JWA JOURNAL

REMITTANCES

How Migrant Workers Provide for Their Families

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

East African migrant workers face death and abuse in Saudi Arabia

Taiwan government launches short-term migrant worker caregiver trial program

Resources to explain immigration and refugee status to children

Repost: How Should a Christian Approach the Issue of Illegal Immigration and Deportations?



JIWA JOURNAL

A publication of Jiwa International, devoted to telling the stories of migrant workers around the world and keeping you up to date about the work of Jiwa International to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of this vulnerable population.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Jiwa International 213 N. Main St. Spring Grove, PA 17362 contact@jiwainternational.org

President & Founders

Nathan Conklin Laura Ward Conklin

Jiwa Journal Editors

Nathan Conklin Adam Schmehl

Jiwa International Board of Directors

Chad Brubaker Emily Brubaker Rev. Nate Conklin Dr. Vincent LaFrance Susan Millikan

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We are pleased to provide this resource for free as we view this as part of our mission to advocate for migrant workers by telling their stories. However, if you would like to help cover the development and distribution costs of The Jiwa Journal, you may make a donation to Jiwa International at www.jiwainternational.org/give.

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FROM THE FOUNDERS

Thank you for your continued support of Jiwa International and our work in Taiwan with the Indonesian migrant worker population.

Cafe Jiwa continues to serve the local community with simple food and drink options, and we are hoping to start offering full Indonesian meal options by the end of the summer season. As the cafe becomes more well known, we've been able to coordinate with the local government and have received requests for events and classes for the Southeast Asian migrant worker and immigrant communities in the area. We're excited to see how God continues to lead us to care for this vulnerable population.

Jiwa International seeks to bridge the gap between policy and people to meet felt needs as government and legislative policies catch up with the ever evolving situation of migrant labor and peoples. There are also cases where government policies change quickly without notice that leaves organizations like Jiwa International in the lurch; unable to sustain services to those in need.

In this volume of The Jiwa Journal, we've highlighted a number of systematic shortcomings within governments, international financial systems, and exploitive multinational companies that lead to real harm in the migrant worker community. We've also included a article encouraging us to consider how God calls us to respond with both mercy and truth as we respond to the complexities within these systems and situations. These systems are in need of improvement <u>and</u> we can stand in the gap in the mean time.

May we never forget the foreigner among us and may we be known by our love.



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PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for our Indonesian partner as she returns to Taiwan in July and readjusts after 7 months in Indonesia.
- Pray that God would give Cafe Jiwa wisdom as it considers how and who to hire to join the cafe team. We're hoping to find an Indonesian-Taiwanese who can help us develop an Indonesian menu and help us expand our customer base.
- Pray for increased funding and onthe-ground partners. We've identified a need of \$250/month in additional funding to continue meeting the needs already in front of us.
- Pray for peace around the world and for the migrant workers caught in the midst of conflict-areas.
- Pray for more opportunities to connect with the Indonesian population in Taiwan and to partner with the Taiwanese government.





Jiwa (noun) \\jee-wah\\

- 1: The Indonesian word for soul.
- 2: The totality of the person as a center of life, emotions, feelings, and longings.
- 3: The spiritual essence of a person.

SOME MIGRANT TEXTILE WORKERS IN TAIWAN



Of the almost 800,000 migrant workers who have come from southeast Asia to work in Taiwan, almost two-thirds of these laborers work in manufacturing. Many of these factories take raw materials and turn them into fabrics and other materials that other factories will then use to make brand-name products recognized around the world. These second and third-tier manufacturing plants often contain some of the more egregious labor rights violations, especially in the case of migrant laborers.

While the Taiwanese economy has transitioned towards high-tech manufacturing and the service industry, it was not long ago that it was "Made in Taiwan" printed on many household items for sale in the US, including textiles, plastics, and bicycles. The manufacturing jobs that propelled Taiwan and its people toward an "economic miracle" beginning in the 1960's are now often filled by migrant workers.

The Taiwanese have since secured higher levels of education and professional mobility, meaning that these jobs are now viewed as less desirable. But for many people in southeast Asia, these kinds of jobs are still viewed as a lifeline for their entire family and so they migrate to another country for the opportunity.

Unfortunately, some of the companies that hire migrant workers to fill these jobs take advantage of their economic need. Transparentem, an American NGO, started surveying workers in 2021 and published a report in February 2025 with their results.

Over the course of its investigation, Transparentem interviewed over ninety migrant workers employed by textile factories and found evidence of forced labor and illegal fees being placed upon the workers.



"I CAME TO WORK TO PAY MY FAMILY'S DEBT BUT RECEIVED ANOTHER DEBT."

-Far Eastern Migrant Worker



In June 2023, the Taiwanese government committed to ending the practice of charging recruitment fees as part of a bilateral trade agreement with the United States. Since then, however, Transparentem has found instances of recruitment fees as high as \$6,000 USD—some of the highest fees the organization has found in any country it has surveyed. In other cases, the workers had also paid deposits of \$500-1000 USD to recruitment agents, which compelled them to remain in their current situation for fear of losing this deposit.

Even on top of these recruitment fees (which can represent two full years of minimum wage salary in their home country), some migrant workers pay \$50-60 USD per month in service fees to their brokers. The brokers say that these fees are to cover things like translation and other services for the migrant workers, but interviewees report that the service provided is often slow or completely nonexistent. Some companies add additional fees like contract renewal fees, which is illegal in Taiwan. Other companies have discontinued the recruitment and service fees but have made no effort to reimburse current employees the fees they previously paid.

These fees, deposits, and debts levied upon the migrant workers by the companies and brokers seem to be designed to make it impossible for the workers to quit or change jobs without bankrupting themselves, though they technically still have the ability to do so. These realities rise to the level of forced labor as defined by the International Labor Organization's (ILO).

The entire Transparentem report points to many other illegal practices by these textile companies such as retention of identity documents.

Employers are not allowed to keep workers' passports in Taiwan unless consented to by the worker. However, it is not difficult to persuade or coerce the workers to voluntarily give up their passports. When an employer holds the workers identification documents, it limits their ability to leave their job, access government services, or seek assistance. On top of this, it also restricts their movement. Some companies were reported to even put strict night time curfews on their workers and/or limits of how many hours the workers are allowed to be off the factory premises. This practice is illegal in Taiwan but is still being reported by migrant workers.

Before publishing their final report, Transparentem reached out to textile buyers and companies whose supply lines include these factories in Taiwan as well as the Taiwanese government. They received a range of responses from clothing brands; some responded in positive ways, and others didn't respond at all. Transparentem reports that global brands and companies have gotten better at ensuring their primary and first-tier suppliers are not using forced labor—but rarely have ensured that the entire supply chain and the second and third-tier suppliers are not abusing their employees. Transparentem also reports that while the Taiwanese government was responsive and listed ways it would work to better protect migrant labor in Taiwan from human rights abuses, it is the organization's view that the more substantive and specific recommendations made were ignored. The government often touts its labor abuse hotline as a way for migrant workers to access help, but this kind of effort is more passive than active, putting the burden of responsibility on the vulnerable population to spark change rather than those who have the power to make changes and hold people accountable.

Today, the majority of labor rights abuses happen beyond the first-tier suppliers and greater responsibility should be taken by global brands to ensure their entire supply chain is free from forced labor practices.

Governments also have responsibility to ensure that their laws are just and fairly enforced. The global economy is intertwined with complex webs of multinational supply chains; it's not an easy task for a company to ensure an entire supply chain is free of labor rights abuses, let alone for an average consumer when looking at clothing on the rack. It's not easy, but it's important to ask who bears responsibility to ensure fair labor laws are in place and respected, as well as to consider the human costs when responsibility is not taken.

While the factories near Jiwa International are smaller than the ones listed in this report, we are working to identify and meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of these workers within our community. We applaud Transparentem for its in-depth research and policy recommendations to both governments and corporations. Jiwa International also invites you to help us take on active responsibility for the most vulnerable in our community.



THE PASSPORT IS
OUR PROPERTY AND
RESPONSIBILITY, SO
WE NEED TO KEEP IT.
I HAVEN'T SEEN MY
PASSPORT FOR
THREE YEARS.

-Lovetex Migrant Worker in Taiwan



WATCH TRANSPARENTEM'S PRESENTATION ON THE FULL REPORT

A catalyst for systemic change, Transparentem spurs companies to play a critical role in remediating abuses at the worksites where they source their products. Through in-depth investigations, strategic engagement with companies, and policy advocacy, the organization strives to drive change across entire industries.

Transparentem transforms industries by allying with workers and communities to uncover abuses in global supply chains and drive labor and environmental justice.

Transparentem staff, alongside Fair Labor Association and Taiwanese CSO Serve The People, discuss Transparentem's recent investigations into forced labor, unethical recruitment, and other labor abuses in Taiwan's textile and manufacturing industries.



https://vimeo.com/1064331544?share=copy



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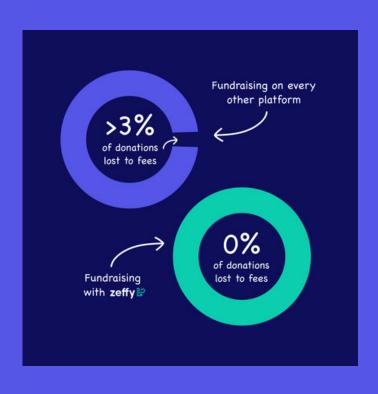
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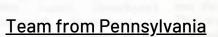




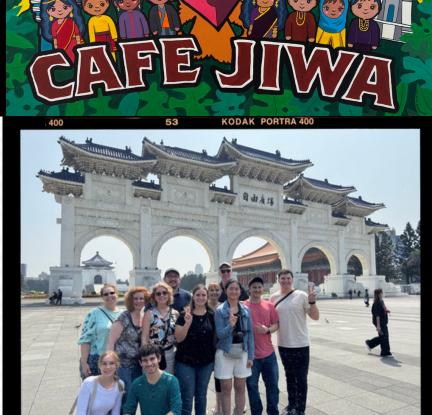
Volume 1, 2025 | The Jiwa Journal Jiwa Snapshots







A team from Lewisburg Alliance Church in Pennsylvania came to Taiwan in March 2025 to help with a variety of projects. One big project was painting a mural on the first floor of the cafe which drove a lot of curiosity throughout the paining process. This mural has continued to spark conversation and we're able to naturally share the mission of Cafe Jiwa! Thanks LAC!



Connection with Yuanchang Local Government

In May, Jiwa International was invited to participate in an Indonesian cultural event sponsored by the New Immigrant Department of the Yuanchang local government. We were able to interact with a immigrants, migrant workers, and local Taiwanese, sharing our story and some coffee! We look forward to future partnership opportunities with the local and county government.











English Classes

In June we started an English class for Indonesians in our area. At their request, we've bumped it up to meeting twice a week! Some dream of eventually visiting America and others see English-language ability as a way to provide for themselves once they return to Indonesia.

Connection with Taiwanese Alliance Church

In July we were invited to present a coffee seminar at the Taiwanese Alliance Church's annual gathering. We and a friend from Aroma Cafe in Taipei led two 1.5 hour workshops about coffee and how it can be a bridge to building relationships. One of the ladies in attendance is originally from Indonesia and has lived in Taiwan for many years.



ART DEC

Thanks to our Intern, Courtney!

Courtney, a recent graduate of Messiah University interned with Jiwa International remotely over the spring semester and bit post-graduation. She helped us with some design work, updating our website, and parts of this volume of The Jiwa Journal. Thanks, Courtney!

If you or anyone else you know has any interest in volunteering with Jiwa International, let us know!

REMITTANCES

How Migrant Workers
Provide for Their Families



magine you're out for dinner with your family or friends and you want to split the bill. Since few of us carry cash anymore, it's now a simple process of pulling out your phone and using Venmo, Cash App, or another app to instantly send them the funds. Easy, right? Instant ability to transfer funds between your and their bank accounts with practically zero fees. Unfortunately for migrant workers, the process of sending money to family members for day-to-day necessities across national borders is much more difficult and expensive.

The majority of migrant workers have not pursued employment opportunities abroad to earn money only for themselves but are often the sole breadwinner for their immediate and extended families in their home country. The wages they accumulate over their contract years add up to the lump sum they bring back with them, but the families of migrant workers often rely on monthly



Focus Taiwan \ CNA English News

THE WORLD BANK ESTIMATED THAT REMITTANCES IN 2024 REACHED OVER \$685 BILLION USD, GREATER THAN GLOBAL FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) AND OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE (ODA) COMBINED.

remittances to make ends meet. The World Bank estimated that remittances in 2024 reached over \$685 billion USD, greater than global Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Official Development Assistance (ODA) combined. This means that the poor and economically disadvantaged have played a larger role in their own economic development than both international organizations and governments have done combined.

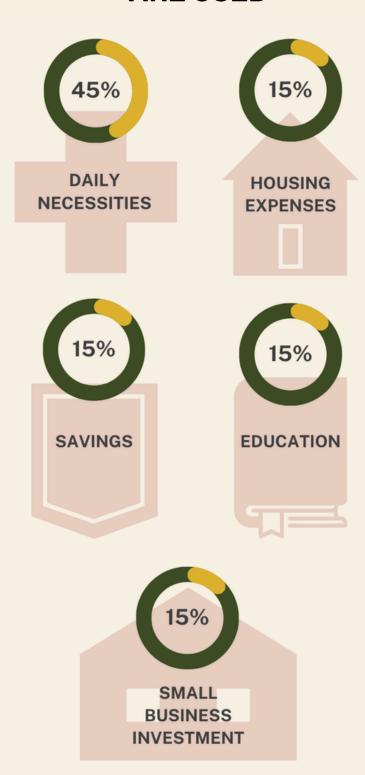
To make a remittance, a migrant worker will give a remittance sending agency a certain amount of money either electronically or in person at a financial institution. They will need to provide their own personal information and detailed information of the recipient in the other country.

The sending agency will then instruct their office in the other country to deliver the remittance to the beneficiary, sometimes even directly into the beneficiary's bank account. Technology and various apps have generally made this process easier, with people no longer needing to physically go to make a remittance. However, countries' differing levels of financial security laws and banking regulations may make it easier or harder to make a remittance depending on which country you're sending from or receiving in.

Taiwan, for example, has strict financial regulations which requires using a bank for international money transfers. These increased regulations mean more complexity and less competition in the remittance market in Taiwan, meaning higher fees for migrant workers.

These fees are often charged as a percentage of the amount of money being remitted. The International Monetary Fund reports that the remittance fee for small transactions (under \$200 USD) averages around 10% but can be as high as 15-20% in less common migration corridors. While fees for larger financial transactions in the case of capital investments, trade, and international aid are often waived or are a flat rate, it is rare to see flat and competitive fees set for the families reliant on remittances to cover day-to-day expenses. Additionally, these large financial institutions with offices in various countries can sometimes make additional money by holding larger amounts of some currencies until exchange rates are in their favor; the interest and exchange rate benefit would never make it back to the remitter. The United Nations has called for the international community to commit to bringing these transaction fees down to 3-5% on average.

HOW MIGRANT WORKERS' REMITTANCES ARE USED



75% of Remittances support immediate family needs, while 25% are saved or invested

When the fees are too high, some migrant workers might turn to personal connections or non-regulated entities to make the remittance for them. While the initial transaction fee may be less, there is much higher risk for funds not reaching the intended beneficiary or exploitation. There are cases of beneficiaries being charged additional fees once the money has arrived in the country although the fees were already paid by the sender.

These remittances are about 15% of a migrant worker's paycheck, on average. They may make a \$200-300 transfer every month or two to their families back home. This 15%, however, often represents 60% of the receiving family's household income. The majority of these remittances (75%) are used for daily necessities such as food, medical care, education, or housing expenses. The remaining 25% of remittances received are saved or used to invest in creating additional income such as a small business. The majority of these remittances are also directly sent to some of the most rural and poorest areas in the world.

Remittances are a necessity for meeting the daily needs of families back home. Additionally, these small-scale financial transactions have been shown to add up to be some of the most effective forms of direct economic development. Migrant workers will continue to send remittances to their loved ones back home, regardless of the cost because of how important these remittances are to the wellbeing of their family. Governments and other development organizations should explore how making these remittances more affordable for migrant workers and perhaps even matching programs could contribute to creating a more efficient model of economic development. Remittances, being small transfers, are unlikely to be a tool for large scale money-laundering or illegal activities, thus targeted deregulation by national governments for remittances would increase competition and decrease complexity, translating to lower costs and safer transactions for the migrant workers.

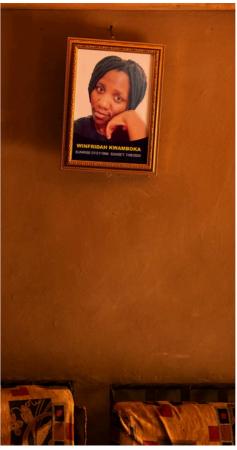
The 16th of June each year is designated as the International Day of Family Remittances by the UN. The United Nations uses this day as an opportunity to call "for greater recognition of the part remittances are playing in reducing the gap, as well as stronger policies and financial inclusivity to maximize the impact of remittances towards families' economic resilience and sustainable development." Each time you make a Venmo or PayPal transfer, think of and pray for the migrant workers around the world. †



CONTENT WARNING: This article discusses instances of physical and sexual abuse, as well as suicidal ideation.

EAST AFRICAN MIGRANT WORKERS FACE DEATH







hen thinking of some of the most dangerous jobs in the world, what comes to mind? Being a household maid or nanny is likely not one of the first that crosses your mind, yet this is the reality for a Kenyan women working in Saudi Arabia.

In the past five years, at least 274 Kenyan workers have died in Saudi Arabia; 55 of whom died last year alone, nearly doubling the previous This death vear's death rate. rate extraordinarily high for laborers working as a housekeeper or nanny. While the official death certificates state "natural causes," the burn marks, electric shocks, and bruises seem to point to something very different than natural.

Individuals who do not have many employment prospects in their own country may look to international employment as a lifeline and ticket to a better future. Governments of developing nations also see exporting labor has a way to decrease unemployment rates in their own country as well as jump start economic

development. Unfortunately, at times, the need source needed laborers for receiving governments and the promise of economic development for sending governments can lead to many instances of abuse and corruption.

The Kenyan president, William Ruto, says he wants to send over a half-million Kenyan workers to Saudi Arabia in the coming years and the staffing agencies owned by his advisors and their family members will play a role in making this possible, for a fee. Fabian Kyule Muli, a member of the Kenyan Parliament, serves as the vice chairman of the labor committee directly responsible for writing laws intended to protect workers. He also owns a staffing agency that sends women in Saudi Arabia and claims that workers there are not being harmed. The Saudi government and royal family also have invested financially in the agencies that supply hundreds and thousands or foreign laborers. The Saudi government reports roughly half a million Kenya or Ugandan workers in the country in 2025.

Some Kenyan women in Saudia Arabia have reported terrible working conditions with bosses threatening to kill them, denying them food, subjecting them to both physical and sexual abuse. However, reporting these abuses rarely fixes anything and, in some cases, actually puts them at risk for even more abuse.

As mentioned previously, some leaders of the government agencies tasked with protecting laborers abroad have a financial interest in higher quantities of workers rather than slowing down the process to ensure fair treatment. When workers go to the police or the courts, those in power tend to take the word of the employers or government officials. And if the workers do receive assistance, they may be on the hook for their flight home and will return to unemployment in their home country in a worse physical, mental, and financial state than when they left.

The New York Times reported on the story of Selestine Kemoli who fled to the Kenyan Embassy in Riyadh in 2020 to escape her abusive employer who had slashed her breasts, forced her to drink urine, and raped her. While telling the Embassy's labor attaché, Robinson Juma Twanga, what she had experienced he said he could help her, with a catch. Kemoli recounts Twanga saying, "I will sleep with you, just the same way your boss has slept with you." Other women have shared similar accusations against Twanga stating that he demanded sex, money, or that they go into sex work to pay for their ticket home. When asked for comment on these allegations, a spokesperson for the Kenyan Foreign Ministry said they had no knowledge of any complaints against embassy officials.

For the men and women who bravely take the step to work abroad to provide for their families, the costs are often much higher than simply being far from friends and family for years at a time and doing difficult labor. They can sometimes find themselves victimized by employers and even the governments tasked with protecting them from abuse. Upon

arriving home, some of these workers are left with deep physical and emotional scars from their time abroad.

Ms. Kemoli, says that she refused the demands of Mr. Twanga and turned to family connections that got her in touch with International Organization for Migration, an arm of the United Nations. IOM bought her a plane ticket back to Kenya where she has been trying to recover. She says she never received her full wages from her time working in Saudi Arabia and bears heavy emotional trauma. Her children ask about her scars and she doesn't know what to tell him. She said she suffers from insomnia, often breaks down sobbing, and has attempted suicide.

For those who have tragically died while working abroad, their families face high barriers to retrieving their loved-one's bodies and wages. When Isiko Moses Waiswa, from Uganda, learned that his wife had died while working in Saudi Arabia. Her body was emaciated. She had extensive bruising, three broken ribs and what appeared to be severe electrocution burns on her ear, hand and feet. Yet the official cause of death was natural causes. Her employer told Waiswa he could either send his wife's body or the wages she was due (approx. \$2,800).

Human rights advocates have pointed to governments like the Philippines who have directly negotiated with receiving countries to ensure safe working conditions and a fair minimum wage. Some governments, however, claim that workers from their own country are less highly regarded than Filipino workers, meaning that they have less to bargain with when negotiating with more developed countries. But again, there are financial benefits to some in the government to get as many workers abroad as possible. While wealthier countries benefit from and powerful individuals profit off migrant labor, it is the poorest and most vulnerable who end up paying the highest, and sometimes even the ultimate, price for economic development. *

TAIWAN GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES SHORT-TERM MIGRANT WORKER CAREGIVER TRIAL PROGRAM

ne of the more common positions that many Indonesian women take while working in Taiwan is in-home caregivers. Due to Taiwan's aging population and the limited number of space available in adult daycare facilities, many Taiwanese families look to hire someone, often from Indonesia through brokerage companies, to provide live-in care for elderly people in the family. The Taiwanese government has now started a trial program that allows for families to hire a caregiver for a short term or for an urgent need.

The current regulations require that the

person receiving care must be diagnosed with physical or mental disability, a severe illness, or medical proof of a specific injury. The family must submit proof of one of these conditions along with their application to the brokerage when requesting a caregiver. While some would like to hire in-house help for more things than just providing care for the elderly, the government has put these restrictions in place so as to not take away employment opportunities from Taiwanese citizens who may work in adjacent fields such as childcare, home cleaning, or education.



Up until now, these caregivers were considered employed full-time by the family through a broker, likely with a one-year contract except in the case of the patient passing. This arrangement would require the family to pay the worker a predetermined wage, provide housing, and hopefully time off as well. The current minimum wage for these southeast Asian caregivers is 20,000 NTD (~\$600 USD) per month (which is about \$250 less than the standard minimum wage). However, not every family needs a full-time live-in caregiver for their loved ones, or their physical condition is temporary due to injury or surgery. The Taiwanese Labor Department launched a trial program in April 2024 where a nonprofit would be considered the caregivers' full-time employer and would then be allowed to hire out these caregivers for short periods of time. Families who face a sudden or short-term need would be able to request the nonprofit's assistance in providing a caregiver. The person receiving care still needs to be able to provide documentation as to their need, but it seems like the process may be easier or covers broader needs due to the short-term nature of the need. The current minimum period is four hours and can go up to several days paid in 24hour periods. The per hour rate is 1,000-1,200 NTD (\$30-36 USD) and a 24-hour period could cost 3,000-3,500 (\$90-105). The nonprofit would also have the ability to charge a travel fee. This trial period was originally supposed to launch in

March but was delayed due to criticism that the costs were too high. The government has only approved a few nonprofits for this trial period in various areas throughout the country.

It will be interesting to see how this trial program is received, both by the families receiving short-term care and by the caregivers themselves. The constant moving from home to home can cause even more challenges in these workers as they seek to find community. Additionally, we have some concerns that the higher fees associated with this kind of work would not be passed along to the workers. We hope that there would be higher rates of compensation for these caregivers since the physical and emotional labor is more intense when constantly working in unfamiliar environments.

Jiwa International has recently received approval to become a registered foreign nonprofit in Taiwan and our hope would be to eventually participate in this kind of program. Before Nathan & Laura returned to Taiwan and learned more about the legal restrictions, it was their hope to start a similar program where Jiwa International could be the primary employer of a few workers and allow them to float to provide breaks to other caregivers in the area. There is not a legal way to provide this kind of service at the moment, but this new pilot program could make it a reality in the near future.

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- 3. Type in your desired amount
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Give by Check

- 1. Make check out to "Jiwa International."
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213 North Main Street Spring Grove, PA 17362



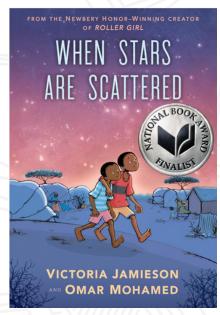
EXPLAINING IMMIGRATION & REFUGEE STATUS TO CHILDREN

Immigration is a complex topic that is difficult to understand the nuance and complexities of, even for adults. The following books are a good starting place to introduce this complicated concept to children who may have met refugees or people who have immigrated to the United States from other countries at their schools or in their neighborhood. These can also serve as conversation starters about how other people may have different life experiences and how we can reflect the character of God by welcoming our new friends!

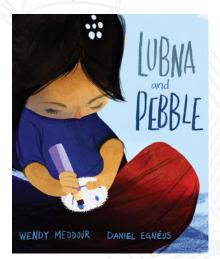
When Stars are Scattered by Victoria Jamieson & Omar Mohamed

Omar and his younger brother, Hassan, have spent most of their lives in Dadaab, a refugee camp in Kenya. Life is hard there: never enough food, achingly dull, and without access to the medical care Omar knows his nonverbal brother needs. So when Omar has the opportunity to go to school, he knows it might be a chance to change their future . . . but it would also mean leaving his brother, the only family member he has left, every day.

Heartbreak, hope, and gentle humor exist together in this graphic novel about a childhood spent waiting, and a young man who is able to create a sense of family and home in the most difficult of settings. It's an intimate, important, unforgettable look at the day-to-day life of a refugee, as told to New York Times Bestselling author/artist Victoria Jamieson by Omar Mohamed, the Somali man who lived the story.







Lubna and Pebble by Wendy Meddour & Daniel Egnéus

In an unforgettable story that subtly addresses the refugee crisis, a young girl must decide if friendship means giving up the one item that brings her comfort during a time of utter uncertainty.

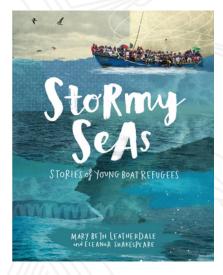
Lubna's best friend is a pebble. Pebble always listens to her stories. Pebble always smiles when she feels scared. But when a lost little boy arrives in the World of Tents, Lubna realizes that he needs Pebble even more than she does.

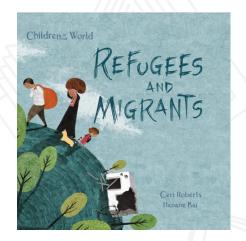
This emotionally stirring and stunningly illustrated picture book explores one girl's powerful act of friendship in the midst of an unknown situation.

Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees

by Mary Beth Leatherdale & Eleanor Shakespeare

The phenomenon of desperate refugees risking their lives to reach safety is not new. For hundreds of years, people have left behind family, friends, and all they know in hope of a better life. This book presents five true stories about young people who lived through the harrowing experience of setting sail in search of asylum: Ruth and her family board the St. Louis to escape Nazism; Phu sets out alone from war-torn Vietnam; José tries to reach the U.S. from Cuba; Najeeba flees Afghanistan and the Taliban; Mohamed, an orphan, runs from his village on the Ivory Coast. Aimed at middle grade students, Stormy Seas combines a contemporary collage-based design, sidebars, fact boxes, timeline and further reading to produce a book that is ideal for both reading and research. Readers will gain new insights into a situation that has constantly been making the headlines.





Refugees and Migrants by Ceri Robers & Hanane Kai

A part of the *Children in Our World* series, a beautifully illustrated non-fiction book series that takes a timely look at today's biggest issues and sensitively explains the crises that dominate the news in an appropriate way for young children, *Refugees and Migrants* discusses the questions "What does it mean to be a refugee or a migrant?" and "Why would people leave their homes?" It answers kids' questions, offers reassurance, and empowers them with ways they can help those affected. Where issues are not appropriate to describe in words, award-winning illustrator Hanane Kai uses a deft hand to create powerful illustrations that help children visualize the people impacted by poverty, hunger, war, racism, and more. All of the images are sensitively rendered and perfectly suited for younger children.

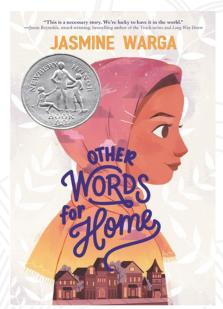
Other Words for Home by Jasmine Warga

A gorgeously written, hopeful middle grade novel in verse about a young girl who must leave Syria to move to the United States, perfect for fans of Jason Reynolds and Aisha Saeed.

Jude never thought she'd be leaving her beloved older brother and father behind, all the way across the ocean in Syria. But when things in her hometown start becoming volatile, Jude and her mother are sent to live in Cincinnati with relatives.

At first, everything in America seems too fast and too loud. The American movies that Jude has always loved haven't quite prepared her for starting school in the US—and her new label of "Middle Eastern," an identity she's never known before.

But this life also brings unexpected surprises—there are new friends, a whole new family, and a school musical that Jude might just try out for. Maybe America, too, is a place where Jude can be seen as she really is.



TAIWAN CONSIDERS ALLOWING UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS TO RETURN TO LEGAL WORKING STATUS

Officials in the Taiwanese Ministry of Labor are seeking public input on a proposed change to migrant labor laws that currently require those migrant workers who have absconded from their legal employers to be deported. The change being considered would allow a potential of 80,000 currently undocumented individuals to reenter the formal and legal labor market in Taiwan without fearing deportation.

This potential change is controversial within the government and public at large. Some believe that this could create national security risks or encourage more migrant workers to run away from their contracts and legal employers who have invested in bringing these laborers from other countries. Proponents for the change believe that allowing these people back into the legal labor market would decrease the amount of undocumented people currently in Taiwan and create a legal pathway for those individuals who fled dangerous or abusive working environments only to find themselves without recourse because they had violated the terms of their work visa by fleeing. This change could also help Taiwan meet its increasing labor shortage with workers who are already in the country with cultural and linguistic abilties. Giving these workers an option to return to legal employment would increase tax revenue, decrease deportation costs, and minimize the exploitative threat held over undocumented workers by oppressive bosses who may seek out undocumented workers.

While the details of what such a policy change might look like in practice are still far off, this highlights the systemic forces at play. While working with immigrant populations in Taiwan, Jiwa International has heard that workers who are undocumented can actually make more money than if they were working legally. This can be because the bosses don't have to pay a broker fee, don't need to pay health insurance and labor insurance premiums for the workers, nor take out income taxes. When many of these migrant workers are the sole providers for their families back in Southeast Asia, this pay increase may be worth the legal risk of being undocumented.

Jiwa International has also heard of a situation where one undocumented person was discovered to be without papers by the police over the course of a minor traffic violation in the town Cafe Jiwa is located and the government started the process of deporting her.

The spouse of this individual didn't want to be separated from their partner and so turned himself into immigration officials. He was apparently told that they didn't have the budget to deport him and so he should go back to illegal work until he could afford the airfare himself so they could deport him along with his wife.

Taiwan has made many changes to its immigration policies in recent years for high-income individuals through a Gold Card residency visa which streamlines the application process, eligibility criterion, and shortens the wait from five years to, in some cases, only one year until a Gold Card visa holder can apply for permanent residency. Digital nomad visas have also been introduced at the end of 2024 allowing influential and high-earning individuals to easily live in Taiwan. These changes, including allowing undocumented residents a way back into legal employment without deportation all highlight the fact that Taiwan recognizes the value of immigration. However, high-earning individuals are being offered incentives and a shortened pathway to permanent residency while undocumented workers are being offered a pathway back to the lower wages and potential for abuse that many of them left. Providing incentives to undocumented residents to take this path could look like cash rewards for reporting abusive and extractive employers, industry specific open work visas that would allow for people to have the freedom to walk away from bad situations without jeopardizing their residency status, and offering a pathway to permanent residency for those who do not violate their visa requirements.

While laws are written in black and white ink, the situations that migrant workers and even government agencies face are often full of grey. Reforming immigration policies to ensure fair treatment of domestic workers, immigrant labor, and business owners is important. These types of pathways to restore legal status that the Taiwanese Ministry of Labor is currently considering may be one way to restore legal status to tens of thousands of individuals and create a more equitable system.

SUPPORT JIWA INTERNATIONAL

as we continue to identify and meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of vulnerable migrant workers in Taiwan.

Your donation...

- keeps our staff present in the lives of migrant workers.
- opens the doors of Cafe Jiwa to be a home away from home.
- provides English instruction and other classes to immigrants and migrant workers.
- encourages the Taiwanese and Indonesian national churches to care for this vulnerable population.
- buys welcome gifts for migrant workers new to the area.

Give Online

- 1. Scan QR code or go to jiwaintl.org/give
- 2. Choose one time or monthly gift
- 3. Type in your desired amount
- 4. Fill out your information

Give by Check

- 1. Make check out to "Jiwa International."
- 2. Send to:

213 North Main Street Spring Grove, PA 17362





HOW SHOULD A CHRISTIAN APPROACH THE ISSUE OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION AND DEPORTATIONS?

We have included this article, first published on the blog *The Christian Exile* by Tyler Boyd, in this volume of The Jiwa Journal as it gives a nuanced perspective on the topic of illegal immigration and deportations.

Since the beginning of the second Trump administration there has been an increased number of deportations and, in-general, a more aggressive approach to immigration enforcement by the American government. In Taiwan, Jiwa International also has interacted with a number of people who are undocumented and we have wrestled with knowing what kind of help we can legally provide and what kind of advice to give. We have also seen first hand the fear and concern on the faces of both documented and undocumented people as there have been more immigration raids in the area near Cafe Jiwa. One of our friends from church originally from Indonesia, but now a Taiwanese citizen was once arrested as she didn't have proof of citizenship on her and needed her husband to come to the police station with her documents. We even heard of one woman giving birth at home alone because she both could not afford a hospital and was afraid of being deported if she went. We've also talked to Taiwanese farmers who say that this rural and less-developed part of Taiwan relies on undocumented laborers as there aren't enough Taiwanese willing to do the work.

It's a complicated topic, especially for those who didn't chose to be undocumented and were either born into it or fleeing an abusive situation seemed to be the only option at the time. This article has helped us process this topic as we both face this situation in Taiwan and see what's happening in the United States. We hope this thoughtful approach will also be helpful to you.

Earlier this week a Christian friend sent me the following request for an article:



I've seen lots of liberals and conservatives arguing over deportations. There are lots of emotions on both sides, and I haven't had the chance to think through it. Can you write an article on the subject of how a Christian should approach the issue of illegal immigration and deportations?



This is an important question, and yes, it is often an emotionally charged issue. As Christians, we must ensure that our perspective is shaped by Scripture rather than political partisanship. To do that, we need to carefully consider a few key biblical principles.

What Does the Bible Say About Immigration in General?

Before addressing the more complex issue of illegal immigration, it's important to remember what the Bible says about immigrants – often referred to in Scripture as "sojourners" or "foreigners." On this, the Bible is clear. Immigrants must be treated with kindness and fairness. This begins with God's commands to Israel in the Old Testament. Many foreigners in Israel were there for economic reasons, much like many immigrants today. God explicitly and repeatedly commanded Israel to treat them well.



You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

-Exodus 22:21



When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

-Leviticus 19:33-34





He [The LORD] executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and love the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

-Deuteronomy 10:18



Furthermore, Israel was commanded not to return runaway slaves to their masters.



You shall not give up to his master a slave who has escaped from his master to you. He shall dwell with you, in your midst, in the place that he shall choose, within one of your towns, wherever it suits him. You shall not wrong him.

-Deuteronomy 23:15-16



While this passage does not explicitly refer to foreigners in particular, and arguably does not provide a direct parallel to illegal immigration, this shows that in the case of slavery, when certain individuals escaped difficult circumstances and found refuge in another land, God desired his people to prioritize hospitality over their legal (or rather "illegal") status.

The New Testament does not speak as directly to the issue of immigration. We do, however, see in the parable of the Good Samaritan that our neighbor is defined as whoever we love and provide care for, regardless of their nationality (Luke 10:25-37).

Among those who have been baptized into Christ, "There is neither Jew or Greek" for they are all "one in Christ" (Galatians 3:28). Christians are even commanded to love their enemies, providing for their needs (Romans 12:20).

Therefore it is plain to see that God expects Christians to love, do good, and care for others, including immigrants. This stands in stark contrast to the harsh and vindictive attitudes that are often prevalent in the world around us, and sometimes influence public policy. Our primary concern should be to reflect Christ's love when we interact with people, regardless of their nationality or legal status.

Does This Mean Christians Should Oppose Deportations?

This is where the discussion becomes more complex. The thing is, at least among the vast majority of Christians, there is little debate about how Christians are expected to personally treat immigrants in general. The question of **illegal** immigration and deportation requires careful consideration of additional biblical principles.

First, while Israel was commanded to care for foreigners **within** its borders, they were never given the responsibility to change the immigration policies of surrounding nations. The prophets often rebuked Israel for mistreating immigrants (Malachi 3:5; Ezekiel 22:7, 29; Jeremiah 7:5-7, etc), but they never once rebuked Israel for failing to make *other* nations more hospitable to foreigners. There was no command for Israel to use its power, wealth, or alliances to change the policies of the ungodly Gentile nations.

This is not because God was not concerned with the injustices of other nations, but because he desired Israel to demonstrate his wisdom to those other nations by following his law (Deuteronomy 4:5-8), not by directly seeking to reform other nations' policies.

As Gentiles, such as Rahab (Joshua 2:11), Ruth (Ruth 1:16), or Naaman (2 Kings 5:15) came to recognize the wisdom and power of the Lord, they were drawn to leave their former allegiances, and were welcomed as they embraced Israel and their God.

Similarly, in the New Testament, Jesus and the apostles also never attempted to change Roman public policy, even though Rome was guilty of many injustices. The closest Jesus came to commenting on Roman law was when He was asked about paying taxes to Caesar (Matthew 25:15-22), and even then, He turned the question around into an opportunity to teach people about the importance of giving their allegiance to God. If Jesus had desired to change Roman public policy, He had the opportunity when Satan offered Him "all the kingdoms of the world" and all their "authority and glory" (Luke 4:5-7). Yet Jesus rejected this as a temptation.

Likewise, the apostles never campaigned to change Roman policies. The early church was known for "turning the world upside down" (Acts 17:6), but not through political activism. Instead, they focused on living a radically distinctive lifestyle, as salt and light (Matthew 5:13-17), faithfully following Christ's commands while submitting to governing authorities (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17).

Would Jesus and the apostles be concerned with how Christians treat immigrants? Absolutely. If Jesus and his apostles were around today, would they have opinions about immigration laws and their enforcement? It wouldn't surprise me. But just as we see in the example of Jesus himself, and in the example of the early church, our focus should be on living out the gospel, proclaiming our allegiance to a different Lord, and maintaining citizenship in a heavenly country, not political reform of earthly kingdoms.

How Should Christians Handle Situations Involving Illegal Immigrants?

Since the Bible calls us **both** to love immigrants and to **submit to governing**

authorities (Romans 13:1-7), we must proceed wisely, carefully considering each of these obligations.

This is especially important if we find ourselves counseling immigrants who have become Christians, and have begun to wrestle with the implications of their illegal status.



If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?

-James 1:16-17



We must avoid harsh, vindictive attitudes toward those who are in difficult situations, even if those difficult situations are brought on by their own choices.

In Romans 13:1-7, Paul commands the Christians in Rome to remain subject to the governing authorities. He states that "there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God." He teaches them that God appoints the authorities as His ministers for their good, and as an avenger to carry out His wrath on wrongdoers. As governments bear the sword enforcing their policies, they do not do so in vain. God has a purpose for them.

It's important to remember that Romans was written while the wicked Nero reigned as emperor. This passage is not suggesting that God endorsed Nero's numerous unjust uses of the sword. It simply reminds us that "all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). This means that even bad things, such as tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, or sword (Romans 8:35) can work together "for good." In the same way, God uses the governing authorities, even the wicked and unjust ones like Nero for the good of His children.

Since we recognize that God has a purpose for the governing authorities, we should submit to their authority. The only exception to this rule would be if obedience to God necessitates disobedience to their commands (cf. Acts 5:29). If an illegal immigrant becomes a Christian, we should encourage them to consider what submission to governing authorities looks like in their situation. Some cases may require difficult decisions. Each situation should be handled with wisdom and compassion, and a desire to please our Lord in everything He has required of us. Ultimately we are to subject ourselves to human institutions, and to those who enforce their laws, not because we view ourselves as their servants, but because it is the will of God (1 Peter 2:13-17).

For example, I once knew a young man who confessed to his close friends that he was brought to the U.S. illegally as a child. After this young man became a Christian, and after much prayer and counsel, he decided the right thing to do was to return to his home country as soon as arrangements could be made. It was a difficult decision, but he made it out of a desire to live faithfully. Each case is unique. It is important to surround fellow Christians with wise counsel and prayer.

So, What Is the Christian Perspective on Illegal Immigration?

In short, Christians are called to live as citizens of another kingdom (<u>Philippians 3:20</u>) while respecting the earthly authorities under which we live.

- We should love and care for immigrants (Luke 10:25-37)
- We should submit to governing authorities as much as possible (Romans 13:1-7)
- We should be distinct from the world, in that we must not be vindictive or harsh, but instead show the character of Christ (Colossians 3:12-14)
- We should not become obsessed with political activism, remembering that our mission is to seek first God's kingdom, and to proclaim the supreme authority of His Son (Matthew 6:33; 28:19-20).

As strangers and exiles in this world (<u>1 Peter 2:11</u>), we must let our ultimate allegiance to Christ shape how we engage complex issues like illegal immigration. We are neither enforcers of government policy, nor the enemies of the governing authorities. Our primary mission to to bring the light of Christ into every dark corner of this world, drawing as many as possible out of the domain of darkness into the Kingdom of His beloved Son (Colossians 1:13). **

Can't make it to Taiwan, but want to help immigrants near you?

CONNECT WITH



Church World Service is a faith-based organization transforming communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement and disaster.

Church World Service was born in the wake of the devastation of World War II. Seventeen Christian denominations came together "to do in partnership what none of us could hope to do as well alone."

In our early days, the CWS family mobilized more than 11 million pounds of food, clothing and medical supplies for war-torn Europe and Asia. In the United States, we began to welcome refugees who were looking to start new lives in safety, resettling more than 100,000 refugees in our first 10 years.

Over the decades, the specifics of our programs have shifted and evolved. The CWS family has grown. And our foundation of collaboration and welcome has remained unshakable. We proudly serve as the toolbox that our neighbors near and far use to build healthy, dignified and safe lives.

Volunteering opportunities in Lancaster, PA on next page





Mains

Donation/Warehouse Volunteer

Help CWS staff organize the donation warehouse, manage inventory, and create welcome kits and baskets. Commitment: 2-3 hours/week for 3 months. Great for one-time group volunteering! No clearances required.

Transportation Volunteer

Provide transportation for CWS staff and clients to appointments and work in Lancaster and nearby areas. Volunteers must be 21+. Commitment: 2-3 hours/week for 3 months. Clearances required.

In-Home ESL Tutor

Help a new neighbor improve their English skills through one-on-one support. Ideal volunteers are patient, consistent, and willing to befriend those in need. Commitment: 2-3 hours/week for 3 months. Clearances required.

Job Search Volunteer

Assist the CWS Employment Team with job searches, applications, onboarding, and interview transportation. Ideal volunteers are computer literate, patient, and flexible. Commitment: 2-3 hours/week for 3 months. Clearances required.

Citizenship Tutor

Help a new neighbor prepare for the citizenship test by providing one-on-one support. Ideal volunteers should be patient, consistent, and willing to befriend someone in need of instruction. The commitment is 2-3 hours/week for 2 months. Clearances required.

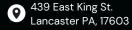
CWS Office Volunteer

Assist CWS Lancaster staff with data tracking and administrative tasks at the office. Commitment: 2-3 hours/week for 3 months. Clearances required.

Youth Mentor

Support a 15–24-year-old refugee in their education, career, and personal goals by building a friendship and helping them feel at home in the U.S. Volunteers meet with their mentees for 1 hour/week for a year, at a time and place that works for both. Clearances required.

Penny Gushiken pgushiken@cwsglobal.org







Starters

Hot Meal Volunteer

Provide a hot meal for new neighbors on arrival, using provided culturally appropriate food lists. Meals are dropped off at the CWS Lancaster office for staff delivery. Commitment: 2-3 hours/month

Grocery Volunteer

Provide a new family with their first set of groceries using a provided food list. Purchase and drop off groceries at the CWS Lancaster office for staff delivery.

Commitment: 2-3 hours/month for 3 months.

No clearances required.

Housing Setup Volunteer

Help set up homes for arriving neighbors by cleaning, moving furniture, and creating a welcoming atmosphere.

Commitment: 3-4 hours/month for 3 months. Great for one-time group volunteering! No clearances required.

Add Ons

Interpreter & Translator

Assist speakers of Arabic, Spanish, Pashto, Dari, Somali, Haitian Creole, Ukrainian, Kiswahili, Kinyarwanda, Lingala, and Tigrinya at medical, employment, and legal appointments. Document translation can be done remotely. The commitment is 1-2 hours/week for 3 months. No clearances required.

Childcare Volunteer

Volunteers will assist children in ESL & Cultural Orientation classes and other CWS events, working in pairs. Comfort with children of various ages and limited English is required. The commitment is 2-3 hours/month for 3 months. Clearances are needed.



We understand the stress International Workers face when figuring out all the details of coming back to the US for a limited amount of time. Buying or finding a car to use for a couple weeks to over a year adds a lot of stress. Through the Lord's calling and blessing, we can help!

We provide vehicles for International Workers, including Jiwa International staff, primarily based out of Pennsylvania to use when they are home from abroad. If you or someone you know needs a vehicle, contact us at springgrove@sgacma.org or (717) 225-0343.



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