

## VOA REFUGEE PROGRAMMING

VOA aims to improve information flows to and from the estimated 100 million forcibly displaced persons around the world. Forced migration affects all 48 of VOA's language teams in some way, yet nuanced coverage of its complex dynamics is often in short supply in local media markets. As a result, displaced communities are often information deprived and misunderstood. VOA is pioneering techniques and partnerships to reach these underserved audiences and the communities hosting them.

**Target area:** Displaced communities worldwide.

**Dedicated Website:** <https://www.voanews.com/refugees>

### Programs and Projects

#### **Programs and Projects**

***Lifeline:*** a 30-minute Rohingya-language audio newscast broadcast regionally via shortwave and mediumwave (AM) radio and available for in-person group listening sessions in Bangladesh.

**Infrastructure to reach camp populations:** VOA's solar-powered FM transmitters provide Kenya's Dadaab (106.7 MHz) and Kakuma (99.9 MHz) refugee camps with local, regional and international news in the English, Swahili and Somali languages. Noteworthy content includes the locally produced "Crossroads Dadaab" and the Somali-language children's program, "Sesame Sheeko Sheeko."

**Voice of America Learning English** offers a yearlong training program for teachers that includes lessons and materials for teaching American English in refugee camps. UNHCR recognized the implementation of this curriculum in Bangladesh as a "good practice" according to the Global Compact for Refugees. The program has also been implemented to serve displaced Ukrainians.

**China Exodus:** The number of people from China seeking asylum worldwide has risen sharply in the past decade, according to the U.N. This multilingual web feature follows residents of Hong Kong and mainland China as they build new lives outside of China.

**Venezuela 360:** A weekly 30-minute current affairs television program connects Venezuelans displaced throughout the Americas.

#### **Documentaries**

***Kyiv-Sofia-Hollywood*** -- Fleeing the Russian invasion of Ukraine, two mothers find themselves in an unusual place, Nu Boyana Film Studios, in Sofia, Bulgaria. Eastern Europe's largest film company, it has participated in the production of over 400 Hollywood films. This moving work follows these two women as they rebuild their lives in a new country and find their way in the film industry. On their journey, they overcome challenges and find success, begging the question of whether they will eventually ever return to their homeland, Ukraine.

***Symphony of Courage***: They were the last students of the Afghanistan National Institute of Music to be evacuated from the country after the Taliban takeover. The Afghan National Institute of Music (ANIM) was the country's only music school and home to the world-renowned Zohra Orchestra - Afghanistan's first all-female ensemble. ANIM's director Dr. Ahmad Sarmast worked with an international team of philanthropists, politicians and musicians to facilitate the evacuation of Farida and Zohra Ahmadi, two girls with a passion for music and a

zest for lift. *Symphony of Courage*, follows the group from their uncertain final days in Kabul through an uncertain time in Qatar to their new home in Portugal.

***The Migrant Priest.*** Since 2003, Father Mussie Zerai has received thousands of emergency calls from distressed refugees and migrants stranded in the Mediterranean Sea. The Eritrean priest, head of the refugee rights organization Habeshia, travels to the Italian island of Lampedusa to commemorate October 3, 2013, when a fishing vessel caught fire and sank near the coast, killing 368 people. Leaning on his faith, Father Zerai helps survivors start anew. The 2015 Nobel Peace Prize nominee fields crisis calls as Europe struggles to accommodate the ongoing influx of migrants and refugees desperate to escape war, famine, and persecution.