



**Jessica ALEXANDER**

Jessica Alexander is a humanitarian aid professional with experience in operations, evaluation and policy. Her career includes global deployments spanning Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. She has conducted large scale evaluations, assessments and policy research for the UN, Red Cross and various NGOs on a range of humanitarian issues including: child protection, shelter, emergency education, coordination, accountability and humanitarian effectiveness. She has also overseen programming in Darfur, South Sudan and Haiti.

Jessica is two-time Fulbright grantee who received the award to research Japan's approach to disaster risk reduction in 2019 and the use of child soldiers in Sierra Leone in 2006. She is currently a Visiting Scholar at Sophia University. She received a Master of Public Health and a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University. She currently teaches humanitarian affairs at numerous global universities. She has authored policy papers and mainstream articles about the humanitarian sector and is the author of "Chasing Chaos: My Decade In and Out of Humanitarian Aid."

***2015 European Migration - Challenges for humanitarian actors***

**Abstract:**

In 2015, European states found themselves experiencing levels of mass migration not seen since World War II as over a million refugees and migrants, entered the European continent by sea, predominantly from Africa and the Middle East. Many refugees and migrants continued to arrive in 2016 and 2017 and by the end of 2017 over 1.8 million people arrived in Europe seeking protection and asylum. Of these, an estimated 432,000 (23%) were children. During the height of the surge, there was an almost continuous flow of people moving rapidly through countries of transit where people later became stranded as a result of border closures. Mobile populations proved a challenge to the normal humanitarian systems used to designed for static populations. European states were unprepared for migration of this scale and scrambled to adapt and to meet needs. Despite their high or middle-income status, the refugee and migrant flows exposed countries' weaknesses in asylum and status determination procedures and limited ability to respond in a timely or adequate way. This presentation will explore some of the main challenges that this situation posed not only for European states, but also humanitarian actors struggling to respond.