The second **Techfugees Global Summit** took place last week (Thursday 25- Friday 26 October 2018) at the 'Station F' startup campus in Paris, where more than 600 participants from the tech community came together to exchange ideas and find solutions to the refugee crisis.

The debates, talks and round-table discussions focused on **the role technology can play to help integrate displaced people in society**, covering hot tech topics such as blockchain, AI and Big Data.

Promising new algorithms were presented to the audience, generating debates on program efficiency, data acquisition and respect for the refugees' privacy.

For instance, Rana Novak from IBM Refugee & Migration Predictive Analytics developed a tool that forecasts refugee arrivals and changes the way migration crises are managed thanks to **machine learning** (ML), statistics and probabilistic network correlations. John Jagger, Hala Systems CEO, is also developing innovative technologies based on ML and NLP (Natural Language Processing) to save lives and reduce trauma by predicting where conflict may arise and where refugees may be displaced.

Another example of **algorithms that can help improve refugees' integration** came from Kirsk Bansak, PhD candidate in political science at Stanford University. His data-driven refugee allocation algorithm uses ML to geographically distribute refugees and thus **optimize their overall employment rate**. Thanks to this algorithm, refugees' employment prospects improved by 40% in the United States and by 75% in Switzerland.

Mike Mitchell, HIAS Associate Vice President, presented an algorithm called Annie (named after the first immigrant registered at New York's Ellis Island in 1892) that uses past employment, language and nationality data to match refugees with the optimal location for them to find a job and adjust to their new life. In the future, the software may integrate other data such as educational and vocational background and workplace, housing, school, and healthcare needs.

Despite the encouraging results, **a lot remains to be done**. As Rana Novak commented: "a better job should be done to improve these models, such as the impact of creating a wall or a new border on the displacement of the refugee population". This calls for more resources (both technological and human) to be devoted to analyzing refugee population movements and integration.

Personally, taking part in this event was a deeply **satisfying experience**, proving that cutting-edge technology can be used to achieve humanitarian goals and ultimately help create a fairer society.

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