

Books and Films

The following books and films may serve as resources for events or to share with advocates interested in learning more about forced displacement.

BOOKS

Dying to Live: Stories from Refugees on the Road to Freedom By: Danielle Vella

This book opens a window into the world of people who are forced to flee their homeland to survive: refugees. To understand this world, you'll read the words, stories, hopes, expectations, and often despairs of the refugees themselves. Danielle Vella, a JRS staff member, takes the reader along on her travels from Africa to the Middle East to Europe to the US to meet and interview refugees—and tell their stories.

Those We Throw Away are Diamonds By: Mondiant Dogon

A New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice, Dogon tells he and his family's story of fleeing the Democratic Republic of Congo to Rwanda. He faced unimaginable loss and trauma and was forced to become a child soldier after briefly returning to the Congo. Dogon manages to share the devastating experiences he has gone through while highlighting the goodness of humanity he also encountered.

Enrique's Journey: The Story of a Boy's Dangerous Odyssey to Reunite with his Mother By: Sonia Nazario

Enrique's Journey recounts the unforgettable quest of a Honduran boy looking for his mother, eleven years after she is forced to leave her starving family to find work in the United States. Braving unimaginable peril, often clinging to the sides and tops of freight trains, Enrique travels through hostile worlds full of thugs, bandits, and corrupt cops. But he pushes forward, relying on his wit, courage, hope, and the kindness of strangers.

What is the What: The Autobiography of Valentino Achak Deng By: Dave Eggers

What Is the What is the epic novel based on the life of Valentino Achak Deng who, along with thousands of other children—the so-called Lost Boys—was forced to leave his village in Sudan at the age of seven and trek hundreds of miles by foot, pursued by militias, government bombers, and wild animals, crossing the deserts of three countries to find freedom. When he finally is resettled in the United States, he finds a life full of promise, but also heartache and myriad new challenges.

Call Me American By: Abdi Nor Iftin

Call Me American tells the story of Abdi Nor Iftin, a Somali boy captivated by American culture. When the radical Islamist group al-Shabaab rose to power, his love for America became dangerous, eventually forcing him to flee to Kenya and ultimately find his way to the United States.

Where the Wind Leads: A Refugee Family's Miraculous Story of Loss, Rescue, and Redemption By: Vinh Chung

Vinh Chung was born in South Vietnam, just eight months after it fell to the communists in 1975. Knowing that their children would have no future under the new government, the Chungs decided to flee the country. In 1979, they joined the legendary "boat people" and sailed into the South China Sea, despite knowing that an estimated two hundred thousand of their countrymen had already perished at the hands of brutal pirates and violent seas.

FILMS

Flee (2021) *Flee tells the story of Amin Nawabi as he grapples with a painful secret he has kept hidden for 20 years. Recounted mostly through animation to director Jonas Poher Rasmussen, he tells for the first time the story of his extraordinary journey as a child refugee from Afghanistan.*

The Swimmers (2022)

The Swimmers follows the life story of teenage Syrian refugees Yusra Mardini and her sister Sarah Mardini, who swam alongside a sinking dinghy of refugees to lighten it, and eventually help 18 refugees reach safety across the Aegean Sea.

Not Just Football: from genocide to the World Cup (2018)

Not Just Football follows the story of Darfur United, an all-refugee team from a forgotten region, as they journey from refugee camps in Chad to the Football World Cup.

Salam Neighbor (2015)

The film follows the journey of two Americans, Chris Temple and Zach Ingrasci, as the first filmmakers ever allowed to be registered and given a tent inside of a refugee camp.
livingnone.org/salamneighbor

God Grew Tired of Us (2006)

Filmmaker Christopher Quinn observes the ordeal of three Sudanese refugees—Jon Bul Dau, Daniel Abul Pach and Panther Bior—as they try to come to terms with the horrors they experienced in their homeland, while adjusting to their new lives in the United States.

Lost Boys of Sudan (2004)

Santino Majok Chuor and Peter Nyarol Dut are two orphaned Sudanese boys whose lives have been ravaged by civil war in their country. This film follows these "lost boys" as they travel from a refugee camp in Kenya to the United States to try to start a new life.
www.lostboysfilm.com