

Edited by Sofia Leitão, Yvonne Vissing

# Community Structures and Processes on Lives of Refugee Children

SERIES IN SOCIOLOGY

## About the editors

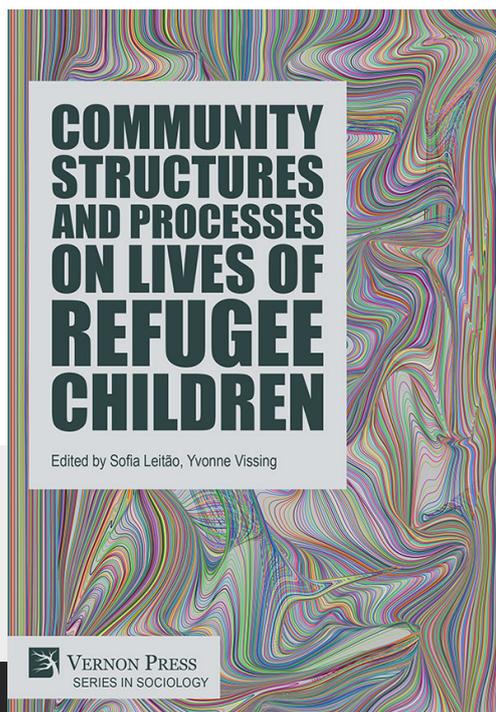
**Sofia Leitão**, Ph.D., is a Sociologist, Senior Development Manager at Rinova Ltd (UK), Senior Advisory Board Member at “Hope For Children” CRC Policy Center (Cyprus). Sofia’s work reflects her interest in children’s agency in matters related to their spheres of action. She is particularly interested in raising awareness on the Rights of the Child; in developing learning programmes promoting child-friendly practices, children’s entrepreneurship, social inclusion and participation; non-formal education with an emphasis on storytelling and the use of media and arts as means to enhance self-expression and learning. Sofia has directed the development and implementation of numerous programmes in the field of the Rights of the Child, including the transnational programme INTEGRA: Multidisciplinary Mentorship program to support the entrepreneurship of children in care and young care-leavers; BASE: Migrant and Refugee Child-friendly Support Services in cases of sexual and gender-based violence; HIT: Hate Interrupter Teams (funded by the Rights, equality & Citizenship programme of the European commission); FATIMAIL: Preventing Honour Related Violence against women through Social Impact Projects and Peer Learning led by Young men. She is the author of a book on media discourses and childhood constructions ‘Desenhos Animados – Discursos sobre ser criança’ (Edições 70) and co-editor of ‘The Rights of Unaccompanied Minors: Perspectives and Case Studies on Migrant Children’ (Springer).

**Yvonne Vissing**, Ph.D., is Professor of Sociology and Founding Director of the Centre for Childhood and Youth Studies at Salem State University in Salem, Massachusetts. Yvonne has worked in the area of child and youth advocacy for her entire career collaborating with different child rights groups in the USA. Her work is driven by the pursuit of human rights, community-building, resiliency, peace and justice. Yvonne has worked as a teacher, researcher, consultant, therapist, award-winning filmmaker, mediator, guardian-ad-litem, and helps organizations to decrease child abuse and improve child well-being. She is a former fellow at the National Institute of Mental Health, University of Connecticut Center for Democracy, and Whiting Foundation. Author/co-author of 15 books and hundreds of chapters, professional journal articles

and other publications, including ‘Children’s Human Rights in the USA: Challenges and Opportunities’ (Springer, forthcoming), ‘The Rights of Unaccompanied Minors: Perspectives and Case Studies on Migrant Children’ (Springer), ‘Children’s Human Rights as a Buffer to Extremism’ (Springer); ‘Changing the Paradigm of Homelessness’ (Routledge) and ‘Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Homeless Children in Small Town America’ (Lexington).

## Summary

Communities around the world face challenges in how to assist the influx of refugees and immigrants, who arrive with only the clothes on their backs. They may have health problems and have experienced violence and trauma before they arrived in their new communities. They require healthcare, housing, education, jobs, financial & material support, and childcare, to name a few. Some arrive with families, but often, children and youth arrive unaccompanied and are in need of special care. Even well-intentioned and resource-rich communities may find themselves taxed as they struggle to help everyone in need. This book is framed by a human rights approach and highlights how social structures and institutional processes impact the lives of refugee and asylum-seeking children. Social institutions around the world tend to experience a similar type of challenge in serving this population. These challenges are examined in this book as recommendations for actions provided. The authored contributions present different perspectives on processes, interactions, policies, practices, and laws embedded in a variety of institutions and community social interactions. It is a reference for researchers, practitioners, and students in its presentation of academic and practitioner approaches to challenges faced by refugee children in different geographic and social contexts. Topics in this book include work on the character of transnational migrant families and communities, uses of new information and communication technologies, international frameworks of humanitarian assistance, social inclusion best practices in the integration of migrant children and unaccompanied minors, and models to provide multidisciplinary services on prevention, integration and rehabilitation integration strategies. Concepts of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and HOPEs (Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences) are explored, along with lifelong learning as a catalyst for the sustained promotion of safe communities in the context of migration; and individual refugee needs and their family’s future wellbeing towards service to refugees that work for the individual.



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