocation" ends).

Geographically, TIRIs exist in every part of the world and the community of practice connecting providers of relocation is increasingly global. While a majority of TIRIs continue to be based in and relocate individuals to Europe, the largest growth in temporary relocation initiatives over the last decade has been in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Africa, and Latin America. As noted previously, Asia and the Middle East have been the only regions that have failed to witness a growth in the institutionalisation of relocation within TIRIs over the last decade. As discussed in this report, within this diverse community of practice there is also significant variation in the relationship to other organisational programmes, length of relocation, programming during relocation, and support during return from relocation.

Perhaps the most important aspect of diversity is that relocation initiatives are set up for a variety of purposes. While, as noted at the outset, all share a desire to express international solidarity, there is a wide variety of additional purposes of each initiative. These varied purposes suggest a range of theories of change, understandings of how relocation responds to risk and the contribution of relocation to the broader human rights project.

2.4   Current research on temporary international relocation

Notwithstanding the increasingly diverse and well-developed literatures concerning issues at the core of temporary international relocation initiatives (including human rights practice, transnational activism, and migration and forced displacement), very little scholarly, practitioner and policy maker attention has been paid to temporary relocation.

The academic literature, within the noted fields, has not addressed the phenomenon of temporary international relocation for defenders at risk. Jones coined the term "temporary international relocation initiative" (TIRI) and addressed the tension between relocation and the broader protection of the asylum regime (Jones 2015). Eriksson more recently contributed to the literature with a review of the Centre for Applied Human Rights' experience with relocation (Eriksson 2018). The silence of the academic literature on temporary relocation has to be understood within a broader academic landscape that is only beginning to specifically address tactics of protection and issues relating to human rights defenders (Nah et al. 2013). Artists at risk receive even less attention in the academic literature (outside of narrative treatment in biographical or period studies of artists).

Temporary international relocation has been broadly recognised as a good practice in the international policy community (United Nations 2016: 72 et seq.) and has been adopted as a practice by leading human rights organisations addressing the protection of human rights defenders. However, many regional and national guidelines on human rights

defenders mention relocation only in passing and with significant limitations. The landmark guidelines of the European Union mention "issuing emergency visas and facilitating temporary shelter in the EU Member States" as a practical form of support to defenders at risk (European Union 2004). However, very little guidance is given to how such visas will be issued.[8] Some national guidelines only mention relocation in passing, with caveats, or as a permanent solution to the issue of risk.[9]

Temporary international relocation initiatives have themselves begun to fill the gap in the literature through the publication of guides and resources on relocation (Justice and Peace 2017). Some of this has been driven by the interest of these initiatives in expanding and in a complementary desire by new funding initiatives, such as the EU Human Rights Defender Relocation Platform, to develop further relocation initiatives. In contrast to the absence of academic or policy literature, the extremely high response rates in this study from all stakeholders suggest an appetite for reflection on and systematised study of the practice of relocation.

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[8] Advocacy efforts by human rights organisations to systematise the issuance of "humanitarian" or "emergency" visas by EU member state missions have been unsuccessful. Presumably part of the resistance has come as a result of larger concerns and intra-EU disagreements about the response to European "refugee crisis". Problems with the urgent issuance of visas to defenders at risk were noted as an implementation problem in the EU's review of the Guidelines in 2006, European Union (2006).

[9] For example, Canada's guidelines on supporting human rights defenders conceive of relocation as indefinite in duration and note that relocation will both "typically" occur to a nearby country and will require "consultations" with "the mission's visa section" or "Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)." It also unhelpfully requires defenders at risk seeking to (permanently) relocate with Canadian government assistance to register with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a process which in many countries can take months or years. See Government of Canada (2017): § 4.3. Amnesty International Canada is currently seeking to advocate for greater attention to temporary relocation in the Canadian guidelines (which are currently under review).

II. Temporary Relocation Initiatives from the perspective of managers
by Martin Jones, Alice Nah and Patricia Bartley

This part of the report seeks to better understand the practice of temporary international relocation and is organised around the key themes of effectiveness, impact and evaluation.

In terms of effectiveness, what practices in relocation are particularly effective to enable a meaningful stay (and successful integration) in host communities for actors at risk? What practices improve the likelihood of a safe return at the end of relocation? "Accompanying measures" is understood broadly within this report and includes both the practices of management and programmatic elements in relocation, including those delivered by partner organisations and individuals. The report does not seek to define in advance the terms "meaningful stay" and "successful integration", instead exploring the understandings of these terms of managers of relocation and participants in relocation.

In terms of impact, how do relocation initiatives impact civil society and cultural scenes in host and sending communities? As all of the interviews conducted were with individuals currently in relocation or managing relocation, its findings necessarily focus on the impacts of relocation in the host communities. The report of the other researcher involved in the project (Stanley Seiden) provides greater background on the impacts of relocation on defenders' and artists' "home" (sending) communities.

In terms of evaluation, what are the existing practices for measuring the impact of relocation? How can reflective practice be further developed around relocation to better understand its effectiveness and impact? One of the key findings of the research was the awareness of managers of relocation about gaps in their expertise, including in the evaluation of their practices. The report seeks to map some of the existing methods of evaluation and chart possible opportunities for further development in this area.

Research methods
The research was conducted between September and December 2018 by a team of researchers at the Human Rights Defender Hub of the Centre for Applied Human Rights at the University of York (the HRD Hub).

In collaboration with the MRI it was decided that the research of the HRD Hub should focus predominantly on the experiences of managers of relocation and effects on host communities. The research methodology consisted of both the review of secondary literature and collection of primary data, through interviews and workshops with practitioners.

The review of the secondary literature on temporary relocation was conducted using databases of scholarly literature (for academic articles), catalogues of United Nations documentation (for practitioner and international policy documents), and web-based search engines (for practitioner and policy documents). As the research progressed, we also identified cognate areas of research which might inform the findings and conducted literature reviews of these areas, including literature on refugee protection and resettlement, risk and well-being, and transnational (human rights) activism.

In relation to primary data collection, we conducted a total of 51 interviews with managers of temporary relocation schemes (27), human rights defenders who have experience of relocation (16), and other stakeholders (including funders) (8). Initial participants were identified in consultation with MRI and based on our knowledge of the community of practice; subsequent participants were identified through referral by participants (snowball sampling) and conversations with practitioners and other stakeholders about our research at workshops. We aimed to ensure our sample reflected the experiences of relocation schemes of different ages; geographical foci and hosting locations; type of host organisation; and, type(s) of beneficiaries of relocation. In relation to this last concern, we were particularly anxious to ensure that our sample included managers of schemes self-identifying both as for "human rights defenders" as well as "artists at risk".

We also participated in two workshops bringing together managers of and other stakeholders in temporary relocation in Berlin (November 2018) and Bangkok (December 2018). The former was the launch event of the Martin Roth-Initiative and occurred over two days in November; the latter was a two day regional discussion of relocation in Bangkok in December organised by Forum Asia.

An interview guide was developed for managers of TIRIs. The guide was revised after being piloted with one interview. The interview guide has 35 questions with questions clustered into topics: personal and organisational context, nature of the relocation initiative, logistics of relocation, programming during relocation, well-being, and, end of relocation and impact. A copy of the interview guide is appended to this report. Interviews tended to last between 45 and 90 minutes. The interviews with human rights defenders

and funders were also guided by interview guides developed using the same methodology and structure. All interviewees were promised anonymity.[10]

We came to the research project with experience in temporary relocation of human rights defenders. The Centre has hosted for more than a decade a "protective fellowship scheme" which provides relocation to York for periods of between three and six months for human rights defenders at risk and members of their families. As a result of hosting this initiative, we have direct experience in many of the issues raised by the research. We have also previously worked with the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and practitioners of relocation to promote relocation as a "good practice" in response to threats to human rights defenders.

This background is mentioned both because it inevitably has informed our design of the research, in particular the drafting of the interview guide, but also because it has forced us to be aware of and interrogate our preconceptions based on our own experience and our own (institutional) self-interest in this research. While our familiarity with the community of practice greatly facilitated our access to many of the participants in the research (as evidenced by the near universal participation rate of practitioners that we approached), it also likely prompted greater discussion with participants of our role as researchers and the availability of the outputs of the research.

1.   Managing temporary international relocation

The management of relocation brings with it a range of considerations concerning the staffing and financial infrastructure required for relocation; the selection of participants in relocation; overarching issues of equity of participation in relocation; the logistics of arranging for visa and accommodation for participants; programming during relocation; and, the well-being of participants during and after relocation. Although it is impossible to identify best practices given the diversity of the community, good practices will be identified, wherever possible, in relation to each of the management considerations.[11]

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[10] In keeping with this promise, no mention is made of specific, named programmes of relocation in this report – with the exception of the general review of the diversity of the community of practice (§ 3 below) which is based on publically available information.

[11] "Good practices" are understood as discrete practices which significantly contribute to achieving a successful relocation and which may be able to be implemented by other TIRIs.

1.1   Infrastructure of relocation

Despite the variety of models of relocation, there remains a core infrastructure required to operate a relocation initiative including both staffing and raising financial resources (funding). In the context of relocation initiatives, both of these requirements pose unique and underappreciated challenges, particularly for new relocation initiatives.

Staffing and support

As noted earlier, relocation initiatives are conducted by a wide range of organisations pursuing a range of models of programming. In all cases, someone is required to manage the relocation initiative. In almost all initiatives surveyed the management of relocation is performed by one (and sometimes two) persons. While there are often a larger number of individuals involved in the provision of a range of programming and support, the main responsibility for organising the relocation, from application process through to hosting to return, falls to one or two individuals. An unexpected issue uncovered by the research is that this responsibility often weighs heavily upon managers of relocation: "When you become the primary contact that is a very resource demanding and it takes a lot of energy and patience and time also."[12]

Relocating individuals to a new, foreign, distant location (such as during relocation) has the potential to increase the demands they place upon any support systems; individuals at risk may already have suffered mistreatment and trauma and may have a reduced capacity to deal with any new challenges. The confluence of these two aspects of relocation places heavy and often unexpected demands on those managing relocation and supporting those who have been relocated:

> "I think, for me, personally, when I first started on the job, I wasn't really prepared for the stress that it brought with it. I didn't know what it would be like. I didn't really get any support from anywhere. Within [the organisation], you could go to counselling, but I never took that up because I didn't feel I had the time which is typical for all of us. The other thing as well, I thought, "Are they actually going to understand what I'm talking about?" because […] how can they understand what is effectively secondary trauma?"[13]

Managers expressed an often deeply felt inner conflict between their desire to provide support and their commitment to accompanying defenders and the need to protect their own personal wellbeing. One manager commented

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[12] Interview M17 on 5 December 2018.
[13] Interview M5 on 8 and 9 December 2018.

> "I reckon now I have no energy to see those people outside work, and at the same time I still feel guilty that I don't make enough time for them because they are still very lonely. We only see them through work, and I realize it's not enough."[14]

The impact of managing relocation on personal well-being was particularly remarked by managers of small and new relocation initiatives. The "overwhelming" demands of managing the arrival and settlement of participants was remarked by a manager of one such initiative:

> "[T]hey get off the train, off the plane and then, having to take them to their accommodation, take them out, give them a meal, be nice and take them back, make sure that they [...] You know? It was a bit ridiculous [...] I'm thinking, 'Actually, I really need help. I really need help.'"[15]

Significantly, despite the experience being fairly recent, the manager had forgotten it until prompted – suggesting either the normalisation of such an experience or the development of coping mechanisms to deal with this type of experience over time.

Some of the excessive demands placed upon managers arise less directly. Managers expressed concern about becoming "heroes" to the participants in relocation and thereby, indirectly, reducing their effective autonomy. One experienced manager commented,

> "[Participants] really give you their life, it's how it feels. When you work in this field, they really, really think that you are the saviour, and you really have to say, "No. I did my job. This is my job."[16]

Although the well-being of core staff remains a challenge for all relocation initiatives, older initiatives have both broadened the support base for those in relocation and sought to mitigate the difficulty of relocation. Amongst the innovative means of dealing with the former, is the establishment of a "network of friends"[17] to increase the social support available to those in relocation. Many new and old relocation initiatives have developed programming that addresses the psycho-social wellbeing of those in relocation.[18] A team-based approach, drawing upon both a range of competencies and the possibility of peer-based mentorship and support, has been adopted by some relocation initiatives and has reportedly increased staff well-being and decreased staff turnover.

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[14] Interview M14 on 22 November 2018.
[15] Interview M7 on 7 November 2018
[16] Interview M4 on 6 and 8 November 2018
[17] Interview M5 on 8 and 9 November 2018.
[18] See below for further discussion of the issue of well-being.

Funding

Although most managers were happy with the availability of funding, almost all managers interviewed expressed concern about the type of expenses funded and the need for continual fundraising for relocation initiatives. With the growth of large programmes of funding (notably from the EU Platform and the MRI) over the last decade, few managers expressed concern that relocation was "fundable." However, there was a near universal concern expressed by managers that relocation funding was too closely tied to the individual being relocated, without regard for the larger institutional (and infrastructural) needs:

> "The general issue we have with funding is that organizations that are happy to fund us are happy to fund the fellows. They're not happy to fund staffing costs, but you can't run a scheme like this without the staffing costs or staffing in place".[19]

Linking funding to the relocation of individuals also made difficult funding processes preceding the arrival of individuals being relocated, including staff support for visa processes and sourcing accommodation. In some cases, the precariousness of funding has been cited as contributing to higher costs for relocation, for example as a result of needing to source short-term (rather than cheaper long-term) accommodation. In more distributed models of hosting the lack of funding also precluded host organisations being able to provide support to individuals during relocation.[20] Funding constraints have also limited the support available to individuals after relocation, especially during the initial period of return.[21]

Reliable, medium-term funding for core relocation infrastructure is necessary for a sustainable relocation initiative; this funding can be sought directly from funders or through cross-subsidisation within larger organisations. Hosting revenue-generating events such as short courses or advocacy fora has been cited by some organisations as helping to provide a broader funding base to support the infrastructure of relocation.

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[19] Interview M5 on 8 and 9 November 2018.
[20] Interview M10 on 30 November 2018.
[21] Interview M3 on 21 November 2018.

1.2   Selection for relocation

Almost all TIRIs require a formal application for relocation and the application for relocation be made (or supported) by a (trusted) partner organisation or otherwise supported by trusted independent third parties through reference letters or statements of support. Often decisions on applications are made with the input of trusted individuals from the broader human rights community, through formal advisory board processes or informal consultation. The three most frequent criteria for relocation are outlined below, along with a review of other considerations in the selection for relocation (including implied exclusion criteria).

Qualification in category eligible for relocation

The majority of relocation initiatives are targeted at "human rights defenders". While the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders does not define the term, many programmes have adopted the definition drafted by OHCHR, significantly requiring commitments to non-violence and non-discrimination.[22] Although the definition of human rights defenders is very broad, many initiatives adopted definitions that excluded defenders with overt political agendas or activities.[23] Managers also struggled with the reality that many of those applying for relocation do not fully espouse the commitment of universality of rights demanded by the OHCHR definition:

> "Human rights defenders must accept the universality of human rights as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A person cannot deny some human rights and yet claim to be a human rights defender because he or she is an advocate for others. For example, it would not be acceptable to defend the human rights of men but to deny that women have equal rights."[24]

Given that individuals generally share at least some of the prejudices of the societies within which they are situated, misogyny and homophobia are two concerns about defenders in relocation cited by managers. As one manager noted, "Sometimes we are joking, we should put in the application form this question, 'Do you believe in the universal character of human right?'".[25]

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[22] OHCHR: Who is a defender?, available at:
https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/srhrdefenders/pages/defender.aspx [07.05.2019]
[23] Interview M17 on 5 December 2018; Interview M8 on 12 November 2018.
[24] OHCHR: Who is a defender? (op. cit.)
[25] Interview with M13 on 5 December 2018.

Within programmes focusing on artists at risk there was often an overt preference for particular types of artists.[26] Programmes focusing on particular types of individuals (law-yers, journalists, writers) or types of human rights defenders (women human rights de-fenders) usually require some proof of membership in the particular category.

Risk due to professional activities

All relocation initiatives surveyed relocated only individuals at risk – though there were varying approaches to the definition of this term. The evaluation of risk often requires initiatives to establish whether individuals fall within often idiosyncratic "sweet spots" of risk. All initiatives surveyed expressed strong views about the urgency (chronic vs. emer-gency), type (psychological vs. physical), and level (high vs. low) of risk facing individu-als. The differing approaches to risk are not always fully described in the material availa-ble to individuals applying for relocation.

Some initiatives explicitly select individuals working in "attritional" environments and at risk of burnout whereas others require more acute and imminent risk of physical harm. Those initiatives preferring the latter often phrased the distinction as less philo-sophical or principled and more a pragmatic reflection of the operating environment facing defenders:

> "In most of the cases [from our countries of origin] we see that most of them have been arrested at least once or two times. So far, we didn't have to have people who just have for stress or who have other problems."[27]

In addition to the existence of risk, there must be a nexus between the risk and the professional activities of the individual as a human rights defender, writer, or member-ship in another particular category. Many initiatives defined risk at least in part in relation to interference with professional activities:

> "you have to be individually targeted or persecuted because of your work or silenced and silence can also be anything from being subjected to censorship to being tried"[28]

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[26] Interview with M3 on 21 November 2018.
[27] Interview with M12 on 29 November 2018.
[28] Interview with M1 on 2 November 2018.

In practice, the source of risk (personal or professional) can be difficult to ascertain (especially for defenders sharing an identity with those they assist) and most initiatives with this requirement relied on references from partner (human rights) organisations. Many relocation initiatives were more willing to consider relocating individuals from particularly vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. Women human rights defenders and indigenous people were often identified as "gaining extra points" in the selection process.

Although implied in the nature of relocation initiatives, some of the newer initiatives also considered whether or not the individual would be safe during relocation. Individuals from (hostile) neighbouring states and transgender individuals potentially facing transphobia were two types of individuals noted as ineligible for relocation due to concerns about their safety during relocation. With the rise in the number of relocation initiatives in the region and in the Global South, this issue bears monitoring and further research.

Fit with the parameters of the relocation programme

Many relocation initiatives applied a secondary screen based on "fit" with the relocation programme to those candidates who otherwise qualified and were at risk. Being able to benefit from the specifics of the relocation initiative and being able to contribute to the host organisation and community were two frequently cited factors that are considered. Some programmes, based on past experiences, expressed an interest in particular profiles of defenders – often conflicting between programmes. For example some initiatives favour "established human rights defenders"[29] whereas others prefer individuals who have had less international exposure.[30]

Although many initiatives expressed concern about the ability of defenders with dependents to be relocated (a concern often expressed in gendered terms), a large number of the relocation initiatives surveyed were at least open to hosting dependent family members, including spouses and minor children. The presence of accompanying family members often brings to bear additional criteria (such as the availability of schooling for children) and can result in an adjustment of the timing and length of the relocation (often shortening it due to the higher cost).

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[29] Interview with M15 on 19 December 2018.
[30] Interview M5 on 8 and 9 November 2018.

In larger organisations and more distributed selection processes, some interviewees recounted occasional disjunctions between the assessment of "fit" by different participants in the decision making process, in particular between the central organisation and actual local hosts. Some local hosts that are part of larger networks of relocation expressed concern about the mismatch between broader organisational criteria for relocation and the local needs and capacities of the site of relocation:

> "We would like to have more say in who they host because you want to have the HRDs tell their story and some people are willing to do that due to security issues, personal preferences and we want somebody who wants to do public events."[31]

Other local hosts expressed concern about not being consulted about programmatic developments that would impact the type or timing of relocated individuals[32]. Defenders themselves recounted experiencing confusion about the selection process for their relocation. As with much other human rights programming, greater transparency about the precise selection criteria (and consistency of practice with it) would benefit all stakeholders.

Other considerations

A range of other considerations were often brought to bear in the selection of defenders; e.g. the ability to continue work during relocation and the larger organisational benefit from relocation for the organisation (of the person being relocated or the host organisation). Some programmes also require that the relocation will mitigate risk – though it is not always clear whether the mitigation must occur during the relocation (the person will be safe during relocation) or as a result of relocation (the person will be safe after the relocation). Language ability, the presence of accompanying family members, and the ability of the person to continue his or her work during relocation were all factors that were considered. Although not openly advertised in publically available material, many of these other factors considered in selecting individuals for relocation were effectively grounds of exclusion. All interviewees noted that the selection of individuals for relocation does not occur in a vacuum, it is deeply influenced by the requirements of funders and host state visa policy both of which will be further discussed below (and considerations of which many coordinators were embarrassed to express publically).

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[31] Interview M22 on 18 December 2018.
[32] Interview M5 on 8 and 9 November 2018.

1.3 Equity of access to relocation

Selection for relocation raises a number of issues of equity. Even within the target populations of human rights defenders or artists at risk, access to relocation is not evenly distributed. Most selection procedures prefer (or require) individuals with established connections to large, international organisations – whether these sponsors be international human rights non-governmental organisations or established art galleries. At the very least, many relocation initiatives require individuals to be working within credible, established human rights organisations[33] or to have an identifiable artistic career as partial proof of the credibility of their risk. The pursuit of "genuine" individuals at risk further marginalises those pursuing unconventional or part-time career paths in human rights or the arts. Language and educational requirements imposed by relocation initiatives often further reinforce the marginalisation of unconventional defenders and artists.

Many relocation initiatives identified gender inequity as a concern. Some initiatives went so far as to prefer female applicants:

> "When we have a man and a woman who have the same - who meet all the conditions, we always prefer a woman because sometimes they have suffered gender violence."[34]

The (in)ability to be relocated with dependents was often expressed as an issue restricting access to relocation by women – though some male participants in relocation identified this as a problem facing them too.

It is notable that other possible grounds of inequity were not raised as posing questions about equity of access by managers or participants. Race and nationality were only raised in the context of the experience of relocation, including visa processes and the experience of those relocated being a visible minority in the host community. Disability was not raised as an issue of equity of access by any interviewee, though some discussions at workshops expressed concern at the ability of (under-resourced) relocation initiatives to reasonably accommodate individuals with serious disability (or illness). One relocation initiative listed serious illness as a ground of exclusion.[35]

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[33] Interview with M16 on 28 November 2018.
[34] Interview with M12 on 29 November 2018.
[35] Interview with M16 on 28 November 2018 (though an exception to the exception is made if treatment was not available without relocation).

1.4 Logistics of relocation

As foreshadowed by the discussion above of the challenges of staffing and resourcing relocation, the logistics of relocation can be considerable. Participants in relocation often need to obtain travel documents and entry (and possibly exit) visas in order to travel. In the host community, accommodation and other features of the settlement of participants in their new communities must also be arranged.

Visas

In most instances of relocation, participants require entry (and sometimes residence) visas in order to enter the host state. The notable exception to this requirement of entry visas is regional relocation initiatives which often benefit from the visa-free travel of nationals within the region. The consequence of the need for visas for participants in relocation is both practical (enduring an often lengthy and complex process) and political (internalising anti-migrant discourses within temporary international relocation initiatives).

Visas are usually facilitated by managers of relocation. Often the visa process requires provision of proof of formal sponsorship by the TIRI. Some initiatives negotiate visas directly with the host state as part of the planning process for relocation. Such visas are then approved outside of the normal, overseas consular process and require a close working relationship with the host state (and its related support of the relocation initiative).[36] However, the more common approach is to obtain visas on an ad hoc basis, placing upon TIRIs the impossible task of keeping track of ever changing overseas consular processes.

The type of visa received by participants varies and often dictates the length of the relocation.[37] Individuals who have already relocated (temporarily) can face the requirement that they return to their country of nationality (their place of risk) in order to obtain a visa. Other individuals face difficulties (and costs) due to requirements that individuals apply at regional processing centres:

> "In the Middle East, we've had case of Iranian defenders because you can't submit a visa application within Iran. You have to go and submit it in UAE. They take your passport away. You have to sit there for three weeks for them to process the visa. You get all these extra expenses, first of all. Secondly, how is that a fair process for anyone applying for a visa from Iran to the [host state] if you have to sit in another country, leave your job, your family, everything for three weeks or longer?"[38]

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[36] Interview M1 on 2 November 2018; Interview with M13 on 5 December 2018; Interview with M16 on 28 November 2018.
[37] Interview with M10 on 30 November 2018.
[38] Interview with M5 on 8 and 9 November 2018.

Amongst the biggest problem in obtaining visas is the challenge of establishing that the travel and residence is temporary. This is almost always a requirement of tourist or visitor visas and one that is particularly challenging to meet by initiatives that define their participants as suffering risk of harm in their country of activities.

Managers reported visa processes taking up to three months with some visa processes lasting upwards of one year. The global trend towards more restrictive visa policies has caused some managers of relocation initiatives to describe the visa application process as "hell".[39] The relocation of some nationalities has become very difficult due to restrictive visa policy, notably nationals of Iran, Syria and Yemen. Managers have also reported Muslim participants and participants from Muslim majority states face both more lengthy and intrusive processes and more restrictive policies.[40] Beyond entry visas, some participants faced additional challenges from the need to obtain or renew travel documents (particularly if the person is already abroad), obtain visas for dependents, and obtain exit permissions.

Visas pose particular challenges for relocation initiatives with time sensitive schedules (for example, requiring attendance at a particular training session) or with bespoke programmes of activities (for example, tailored to the requirements of the participants and particular host organisations). In the face of an unpredictable visa process, meeting these requirements is difficult and time consuming:

> "When we work like we do, as I said, we need to find the environment, musicians, financial funding and then we need to secure this. Then, we invite, and then, the artist applies for visa, and then it's turned down and we have to start the process anew. Because we have then made agreements with organizers, concert organizers, musicians, maybe studios, and everything falls apart, because we have a schedule." (Safemuse)

Some managers identified "visa planning" as part of the process of protection. They noted that defenders at medium to high risk should obtain visas in advance to facilitate easy and rapid international travel if problems arise.[41] Fortunately, many states have adopted the provision of such "humanitarian" visas as part of their practice of protecting

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[39] Interview with M9 on 7 January 2019.
[40] Some interviewees seeking to relocate individuals to the USA noted the impact since 2017 of the Trump administration's various "travel bans".
[41] Forum Asia

defenders at risk.[42] Managers of relocation also noted that the route of travel to the country of relocation is important – both to avoid the need for further (transit) visas and to prevent interrogation by hostile states while en route to relocation.[43] Advocacy to states must be continued to both address the underlying migratory and refugee policies constraining access to protection by individuals at risk and to seek the implementation of specific emergency or humanitarian visa policies for individuals at risk.

Accommodation

Accommodation during relocation represents both one of the largest costs during relocation as well as, for some initiatives, one of the largest logistical challenges. Relocation initiatives are seldom deliberately located in locations of low cost accommodation. To the contrary, the relative economic affluence, stability, cultural scene, and urban vitality that often give rise to (or support the emergence of) relocation initiatives often entail high cost and limited availability of accommodation.[44] The already high cost of accommodation is driven higher by the short term and urgent nature of the need for accommodation.

A significant number of relocation initiatives have an established stock of accommodation either controlled by the relocation initiative or its partners in relocation.[45] In some cases, the accommodation stock is ultimately part of government programmes of social housing.[46] A large number of artist relocation programmes draw upon accommodation stock controlled by artist-in-residence programmes and artistic institutions, though the competition for such accommodation can undermine any advantage it provides. Finding accommodation is such an ongoing and important challenge that one relocation initiative noted that it has (re)structured its programming to minimise the need to source new accommodation every year.[47] Sourcing accommodation is very time consuming for managers of relocation. Health and safety checks on accommodation and contract approval processes can further complicate sourcing accommodation. However, despite the general ambition to minimise the need to source new accommodation, several managers raised security concerns about using the same accommodation each year for those in relocation.

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[42] This is often expressed in national guidelines and policies, though usually in permissive rather than mandatory terms.

[43] Interview with M13 on 5 December 2018.

[44] This is a problem also faced by refugee resettlement schemes.

[45] At least four of the initiatives interviewed drew, at least partially, on an established stock of accommodation.

[46] Two of the initiatives interviewed drew, at least partially, on municipally controlled stock of accommodation.

[47] For example, by spreading the cohort of individuals relocated over the (nearly) complete year to justify holding accommodation indefinitely.

The uncertainty of the outcome and the timing of the visa process exacerbates the challenge of sourcing accommodation, especially when combined with funding (for accommodation) that is often contingent on a positive visa decisions and linked to the date of arrival in the host state. Many managers confessed that some participants were forced to move during relocation because of the inability to secure long(er) leases with landlords.[48] Other managers noted that they have turned to holiday lets and Airbnb flats out of desperation, though neither option is economically feasible in the long term.[49]

Beyond finding and securing accommodation, the configuration of accommodation poses a challenge for managers of relocation, especially when managing larger and longer term cohorts of individuals. Managers expressed divergent views on whether participants in relocation should be housed individually or collectively. However, almost all coordinators expressed the view that some participants required their own accommodation, including families in relocation, survivors of recent trauma, and (most controversially) some LGBTQ participants.

1.5   Programming during relocation

Almost all relocation initiatives offer some programming for participants during relocation. This programming can include social activities and other networking opportunities, general training and capacity building, and targeted interventions addressing risk and psycho-social wellbeing. A challenge noted by one manager of an established relocation initiative is to ensure that the programming does not exceed the capacity (or funding) available. In addition, even structured programming must be flexible enough to accommodate often varying interests and needs of participants:

> "Every relocation is so different in a way. There is some similarities of course, but the difference is that there is a different individual in a different place, with different surroundings, with different not just history but also the place."[50]

Continuation of activities

Although many relocation initiatives select participants based on, in part, their ability to continue their activities while in relocation, there is constantly a tension between relocation as continuity and as disjunction. The practice amongst relocation initiatives is quite

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[48] Interview with M17 on 5 December 2018.
[49] PiN, Tiblisi; Interview with M5 on 8 and 9 November 2018.
[50] Interview with M1 on 2 November 2018.

starkly divided between those initiatives that support and even require a continuation of activities and those that adopt the opposite position.

In many cases, participants in relocation express that they feel a "distance" from colleagues and their organisation during relocation even when they continue with their professional or organisational activities. More generally, individuals in exile are not always seen favourably by compatriots who remain. Human rights defenders abroad have been characterised as traitors; artists working abroad have frequently sought to eschew being primarily identified as "in exile." The continuation of work conflicts with participants' often stated desire to "take a break" or regroup. In one case, a manager recalled the case of human rights defender who was relocated simply to rest:

> "[She was here for] three weeks of rest and respite relocation […] and she was sleeping most of the day. We tried to engage her and arrange some meetings or invite her out or do something relaxing or fun but she was like, 'No, I just want to sleep. I just need to sleep.'"[51]

A wide variety of approaches have been adopted to resolve the tension between continuity and disjunction. The diverging between continuing work and enjoying a period of respite often reflects differing understandings of risk and different selection criteria for participants. The nature of the partnerships that support the relocation may also require continuity, to the extent hosting organisations are selected because of their desire to collaborate and support the work of participants. Artists and creative professionals, in particular, have commented on the difficulty of continuing their work in a completely new creative community. A manager of a relocation initiative for artists at risk recounted one particular case:

> "What I think is really, really important is for the organization in the program to enable them to do the work and continue the work they're doing, but the creative work cannot stop, but it's not that easy. What I learned also from colleagues who are running a relocation program is that sometimes they stop creating. […] The thing is that what we know is that with this individual, he was [an artist], but doing millions of different things to make his family survive in [his country] and when he relocated in the middle of nowhere, he was like, 'That's the first time in my life that everybody wants me to create just art.' He was lost at the beginning. He was like, 'I have just to do that?'"[52]

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[51] CRD, available at: https://crd.org/ [07.05.2019]
[52] Interview with M18 on 3 January 2019.

Capacity building

Structured capacity building activities are often part of the programming of relocation initiatives. This is especially true of relocation initiatives serving human rights defenders, perhaps reflecting the growing trend towards the "professionalisation" of human rights work. Programming during relocation of artists at risk is more likely to be ad hoc and tailored to the individual.

Language training is commonly part of relocation programming, both to facilitate local integration during relocation and to broaden the reach of professional activities. English language training, in particular, is offered even in locations of relocation where the local language is not English in order to support the participant being able to communicate with a broader, international audience.[53] Beyond language training, relocation initiatives offer a wide range of programming ranging from driving lessons (to facilitate greater autonomy)[54] to human rights education (to increase professional capacity).[55] In terms of the latter, the most common topics covered include digital and physical security; fundraising; advocacy; and, the international human rights regime. Relocation initiatives also offer opportunities to network, to perform advocacy by human rights defenders or to build a community of practice of artists. Well-being activities may sometimes be framed as "capacity building" both to reduce any stigma and to encourage the spread of well-being activities upon return.[56]

The professional capacity building of those in relocation is often frustrated by the mismatch between their interests and the training capacities that are available. In some cases this is caused by the broad selection criteria of the relocation initiative[57] or limited local capacity of the relocation initiative.[58] However, in other cases it arises out of the mismatch between the level of training and existing technical competence. One trainer of participants in relocation commented, somewhat guiltily, "I don't think this was very beneficial to me in [professional] terms, because his [practice] was way behind, you won't be surprised to hear that, and he didn't really succeed in catching up."[59]

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[53] Interview with M10 on 30 November 2018.
[54] Interview with M13 on 5 December 2018.
[55] Interview with M14 on 22 November 2018; Interview with M5 on 8 and 9 November 2018.
[56] Interview with M14 on 22 November 2018
[57] Interview with M5 on 8 and 9 November 2018.
[58] Interview with M1 on 2 November 2018.; JP
[59] Interview with M21 on 6 December 2018.

1.6 Well-being during relocation

Well-being is an under-discussed issue within both the human rights and artistic communities. As with society at large, illness (or the lack of well-being) is often seen as a weakness and individuals and communities are often hesitant to openly reveal or discuss well-being. This is especially true of mental health (and illness). Beyond issues of stigma, a fundamental difficulty facing both managers of and participants in is the difficulty of accurately assessing well-being. Recent, ongoing research suggests that human rights defenders participating in relocation experience mental health challenges in excess of comparator high risk groups such as combat veterans, survivors of torture, and refugees.[60]

Many participants have faced a prolonged period of stress or trauma; all participants are facing the ongoing traumas of relocation. As noted one manager, drawing upon her own experiences facing the latter:

> "They can be in a very distressed state, but because they've been operating such a high level stress given what they're facing, they don't realize what's happening. Sometimes speaking with them and speaking through that and just suggesting and this is where I'm relocating myself comes in, sharing. Any time you're in a new setting or a new environment, it can be a shock, and it can be further complicated by what you face and things of that nature."[61]

Many managers expressed the view that mental well-being was linked to physical and creative well-being and could be most easily approached through the encouragement of physical health and creativity. Physical well-being is encouraged through the encouragement of sporting activities and exercise (for example, walking in nature, hiking, yoga, bicycling and other athletic activities) and attention to rest. However, troublingly, some of the desire for rest may, in extreme cases, be a manifestation of mental illness:

> "They have 'self-isolation', don't go out, socialise-develop many psychological problems, strange behaviours-not in a position to help others. They need professional psychological help and often don't understand that they need help."[62]

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[60] Nah, Jones and Brown, in collaboration with ICORN, Justice and Peace, and the Martin Roth-Initiative, are conducting a study on the psychological defenders in relocation. Preliminary findings in the study suggest a majority of defenders in relocation experience significant emotional regulation issues, depression and anxiety.

[61] Interview with M11 on 20 November 2018.

[62] Interview with M24 on 12 December 2018. This may require us to revisit the analysis of the extreme example noted above of a defender spending three weeks of relocation simply sleeping.

In terms of encouraging creative activities (particularly for human rights defenders), relocation initiatives have offered a wide range of programming including drumming classes, art therapy, creative writing, and visits to cultural attractions (including museums and zoos).

Even those participants seeking support for past physical trauma (for example, survivors of torture) face barriers caused by lack of trust; the association of mental health professionals with mechanisms of state oppression in some countries is a further obstacle to participants seeking support.[63] These barriers are only overcome with difficulty and over time. Managers have noted that normalising discussions of well-being and increasing the sense of safety of participants decreases resistance – along with the attritional effects of their suffering: The ones who open up to it, it's after they've seen someone successfully receiving that support or some of them are just too tired. "Let me just go for it. What do I have to lose if I went for it?"[64] Some programmes have experimented with making at least one meeting with a counsellor obligatory, though others dispute that this is the best way forward. A significant number of relocation initiatives offer at least some structured programming aimed at providing psycho-social support for well-being.

Beyond addressing historic trauma and well-being issues caused before relocation, many relocation programmes seek to mitigate any distress and isolation caused by relocation through attention to pastoral care and the creation of communities of support, including from other participants in relocation. The decision to provide communal accommodation is often defended in terms of its effect on well-being and facilitation of peer support such as regular retreats and meetings with other participants in relocation.

While the presence of social support from family members might be seen as a way of overcoming these barriers, managers often noted a problematic dynamic between participants in relocation and their accompanying family members:

> "On the psychological side, I think it's easier at the beginning, however, in the longer term it's difficult because family members usually don't fully appreciate and blame the human rights defender for what they have to go through. It's very much a case by case basis but we find that the family eventually blames and ends up resenting the individual for forcing them to do this and leaving everything behind because they usually don't

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[63] Interview with M8 on 12 November 2018.
[64] Interview with M6 on 8 November 2018.

> understand fully that the part on that should be what they had to do, and unfortunately there are risks associated with work after they've had to leave."[65]

Managers of relocation initiatives for artists suggested that artists may be particularly susceptible to mental health issues as a result of their risk and their relocation. The logic was that human rights defenders "expect" repression – and are often motivated to confront it. In contrast, an artist can be surprised and confused by a sudden act of repression:

> "A visual artist or performing artist will get suddenly attacked when he got funding from the state forever, was really recognized in a country then suddenly got blacked out very badly, a ban, on watch list, and has to escape the country within a month, then it has a real, real impact in their health, in their mental health."[66]

Despite the argument for increased risk of well-being issues, relocation initiatives serving artists at risk are least likely to have structured well-being activities. Further study is needed to disentangle the well-being issues of human rights defenders and artists both *in situ* and during relocation.

Although managers frequently mentioned individual examples of participants who were "rejuvenated" by the experience of relocation, the more general view was that the limited length of some relocations makes addressing even the symptoms of well-being problems, let alone any underlying causes, very difficult. At best, managers seek a more limited impact in making participants realise that their well-being is both important and within their own control: "[A]t the end they understand they must take care for themselves. That's important as the first step to [their] self-protection."[67]

Although rare, some relocation initiatives identified actively monitoring well-being during relocation as a core part of their programming. These programmes administered psycho-metric scales to assess both the well-being and impact of relocation on well-being of participants; these programmes also tended to place well-being at the heart of many programming decisions. While the adoption of such scales may not be appropriate or desirable in all contexts, such programmes of structured, active monitoring of well-being are a good practice to be emulated.

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[65] Interview with M6 on 8 November 2018.
[66] Interview with M18 on 3 January 2019.
[67] Interview with M19 on 27 November 2018.

Returning to the issue of well-being of staff addressed earlier, the increased attention to well-being of participants is double edged: while it may force staff to reflect upon their own well-being it may also increase demands on them for pastoral support. As one manager noted,

> "I was going back home, I felt really responsible personally for the persons. I would have nightmares, like living directly the stories of the person or really, I was really anxious if something was happening or something was not going well."[68]

While many of the strategies adopted in addressing the well-being of defenders are successful for managers, most managers commented on the additional need to enforce professional work / life boundaries: "Now I've learned to have my own boundaries. I realized that I spend also less time in my private life with human rights defenders."[69] The mitigating effect of professional boundaries is consistent with the literature noting that "professional" human rights defenders (such as lawyers) are at lower risk of mental illness than other human rights defenders – though it does conflict with the noted increased demands on them for pastoral support.

1.7   Preparation for return and safe return

By definition, temporary international relocation initiatives are time limited. While a small number of relocation initiatives relocate individuals as refugees with no intention to return, the overwhelming majority of participants in relocation are relocated for an explicitly time-limited period. Beyond seeing the successful return of participants as a contribution to the human rights project, many relocation initiatives require relocation in order to be able to obtain visas for future participants and as part of the theory of change required by their funders. The tension between the safety of participants upon return and the programmatic interests in the return of participants can result in complex and ambivalent attitudes towards asylum.

Across all relocation initiatives, it is hypothesised that one fifth of participants do not return (Jones 2015: 935-960[70]). Most of these individuals seek asylum, though some enter other relocation initiatives or programmes of study. The difficulty in obtaining visas for travel faced by human rights defenders and artists at risk often forces participants into

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[68] Interview with M14 on 22 November 2018.
[69] Interview with M14 on 22 November 2018.
[70] This excludes from calculation the relocation initiatives which relocate participants as refugees; rates of asylum seeking vary significantly within (over time) and between relocation initiatives.

asylum as a result of the worry about not having an opportunity to seek asylum in the future. In addition, some managers expressed concern that ironically the focus on risk in capacity building activities during relocation (along with the feeling of relative safety during relocation) may heighten the perception of risk by participants – driving them towards seeking asylum. Resonating with the literature on asylum seekers and resettled refugees, past participants in relocation who sought asylum have expressed surprise at their inability to continue their professional activities after seeking asylum.

The responses of coordinators to asylum claims varied. Some recounted frustration or surprise at asylum claims. Many discussed the organisational issues raised by such claims, including worries about funding and being able to obtain visas in the future. Several coordinators expressed asylum claims as fostering a sense of emergency or panic within the initiative. Only one coordinator cited an organisational policy on asylum, suggesting the need to systematise in advance such policies and to communicate them not only to participants but also potentially funders and government or government-affiliated part-ners.

As noted earlier, coordinators of TIRIs within organisations with broader program-ming addressing protection and risk expressed greater confidence and precision about arrangements for preparation for return. Such organisations also, anecdotally, appeared better able to follow (and potentially support) participants upon return. A challenge par-ticularly acute for both distributed networks of relocation and organisations without such complementary programing is to secure resources for and develop capacity to better sup-port and monitor the safe return of participants.

2. Key findings of the research

Returning to the research questions outlined at the start of this report, the project sought to answer key questions concerning the effectiveness, impact and means of evaluation of relocation initiatives. The following sections highlight the response and key findings in relation to each of these questions.

2.1 Effectiveness of temporary international relocation initiatives

The cluster of research questions guiding the consideration of the effectiveness of temporary relocation initiatives of the research project was: Which accompanying measures are particularly effective to enable a meaningful stay for actors at risk in the "shelter", a safe return to their home country with new perspectives and/or a successful integration in host communities?

Although the term "meaningful stay" escapes precise definition, the managers of relocation identified key features of a successful relocation:

- The selection of appropriate candidates for the particular relocation initiative;
- A community to support the settlement of defenders;
- Active attention to the psycho-social well-being of defenders during relocation;
- A sustainable infrastructure of support, including reliable funding and support for coordinators

A threshold question for any relocation initiative is "who to relocate?". As outlined above, most relocation initiatives have fairly robust selection processes, involving application, collection of supportive references, and further research into the defender. All coordinators expressed concerns about recruiting "appropriate" defenders, suited to the particular features of the relocation initiative. Many programmes struggled with determining whether to host accompanying family members, an anxiety that was reinforced by the uncertainty expressed by defenders about whether or not to relocate with or without their family members. Clear information needs to be provided to defenders about the features of a relocation initiative and the effect of bringing family members on their selection. Coordinators must ensure that their practice is as consistent as possible with the information that is provided.

The settlement of defenders into their new environment is a key challenge for any relocation initiative. The importance (and difficulty) of rapid settlement is highlighted by both the often considerable "culture shock" facing defenders and the relative brevity of most periods of relocation. Good practices included having a cluster of organisations (and

individuals within organisations) support defenders and establishing a network of "friends" in the broader community to support the social integration of defenders and to provide pastoral support to them during relocation.

The psycho-social well-being of individuals has a profound impact on their ability to adapt to new environments. A key element of supporting settlement must be addressing the well-being needs of defenders. A wide range of programming was cited as addressing well-being by coordinators, including physical activity (cycling, walking, football, yoga), outdoor endeavours (nature walks, hiking), counselling (individual, group and art-based therapy), and meditative and mindfulness activities (retreats, better understanding of cognitive processes).

As noted earlier, in order to be sustainable, relocation initiatives require adequate re-sourcing, including stable funding and the structuring of workload to create a "team" that can support defenders. Many coordinators expressed anxiety about the nature of the funding available, often linked to specific defenders and not guaranteed until shortly before arrival. The well-being of coordinators of relocation (and any broader team of support) must be actively supported, including through the management of professional and personal boundaries, the setting of office policies (about contact outside of hours, for example), and the provision of opportunities to "debrief". New coordinators need oppor-tunities for peer support and mentorship. If not available within (a sometimes new) initia-tive, this could be provided through a network of coordinators.[71]

The presumption within the research question of a dichotomy between "safe return" and "successful integration" is belied by the nature of the initiatives surveyed. There are indeed some programmes that either aim to fully integrate relocated defenders from the outset or manage to almost completely enable the safe return of defenders from relocation. For example, in relation to the former, some of ICORN's cities of refuge are part of state refugee resettlement programmes and seek to indefinitely settle defenders into their host communities. In relation to the latter, the manager of one relocation programme noted that fewer than 2% of defenders had sought asylum (though a much larger percentage had not been able to return to their home country and had instead relocated elsewhere at the end of their participation in the relocation initiative). However, as discussed above, most of the relocation initiatives struggled with the issue of asylum. While seeking to

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[71] Some opportunities for peer support already exist through the regular meetings of the EU Platform on Relocation and other *ad hoc* events within the community of practice.

support a safe return, most initiatives experienced significant levels of asylum seeking during (or at the end of) relocation. All described the difficulty of discerning whether a defender would stay or return, reflecting a dynamic and uncertain situation that might act as a barrier to successful integration.

2.2   Impact of temporary international relocation initiatives

The cluster of research questions guiding the consideration of the impact of temporary relocation initiatives of the research project was: What do Shelter and Relocation Programmes contribute towards enhancing civil-society initiatives, critically cultural scenes and their key players?

Managers and participants were asked about the "impact" of relocation both in terms of its effect on participants and other effects.

First, one of the biggest impacts of relocation was on the identity of the participant, validating their identity as a human rights defender or artist. As one manager noted,

> "being here has strengthened their identity as human rights defenders because some of them didn't identify themselves as defenders until they saw this program and realised, `I'm a human rights defender.' Then, being here strengthened that identity and how they were looking at themselves and their work."[72]

Second, participants and managers noted heightened levels of "introspection" by participants. Some of this introspection is likely caused by the experience of relocation itself, disrupting and prompting reflection on existing habits and assumptions. However, it is also likely encouraged by some of the programming and interactions during relocation. This introspection was noted to lead to an increased willingness to interrogate cultural norms, such as gender roles.[73] However, the biggest and most frequent impact of relocation cited by both participants and managers of relocation is the ability and willingness of participants to continue their activities. In the words of one manager: "as long as they continue working"[74]. Managers working within regional relocation initiatives, who as a result have frequent contact with participants after return, describe participants as having been rejuvenated and having become members of a larger, international movement:

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[72] Interview with M5 on 8 and 9 November 2018.
[73] Interview with M12 on 29 November 2018.
[74] Interview with O3 on 3 January 2019.

> "They have like this courage and new skills to continue their activities. Also when they're talking with their colleagues back home or our member organizations in their own countries, they've always said that they're different people and they're very determined to continue their activities. They're different people, we talk like members."[75]

Beyond defenders, managers often cite the impact of relocation initiatives on host communities. Often the act of providing safety by a community becomes part of the local identity, encouraged by labels such as "shelter city" and "city of refuge." As noted by one manager of a relocation initiative, this impact can be mobilised for self-interest and aggrandizement by local politicians and officials: "if they're clever and good at telling their inhabitants, their citizens that this is a city of refuge, it has impact."[76] In the context of a much discussed "refugee crisis" facing much of the world, relocation initiatives can humanise risk and migration – often prompting unusual outpourings of support for individual participants in relocation despite contrary prevailing popular opinions about migrants and refugees.[77]

However, the impact of relocation can also be less benign for both the participant in relocation and the host communities. One manager of a relocation initiative for artists at risk noted the fetishisation of risk: "What I'm arguing to you first and foremost is that there is a hungry market that loves to consume the artist in danger."[78] Some managers noted that participants in relocation are often invited to give talks and otherwise participate in events without any thought given to how they benefit from such activities; the participant is seen as a common good (in every sense of the term) to be deployed instrumentally to counter the perceived causes of his or her risk.

The impact of temporary relocation initiatives as a whole is difficult to assess. Coordinators expressed a wide variety of views of the purposes ("theory of change") of their programme. All coordinators identified the safety and well-being of the participant in relocation as their primary (and sometimes only) consideration. Additional considerations included the ability to benefit from capacity building, networking or advocacy opportunities while in relocation and their ability to make a contribution to the local social or cultural scene. However, while these factors may contribute to both the selection and programming of relocation initiatives, they were seldom measured in any structured way. As

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[75] Interview with M12 on 29 November 2018.
[76] Interview with M1 on 2 November 2018.
[77] Interview with M1 on 2 November 2018.
[78] Interview with M4 on 6 and 8 November 2018.

discussed further below, evaluations tended to focus almost exclusively on the impact of relocation on participants.

Some coordinators, particularly those within organisations that grappled with some of the larger challenges of protection, expressed concern about the resources required for relocation and the necessary "elitism" of relocation. Participants in relocation similarly expressed concerns about the effect of their absence on their colleagues, organisations, networks and causes back in their country of origin. However, beyond a small number of funders (generally voicing similar issues), the current project did not seek to interview individuals outside the community of coordinators and participants in relocation.

More anecdotally, relocation programmes involving a wide range of partner organisations often mentioned the fit of the participant in relocation with one or more of the local partners as a key consideration (and outcome) of relocation and it is not difficult to imagine how such a fit could create impacts. Such arrangements were more common in relocation initiatives hosting artists at risk and, in such initiatives; partner organisations included a wide range of cultural institutions. For example, the hosting of a musician by a local orchestra would have an impact on the latter, both as an institution and the individual musicians within it. Both the long term nature of many local hosting arrangements and the growing number of local hosting arrangements bringing together a range of partner organisations suggests that there is a regular, significant and positive impact in such organisations by relocation. However, as with civil society impacts, the distance of the coordinators from such an impact makes it difficult to ascertain. Future research could build on the current project by expanding the pool of interviewees to include those located in partner organisations and the host community more broadly as well as those located in civil society in the countries of origin of the participants in relocation.

2.3   Evaluating temporary international relocation initiatives

The research question guiding the consideration of the evaluation of temporary relocation initiatives of the research project was: How can the effect of these programmes be measured and possibly improved?

The issue of evaluating relocation initiatives was through questions directly inquiring as to how initiatives monitored and evaluated their activities.

As noted in the discussion of impact, much of the evidence is anecdotal. Few relocation initiatives have embarked upon a systematic, independent evaluation of their programming; only three of the relocation initiatives surveyed had employed an independent, external evaluator to review their programming (and most often as a result of a demand by a funder). While all initiatives provided reports to funders, these were generally descriptive in nature (of the activities and support during relocation) and were not focused on evaluating the programming. Many of the surveys of participants in relocation were, for logistical ease, collected during relocation (albeit during the final days or weeks). Defenders who were interviewed expressed such gratitude for being selected for and having an opportunity to participate in relocation that it would be difficult to imagine a willingness to provide critique or criticism. The ability to evaluate the long term impact (and safety) of participants is hampered by the lack of resources to maintain contact with participants after return.

3. Conclusion

This part of the report consciously uses the term "community of practice" to describe the emerging networks of relocation initiatives. Relocation initiatives, consistent with the literature on communities of practice, share a common domain of knowledge, shared sense of community, and focus on the specific tactics and management of temporary international relocation. The sense of community amongst those involved in relocation was evident at the workshops and meetings attended during this research project. Adopting the term community of practice, leads to the conclusion that future support should be developed for relocation initiatives around four key activities:

- Decreasing the learning curve of new relocation initiatives (and new staff on existing relocation initiatives);
- Improving the ability of relocation initiatives to respond to the changing needs of funders and participants in relocation;
- Improving the spread of good practices in relocation; and,
- Developing new practices and innovations in relocation.

The identification of the challenges facing managers of relocation of this research should strengthen the ability of the community to develop training material for new relocation initiatives, building on existing resources such as those developed by Shelter Cities, ICORN and various funders. Supporting the learning of (new) managers of relocation is particularly important in terms of dealing with the well-being issues posed by the role – both to better ensure the well-being of participants and to reduce the attrition of individuals from these important roles. Equally, both sending and host communities need better support to maximise their positive impact on the selection, integration and return of participants in relocation.

This research has drawn upon a limited number of interviews with participants in relocation. It has also exposed the lack of systematic review processes to more rigorously evaluate the "successes" of relocation. In this respect, this report should be read alongside that of Stanley Seiden which had a greater focus on and input from (past) participants in relocation. It is also important to note that only one manager surveyed had any personal experience of risk or protective relocation (though many had experience of migration more generally). This partly reflects the overrepresentation of European sites of relocation in the community and in this research project. However, given the growth of relocation initiatives in the global South it raises questions about the extent to which the staffing of initiatives can be true to both the ethos of participation within the human rights project and its reliance on building solidarity between participants and host communities.

This research has begun to identify good practices – and divergent views of practice in need of further discussion and investigation. More research is needed to test the good practices that have been identified and to develop good practices in domains such as well-being which are particularly important to relocation. For example, the development of and testing of a "tool box" of tactics to address well-being during relocation is vitally important. Such a tool box would bring together and assess the wide range of existing practices and bring mental health professionals and para-professionals more fully into the conversation.

Notwithstanding that this research project reveals that much remains to be done in terms of solidifying the evidence base for relocation, it is notable that the community of practice has been enthusiastic about this study and the discussions that have already occurred of its initial findings. A broad commitment to sharing, reflecting on, and critiquing practice, more than any future research, is key to the continuing growth and development of temporary international relocation and the strengthening of its community of practice.

III. Improvement of relocation programmes from the perspective of participants *by Stanley Seiden*

This part of the report focuses on the experiences of participants of shelter and relocation programmes, their experiences, and the impact of relocation on the communities in their places of origin. The bulk of the information supporting this study was obtained through interviews and surveys conducted with 60 participants of temporary shelter and relocation programmes. Of this number, approximately 10% of participants originated from Central/South America, 20% from East and Southeast Asia, 10% from the Middle East and North Africa, 35% from East Africa, 10% from Sub-Saharan countries outside of East Africa, and 15% from Central Asia and former Soviet states. Respondents included artists, writers, musicians, directors and film producers, lawyers, civil organisers, journalists, scholars, teachers, NGO workers, and government whistleblowers. They were participants in relocation programmes designed to last between three months and two years, individuals who received relocation and shelter support with no fixed duration, as well as individuals who had already fled their country of origin due to threats or persecution prior to their application to participate in any relocation programme. Individuals who applied for relocation did so seeking a variety of objectives: an escape from a dangerous environment or a safe haven to continue their work, an opportunity to refresh, development of skills and capacities, and new connections in international organisations.

To add a further degree of complication, the countries of origin and destination for participants of relocation programmes are deeply relevant to their experience, needs, challenges, and most successful relocation strategies. Certain programmes in certain countries are often better suited to receive certain types of artists or civil society actors, or residents of certain countries, than others.

In this diverse context, answers to the question of how to improve the effectiveness of these programmes are similarly multifaceted. Ultimately, the most comprehensive approach to meeting the shelter and relocation needs of threatened civil society actors will require a coordinated approach between numerous stakeholders, leveraging the comparative advantages of each to provide the most appropriate experience to applicants.

1. Contribution of shelter und relocation programmes to enhance civil society initiatives and cultural scenes

Participants in shelter initiatives expressed almost unanimous endorsement for the work of these programmes. While there exists an inescapable bias in polling programme participants on the benefits of these programmes, qualitative research data also supports the conclusion that shelter and relocation provide irreplaceable contributions to the work of their beneficiaries. Artists and writers discover new ideas, new themes, new supporters, and new audiences for their work. Advocates for justice and political reform find new allies and devise new strategies for engagement. Almost all respondents described their time in relocation or shelter as an opportunity to recharge and revitalise. In some cases, individuals who simply had no room for expression or engagement find that space during relocation; in the direst cases, programme participants may owe their lives to their decision to leave their country, for which facilitation by these programmes is vital.

1.1 Preservation of life and liberty

Without question, the most critical contribution of relocation programmes to the continuation of civil-society and cultural scenes are the physical protection of their participants from judicial and physical attack. Many participants in relocation programmes and other recipients of relocation support leave their countries of origin under immediate threat of arrest, imprisonment, or physical harm. While the source of these threats vary by region, country, and circumstance, they all carry the potential effect of completely removing an activist or artist from their sphere of work, cutting them off from colleagues, family, and support networks, and breaking up the movements they support.

> "Then I saw a report on the [government's] official TV channel, showing our [office] equipment together with huge piles of weapons, and they were claiming our organization was a terrorist cell […]. Then I realized I couldn't go back anymore."
> Cultural manager, Middle East

For this reason, in cases of threat to life and liberty, one of the most important functions of shelter and relocation programmes is simply to keep these threatened individuals alive and safe. Many participants in this research project were forced to seek relocation opportunities because of such threats, and many similarly attribute their current ability to continue their work to the fact that they left their threatening environment when they did.

> "The relocation allowed me to save my life." Human rights defender, East Africa

The threats facing artists and activists are varied, and the ideal strategies to face these risks are highly case-specific. With regard to the threats to life and liberty discussed here, shelter and relocation opportunities may be most effective when the following criteria are met:

- Threats to an individual are highly specific and localised;
- Short-term relocation out of an applicant's immediate environment is anticipated to be sufficient to carry the participant past the threats in question;
- Relocation will not lead to new threats or vulnerabilities for an applicant upon their eventual return to their place of origin;
- Relocation will not lead to new threats or vulnerabilities for the applicant's family or community in their place of origin.

So long as these conditions are met, however, shelter and relocation programmes can provide an irreplaceable service to participants and the causes they serve. In some cases, rather than simply safeguarding an individual's life and liberty, participation in relocation programmes can lower the overall risk level facing relocation participants. Two interview participants commented on a positive effect of relocation in raising their profile in the eyes of local authorities "from the village level to the international level." Following their return from relocation, authorities were less willing to take certain judicial action against these individuals.

> "Since I work at the very local level, it was good to raise the stakes of attack [by authorities][…]. I am not just a guy from [the village] anymore. Years back, they could arrest me at any time. Now I had profiled myself from the village level to the international level; the stakes were higher." Human rights defender, East Africa

Due to the nature of threats facing many artists and activists, temporary relocation programmes may provide only temporary relief to threats to life and liberty. In particular, challenges arise in three cases:

- First, when the threat to life or liberty outlasts the allowed duration of relocation;
- Second, when relocation is an insufficient measure to protect the individual, or otherwise creates greater risks for the individual's community or work environment in their country of origin;
- Third, when an act of relocation itself can raise the existing threat level of the individual.

These cases should by no means render an individual ineligible for relocation on the basis that relocation is insufficient to provide long-term protection to the risk an individual may be facing. Several research participants facing unresolved threats, or otherwise still unable to return home for security reasons, predictably remain immensely grateful to the programmes that have supported their relocation. In many cases, these individuals are able to continue their work, art, or activism during and in their place of relocation, as shall be discussed later in this report.

Therefore, in the pursuit of expanding the benefits of this particular contribution of shelter and relocation programmes, the nature of these risks should be incorporated into the strategy devised for any given applicant seeking relocation support.

When threats to an individual's life and liberty are…	…shelter or relocation programmes…	
…local, specific, and short-term, and involvement with an international organisation can improve an individual's security,	…are at their most effective, and can both provide a safe haven for a participant throughout their period of risk as well as afford them greater safety upon their return to their place of origin.	Based on this research, this circumstance applies most often to activists and artists working at the grassroots level, whose harassment or threats come primarily from local authorities or in relation to a specific event or incident.
…local, specific, and short-term, with no anticipated benefit to involvement with an international organisation,	…provide a crucial escape for at-risk individuals, so long as the duration of their relocation programme is sufficiently long, and adequate plans are made for the individual's safe return.	This circumstance frequently applies to activists and artists targeted by local authorities or in relation to a specific event or incident.
…long-term, with no immediately foreseeable conclusion,	…should take early steps to create plans for once the relocation duration has concluded.	This circumstance frequently applies to activists and artists threatened by local violent conflict or violently hostile political regimes.
…not specific to an individual, but shared among her/his colleagues or family by association,	…should consider offering relocation assistance to a family unit or a group of at-risk colleagues.	
…likely to be exacerbated by an individual's participation in a relocation programme,	…must make plans to conceal sensitive aspects of the relocation process.	

1.2   The revitalising impact of relocation programmes

Subsequent to the safeguarding survival and freedom, shelter and relocation programmes also provide a vital service of restitution and rejuvenation. Opportunities to rest and recharge outside of stressful or dangerous work environments has a powerful effect on programme participants, but these effects also carry forward via participants to the movements they work in.

> "I spent a lot time just taking walks by the sea; every day, I would spend an hour walking by the sea and thinking. This was very nice for me." Human rights defender, Asia

Research participants from across the world reported feelings of stress, burnout, intimidation, and exhaustion. Similarly, many responded that they spent very little time on self-care or well-being in the course of their work, whether for reasons of intense workload or lack of self-care tools. For these individuals, relocation programmes that brought individuals far from their threatening or stressful environments impacted them strongly; some attributed their ability to continue doing their work completely to the chance they had to recharge while on relocation.

> "In 2012, I was feeling very burnt out and exhausted, because of the security situation, and because I was receiving intimidating notes, and all of that was very tiring. I wanted to get out." Human rights defender, Asia

> "Without having had those days for myself, maybe now I would be more sick or maybe dead." Community activist, South America

The means by which programme participants achieve this revitalisation are varied. Many respondents reported feeling rest and refreshed simply to have a holiday, away from the stresses and challenges of their daily work requirements. Some well-funded programmes are able to offer services or support activities focused on mental health and well-being. Other programmes offer basic medical services for participants, while still others provide support for athletic or other recreational or cultural activities. When discussing the most positive aspects of relocation experiences, programme participants frequently mention these components of their relocation experiences first. Some programme-supported activities mentioned by study participants include:

- General health exams;

- Psychological consultations;

- Gynecological examinations for women;

- Examinations by other medical specialists;

- Sessions on wellness and self-care;

- Access to thermal pools;

- Yoga classes;

- Access to gym and fitness facilities;

- Funding for participation in recreational activities;

- Swimming classes;

- Academic opportunities, both in teacher and student roles;

- Trips to cultural or historic sites;

- Tickets to films, concerts, or theatrical performances;

- Bicycle access.

"I think I'm re-energized, I've rebooted… the experience for me mentally was so spot-on, that I can only pray that more projects or programs are there for human rights defenders. They are very needed." Human rights defender, East Africa

"[Relocation provides a] battery recharge, something good for your body, for your sense of appreciation, everything. My work is better. That opportunity contributed a lot to my existence [afterward]." Human rights defender, Middle East

While relaxation is a benefit in itself, these revitalisation effects follow programme participants back to their places of origin, as well. One programme participant wrote that she was now able to socialise and engage with her community again, in a way her mental state had not permitted prior to the restful experience and counseling sessions she enjoyed during her programme. Another credited his saner, calmer approach to his work on his refreshed mental state following his relocation experience. Furthermore, these positive effects spill over into the movements that programme participants support, as well. One interviewee reported that he returned to his home country with new enthusiasm, to the extent that he was finally taking action on new training and outreach initiatives that he had been considering starting for years. Another discussed sharing tools she had learned for mindfulness and self-care with other activists in her network.

> "I feel a lot better on well-being and health. When I arrived and talked to HRDs from around the world, everyone talked about the problem of feeling depressed, problems of mental health, and it made me realize how much healing or well-being for HRDs is really important. When I came home, we tried to start a project to support and take care of our well-being." Human rights defender, Asia

There are two significant limitations to the "revitalising" benefits that deserve mention here. While the rejuvenating effect of relocation programmes definitely strengthens the effectiveness of artists, HRDs, and civil society actors when it exists, sometimes relocation programmes fail to achieve this result, or the spiritually beneficial aspects of a relocation experience can be otherwise overwhelmed by other, negative aspects.

In some cases, research participants communicated that they felt unsafe or unstable even in their places of relocation. Such responses were most common among individuals who were forced to extend their duration of relocation due to ongoing threats to their safety in their place of origin. For these individuals, relocation may have started as a positive, encouraging situation, but later transitioned into a source of stress and anxiety. Relocation experiences transforming into exile represents an ongoing vulnerability of relocation programmes, a phenomenon that will be discussed in greater detail later in this report.

In other cases, individuals participating in relocation in countries close to their place of origin often feel that they are not sufficiently removed from the source of the primary threats against them. Political regimes that persecute civil society actors and human rights defenders often have no qualms in sending officers, or recruiting expatriate citizens or foreign governments, to monitor, follow, harass, or even arrest citizens living overseas. While this research encountered no cases of an individual participating in a relocation programme suffering arrest during their programme, numerous respondents reported feeling unsafe in their place of relocation due to concerns of monitoring or surveillance by hostile regimes from their country of origin.[79]

Finally, some participants noted that the restful effects of relocation can wear off faster than they anticipate, particularly once they are drawn back into the stress of their working life. Multiple respondents noted that, while they try to be mindful to preserve the mindset

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[79] This phenomenon was particularly prevalent among individuals from African countries currently living in Uganda, and almost non-existent among other research participants.

and mental calm they enjoyed while in the relocation programme, it can be difficult to preserve that state once returned to their home environment.

These negative cases in no way detract from the potential benefit to mental health and well-being that relocation programmes can offer. Rather, they highlight certain subsections of participants in relocation programmes who would benefit from greater attention and support by these programmes. Methods for providing such support will be expanded on in later sections of this report.

1.3   Idea and information exchange across communities and individuals

While some participants in relocation programmes are eager for an opportunity to put their work aside and embrace a period of relaxation, many take advantage of their time in a foreign country to expand their support networks and develop their professional contacts. In terms of building capacity for individuals and the movements they support, this practice serves as a critical channel for relocation programmes to fortify cultural and civil society.

Professional connections with political, organisational, and community stakeholders offer many benefits to relocation participants. Relationships with international organisations and diplomatic representatives strengthen at-risk individuals' access to support for themselves and their colleagues in their countries of origin. Introduction to donor organisations and funding groups encourage participants' organisational autonomy and capacity to expand and manage their own programmes. Linking programme participants to local organisations working on related issues expands solidarity networks and enables exchange of strategies and information. Connecting artists and content creators to local contributors to cultural scenes similarly encourages idea exchange and collaborative creation.

> "I am restarting [in my place of relocation], but it is quite fair, because I am getting attention from journalists, wanting to interview me, because I wrote a song that is on the [local] radio." Artist, Europe

These connections remain useful—and in some cases, become more useful—once relocation participants return to their places of origin. Many programme participants reported that they maintained their relationship with overseas organisations and stakeholders following their return, in order to hold activities, explore new projects, conduct new advocacy campaigns, and continue to develop their support networks.

"[My relocation sponsors] also connected me to people of important institutions like International Commission on Missing Persons, the Amsterdam municipality, the Institute of Forensic Studies of Holland, Amnesty International […]. The opportunity to meet institutions like ICMP has given us a bigger opening to know what can be done in the search for missing persons […] so much so that since my return we organized a press conference involving several members of my Collective. It was very productive." Human rights defender, Central America

"One of the attractions was the opportunity to engage with other HRDs, funding agencies, that do similar work, sometimes, the organisations that you engage with are less relevant? The means of selecting the partners and agencies that you engage with. When we are given such an opportunity to stay outside our work place, to regain strength and to build fresh contacts, I consider it a lifetime opportunity." Human rights defender, East Africa

Relocation programmes that simultaneously host multiple participants in a single location offer an additional benefit of enabling artists or HRDs from different regions or areas of work to meet and coordinate. Several research participants highlighted these opportunities in their praise of relocation programmes. For one artist, a collaborative mural project with artists from around the world proved the most rewarding component of her three-month relocation experience. Other respondents similarly highlighted occasional group meals and meetings, organised by the host organisation, at which relocation participants from several countries could meet, play, and share stories and experiences. These respondents described their appreciation to learn about the working and living conditions, challenges, and strategies in the home regions of other relocation participants. In addition to the value of exchanging best practices, however, respondents also expressed that connecting with fellow activists and artists imbued them with a strong sense of empowerment and validation, that others were engaged in similar struggles and facing similar obstacles around the world.

For participants in relocation programmes, many of whom have trouble securing opportunities for international travel, collaborative opportunities like those described above are very difficult to come by in the course of their daily life and work. While certain international conferences and human rights platforms exist for activist and artist communities to meet and exchange ideas, these events typically last only a few days, limiting the opportunities for and benefits from interaction and collaboration. Relocation programmes that can facilitate meetings and other events for participants from diverse backgrounds therefore provide a critical service for those participants. Even if these meetings do not lead to future collaborative activities between participants after they return to their home

regions, establishing relationships between these individuals and communities strengthens and reinforces the global artistic and human rights communities in general.

> "These programmes provide a different experience for the participants—to experience different countries, different causes. They get to know each other, and in the future they can make plans together." Case manager, Relocation Programme

The extent to which relocation programmes support this sort of network formation is often dependent on programme resources and location. Some programmes lack the connections or manpower to facilitate network development, while others operate in cities or regions where few international stakeholders operate. The positive feedback from those relocation participants who benefited from these relationships, however, should encourage all relocation programmes to establish or continue developing capacity for expanding participants' professional and social networks.

1.4   Skills and knowledge development

A fourth contribution mentioned by numerous research participants is skill acquisition and capacity development for project participants. Typical examples mentioned by research participants include language skills, project management skills, knowledge of international human rights principles, laws, and mechanisms, enrollment in university courses or study of other academic disciplines, and training in aspects of digital and other protection.

Language learning is a common feature of many relocation programmes and one of the most crucial. English tends to be the language most commonly offered, but this varies based on participants' interests, needs, and the location of the relocation programme. Language training, in particular, serves multiple functions for relocation participants. In cases where a participants' engagement with an international human rights organisation could heighten the individual's level of risk, English class enrollment provides a convenient cover for the individual's whereabouts and activities during their period in relocation. A second key benefit of local language acquisition is to enable greater integration of the individual into their host community. Integration has an immediate effect for participants of short-term relocation programmes, because greater community immersion enhances the restorative effects of relocation as described above. For persons facing voluntary or involuntary long-term relocation, stronger language skills can be critical in securing welfare services, employment, and community acceptance necessary for a stable life during their ongoing displacement.

Finally, second language skills contribute to the work of artists, HRDs, and civil socie-ty actors by opening up critical channels of communication with global stakeholders. While this is most true of English language skills, heightened capacity in other European languages can also facilitate engagement with important organisational, diplomatic, and media contacts important for project development, solidarity campaigns, and other activi-ties.

In addition to English classes, many participants in relocation programmes enroll in university courses on human rights and other topics. For some longer-term participants, they even find sufficient time to complete entire Master's degrees, often with funding support from sponsoring organisations. Knowledge acquisition at this level has accrueds numerous benefits to relocation participants and their movements. In addition to the advantages of deeper knowledge on topics and feels relevant to their work and interests, academic certification—or any other form of skill mastery—affords an individual much greater flexibility in their work and life. Many participants of relocation programmes are forced to seek out relocation opportunities because they have been forced out of their jobs or organisations, or their organisations have been shuttered or de-registered completely. Acquiring new skills empowers relocation participants to better find new employment upon returning to their place of origin. In cases where an individual is unable to return home due to threats to their safety or well-being, skill certification can help them to find employment or achieve a more stable livelihood in their displaced location until the time when they are able to return.

Aside from courses and skill training facilitated by relocation organisations, many or-ganisations directly provide training on human rights and security topics. These trainings range from tutorials on human rights mechanisms to sessions covering varied aspects of security and protection, including capacity-building on such topics as risk assessment, designing emergency plans, digital protection, and personal and organisational safety. For many relocation participants, these training sessions offer a first exposure to vital topics.

As with other aspects of relocation programmes, trainings offered to relocation partic-ipants enjoy spillover effects to colleagues of those participants once they return to their places of origin. One case manager of a relocation programme described how trainings on the European Court of Human Rights, the International Criminal Court, and international human rights conventions have been highly appreciated by programme participants, even those residing outside of Europe, for the broader understanding of how human rights frameworks can be employed for their protection and the knowledge shared with their colleagues at home. A relocation participant interviewed in this study described a pro-

gramme she is working on which aims to connect with a local embassy to provide digital protection training to other organisations operating in her city. This latter case highlights the exponential impact of training courses provided in the course of relocation programmes: the content of any community digital protection course will likely differ from the specific course provided to the participant during the course of her own relocation experience. However, the participant attributes her passion for establishing such a course to the awareness and security consciousness instilled in her during her participation in the programme.

Safeguarding life and liberty, an opportunity to recharge, broadened professional networks, and new skills and capacities are only four of the myriad ways that relocation programmes strengthen and empower the work of artists and activists around the world, but they are among the most significant. The means by which these programmes deliver these services, however, are also greatly varied, and in many cases stand to be strengthened and improved.

2. Improving shelter and relocation programmes

The task of improving temporary relocation programmes faces one overarching challenge: because existing programmes aim to serve a variety of purposes for a myriad population of diverse actors, there is no single standard of quality or success along which programmes can be objectively measured or strengthened. For example, an academic fellowship programme designed to provide a rigorous course of study for threatened academics may assess itself on the rigor of its curriculum, whereas a programme focused on recuperation may measure itself on the relaxing environment provided.

Even within the scope of a single programme, "improvements" in one aspect of programme operation could even lead to deterioration in quality of others. The quote below highlights one such paradox:

> "I've spoken to several artists, and one question that arises is, do you allow yourself to become more vocal [now that] you're in a safe city? Your profile can be raised, you can keep fighting, you can keep making trouble to make things better. But if you do that, raise your bigger-than-life profile, then when you go back [you will be] in more danger than you were before." Artist, East Africa

One aim of relocation programmes is to provide activists with a safe haven while their threat level in their home country decreases. At the same time, many programmes aim to provide a suitable environment for programme participants to continue their work and expand their network. If a relocation programme seeks to improve itself by better facilitating a human rights defender's work, and as a result of increased work during the relocation period, the defender's level of risk rises, it is unclear if the programme has truly improved.

As a second example, many relocation programmes intend to provide a relaxing, restorative atmosphere for their participants, while also creating a stimulating course of activities to engage participants during their stay. As demonstrated in the previous section, providing relocation participants with opportunities to recharge themselves is one of the most important contributions of such programmes. And yet, developing a programme's capacity for complete relaxation could weaken its ability to provide a fertile working environment for participants who wish to retain some industry during their relocation experience.

Among the array of relocation programmes operating today, no two of them provide the same package of services and benefits to their participants, nor do any two pro-

grammes seek to do so. As such, the means by which one programme might improve its effectiveness or impact may not even be applicable to another programme based in another region or serving a different target population. And indeed, many of the means of improvement described in the main body of this section may prove inapplicable to some organisations.

But first, there are three responses to the broader quandary of diversified specialisation among the spectrum of shelter programmes. These responses, while intentionally not phrased in the form of actionable recommendations, enjoy a universal applicability across all relocation programmes, and thus serve as a useful introduction to this section.

First, while specific programmatic changes to a relocation programme can have opposing or inconsistent effects with regard to programme participants, expanding programme capacity in itself constitutes an impact-neutral addition of value. To provide a concrete example, some relocation participants describe thriving under a busy schedule of meetings and activities with stakeholders in their host country, while other participants describe that hectic scheduling denies them the time they need to integrate and process new knowledge, skills, or thinking. In this sense, any sort of programme-level change to make schedules busier or more relaxed will satisfy and improve the experience of some and worsen the experience of others.

On the other hand, working to broaden the network of stakeholders available for engagement with relocation participants creates an opportunity without imposing obligation on a relocation participant. To leave behind the example of participant schedules, this same reasoning applies to psychological services, access to recreational and recuperative activities, and physical resource and training courses. While not all of these services, activities, or courses would be of benefit to all participants, ensuring their availability to individuals participating in temporary relocation in itself enhances the process.

Second, and more simply, programmes can improve their impact by continuing to increase communication and time planning with project participants. Several respondents to this survey commented that there were small adjustments that would have improved their relocation experience, such as earlier access to certain training topics or psychological counseling or more opportunities to develop their skills while living abroad. Many also arrive in their place of relocation with no idea of what to expect in terms of daily activities. Relocation programme staff can address this issue by increasing discussion on the schedule for their relocation experience and encouraging participants to take autono-

my in shaping that time as they need. Equally important, this approach enables a programme to better tailor the relocation experience to the capacities, interests, and needs of the individual participants, instead of leaving it to participants to fit themselves into a standardised relocation experience.

These two responses both comprise internal actions that can be undertaken independently by shelter-providing organisations. The third, which represents a communal commitment by the body of organisations providing this service, is greater communication, information sharing, and referral between organisations. It is inevitable that each organisation will possess its own expertise, strengths, and unique opportunities. As the community of shelter-providing organisations continues to grow, it will be important for these organisations to determine how the broader network of services can best serve the pool of applicants requiring support. This idea will be examined in greater detail later in this section.

On the subject of improving relocation programmes, many respondents initially found the question difficult to answer, recalling first the heartfelt care and compassion shown by programme staff and expressing gratitude for their opportunity to participate in such a programme. After some discussion, six primary themes emerged on which these programmes might be strengthened, from the perspective of participants and their communities. Three of these themes relate directly to sub-sections of the preceding chapter of this report. Participants were highly appreciative of programmes' focus on skill building, health and relaxation, and professional empowerment, and many of their comments addressed ways in which these ends can be better achieved. The remaining three themes address other aspects of shelter and relocation programmes and how these programmes can better serve the cultural, artistic, human rights, and civil society movements that they aim to support. These themes are expanding access, developing more comprehensive support mechanisms, and facilitating long-term residency.

2.1 Relaxation and health

Relatively few programmes currently offer mental health or psychological counseling as a component of their standard offerings to participants, but those that did receive this opportunity all found it immensely useful and important, even those who reported that they did not particularly like their appointed psychologist.

> "My programme had a psychologist [available], so it was great that I could meet my psychologist, but I know other programmes did not have that. It would be good for other HRDs to have access to counseling services, for other HRDs. When I am Thailand, I cannot go talk to a doctor because I cannot trust them, but in Europe I can. Still, more individuals should have that option." Activist, East Asia

Psychological services represent one of the areas where "capacity expansion" can be most useful for relocation programmes. The stresses and burnout risks for HRDs, activists, and artists at risk have been covered both earlier in this report and extensively in other literature, and offering even basic sessions with a trained psychologist can empower relocation participants to see themselves, their work, their stress, and their challenges in new ways that may be beneficial to them (Chen/Gorski 2015).

> "It was quite difficult to arrange psychological treatment during my program. One of the biggest obstacles was that I did not know how the [local] medical system worked; it was very different than in my country. I spoke with [programme] organizers and learned there was a waiting period, in the end I had to wait three weeks. [But,] I didn't talk [about wanting psychological services] much in my plans when I applied. I wasn't explicit enough. I was later told by organizers, that when another participant came to that city, it was easier for her to arrange her counseling, maybe because I had pushed on this issue so much." Human rights defender, Central Asia

Furthermore, as the preceding quote demonstrates, it is better for a relocation programme to have some system or plan in place for providing at least a degree of therapeutic counseling or psychological support *prior* to receiving the request. An organisation that is faced with a sudden request from a participant for access to a psychologist, especially in the case of a participant who will soon have to return to their country of origin, will be much better able to meet that wish if they have already made arrangements or preparations in this area.

Other participants discussed the issues they had with current and previous programme-sponsored psychologists. One participant expressed frustration that the psychologist, a local national, did not seem to know or understand the local context where the participant worked. The participant explained that he would expect for the psychologist to be an expert on the situation in the participant's country of origin. However, some understanding of the issues involved can be critical, even for just the process of listening to and understanding the participant's lived experience.

"I really appreciated working with a psychologist in this three-month term. The psychologist helped me to consider my goals. I have worked with psychologists in other short term programs—they were not very effective and didn't have success of this one." Human rights defender, Europe

Some participants also commented specifically on the issue of working with a psychologist they do not like. In the words of the participants, an ideal situation would be for recipients of psychological treatment to have a choice of two or three psychologists that they could choose between. This may be entirely impossible for many relocation programmes, due to budgetary constraints, insurance policy limitations, or lack of suitable practitioners in the area, but these notes may still prove instructive as organisations attempt to develop their capacity in the domain of mental health support.

Finally, it is also important to mention in this section the importance of offering general medical evaluation for participants in relocation programmes. Activists and individuals under threat often neglect proper medical self-care, and multiple participants in this research reported that they learned of potentially life-threatening conditions while enrolled in a relocation programme. While most programmes at least guarantee emergency medical coverage while an individual is living in their host country, enabling a general medical overview can have life-saving implications for a participant.

Of those programmes that do support basic medical services in their support package, most participants were satisfied with their medical care. One participant felt frustrated by the speed of the medical system in his host country.

2.2 Professional empowerment and network development

Organisations involved in providing relocation opportunities work on a daily basis with artists, activists, and HRDs from around the world. From this perspective, it can be easy to forget that many relocation participants have opposite experience in their daily working life, operating in varying degrees of isolation with few chances to meet, collaborate, and brainstorm with allies and others in similar fields from elsewhere on the globe.

Not all relocation programmes enjoy the capacity to facilitate exchanges between multiple relocation participants, but those that do should take greater advantage of this opportunity.

> "I think that one thing that went really well [was meeting with other relocation partici-
> pants]. We met together with other activists in similar situations. I recall an emotional
> moment where everyone shared feelings about their situation; some people had re-
> ceived death threats in their country, and were partaking [in a shelter programme] just
> to stay alive. We were from very different cultures and backgrounds, Zambia, Palestine,
> and others and others, and working together is very helpful and supportive. Maybe we
> need more space and common context in addition to [group] workshops. Why don't we
> have a small meeting together weekly, every two weeks, a small lunch? It would help
> us." Activist, Southeast Asia

> "In the Netherlands, they have almost ten shelter spaces hosting HRDs, and there are
> not many spaces for HRDs to meet, maybe a place for them to meet, short term, just to
> talk, I think it is not enough. When I talk with my friends from Indonesia, I get inspira-
> tion from them, because we are HRDs working in this field together, but we get a lot of
> problems because of our work. But if we talk to together, we can discuss our opinions
> and knowledge and tools, but it is also a great way for to communicate more. More op-
> portunities!" Human rights defender, Asia

Certain relocation programmes that host multiple participants a year, all in close geographical proximity to one another, are clearly best suited to such a proposal. However, there are numerous relocation programmes situated in adjacent European countries, and there may be opportunities for such interaction and exchange across programmes. Of course, any interaction of this sort first requires a careful analysis of the risk profiles of all participants involved in the event that one participant's safety could be jeopardised if their involvement in a relocation programme were made public. However, this caveat is equally applicable to any activity that may involve public engagement by programme participants.

In addition to opportunities for programme participants to meet with and learn from one another, participants also highly value opportunities to engage with other stakeholders involved in their areas of work. This report has previously mentioned the experience of a human rights defender who was able to meet with organisations working on the issue of missing persons, and musicians who were connected to local music venues and groups. Multiple research participants described how these opportunities empowered and inspired them to continue and develop their work.

> "One of the attractions was the opportunity to engage with other HRDs, funding agencies, and organisations that do similar work. When we are given such an opportunity to stay outside our normal place of work, to regain strength and to build fresh contacts, I consider it a lifetime opportunity. People organizing such a program should on a very serious note recommend it." Human rights defender, East Africa

Finally, in terms of expanding the professional capacity of participants in relocation programmes, one respondent made the following two-part suggestion:

> "However, from a practical point of view, [every participant in relocation programmes] should have a right place to fit, and could contribute in a way that maintains his efforts in his field. If I have been relocated to your organisation now, instead of just asking me to do some activities, involve me!"

Earlier in this chapter, this report mentioned the importance of personalising each relocation experience to the individual undergoing relocation. As this report will explore later on, organisations can better support target populations by undertaking a more involved application approval process; one component of this is to view each applicant on the basis of her or his strengths and capacities in addition to her or his needs.

The above quote demonstrates that this tailoring process carries value not only for the individual, but can potentially be of use to both a host organisation and the cultural scene or human rights cause in which the participant works. Particularly in cases where an individual is participating in a relocation programme for security or skill-building reasons, finding opportunities for the participant to work directly with their host or other organisation on issues of interest to them can serve multiple benefits, validating the skills and expertise of the participant, bringing new perspectives, ideas, and capacities to the host organisation, keeping the participant engaged and involved in her or his field, and imparting valuable experience to the participant that can also strengthen her or his work in the future.[80]

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[80] Long-term relocation programmes have found administrative positions for participants, though this practice seems less common in shorter-term relocation programmes.

2.3 Skill-building and capacity development

Individuals interviewed for this research primarily commented on two aspects of the training opportunities offered therein: training *content* and the *scheduling* of those trainings.

Individuals surveyed in this study mentioned over a dozen training courses and topics. While the most common trainings by far were those on digital protection and human rights mechanisms, respondents mentioned training sessions on delegation and project management, diversifying risk, avoiding stress, communicating with donors, communicating with authorities, and several other topics.

> "The trainings were really useful for my work. [I remember two of the most important,] one on report-writing with a great trainer; it really depends on the trainer. I have used these skills in my work. Another training was on expertise on extremism and terrorism. We learned about collecting information on victims of torture. [Overall,] the trainings offered were very appropriate and on-point." HRD, Central Asia

All direct quotes from survey respondents on the subject of survey content were glowingly positive. No individual surveyed responded that their programme lacked a training topic they thought should have been included. This section is incorporated here regardless to encourage organisations to continue to expand the scope and number of training opportunities they provide, as well as to engage with local and other resources to do so.

Aside from training content, however, multiple participants did address the scheduling of training sessions in the context of their relocation period.

> "So many of us HRDs have problems related to mental health, which makes us we feel insecure in our communities. If you want to bring the HRDs [into relocation programmes], then you should talk to them first about mental health and security as well. We had a security training during my stay, but it happened the last week before I left. I think this is too late. We need to make a plan before then, so we need talk about security and mental health earlier." Activist, Southeast Asia

The trainings provided during relocation inhere benefits to participants both during their time in a place of residence and afterwards, as well. As the above quote demonstrates, however, simply including these trainings in the standard programming can be of limited benefit, if the participants feel they lack adequate time to process or make use of

new knowledge while still enrolled.[81] By holding certain training activities earlier in a relocation period, trainees have greater chance to incorporate their knowledge into their activities as well as to indulge curiosity and expand their understanding further.

As mentioned previously, many programme participants would prefer to have greater autonomy over their schedule of activities. Participants of programmes featuring language classes as a core component expressed appreciation that their host programmes were highly flexible with regard to class attendance. This flexibility granted participants wide leeway to schedule and attend those classes in a manner that best suited their work and recuperation needs. Many research respondents highlighted the amount of control they had over their own agenda as one of the most rewarding components of their experience. Organisations interested in enabling this sort of self-direction may see a value in expanding communication with project participants, both prior to and following their arrival, on how they wish to structure their time.

2.4 Expanding access and awareness

Expanding access to and awareness of relocation programmes is a perennial goal of all organisations that operate such programmes. Expanding the reach of relocation opportunities is important because it helps to provide some fairness to the global relocation process, attempting to avoid single communities or networks from benefiting multiple times, while others not at all. More important, however, is that the most vulnerable populations are also those that have least access to relocation programmes, and least access as well to opportunities to even learn about such programmes.

Based on the responses from participants in this research project, critical access issues exist on four levels: access to potential applicants working at the grassroots level and therefore disconnected from international organisations' standard communication networks; illiteracy as an obstacle to learning about relocation programmes and completing applications; inefficient use of existing communication networks; and insufficient access to individuals who do not perceive themselves as HRDs or otherwise do not believe they are eligible for relocation support.

Grassroots activists, by definition, are often only loosely linked to the global information channels along which calls for relocation applications are disseminated. Even

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[81] In some cases, organisations are forced to delay these trainings due to language constraints.

assuming the network of relocation-granting organisations could overcome their penetration issues, however, literacy can provide another obstacle:

> "We have very great HRDs at grassroots level, even those who can't read and write. We still need and appreciate them; without them we are nothing." Human rights defender, East Africa

And even assuming that an individual can read, literacy is only helpful if target communities receive necessary information on a timely basis. According to an activist from the Middle East,

> "Information is crucial and critical, but it must be accurate information at the right time. Sometimes you get the [call for applications] with only a day or two before the deadline, and then it's like they're only informing you as a formality! Accurate and timely information are very important."

Other respondents to this research expressed frustration at long processing times for programme applicantions, which can be particularly problematic in emergency cases where the difference between departing in two weeks and two months can be very significant for an applicant.

Finally, one respondent suggested that it would be useful for relocation programmes to expand their support to certain other vulnerable groups, specifying in particular free speech advocates facing severe judicial harassment and other individuals persecuted for defending their own rights from authoritarian governments. He was surprised to learn that, by most standards, these individuals would also qualify as human rights defenders and therefore likely be eligible for the relocation schemes discussed herein. This calls to light the final issue of access to be raised here, namely that certain populations of human rights defenders do not realise that they indeed qualify as such, and therefore will not even apply for relocation programme support in the first place.

To affect improvements across these issues of access requires an array of strategies and can be difficult for any organisation to achieve, particularly a centralised organisation lacking representation in target regions. Without the assistance of remote staff to assist in building connections and expanding awareness about relocation opportunities and broad definitions of "human rights defender" and other relevant terms, organisations managing relocation programmes can only rely on existing networks, often including or built around former programme participants. While these networks can be effective, they also lead to "aperture" concerns, particularly in the case where one organisation or individual tends to be the central or sole contact point for a region or country.

2.5 Contextualising shelter and relocation in a broader support framework

The positive effects of shelter and relocation programmes, to some extent, can be observed and analysed only in terms of direct benefit to the wellbeing of their participants. In an assessment of how to strengthen these programmes and their impact, however, it is important to take a wider view of the needs and experiences of activists, artists, and human rights defenders, and the role that relocation plays in supporting these individuals and their work. If those organisations providing shelter and relocation opportunities wish to serve their beneficiaries to the greatest extent possible, it is important to consider relocation support neither as an end in itself, nor as a standalone service. Instead, shelter and relocation programmes should be perceived as a component of a broader process of assistance and empowerment, and the structure, planning, and execution of relocation programmes should be shaped to match this perception.

To a hammer, every problem resembles a nail; to organisations or programmes facilitating relocation and shelter, it can be simple to "prescribe" a fixed relocation programme to any and all individuals requesting support, regardless of the individual's specific experience or needs. Many relocation programmes conduct relocation operations via a uniform framework: for example, participants are invited to travel to a distant country for a period of three months, after which point they are expected to return to their country of origin. This formula is often applied regardless of any specific circumstances or needs of the participant.

Organisations have valid reason for adhering to such formulas. Funding, time, and manpower limitations, as well as legal regulations on visa durations and other logistical considerations, make it difficult for these organisations to enjoy greater programmatic flexibility. In the following observations and suggestions, this paper does not ignore these limitations, but rather aims to encourage organisations to continue seeking new, innovative solutions thereto. The following section of this report will discuss adjustments to the structure of relocation programmes based on suggestions made by participants, namely in the areas of programme duration, family inclusion, and programme location.

Programme duration

The most common response from research participants on this topic was also one of the most commonly voiced suggestions for programme reform: namely, that fixed programme lengths are problematic for participants. Frustrations about programme duration were diverse: some felt that programmes as short as three months were already too long, particularly due to professional or family obligations that made it difficult for participants

to spend so much time away. Others responded that projects of six months or longer were still not long enough, because local threats to safety would not change in so short a time, or because six months was not enough time to learn new skills or fully enjoy the benefits of a relocation experience.

While illustrative of the diverse needs of the participants of relocation programmes, conflicting feedback on appropriate programme duration also clearly demonstrates that no "ideal" duration exists. In terms of participant satisfaction, one potential strategy organisations could implement would be to determine programme duration through consultation with the participant on their particular scheduling preferences and personal situation. Such a strategy suffers from two primary shortcomings, however: the first being the extensive strain such flexibility can place on an organisation's capacity and resources, and the second being that programme participants are not necessarily reliable resources on the ideal length of their own programme. Alice, a programme participant from central Europe described her experience thus:

> "At first, I was concerned about the length of programme: three months seemed too long. Later, understood that it was perfect, it was the exact time I needed for recovery. […] A lot of HRDs are concerned about how to leave their activities and work but I think they shouldn't worry about this. Three months is a perfect length."

From Alice's perspective, three months is the perfect duration for a course of mental restitution and rehabilitation. As discussed previously, however, many organisations provide relocation programmes for other aims as well, such as skill-building or engagement with other organisations or stakeholders, which could increase the amount of time needed to best support the participant.

Unfortunately, the varied responses from programme participants on the question of relocation duration precludes this document from making a firm recommendation on this subject. In the absence of such an ideal, and given the imposing obstacle of visa limitations faced by some organisations, it may seem easier in many cases to continue using a standardised programme duration. To the extent possible, however, it is the recommendation of this paper that relocation programmes strive to make programme length a dynamic property, determined as part of a consultative process incorporating both the experience and expertise of the organisations and the needs of the individual participant.

Family inclusion

> "[You ask yourself], how is it going to turn out? As a mother with children, the programme duration is quite long: three months. How will the children take care of themselves?" Human rights defender, East Africa

Recently, some relocation programmes have begun extending invitations to spouses, partners, and other family members of programme participants to accompany them during their relocation experience. When possible, and when desired by the participant, feedback from participants suggests that this is a beneficial inclusion in programme planning. Allowing participants to bring along families can directly address one of the primary concerns considered by individuals when deciding to participate in a relocation programme. Several respondents to this research who traveled independently also discussed the difficulty of supporting their family remotely, or the stress they felt about not providing more support to their family while participating in a relocation programme. Supporting family members to travel with the primary participant can mitigate these issues.

Furthermore, supporting entire families in a relocation programme can have positive effects on the family as a whole, which further empowers the primary participant. As one respondent from Central Asia remarked,

> "It was not a challenge to travel with my family. On the contrary, our relationship improved. We had some problems, but we came together, and [going through the programme together] made everything better."

In the case of this participant, the organisation sponsoring her relocation also supported English classes for the participant's husband and some family therapy sessions. Skill building for participants' family members and family counseling are often considered well outside the scope of relocation support, but such offerings are prime examples of how relocation programmes can be expanded to more widely perceive participants as complex persons rather than simply threatened individuals. Family stress can provide just as much of an impediment to engaged activism as can external security threats. Programmes that acknowledge these critical family dynamics, even by simply offering for family members to accompany an individual in their temporary relocation, may offer more to their participants than programmes that do not.

Supporting relocation to a third country and other geographical considerations

Most organisations supporting relocating and shelter requests host participants in the country in which these organisations operate, and usually within the same city and neighbourhood. The advantages of such an arrangement are numerous and self-evident, and in general consist of the convenience of situating relocation participants in close proximity to programme staff, and the relative logistical simplicity of operating a programme inside one's own country. Furthermore, most relocation programmes are located in countries that enjoy considerable wealth, peace, and stability, in particular relative to the countries of origin of many participants in such programmes. Finally, few organisations have the capacity to provide comprehensive housing, health, training, recreation, and other types of support in distant locations, meaning that a participant in such a relocation scheme may have to forgo the standard range of assistance services provided by relocation programmes. For these reasons, it is unsurprising that few organisations offer, or even consider, supporting relocation or shelter in a third country.

Nevertheless, some organisations do provide such support, addressing the above issues through various solutions. Under the simplest mechanism for third country relocation, organisations simply provide direct funding to an applicant, who then uses those funds to arrange for their own travel, accommodation, and daily needs. When organisational or hosting support in the third country seems necessary or beneficial, organisations supporting relocation can collaborate with those local organisations to facilitate the relocation process, providing some of the financial resources needed while leaving the logistics of day-to-day support to the local organisation. Finally, inter-organisational referral, by which one relocation programme refers an application to another organisation in a third country, can also be considered as a means by which one organisation facilitates an applicant's relocation to a third country. While this third mechanism ultimately involves little to no involvement from the referring organisation after the referral is made, a successful referral still constitutes a process of relocation to a "third" country: neither the country of origin, nor the country of the organisation to which the applicant originally applied.

In general, this research supports the conclusion that organisations providing relocation support should strive for the greatest degree of flexibility possible, supporting relocation to third countries if and when such an arrangement is optimal for the applicant. In this vein, organisations hosting relocation programmes should continue to make themselves available to one another as strategic geographic assets, lending local knowledge and, when possible, offering to act as hosts for relocation applicants who would benefit from placement in a specific geographic region. Such a system would allow a far more

dynamic and effective response to the needs of programme participants with respect to their geographic location.

In the event that an organisation sees a value in supporting relocation to a third country for an individual, findings from this study suggest that programme comprehensiveness and suitability to the needs of the applicant are the most important indicators in the success of such a programme.

Survey and interview questions on this topic only confirm that distance between country of origin and host country has no clear impact on participant satisfaction or well-being. Some respondents felt lonely or isolated when participating in European relocation programmes, thousands of miles from home, while others who travelled the same distance felt that this distance better enabled them to relax, and who enjoyed the chance to integrate into a new community. Likewise, several research respondents who travelled only to a neighbouring country lived in stressful anxiety, feeling that they still faced risk from authorities of their home country. Others, however, appreciated the opportunity to continue their work with colleagues nearby, or enjoyed being able to use existing language skills and operate in a familiar cultural context.

Multiple interview participants commented on the challenge of living or working in a country where they did not speak the local language. Even when organisations offered training in the local language, programme participants reported that they did not feel as though they had enough time to achieve sufficient mastery of that language to use it effectively in a work context. Particularly for those individuals who express an intention to continue their work while on relocation, it may be better for an organisation to support such an individual to relocate to a country where they can work in their native language, or with a community of individuals with whom they can communicate, rather than requiring that they travel to a country where they cannot operate as effectively.

> "Language is difficult. [If you don't speak the local language], it is difficult to participate in the culture or the artistic scene. It's very alienating, unless you find some people you can communicate with. It's very difficult to make friends. The social need is important… This is one of the biggest challenges and downsides." Artist, East Africa

Delayed return and ongoing support

A number of research respondents were beneficiaries of temporary relocation support who, following the conclusion of their programme or period of support, were still unable to return home safely. The question of safe return is covered primarily in the next section, but several respondents noted that organisations offering relocation support rarely offer any sort of continued assistance for individuals who are unable to return.

Of those respondents to this study who were still living in exile, self-imposed or otherwise, most are still working actively on the same causes that led to their persecution in their home countries. Although the threat of political persecution and physical harm was often lower in their country of residence, these individuals faced new challenges of lacking financial resources for both living and work expenses as well as navigating issues of legal status in their country of residence.

In the course of supporting artists at risk, threatened civil society spaces, and the work of human rights defenders, organisations supporting relocation programmes should consider the wider needs of particularly vulnerable communities. Historically, organisational support for persons seeking relocation begins and ends with the relocation programme itself. In the more progressive model suggested by this work, relocation should comprise a single component of a broader support process, which may involve delayed return to a country of origin, travel to a third safe country, and/or some sort of ongoing support for persons who wish to continue their work but cannot safely return to their home country to do so. This alternative model would also empower relocation organisations to reach out to a wider audience of individuals needing relocation support, in particular those who may be passed over for relocation opportunities because their prospects for return to their home country are so bleak.

Such a model is impracticable given the programmatic, capacity, and budgetary constraints of most organisations managing relocation programmes. As relocation programmes continue to expand and develop, however, these are areas where greater development and support are most needed.

In conclusion, the needs of individuals seeking relocation opportunities, and the diverse capacities of the numerous shelter and relocation programmes that currently exist, unfortunately preclude that a specific formula can be drawn to determine the ideal relocation experience for any type or category of applicant. The optimal approach is for programmes to treat each relocation process as a unique experience, intended to address the

needs of each applicant and the exigencies of her or his circumstances, and taking advantage whenever possible of the resources offered by other organisations and stakeholders in that process.

3. Accompanying measures for a meaningful stay, safe return or successfull integration

3.1 Enabling a meaningful stay

Respondents to this research highlighted several aspects that particularly enhanced their relocation experiences. A number of these aspects are examined here.

Facilitating a relaxing stay

The importance of the "relaxation" components of shelter and relocation programmes have already been discussed in this report, but they are worth repeating here, particularly due to their prevalence in research respondent's testimonies of their relocation experiences. As with all aspects of relocation, however, there is not a single formula for providing a relaxing environment.

> "I really appreciated sleeping—just lying there on my bed. For a month, I silenced my phone, deleted communication apps, and told colleagues to text me only if in case of an apocalypse. But I also wanted my [programme-appointed] counselor to recommend some films and books for me. I want to be 'active' in my rest." NGO Worker, Eastern Europe

> "If I had to choose one best thing, it would be cycling. Of course, The Netherlands is a beautiful country, and there is cycling everywhere, which was beautiful. It was something I was happy to have these three months. Dutch people cycle all year long, and this is a small bit that made me very happy, in [my country] you shouldn't really cycle on the road." Activist, Eastern Europe

> "I really appreciated having uninterrupted time. It was good to do my thing. I finished my book and edited it." NGO Worker, East Africa

The process of designing a restful environment for a programme participant should be collaborative, and programme organisers should maintain regular communication with participants on this point. Some participants in relocation programmes prefer to spend the first month completely at ease, free from all obligations and appointments. Others may find it more relaxing to immediately immerse themselves in their new city or learning opportunities. And while some participants in relocation programmes may possess the autonomy and self-awareness to actively communicate their preferences, other participants may be unable or unwilling to do so. Particularly at the start of a relocation experience, programme organisers should therefore actively engage in dialogue with the participant about how the participant wishes to spend their time, and how the programme staff can support those requests.

Below is a list of activities that research respondents mentioned in the context of relaxing experiences. Organisations that host relocation programmes may wish to consider offering access to such experiences if they do not already do so.

Sources of relaxation mentioned by research participants included:

- Freedom from appointments or work obligations
- Freedom from work messages or notifications
- Communication access to family or colleagues at home
- Privacy in living quarters (including cooking space, recreational space, and access to sleeping areas), rest in a comfortable bed
- Reading, including:
  - "Free reading" of books unrelated to her/his work
  - Reading books on topics related to her/his work
  - Reading on topics of mental health, burnout, and well-being
- Writing/creating, including:
  - "Free writing" on topics unrelated to her/his work
  - Writing on topics related to her/his work
  - Opportunities for artistic expression of any form, both for professional artists and for non-artists
- Sport and exercise, including:
  - Cycling (organisations should consider ensuring that a programme participant has all necessary equipment: helmet, bike lock, reflective vest)
  - Swimming
  - Walking (research respondents referred in particular to walking routes through parks or along water)
  - Gym membership, athletic or sport club participation, or access to other sporting activities
- Cooking/communal eating
  - Access to familiar foods or ingredients for preparing familiar foods
  - Group meals[82]
- Counseling/Therapy[83]

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[82] One relocation participant described regular meals with host organisation staff, for which she would prepare traditional dishes in the apartment provided by the organisation. This participant described these gatherings as one of the most enjoyable parts of the relocation experience.

[83] Therapy and psychosocial counseling are generally covered in other sections of this report. For some individuals, however, work-related anxiety can be a critical and persistent source of stress that impedes a fully restful and restorative relocation experience. For such individuals, sessions with a counselor may be a vital component of the relaxation process.

Engendering a sense of welcome and care

Several research respondents emphasised the importance of the care, devotion, and dedication to participants shown by programme staff. Some respondents expressed surprise that programme staff placed so much importance on participants' needs and well-being.

> "I did not expect the level of care. I expected support, but not care. And here, we feel it: not just relocation, but care, treatment. Being treated as a person and receiving personal attention." Activist, Eastern Europe

> "The arrival process was very smooth. I was really touched by the support and love of the managing committee. I really felt this when they brought me to the airport [to return home]. I was treated as a person, not a project, and this was really overwhelming. I believe that we made lasting friendships." Journalist, East Asia

When discussing the ways that programme staff made participants feel welcomed and cared for, some of the practices mentioned by respondents included:

- Pickup and dropoff at the airport
- Introduction to or opportunities to connect with programme/organisation staff
- Invitations to participate in social events or outings with organisation staff
- Invitations to participate in safe, peaceful social demonstrations[84]
- Regular check-ins with participants by dedicated staff
- Opportunities to engage with local community
    - Introduction by staff to local businesses, landmarks, and transportation
    - Staff facilitation of participation in local sports, art, or other recreational activities
    - Orientation to local places of worship
- Opportunities to engage with fellow activists or artists
    - Engagement in local artistic projects (including performance, audial, and visual arts)
    - Engagement with the host organisation or other local organisations on projects relevant to the participant's work/interests
    - Opportunities for participants to discuss their work with host organisation staff, other organisations, or in academic settings

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[84] Particularly for programme participants traveling from countries where freedom of speech or assembly are curtailed, participating in peaceful public demonstrations can be a very emotional and empowering opportunity.

Empowering participants to design their own agendas

Whether they wished to spend their time relaxing or actively engaged, relocation participants frequently mentioned how important it was to them to have power to arrange their own time and schedules. Different organisations providing shelter opportunities take vastly different approaches on this point. At one end of the "involvement" spectrum, some organisations leave participants' time completely to their own design. Other organisations construct fairly saturated schedules for programme participants, arranging medical inspections, psychological counseling, language and skill training courses, and other activities. While programmes featuring busy agenda usually make these activities completely optional, many programme participants will still opt to participate whenever they are able to do so.

Relocation programmes can continue to enhance the service they offer to programme participants by adopting a more deliberate process of guided schedule planning with those programme participants who are so interested. This process would begin prior to the participant's arrival in the host country and continue with regular meetings throughout the course of the programme. The schedule planning would rely on both the programme's experience with previous participants as well as the participant's own expectations from their relocation period.

> "I would have appreciated more planning of my time for the relocation period, perhaps working together with a case manager." Civil society actor, Southeast Asia

> "This programme is for HRDs who choose to travel abroad, so we should also be able to organize our time and decide what we want to do. I decided I wanted to focus on my health and meet doctors and psychologists. I also wanted to take a break from my work. By organizing my own activities, I could choose the ones I want to participate in. I could also focus on certain activists in my host country. Then, when I returned home, I had a plan all ready." Activist, Eastern Europe

> "It was great to have lessons without pressure. It was delicate planning of our time. Even though I was in a foreign city, I felt secure and free from pressure. The programme staff said I could come and go as I wanted. It was relaxing to have possibilities." Artist, Eastern Europe

> "I travelled with family and children, and I was able to rest for one week, with no trainings or other activities scheduled. After that, it was very busy. [I was able to receive some psychological counseling, but] it wasn't maximally helpful, because I had no time to process my counseling because I also had English class and other training courses. It would maybe be better to have a less busy schedule." Civil society organizer, Eastern Europe

Community immersion

For some project participants, being able to engage with members of the local community, either socially or professionally, had an important impact on their feeling of integration and acceptance in a host country. Relocation programmes can affect this immersion in different ways, but the most useful is likely via facilitating introductions into professional, artistic, social, or recreational communities of interest to the participant.

> "This programme provides a unique opportunity to live on your own and to live in a community. I felt like it was a second home. I knew that if I wanted to have fries, I would go to [the neighbourhood café], if I needed to relax, I would go to the park. It became my small community. I knew the butcher personally. It made it so good, knowing that I could just drop by and say hello. In my application, I said I want to mingle with everyday people, and the team gave me the freedom to get to know them. I was still doing my work, but I was also visiting church, maybe working in a park. So it didn't look like a "programme." It was home. That helps, and it removes the loneliness." NGO worker, East Africa

Work empowerment

While some respondents found the opportunities for relaxation to be the most rewarding aspect of their relocation experience, for others this aspect was instead the opportunity to continue their work or to develop it in new ways. (For some individuals, both aspects were equally important.) The most satisfying aspects of work for respondents that raised this point were generally the connections they were able to make with interested or otherwise relevant stakeholders, as well as the chance to explore new ideas, concepts, or possibilities related to their artwork or field of activism.

> "Something that was very important to me as an activist was being able to talk to people in politics; I met with the town mayor at a special event in the Ministry of Foreign Affair. I attended another event with representatives from the International Court of Justice. Meetings with government officials like this could not happen in my country. The most emotional was the meeting with the mayor. It is impossible to imagine talking to a mayor in my country on topics [of LGBT rights], and it was so, so impactful to be able to see that possibility. It was a mind-boggling experience." Activist, East Africa

> "I [enrolled in a relocation programme because I] wanted to be safe and free to work. [Before relocation, I was living in exile in a third country.] I liked it even though I was stuck there, but we shared a common language, and I felt welcomed. What I liked and what I found really interesting about my country of exile was what there is a huge community of people from my country, so I could do something, and I did a networking event for my fellow exiles. I did a short film for my compatriots in this country. I could

> have done a lot of collaborations and projects with organisations there, if only the government let me do it or continued doing it." Artist, Middle East

> "Before you arrive [at the relocation programme], they ask you what you want to work on. The system was very organized, I requested office space, which they provided for me." Artist, West Africa

> "I taught a class for a semester. My relationship with the students, the young people and myself, was very important to me." Civil society actor, East Africa

Ability to meet or travel with family or close friends

The benefits to allowing family members to accompany programme participants have already been covered in this report. More broadly, many research respondents mentioned either their wish that they could have brought family with them, or their appreciation for the opportunity to travel with family or host family for a temporary period while participating in a relocation programme. Some respondents expressed similar sentiments regarding close friends, whom the programme allowed to cohabitate with the programme participant for a short period.

> "I think you should have the opportunity to bring one other loved one. Rest is important, but it is different from resting with someone familiar present. So I feel that, as the program progresses, there should be an option for another loved one to join. It should be somebody you feel close to. If you are with them, it makes the experience even more relaxing." NGO worker, Eastern Europe

> "Being able to see my daughter, whom I had not seen for years, was really an exceptional surprise." Journalist, East Asia

3.2   Enabling a safe return

For those individuals who seek relocation in order to escape local threats to their safety, ensuring that these individuals can return home safely is often one of the most daunting challenges for both programme staff and participants themselves. Given that the purpose of shelter and relocation programmes is to protect those individuals at risk or under threat for their work, achieving a safe return for participants is of equal importance to any other objective of shelter and relocation support.

Unfortunately, despite their resources and intentions, relocation programmes and their partners are unable to fully guarantee a safe return for participants. The knowledge, intent, and capacity of governments and other adversaries hostile to the work of artists

and activists can never be known with accuracy, and even the most meticulously calculated plan for a safe return could be threatened or stymied by sufficiently motivated enemies. Indeed "safe to return" is a condition that defies measurement or certainty. As it applies to participants in relocation programmes, "safe ability to return" is a highly subjective measurement, dependent both on actual events and conditions in the participant's country of origin as well as the individual's perceived ability to return home safely.

> "The time to go back is when I feel I and my family are safe. I also have concerns about quality of education for daughter. As soon as the political situation is stable and everything is settled, I will go back." Artist, Middle East (currently in Europe)

Relocation programme staff have only limited capacity to influence the safety of a participant's return, just as said staff have little to no power to impact the objective security situation on the ground in a participant's home country. As an additional challenge to safe return planning, in some cases, participants themselves may not see the need for any such discussion or preparation. Many respondents to this research study, particularly those who chose to enroll in relocation programmes for mental health or professional development reasons, commented that the nature of threats against them, even when such threats existed, did not have any impact on their safety while traveling to or from their place of relocation.

Nevertheless, as sponsors of relocation participants and as responsible actors in the field of supporting culture under threat and human rights defenders, relocation programmes should still observe certain due diligence in ensuring the safety of their programme invitees. This section will therefore discuss steps that may be taken to understand the risk involved for programme returnees and to mitigate that risk as much as possible.

> "[Time spent in a relocation programme] feels like a honeymoon, but then you have to leave. Nobody is prepared. Legally, the organisation does not have any responsibility for you. I suggest from the very beginning, from the first day, that you must plan the leaving part. That is missing everywhere, I would say. That is the most important. The leaving part should be planned." Artist, Central Africa (currently in Europe)

Preparing a security plan

Arranging for a safe return following programme completion should begin prior even to the start of a relocation programme, via conversation with imminent participants about any concerns they may have about their ability to return home safely. While relocation programmes are beginning to incorporate such conversations into their preparatory procedures, many research respondents stated that no such preparatory conversation was had prior to their departure for a host country.

Beginning this conversation early has multiple benefits. First, early awareness of the potential obstacles to a safe return ensures the maximum amount of time possible to plan and prepare methods to overcome those obstacles. Second, in some cases, plans that allow for the safest return may involve steps initiated as early as the point of a programme participant's departure from their country of origin. Some organisations that deal frequently with at-risk individuals arrange for invitation letters from third-party organisations with no clear link to global human rights activity; these letters provide some degree of a cover story that an individual can use if questioned by authorities during their departure from or return to their country of origin. While similar measures can also be decided on or arranged for during a participant's stay in a host country, delaying until this point means forgoing earlier opportunities to make additional security preparations.

Finally, some research respondents commented on how quickly the end of their relocation experience seemed to arrive, and how they did not always feel prepared for their return home. Raising the issue of safe return early in the relocation process may ensure that participants are not caught off guard by and unprepared for their eventual return.

> "I've spoken to other artists about this. Once you are offered placement, you have to start thinking: I will have shelter and some sort of income for one or two years and I won't have to look for work, but what happens afterward? The danger you run away from is probably going to exist one or two years after. The way a lot of these programmes work is that, once the placement is over, [the organisation] doesn't have much obligation to keep defending you. Either you go back to your country, or you apply for asylum or proper residency […]" Artist, Africa (currently in Europe)

Conversations about a safe return should then continue during a relocation process. In an ideal scenario, hosting organisations will be able to work with participants to prepare a complete emergency plan for the participant's response process, involving anticipation of certain threats and designing strategies to face those threats. In addition to empowering a programme participant to face foreseeable challenges upon return, such as questioning by

local authorities or difficulties of reintegrating in their home community, designing a security plan early may also impact an individual's activities during their period of relocation. Some programmes involve enrollment of participants in local language classes, so that upon their return to their home country, participants can explain with honesty that they were studying language during their time away. Similarly, if an effective security plan for a particular participant requires that their time spent in a foreign country not be widely known, then the participant's social media use during their time in the programme may also be highly relevant. More than one staff member from relocation programmes recounted participant's irresponsible use of social media accounts in ways that revealed large deals of information about the participant's whereabouts and activities. Early drafting of a security plan enables individuals to address these issues in a timely fashion. Despite the inclusion of some form of security training in many relocation programmes, almost none of the research respondents had prepared any such plan.

> "It would have been better to have made a plan for after I had returned to my country. After I return, if I still need some support, what is the arrangement? It is better if we make a formal system, or establish some space where we can continue our work together. If I have problems, whom should I contact?" Civil society actor, Southeast Asia

Monitoring conditions in participant's country of origin

Apart from the creation of a security plan, it should be the responsibility of both a host organisation and the participants themselves to be aware of the situation on the ground in the participant's country of origin, particularly as the scheduled time of return approaches. While, as always, there is no way of assessing or guaranteeing conditions that are completely safe for return, certain measures are useful indicators in this regard.

> "In my country, politically, things have toned down. The two factions were not as tense. A handshake happened, and that gave me peace of mind, knowing we were going to a place of peace and conciliation. It was a golden opportunity to return. I had court cases still pending against me, but at that time there was a high-profile deportation case going on in my country as well, so the focus was elsewhere. It was a golden opportunity to sneak back in." Human rights defender, East Africa

> "It is a sign that we can return safely when [authorities] close the cases against us. When I learned that the court had closed my case, I went back… I was able to visit safely." Human rights defender, Central Africa

Research respondents mentioned the following considerations when assessing their own prospects for safe return. While the following does not comprise an exhaustive checklist for conditions of safe return, these criteria are useful for attention of programme staff when working with a participant to prepare for their return journey:

- Is the political situation in the country relatively stable? Have political conflicts escalated or de-escalated since the participant's departure?
- Have the participant's colleagues, community, or area of work been subject to recent attacks by government, media, military, or other segments of society?
- Are there existing or new active court cases, or active court sentences, pending on the participant?
- What are the opinions of the participant's friends, family, and colleagues on the prospects for their return?
- Have authorities inquired about the participant's whereabouts from friends, family, or colleagues?
- Have other activists or artists been able to return to, or move freely in, the country of origin?
- Are there any imminent dates of political significance approaching, during which time return to a country of origin may be more sensitive?

Other conditions for return

> "The first question is security. This means financial resettlement costs, does he have means of income, can we re-network him in the region, help him to start a new life again?" Relocation manager, Europe

So far, this section has focused primarily on physical security aspects of "safe return." When planning for a participant's return, however, some attention should also be given to other professional and social aspects of return and re-integration. Fortunately, a large majority of returned programme participants stated that they had no significant issues returning to their countries or to their work. Even when pressed to identify challenges or frustrations upon return, most respondents noted that such frustrations were to be expected after returning to work from an absence.

Nevertheless, staff of relocation programmes may find it useful to consider the following points made by respondents regarding both positive and negative aspects of their return. In some cases, it may be possible to work with programme participants prior to their return to mitigate or avoid some of these issues mentioned therein:

- I lost one project that I was originally supposed to work on."
- "Some of my colleagues were jealous, or did not understand why I had participated in this programme. They said that 'our work is not so stressful or dangerous, so why did you need that?'"
- "When I returned, I already had a big project I was committed to working on. It was a big encouragement to get back to work. It was not hard returning."
- "I noticed that several of us [programme participants] were worried about not having funds to buy gifts for our family when we returned. If you know that you will get a lump sum at the end of the programme, it gives you peace of mind, and this is very important."
- "When [a fellow programme participant] returned home, he had no job waiting for him, and authorities had already made trouble with his landlord. He's now having a lot of financial issues, because the authorities are making it hard for him to find work, as well."

One strategy to address many, and potentially all of these issues, would be for hosting organisations to work with participants to create a post-return plan. Whether merged with a "safe return" plan or designed independently, this plan would focus on potential challenges in social or professional re-integration as well as addressing longer-term threats or obstacles for the individual.

> "When I got back, I had two lawsuits against me, which I had not prepared for. It would have been good if [the hosting organisation] had helped me plan for this; it would be good if they continued to support me at this time. After I returned home, we did not stay in touch." Activist, Eastern Europe

As this report has previously suggested, relocation programmes have an opportunity to take a more comprehensive role in supporting the development and safe operation of vulnerable individuals beyond the duration of their relocation programme. While resource limitations dictate that such support will be very limited in scope, a fundamental first step in this process would be encouraging and assisting programme participants to visualise and prepare for those immediate difficulties they can expect to face upon their return home. Furthermore, given organisations very limited ability to continue communication and support operations with every programme alumnae/i following their return home, future planning may help to mitigate feelings of isolation or abandonment by programme participants. Working with participants to prepare such a plan will establish a space for programme staff to clearly communicate just how little they may be able to continue support for participant, as well as to identify other channels of support the participant may wish to turn to in the future.

3.3 When safe return is impossible

When programme participants have no option to pursue safe return, relocation programmes face a difficult challenge. Whether due to emergence of new threats, or persistence or escalation of existing threats, hosting organisations may find that it is unethical to request that a programme participant return to their country of origin, or the participant her/himself may be unwilling to return home. When these conditions show signs of becoming long-term circumstances, hosting organisations generally find themselves with only two options: identifying a third country that can receive the participant, or finding ways to enable the participant's further stay in the current country.

The process of identifying and supporting a relocation participant's onward travel to a third country falls outside the scope of this research, but the scenario itself cannot be avoided in any treatment of the challenges facing threatened individuals and the programmes that host them. While this paper will not make any suggestions on how to manage this scenario, it is recommended that organisations providing relocation do include this eventuality in their planning.

Whether or not this eventuality is discussed with a programme participant as a stage in the security planning described above, it would be useful for all relocation programmes to consider contingency plans in the event that an individual is unable to return to their country of origin once the programme concludes. This contingency planning could include a basic list of potential third country hosts for an individual, particularly those where local organisations could provide some on-the-ground logistical support or facilitate a follow-up hosting programme of their own. This planning process would also involve taking note of those countries with particularly accepting visa regimes or asylum-accepting policies, or countries that may be particularly receptive to members of the concerned participant's nationality.

Developing a capacity to facilitate relocation to a third country in cases of need may seem like a superfluous preparation, particularly when only a minority of cases encounter such a need. However, it is the obligation of hosting organisations to maintain a baseline of preparedness for all foreseeable circumstances, and many organisations have already found themselves so challenged. Furthermore, while contingency planning inheres its own advantages of preparedness and heightened capacity to respond to emergencies, the process of planning for such an eventuality will also serve to strengthen the network of shelter-providing organisations.

The second option for organisations hosting an individual unable to return home is to find ways to extend the individual's stay in the current host country. For some programmes, particularly those involving the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN), seeking long-term residency is common among participants. For other programmes, any consideration on the part of an applicant to seek residency or asylum is highly discouraged, and in some cases, any perceived intention to make such a request can carry a strong negative impact on the individual's application for relocation support.

This paper will not address the case of individuals indicating a need for long-term asylum at their time of application, but this research does have useful findings for those organisations encountering such requests during the programme or following programme completion.

Many research respondents, including those who participated in both short- and long-term relocation, commented that they felt cut off from the relocation programme and its support following the end of the programme. This paper has already touched on the value of finding ways to extend engagement and support for programme participants, even in small ways, following their return home, but additional planning and preparation on this point can help to address this issue.

> "[As my programme is ending], recently I feel like I will be left aside. I don't know how it is with other programmes. The aim was to be safe, and I am! I could choose to stay quiet and breathe and stay safe, but this is not what I want. But with a permanent residency, it will be easier to move around, to travel, to get visas. It is not easy in this country, the system, they way they work and think, the way I work and think [...] they are not the same." Human rights defender, Central Africa

> "For the people who want to seek asylum, they have to start over from the beginning. In Sweden, I experienced it somewhat, my friends told me they left the residency, but there was no support mechanism. They are living in hotel, but that is not a good idea." Artist, Western Africa

For long-term programmes that anticipate participants may choose to stay in the host country and seek residency, the above testimonies illustrate that more can be done in some cases to assist some participants in the integration process. Strategies for achieving successful integration can be found in other sections of this paper, but the most effective will emphasise taking time to facilitate meaningful social and professional connections and opportunities for programme participants. Some longer-term programmes work with the assistance of volunteers who take on much of the day-to-day support and interaction

with programme participants. In these cases, relocation programmes can consider more training opportunities for these volunteers to learn methods for effecting more thorough integration for project participants.

Short-term programmes are generally prevented from offering any sort of longer-term stay for their participants due to immigration policy restrictions in the host country. In the short term, little can be done to evade these restrictions, though organisations with strong local connections may be able to find ways to facilitate academic fellowships or partnership with other local organisations to enable a continued stay for a programme participant facing such a need.

In the long run, it should be considered a long term objective for relocation programmes to encourage their countries to adopt much more lenient and accepting immigration or visa policies for civil society actors, threatened artists, and human rights defenders. From the perspective of supporting the movements of these vulnerable individuals, if there is a benefit to enabling these actors to visit host countries for a period of three months or longer, then there is an even greater benefit to facilitating their repeated visits or prolonged interaction.

> "Since my return, I am experiencing the same level of stress in my work, and the physical situation is hard. But now I know that I have an avenue of escape, if I need it. That makes the work easier." Activist, Eastern Europe

The testimony above is from a participant in a relocation programme in a country with an open visa policy. At any point, the individual could return to that country for up to three months with no restrictions. As he recounts, having this "escape" as an option makes his difficult work easier to manage.

More restrictive European immigration and visa policies, in contrast, mean that participants in relocation programmes in those countries do not enjoy this comfort. One respondent from Asia commented how much at home she felt in her European host country, and how frustrating it has been to now feel cut off from that second home she had grown to love. Relocation programmes should serve as tools to empower artists and human rights defenders, not reminders of unfair border restrictions and global privilege.

3.4 Supporting returnees

One surprising finding in the course of this research came from testimonies from individuals whose relocation experiences had turned into exile, but who now wished to return to their home countries. These individuals found that, while numerous organisations and funding opportunities exist to support artists, activists, and human rights defenders to leave their countries of origin, very few organisations can support plans for return.

> "Now after nine years, I plan go back. I was a little bit surprised to find that…all the support mechanisms were designed for the person who leaves his country. I don't see any support mechanism for the person wanting to go back. I asked this head of ICORN, do you know this kind of things. After nine years, although I am going home, it kind of feels like a new exile. Many things have changed. [There should be support] for returnees, to sustain themselves for 2-3 months." Writer, East Africa

> "There are currently no projects to bring back exiled activists to my country, though in principle they are authorized to return. Reintegration is now happening after several years. Several activists who left were journalists, but they have a hard time finding new journalism positions after several years away, and very few organisations are willing to help these returnees. More organisations are willing to help persons at risk relocate externally. There are many countries facing this issue. Myanmar and Sri Lanka are two examples." Activist, East Africa

Support for returning exiled activists also falls outside the scope of traditional relocation programmes, and yet relocation-providing organisations are perhaps the most appropriate network to provide such support. As relocation programmes continue to refine and expand their programming and capacities, this area deserves particular consideration.

3.5 Measuring impact on the home country

This study offered little conclusive data on the impact of relocation programmes on participants' home countries. In part, this lack of findings results a limitation of the approach of this study, which focused on the experience of individual programme participants, who themselves are less able to assess the impact of their return on their broader communities.

This research also involved multiple interviews with hosts of relocation programmes and other higher-level operators involved in supporting endangered artists and civil society movements. These stakeholders all referred to the importance of relocation programmes at preserving and maintaining these movements. This report has described the importance of relocation programmes in revitalising fatigued activists and human rights defenders, and higher-level operators voiced similar sentiments on the critical role that

relocation plays to support the resilience of programme participants and the movements they support.

This research was also sensitive to additional impacts on home countries, primarily including:

- Positive impacts such as clear expansion of skills, knowledge, or contact networks gained by programme participants during their relocation experience; or
- Negative impacts such as weakening of civil society movements via the loss of programme participants who choose not to return to their home countries following the conclusion of their programmes.

While this research did discover small-scale examples of both of these outcomes, these impacts were not noticeable at the movement or country level. Further research could be done to explore these topics. However, any such research would benefit from first assessing the objectives of particular relocation programmes themselves, which may or may not include producing effects in participants' home countries, and then assessing their success in achieving those results.

4. Regional considerations

One important finding of this research was the observation of certain regional and country trends regarding the security of activists in these locales, feasibility of their participation in relocation programmes, and concerns regarding their safe return. Four such regional analyses, with demonstrative, factual examples, are included below. None of these descriptions should be interpreted as applicable to all, or even most, applicants from these regions; however, they may serve as useful case studies of issues that may be encountered when facilitating relocation from these countries and regions.

Mary – China

China conducts one of the world's most widespread and comprehensive campaign of oppression and persecution against its human rights defenders, conducting campaigns of harassment and surveillance and subjecting those deemed "dissidents" to travel bans and all levels of judicial abuse. Many Chinese activists do not feel comfortable leaving the country in known affiliation with international organisations. Similar trends also exist, though to a lesser extent, in Thailand, Vietnam, and other Southeast Asian countries.[85]

Mary works as a citizen journalist, supporting efforts to document and report human rights violations in China. She chose to apply for a relocation opportunity after a number of her colleagues were targeted by Chinese authorities. Mary spent three months in a relocation programme in Europe, where she studied the local language and also found time to continue her journalism work. While her time was largely occupied by these two pursuits, she also found time to enjoy local "beautiful scenery" and enjoy museums, films, and other products of international culture, much of which is inaccessible in China. While she found the local climate and the language courses challenging, and wished that she could have stayed longer with the hosting organisations, she believes that her relocation experience had a positive impact on her and her work.

Mary commented that she was able to work more smoothly abroad than she could in China, and that her time with the programme felt restful, happy, and safe. After returning to China, she appreciated the language skills and acquired knowledge in personal and digital security.

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[85] For examples of travel ban in Southeast Asia as well as worldwide, see: Front Line Defenders, Travel Ban Cases, available at: https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/cases/violation/travel-ban [07.05.2019]

While on relocation, Mary had also engaged in some collaborative work with an Asian organisation on the topic of democratic reform. Following her return home to China, authorities have met with her three times to discuss this work. These meetings were terrifying and very difficult for Mary, though for now they show no signs that they will lead to any judicial action.

Dennis – South Asia

Human rights defenders in South Asia frequently find themselves under threat from political regimes, which use harassment, threats, judicial persecution, travel ban, and other methods to impede activists' work. Individuals who may benefit from relocation may be suffering these treatments, and furthermore may be unable to leave their home country, or face difficulty returning, because of them.

Dennis is an HRD from South Asia; he has left his country twice in the face of immediate threats to his safety. Dennis' first departure from the country bears little resemblance to traditional relocation programmes; he first lived in a nearby Asian country for three months, before beginning a speaking tour of several Asian countries to meet with foreign media and INGOs to discuss the political and human rights situation in his country of origin. Throughout this process, he constantly awaited an opportunity to return to his country of origin. Once he felt that he could make that return safely, he did so.

Some years after his return home, Dennis again found himself the victim of threats, usually in the form of written notes seeking to intimidate him. Dennis was granted a fellowship to pursue three months of academic study in another country. Dennis describes his fellowship period as an opportunity purely for study and rest; he largely put aside his human rights work for this period. When he returned home, however, he felt much more energised. He also found that the networks and contacts he had developed during his relocation. Dennis says that he still uses knowledge and insights from this time in his work today, incorporating his learning into talks on human rights and transitional justice, as well as meetings with high level government officials.

Dennis was happy to find no resentment from the local human rights community when he returned home. He attributes this to the fact that he remained very attentive and engaged with domestic issues even while he was away. "I was physically away, but I was still very much linked to the activism at home."

Dr. Khairi – Central Africa

Eastern and Central Africa are home to several countries either undergoing political turmoil or currently ruled by oppressive regimes. Threats from authorities, acts of violence, and the ongoing risk of arrest forces many activists to flee their countries and live in exile. While some artists and HRDs are able to receive support from international organisations to make their escape, others must rely only on their own networks, resources, and initiative. Many flee in the direction of Uganda, whose stable political system, open borders, and generally functional asylum processing system mark the country as the most welcoming in the region for such exiles. Defend Defenders, a Ugandan non-governmental organisation, has taken advantage of these conditions to provide a wide arrangement of support for HRDs and artists at risk who arrive there.

Dr. Khairi left his African nation home in 2006, after being jailed repeatedly over a course of two years. His organisation, which documented acts of human rights violation against minority ethnic groups, has become a target for government attack, and Dr. Khairi soon became a target as well. After repeated judicial harassment, he decided to leave his country.

International attention to Dr. Khairi's case helped him secure invitations to travel to the United States, where he was invited to participate in talks, lectures, and conferences. Seeing the advantage of American academic credentials and legal status, Dr. Khairi applied and enrolled in a PhD programme at a major US university, completing a dissertation on Conflict Analysis and Resolution. Dr. Khairi acknowledges that he could have remained in North America, working with US-based organisations and academia, but he instead decided to return to Africa to continue work supporting his home country.

Dr. Khairi has now lived and worked in a number of cities in East Africa, including with the support of Defend Defenders in Kampala. Much of his work is linked to his original organisation, for which he also opened a liaison office to facilitate the organisation's work. Recently, he was even able to return to his home country, where his former neighbours and colleagues were extremely happy to receive him. However, he currently prefers to work from outside his country, where it is often easier to work with stakeholders and manage resources.

Natasha – Eastern Europe

Many activists in former Soviet states face physical attacks and judicial harassment for their civil society or artistic work. Some are subjected to extreme judicial penalties, which may make it difficult for them to leave, or unwilling to return, to their country of origin.

Natasha supports victims of human rights injustices to obtain legal representation and other emergency support in her home country in Eastern Europe. Her work is deeply stressful, and she considered that a relocation programme might be an important opportunity for her to relax and perhaps receive some psychological counseling.

Natasha believes that her participation in the programme saved her life. In addition to the benefits of therapy sessions, medical checkups supported by the relocation programme revealed that Natasha was suffering from a life-threatening disease. Following her completion of the relocation programme three months later, Natasha underwent a treatment process in her home country that lasted for over six months. She feels that, had she not enrolled in the relocation programme, she might not have learned of her illness until it was too late.

Now that she is back in her home country, Natasha has taken several lessons back with her. She now includes promotion of wellbeing and stress management in her work with female victims of rights violations. She also found that the rest afforded to her during her relocation experience have opened her thinking to new projects and topics of interest. Her relocation experience gave her a sense of confidence and relaxation in her work.

5. Recommendations and topics for future study

Below are recommendations on this subject of relocation and shelter programmes. The first five recommendations are targeted at shelter and relocation programmes themselves.

- Inclusion of psychological services: Relocation programme participants who were able to receive psychological counseling sessions all praised this component of their programmes, even when they felt that they did not fully connect with the counselor providing the services. Many participants of programmes that did not provide this service recommended psychological services as an important service for inclusion. Relocation programmes that do not offer such a service should consider how they might include a basic programme of psychological or listening ear services for their participants.

- Inclusion of health services: Similar to the recommendation for psychological services, programme participants who were able to undergo medical examination and basic treatment as a component of their programme all responded positively to this feature. This positive feedback ranged from appreciation to testimonies that programme-sponsored medical services saved the life of the participant. Programmes should seek to offer not just emergency medical services, but basic medical examination by a general physician and certain basic medical services for those who need them.

- Pre-planning assistance and programme flexibility: Many respondents to this research expressed frustration that aspects of relocation programme structure, particularly programme duration, were generally inflexible. Rather than continuing to apply a one-size-fits-all model, relocation programmes should consider the feasibility of employing adaptive relocation strategies for individuals that need them. These strategies could include referral to a third organisation, support to relocate to a third country, relocation duration's other than the standard period, or other adjustments. Any such modification will require a greater extent of planning the relocation experience with a participant prior to their travel date.

- Post-planning for secure return: In the interest of safeguarding programme participant's safe return to their countries of origin, relocation programmes should take more and earlier steps to discuss and plan for safe return with participants. These conversations can begin, in some cases, even prior to a participant's date of travel.

- Support beyond relocation: As this research has indicated, participants in relocation programmes occasionally require additional support related to, but distinct from, their period of relocation. This may involve support to ensure livelihood or carry on work in a post-relocation country when individuals are unable to return home; support for exiled individuals wishing to return to their country of origin; or individuals who are returning to dangerous conditions in their home country, among others. Even when a hosting organisation is unable to provide financial support to these individuals, further steps can be taken to ensure that the return or onward travel process progresses as smoothly as possible.

The final five recommendations are targeted at the broader network of relocation programmes for actions that they can take in collaboration with one another to better empower and protect those actors that relocation programmes aim to support.

- Greater networking and integration: The network of relocation programmes comprises a large body of experts and passionate individuals working around the world. Between them, these individuals possess collective experience in specific regional challenges around the world, particular threats facing different groups of artists, activists, and human rights defenders, and a wide range of logistical obstacles in facilitating successful relocation. In order to better share this knowledge, and to strengthen support for relocation-seekers through referral and information sharing, these organisations should work to establish a more cohesive network of communication and cooperation.

- Collaboration on safe return: Building off of Recommendation #6 in the specific case of a participant unable to return home, relocation organisations should consider collaborative approaches to determining onward support for these participants. Organisations are understandably hesitant to expend resources on persons who have already benefited from relocation support, but the collaboration proposed here could also refer to logistical or referral support.

- Better information sharing: As a corollary to the previous recommendation, organisations can do a much better job to share various information resources between themselves. Organisations receiving an application from an individual from a certain global region could reach out to relocation programmes in that region for contextual information useful in assisting the applicant.

- Advocacy for visa reform: While relocation organisations have little power over immigration or visa policy themselves, as a connected network, the voice of these organisations could be effective in pushing forward long-touted reforms to grant human rights defenders more favorable status in visa application processes. This would, intern, allow for more flexible support for individuals at risk.

- Continued expansion of shelter city networks. The existing body of relocation programmes should continue to support the development of similar initiatives in countries around the world. Some relocation programmes have already taken the lead in such activities, but other organisations can also play an important role in this process, offering guidance, case referrals, and sharing training materials that fledgling programmes may yet lack the capacity to design themselves.

Based on the findings of this research, the following topics could benefit from deeper investigation in future studies:

- Which global regions are underserved by existing relocation programmes? This research topic would focus both on providers of relocation programmes as well as representatives of grassroots, regional, and international organisations supporting civil society and activist movements. The goal of this research would be to identify countries, regions, sectors of human rights movements, and subsets of society that have enjoyed less access to relocation programmes, and to understand the reasons for this lack of access. This research would be informative both on a global level or within particular global regions.

- How to expand effective psychosocial services? Psychosocial services were consistently reported as one of the most beneficial and appreciated aspects of relocation programmes that offered them. If possible, it would be useful to expand these services to programmes that do not offer them, and to continue to enhance these services in the programmes that do. This research topic would focus on both programmes that offer those services to identify useful and best practices, and programmes that do not offer such services to understand obstacles to their implementation. Researchers would also speak with programme participants who had and had not received such services to better understand participants' preferences and needs with regard to psychosocial services.

- What are the best protocols to follow when individuals cannot return to their home countries?
  Certain organisations providing relocation support already have extensive experience with participants who are unable to return to their countries of origin. This research would attempt to catalogue and assess measures taken in such circumstances. This research would serve two aims: both to assist organisations supporting participants unable to return to their home countries, and to better support those current and former programme participants who find themselves trapped in third countries.

- What are the best practices for working with visa-granting bodies?
  This research project would explore means for improving the visa regime facing activists, artists at risk, and human rights defenders. Several initiatives already exist to facilitate visa requests for these actors, and some organisations already enjoy strong relationships with national visa-granting agencies. This research would seek to identify best practices in this regard.

- How to empower local communities to carry on the work of relocation?
  Local actors have several avenues to carry forward the work of relocation programmes, including: encouraging the spread of skills learned in relocation programmes; supporting relocation returnees in the reintegration process; assisting relocation programmes to expand access to underserved, local populations; and facilitating regional relocation efforts, such as identifying potential host organisations or providing information about local contexts.

6. Conclusion

Regardless of country of origin or area of work, most respondents to this survey spoke positively of their relocation experiences. They listed several contributions that relocation programmes imparted to their participants, including preserving life and security, offering opportunities for relaxation and recuperation, and useful and inspirational connections with both fellow actors working in similar fields as well as influential organisations and stakeholders in positions to support the work of these participants.

Research respondents were also very clear on areas in which relocation programmes could expand or improve their services. Many of these suggestions involved enhancing the services relocation programmes always provide. Respondents suggested that relocation programmes do more to facilitate exchange between participants and other actors or stakeholders engaged in their field of work or art. Respondents that had access to medical and psychosocial services and support, as well as training in language or other work-relevant skills, expressed immense appreciation for these services, suggesting that such opportunities should be more broadly expanded across relocation programmes. Some respondents also noted that relocation programmes can do more to spread awareness of the availability of such programmes.

In terms of enabling a meaningful stay in host countries, research respondents highlighted efforts by programme managers and staff to build personal connections with programme participants, as well as to design safe, restful, and engaging environments in the host country for participants. Respondents also expressed appreciation for opportunities to continue and develop their work and art, usually with other activists or artists in their field. With regard to safe returns home and successful reintegration into participants' home communities, several respondents commented on the importance of programmes to work with participants to plan ahead for the return process.

While the work of relocation has made great strides in the decades since its emergence, there still remains a lot to be done. In terms of the actual work of relocation programmes, participants could benefit from an expanded suite of high-quality medical and psychosocial services, as well as enhanced opportunity for networking and collaboration between interested programme participants. Relocation services can also be adapted to better suit the needs of individuals who are unable to return to their home countries due to continued threats to their safety. While the number of relocation programmes continues to expand, certain regions remain underserved in terms of regional relocation opportunities, most notably in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and large parts of Africa. Research projects such as this one may also play a role in encouraging more impactful work by organisations providing relocation opportunities.

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List of abbreviations

CAHR Centre for Applied Human Rights at the University of York

CARA Council for At-Risk Academics

CRD Civil Rights Defenders

EU European Union

HRD Human Rights Defender

ICMP International Commission on Missing Persons

ICORN International Network of Cities of Refuge Network

INGO International Non-Governmental Organisation

IPDC Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for Development and Communication

IRCC Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

LGBTQ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer

MRI Martin Roth-Initiative

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

OHCHR The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

PEN Poets, Playwrights, Editors, Essayists, Novelists

PhD Doctor of Philosophy

PiN People in Need

TIRI Temporary International Relocation Initiative

UN United Nations

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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Temporary Shelter and Relocation Initiatives

Perspectives of Managers and Participants

A vibrant and functioning civil society needs spaces to express itself in a variety of ways and opportunities to unfold. However, shrinking civic spaces are more and more to be traced. Many groups such as human rights activists and artists are affected and the declining of pre-political spaces takes many forms. To assist these activists an increasing amount of protection programmes have been developed in recent years.
This study examines the protection programmes from different angles in order to formulate the challenges of these initiatives and to seek solutions for an increasing effectiveness in future programmes.

Martin Roth Initiative

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