

Webinar workshop

Re-examining Refugee Self-reliance

Date: 9 December 2023, 9:00-11:00 JST

Venue: Zoom (Webinar)

Description

Promoting refugee self-reliance has been placed much emphasis in recent years. The 2018 Global Compact on Refugees, which has put it as one of the major objectives, is perhaps the clearest example of this trend. However, this does not mean that we should take it for granted. In her seminal work, Easton-Calabria's *Refugees, Self-reliance, Development: A Critical History* (2022) has examined the history of refugee self-reliance and has given critical analysis on the ways that it has been promoted and implemented. In this webinar, we will re-examine the theory and practice of refugee self-reliance with two honorable speakers: Dr Evan Easton-Calabria and Dr Ryuya Daidouji.

Dr Easton-Calabria will present an overview of historic self-reliance programming by national and international organisations, consider the insights these findings combined with current projections on global mega-trends, and examine the future needs, successes, and pitfalls of refugee self-reliance programming in the 21st century and beyond.

Dr Daidouji will critically examine the discourse and practices on self-reliance in Japan, suggesting that praising self-reliance may risk the exclusion of certain refugees and thereby undermine refugees' autonomy.

Anyone interested in the topic is welcome and we are looking forward to your participation. Prior registration via Google Form is needed (deadline: 7 December): https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfesjZC75emtfSbSbIbRk2r4YTaxz7ZPfQREnx_0IJeXE4adg/viewform.

Speakers

Dr Evan Easton-Calabria, Senior Researcher at the Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, USA

Dr Ryuya Daidouji, Associate Professor of Faculty of Law, Aoyama Gakuin University, Japan

Discussant: **Mr Katsunori Koike**, Head of UNHCR Field Office at Mae Hong Son, Thailand

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Schedule

- 9:00–9:05 Welcoming remark by Dr Satoko Horii
- 9:05–9:25 Presentation by Dr Easton-Calabria,
21st Century Refugee Self-Reliance: A history of the present (and beyond)
- 9:25–9:45 Discussion by Mr Katsunori Koike and participants
- 9:45–10:05 Presentation by Dr Ryuya Daidouji,
Does self-reliance really promote refugees' autonomy? The case of Japan
- 10:05–10:25 Discussion by Mr Katsunori Koike and participants
- 10:25–10:30 Closing Remarks by Dr Satoko Horii

Summary of Presentations

Dr Easton Calabria

21st Century Refugee Self-Reliance: A history of the present (and beyond)

While efforts to foster refugee self-reliance have gained prominence in the new millennium, with 'enhancing refugee self-reliance' a key objective of the Global Compact on Refugees, the international humanitarian and development community has worked towards these goals for over a century. However, while good practices emerge, this is little evidence of large-scale success. This talk presents an overview of historic self-reliance programming by national and international organisations. Then, it considers the insights these findings combined with current projections on global mega-trends, including climate change, urbanisation, and the future of work, offer regarding the future needs, successes, and pitfalls of refugee self-reliance programming in the 21st century and beyond.

Dr Ryuya Daidouji

Does self-reliance really promote refugees' autonomy? The case of Japan

The idea of promoting refugees' economic self-reliance has been accepted by international community, including states, international organizations, and private sector. Particularly, there seems to be a broad consensus that self-reliance promotes refugees' autonomy (i.e., the ability to determine how and where they live). This presentation questions this assumption: Does self-reliance really promote autonomy? If (not) so, why and how? To answer these questions, this presentation adopts an analysis of refugee-related discourse and practices in Japan, revealing that only the self-reliant refugees are entitled to be included in the Japanese society, while those who are unable or unwilling to achieve self-reliance become the target of exclusion. This argument implies that the discourse of self-reliance may even undermine the refugees' autonomy.

Contact

Dr Satoko Horii, Akita International University (horii@aiu.ac.jp)

* This webinar is a part of JSPS Kakenhi Research project "International Refugee Regime Revisited: Challenges and Opportunities", Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (B).