

Nursing Strategies to Care for Vulnerable International Communities



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Disclaimer

- The findings and conclusions in this presentation article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official policies of the Office of the Surgeon General or the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps or the United States Government or any of the agencies with which they are affiliated.

Objectives

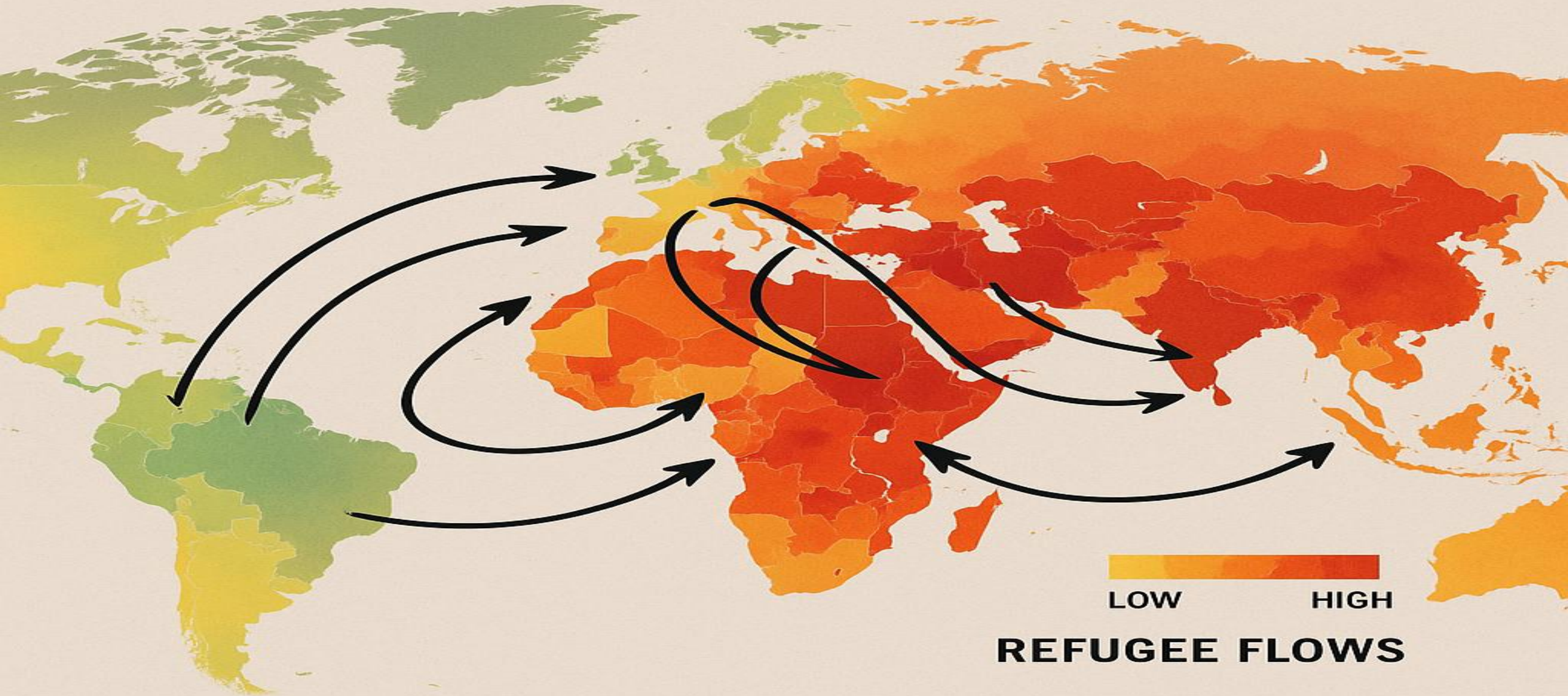
- 1. Define** the concept of vulnerable international communities and describe the social, political, and environmental factors contributing to their risk.
- 2. Identify** and **analyze** common health challenges faced in conflict zones, migration corridors, and disaster-prone areas.
- 3. Apply** trauma-informed and culturally competent nursing strategies in global emergency care settings.
- 4. Develop** practical, evidence-informed nursing interventions to support the health and dignity of displaced and underserved populations.

Understanding Vulnerability

- Approximately 1.9 billion people do not access to safe drinking water at home
- 828 million people are undernourished
- 339 million people need humanitarian assistance
- Poverty levels (% living on less than \$2.15/day):
 - Sub-Saharan Africa: 35.4%
 - East Asia and Pacific: 5.7%
 - Latin America and Caribbean: 4.8%



CONFLICT AND MIGRATION HEATMAP



Barriers to Health Care Access

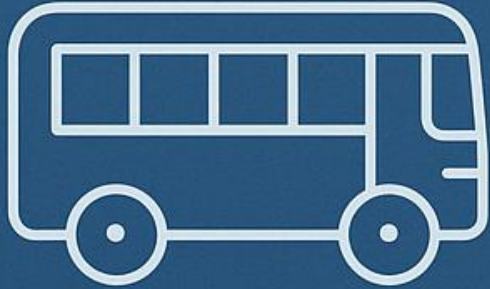


- Legal and Documentation Issues
- Language Barriers
- Transportation Challenges
- Financial Constraints

Nursing Strategies to Address Barriers in Vulnerable Communities

Strategy	Description
Provide Culturally Competent Care	Incorporate patients' cultural beliefs, languages, and practices into care plans; undergo ongoing training in cultural humility and trauma-informed approaches.
Collaborate with Community Organizations	Partner with local faith groups, shelters, cultural centers, and advocacy organizations to bridge trust gaps and extend care beyond clinical settings.
Utilize Telehealth Services	Expand access for remote or underserved populations by offering virtual consultations, health education, and chronic disease management.
Advocate for Health Equity	Engage in policy advocacy, identify systemic disparities, and promote inclusive healthcare policies to address social determinants of health.

Improving Access to Healthcare



58%

Provide mobile
health clinics



65%

Expand community-
based care



46%

Increase outreach
and education

Clinical Strategies

- [World Health Report on the Health of Refugees and Migrants](#)
- [Psychological first aid reduces PTSD onset by 40% when applied early.](#)
- [Mobile triage techniques reduced wait times in Syrian refugee camps by 60%.](#)





Partnering with Global Organizations

- **Doctors Without Borders (MSF):** Supported over 11 million outpatient consultations globally in 2023.
- **WHO Emergency Medical Teams (EMT):** 150+ teams have deployed to 92 countries.
- **Case example:** [Syrian mobile trauma units](#)



MARIA
LGBTQ+ REFUGEE
FROM EL SALVADOR

Case Study: LGBTQ+ Migrant

- Assaulted enroute to U.S.
- Presents with PTSD, dehydration, and pelvic injury
- LGBTQ+ migrants face a 7x greater risk of sexual violence en route (IOM, 2023).



Ethical Considerations in Global Emergency Nursing

Issue	Challenge	Nursing Action	Reference
Consent & Cultural Norms	Cultural values may conflict with Western medical ethics	Use interpreters, build trust before care, respect family dynamics	WHO, 2023
Nonmaleficence in Crisis	Rapid decisions in unstable environments may risk harm	Apply least harmful interventions, document ethical reasoning	ANA Code of Ethics, 2022
Secondary Trauma in Nurses	60% of emergency nurses report experiencing emotional toll during deployment	Implement debriefing sessions, peer support groups access to trauma-informed training	ICN, 2023: Smith et al, 202
Advocacy in Hostile Settings	Nurses may face pressure not to speak up	Elevate concerns via safe reporting channels, partner with human rights or global	MSF Guidelines, 2022

Take-Home Framework

- **Assess:** Social & structural vulnerability
- **Act:** Immediate safety, basic needs
- **Adapt:** Respect culture, manage trauma
- **Advocate:** Document, refer, elevate voices

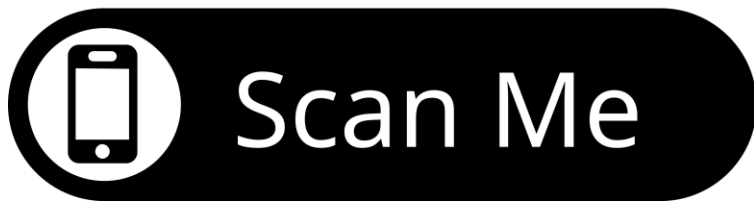


GLOBAL CARE, LOCAL ACTION



Resources

- **UNHCR:** [Public Health Emergency Toolkit](#)
- **National Institute of Health:** [Toolkit of resources for caring for refugee/migrating families](#)
- **Global Health Cluster:** [Quality of Care Toolkit](#)
- **NYC Health + Hospitals:** [Trauma-Informed Care \(TIC\) Pocket Guide](#)
- **InterAction:** [NGO Directory](#)
- **U.S. Customs and Border Protection:** [Border Encounters](#)



**Household
Emergency
Preparedness
Instrument**