

A young boy and girl are shown at a public water tap in a refugee camp. The boy is on the left, smiling and holding the tap handle. The girl is on the right, looking down at her hands as water flows from the tap. The background shows several large white water storage tanks and a fenced area. The entire image has a light blue tint.

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020



**Joint Data Center  
on Forced Displacement**



WORLD BANK GROUP



UNHCR  
The UN Refugee Agency



## Contents

Foreword	4
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. Transforming the forced displacement data landscape</b>	<b>7</b>
Persistent data and evidence gaps	7
From an innovative idea to an established Center – the JDC in 2020	9
<b>3. JDC Actions and Activities – illustrative examples</b>	<b>13</b>
Key achievements in 2020	13
<b>MULTI-COUNTRY:</b> Integrating forcibly displaced populations into Covid-19 High-Frequency Phone Surveys	14
<b>MASHREQ:</b> Measuring changes in socioeconomic welfare since COVID-19 on forcibly displaced populations, and host communities	16
<b>ETHIOPIA:</b> Including refugees in a national socioeconomic household survey	18
<b>CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC:</b> IDP Survey as part of the 2020 Harmonized Living Conditions Survey	20
<b>BANGLADESH:</b> Cox's Bazar Humanitarian Development Statistics Center/Analytical Program	22
<b>GLOBAL:</b> Supporting phase III of the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS)	24
<b>GLOBAL:</b> Compiling and Curating UNHCR's Datasets for the Microdata Library	26
<b>GLOBAL:</b> Knowledge Sharing - Disseminating evidence and data on those forcibly displaced	28
<b>4. From concepts to transformation – reflections and learnings so far</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>5. Conclusion</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>6. Annex: The JDC Work Program: Ongoing and Planned Activities</b>	<b>33</b>

## Foreword

The years between 2010 and 2019 have been labelled a decade of displacement. An almost constant increase in the number of displaced people around the world means that by mid-2020 more than 80 million were forcibly displaced, or one percent of the world's population. This is almost twice as many as in 2010. Among these are almost 16 million refugees trapped in protracted refugee situations, while the number of refugees who are able to return home is sharply declining.

These trends have called for new approaches in tackling forced displacement. National governments, international organizations, as well as other global and regional actors have stepped up their efforts to find effective policy responses. Several recent initiatives, notably the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Refugee Forum have provided significant momentum to enable this change. At their core lies a collaborative response, based on the complementarity between humanitarian and development action, and the leadership of national authorities.

The creation of the Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement (JDC) in 2019 is a direct result of this response. The JDC mandate focuses on one of the key challenges: the scarcity of data on those affected by forced displacement and its inadequacy to effectively underpin national policy and development approaches.

The establishment of JDC by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency and the World Bank signals a new way of working between these organizations. The Center draws on staff and resources from both institutions in a unique manner, bringing together the different capacities and networks of the two organizations while relying on the parent institutions' administrative systems, and hence not creating a new legal entity. But the Center is designed to also foster collaboration and partnership beyond the two parent organizations, including with host country governments, affected populations, other international organizations, civil society, academia, and the private sector.

As for many of us, the first 18 months of the Center's existence have been uniquely challenging. We are very pleased to see that, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the JDC has been able to develop a solid portfolio of activities, while strengthening the collaboration between the World Bank and UNHCR, and facilitating partnerships between our institutions and other organizations. We have already seen a number of datasets and reports that are policy- and programmatically relevant, at the country, regional, and global levels.

In this first Annual Report you will find both a discussion about the overall data and evidence challenge, and the JDC's efforts so far to improve the availability and accessibility of high-quality socioeconomic data on those affected by forced displacement. The Report also highlights some of the key achievements of the JDC in 2020, spanning from the inclusion of refugees in national surveys in Ethiopia, the integration of those forcibly displaced in high-frequency phone surveys, to curating datasets for the UNHCR Microdata Library. In delivering these activities, the team members engaged with, and to some extent came to fully appreciate, the operational and research dimensions of the JDC's work. The activities also offered learning opportunities including the importance—and challenges—of national statistical capacity building. We hope that this work will stimulate our collective efforts to support some of the world's most vulnerable people, including through more, better, and more accessible data and evidence.



*Dominique Hyde*  
 Chair of the Joint Data Center  
 Management Committee  
 Director of External Relations,  
 UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

*Stefan Emblad*  
 Co-chair of the Joint Data Center  
 Management Committee  
 Acting Senior Director of the Fragility, Conflict, &  
 Violence Group, the World Bank.



**The establishment of a joint center by UNHCR,  
 the UN Refugee Agency and the World Bank  
 signals a new way of working between  
 our organizations.**



**Joint Data Center  
 on Forced Displacement**



WORLD BANK GROUP



UNHCR  
 The UN Refugee Agency

# 1. Introduction

Despite recent policy developments and increased political attention on forced displacement and migration more broadly, significant gaps and challenges exist when assessing the related data landscape. To effectively and sustainably address them, creative yet rigorous approaches are required that can provide new and robust evidence to effectively inform both policy and operations in contexts affected by forced displacement.

The *World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement* (JDC) was established in 2019 to help transform the data landscape on forced displacement, and became fully operational in early 2020. Through the design of its work program, it has focused on laying the groundwork to facilitate a step change in the quality, availability, and accessibility of socioeconomic microdata on populations affected by forced displacement to inform policies and operations that can improve their living conditions and overall well-being. The JDC's ambition is to significantly move the needle over the four years of its current mandate, and the team has been busy initiating this process in 2019-2020.

The first year of activities has coincided with the outbreak of COVID-19. During 2020, the pandemic posed significant obstacles to the delivery of activities and, more importantly, has likely heightened the vulnerability of those forcibly displaced. This only emphasizes the importance of including the forcibly displaced in surveys and, consequently, policy interventions. The report delves into some of the ongoing JDC activities addressing these issues.

This document is somewhat different from what one typically expects from an annual report: it focuses on the substantive challenge at hand, rather than providing a detailed and exhaustive account of all activities, or providing a detailed financial statement. This is due to the particular partnership-focused character of the Center, with the legal and fiduciary requirements resting with the two parent institutions.

This first Annual Report of the JDC starts by providing an overview of what the Center believes are the existing major data and evidence gaps for those affected by forced displacement. Subsequently, the Report looks back at the JDC's work in 2019-2020: identifying a set of objectives, designing a work program, and initiating a host of partnerships. The Report then highlights a selection of activities and key achievements based on the work



United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres at the launch of the Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement.

program adopted in March 2020. Reflecting on the first 1.5 years of experience, the Report finishes with some lessons from the experience so far and how these will shape the design of a work program for 2021 and beyond, including the implementation of the JDC Strategy 2021-2023.



# 2. Transforming the forced displacement data landscape

## Persistent data and evidence gaps

Large amounts of forced displacement-related data are produced every day, primarily for the purpose of informing humanitarian interventions at the strategic, operational, and programmatic levels. Given these overarching objectives and the challenging circumstances in which much of this data is gathered, significant gaps persist regarding its quality and coverage that hinder the full inclusion of forcibly displaced populations in development agendas and national planning processes.<sup>1</sup> These gaps became abundantly clear during our consultations as part of JDC's strategy development. The data and evidence gaps can be characterized as five distinct types:

- The **"quality gap,"** or a lack of clear definitions and solid methods. The inconsistent use of terminology, concepts, and definitions in the data landscape on forced displacement, as well as variation in methods and tools to collect data, and a lack of alignment to well-established statistical standards, impede high-quality data and hinder comparability between data sources and across contexts. Although progress has been made in some areas through the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS), much work is still needed. Methodological innovations to improve the quality of data produced are also underdeveloped.
- The **"substantive gap,"** or a lack of quality socioeconomic data that allow for comparisons with host populations and longitudinal analysis. Most data on forced displacement are produced to inform humanitarian interventions but are often not well suited for development purposes. An understanding of the socioeconomic situation of forcibly displaced persons, how this compares to non-displaced populations, and how key variables change overtime is a critical data gap.
- The **"systems gap,"** or limited integration in national statistical systems of affected countries. The collection of data on forced displacement is often not embedded in national statistical systems, and/or the national capacity to do so is low. The inability to generate reliable official

statistics on displacement can hinder the inclusion of forcibly displaced populations in national development processes and impede responses to displacement-specific vulnerabilities.

- The **"access gap,"** or limited availability and access to microdata and disaggregated data. Household or individual-level data on forcibly displaced populations is not readily available in many contexts. This hinders in-depth policy-relevant research and interventions to improve the protection and well-being of displaced households and communities.
- The **"coverage gap,"** or a lack of data on key population groups and geographical areas. Significant data gaps exist for out-of-camp populations, refugees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) residing in urban areas, as well as stateless persons. The welfare of returning refugees is also a significant data blind spot. Taking a global perspective, there are also certain countries and regions where data gaps are more acute than others; these include regions where local capacity is sometimes low (e.g., Sub-Saharan African, the Sahel) but also others severely affected by forced displacement and related population movements (e.g., Latin America).

Unpacking the reasons for the continued existence of these gaps quickly reveals a more complex picture. There are several key reasons that deserve particular mention, each one revealing the fundamental challenges involved in addressing the problem comprehensively.

First, **vast amounts of data produced are intended for humanitarian purposes** and, while they are highly valuable in their own right, they are not aligned to "development data needs."<sup>2</sup> Data on forcibly displaced populations is primarily gathered by national authorities, and both national and international humanitarian organizations through systems that aim, explicitly, to inform protection work, assistance delivery, humanitarian advocacy efforts, and program design. This is largely because, historically, forced displacement has been perceived as a humanitarian challenge. Despite recent policy developments, including a significant shift from development partners to embrace forced displacement

<sup>1</sup> World Bank, "Forcibly Displaced: Toward a Development Approach Supporting Refugees, the Internally Displaced, and Their Hosts", 2017, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/25016>

<sup>2</sup> Sarzin, Zara. 2017. Stocktaking of Global Forced Displacement Data. Policy Research working paper, no. WPS 7985. World Bank, Washington, DC. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/26183>

(most notably in the form of the Global Compact on Refugees) the required transformation of the data landscape still lags behind. For example, the inclusion of forced displacement in national data collection systems is still very limited, as is the alignment to well-established statistical standards (e.g., for employment and poverty) that underpin so many development planning processes.

Second, it is important to recognize the **very challenging contexts in which the vast majority of this data is produced**.<sup>3</sup> Political dynamics have their toll with a complex web of (often untransparent) incentives driving stakeholders' investments in data and their analysis. These can range from incentives to exaggerate or under-report population figures, to increase funding allocations, or fit with a current political narrative. Political dynamics can also lead to significant coverage gaps concerning specific population groups even when there is a broader, more positive investment in data. Funding incentives within the aid sector also have a widespread impact creating competition between agencies and sectors, and hindering collaboration. Operational realities further impact data quality and availability. Limited connectivity, internet access, and institutional capacity, as well as fluid population movements are common challenges that can significantly frustrate data production efforts. With the majority of forcibly displaced persons residing in out-of-camp or urban contexts, the complex nature of many urban environments—such as over-crowding, insecurity, anonymity, and other aspects linked to informality—also presents significant operational challenges that impede the quality of data produced. During 2020, with the developments of the COVID-19 pandemic, the opportunities for traditional data collection methods have also been significantly affected, creating an almost entirely new data collection reality for many key actors.

Third, operational challenges are compounded with a fundamental problem: **inconsistent use of definitions regarding technical—or even conceptual—issues**. As highlighted by the *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics*, there is a “[l]ack of comparability between statistics on refugees and asylum seekers produced by different countries, and across displacement situations within countries. This arises due to the lack of consistency of terminology, concepts, definitions, and classifications, as well as variation in the methods of data collection, compilation,

<sup>3</sup> All these issues are elaborated on in this paper: Natalia Baal and Laura Ronkainen, 2017, UNHCR Statistics Technical Series: Obtaining representative data on IDPs: challenges and recommendations, <https://www.unhcr.org/598088104.pdf>

and presentation at national and international levels.”<sup>4</sup>

For IDPs, the picture becomes even murkier. Precisely which events trigger internal displacement? Are children born to IDP parents also IDPs? When should IDPs no longer be defined as IDPs? Answers to these questions and others vary considerably in practice and have a significant impact on data comparability within and across countries.<sup>5</sup> The reasons for such inconsistent definitions vary, but can largely be explained by differing legal frameworks, political motivations, mixed capacity levels, and (until recently) the absence of internationally recognized statistical classifications.

A fourth issue concerns the **limited access to, or sharing of, existing data**. This has negative repercussions on both operations and policy. While there is consensus that streamlining safe data-sharing procedures between operational partners and responsibly increasing the accessibility of data on forced displacement for researchers brings much added value, the avenues for currently doing so are troubled. At the center of this challenge is a real protection concern about data that identifies vulnerable individuals or groups, as there is a significant risk of subsequent targeting or harm if the data falls into the wrong hands. The potential misuse of data also poses a clear reputational risk to organizations that collected and disseminated the data in the first place, especially when, as in the case of UNHCR, they have a mandate to protect the population concerned. For this reason, data currently collected by UNHCR and other stakeholders often remains under-utilized in the design of policies and programs, and for conducting research on forced displacement. Protection concerns related to re-identification are not the only explanation for limited data sharing. A lack of awareness of the potential benefits it can bring, limited resources to invest in de-identification procedures, and dynamics between agencies that disincentivize sharing also play a significant part.

Taken together, these gaps, and the reasons for their continued existence, underpinned the establishment of the JDC, and have continued to inform decisions taken through its design phase and into its first year of operations.

<sup>4</sup> Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics, 2018, *International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS)*, paragraph 17: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3859598/9315869/KS-GQ-18-004-EN-N.pdf/d331c9cc-1091-43c2-b589-2c250bccc281>

<sup>5</sup> Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics, 2018, *Technical Report on the Statistics of IDPs*: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-manuals-and-guidelines/-/KS-GQ-18-003>). Specifically, the challenge of inconsistent definitions on durable solutions was described here: Chaloka Beyani, Natalia Krynsky Baal and Martina Caterina, 2016, *Conceptual challenges and practical solutions in situations of internal displacement*, *Forced Migration Review*: <https://www.fmreview.org/solutions/beyani-baal-caterina>

## From an innovative idea to an established Center – the JDC in 2020

The data and evidence gaps presented above highlight the need to produce new evidence to inform policy and responses in forced displacement situations. To this aim, the JDC *Management Committee* called for an ambitious work program already from the outset of the Center's existence. JDC operations should lead to a real change in the way data is produced and employed by local, regional, and global actors to enhance the protection and well-being of affected populations.

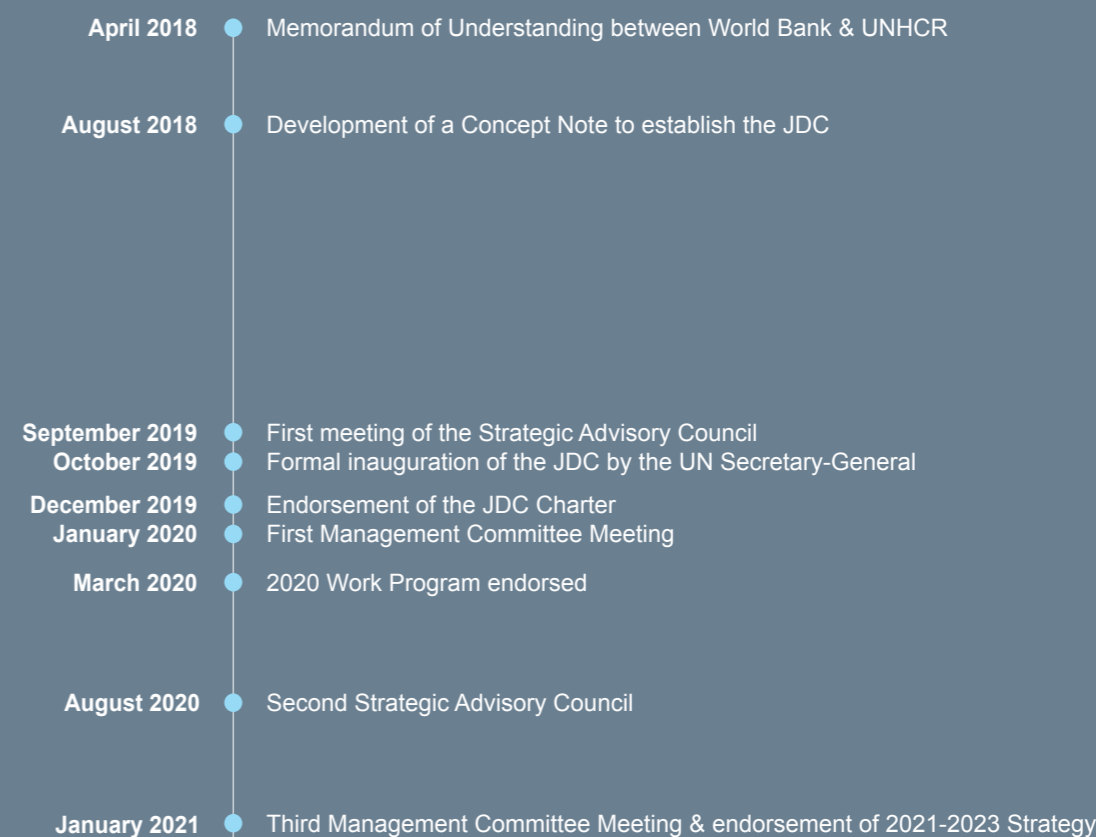
The translation into practice of such an ambitious goal requires the development of a coherent set of actions. Emboldened by the Management Committee and with the support of JDC's host institutions—UNHCR and the World Bank—the Center embarked on some 40 activities already in its first year. This has led to the Center moving very quickly

from being an abstract entity to becoming an established actor in the forced displacement data and evidence space.

The first step included the creation of a new team. By the end of 2020, the JDC was composed of 16 team members from both the World Bank and UNHCR. The Team includes three JDC Fellows, selected from among a pool of young scholars from middle- and low-income countries with forced displacement experience and research interests in line with the work program of the Center (see Box 1).

The current forced displacement data ecosystem is rich with stakeholders actively engaged in producing, using, and improving available data on these vulnerable populations. Defining the position of the JDC within this already crowded space has represented another focus during the early stages of JDC's existence. To this aim, the Center developed a theory of change, representing an important step towards the characterization of the JDC's ultimate goals. The team narrowed down the objectives of the Center,

### Timeline of the JDC

- 
- April 2018 ● Memorandum of Understanding between World Bank & UNHCR
  - August 2018 ● Development of a Concept Note to establish the JDC
  - September 2019 ● First meeting of the Strategic Advisory Council
  - October 2019 ● Formal inauguration of the JDC by the UN Secretary-General
  - December 2019 ● Endorsement of the JDC Charter
  - January 2020 ● First Management Committee Meeting
  - March 2020 ● 2020 Work Program endorsed
  - August 2020 ● Second Strategic Advisory Council
  - January 2021 ● Third Management Committee Meeting & endorsement of 2021-2023 Strategy



and started identifying the implementation steps and partnerships needed to reach these objectives, as well as the direct beneficiaries of the Center's activities. This process was guided by the definition of a precise area of work—both regarding thematic focus and target populations—which was determined at the outset of the JDC. Thematically, the JDC focuses on the collection, analysis, dissemination, and use of primary microdata: population and socioeconomic data, which includes information on income, poverty, skills, health, education, and economic activity, among others. The populations that JDC focuses on include refugees, IDPs, stateless people, returnees, asylum-seekers, and host communities.

These elements constituted the starting point for the definition of the 2020 work program, representing a critical moment in the evolution of the JDC. Working in close collaboration with World Bank and UNHCR teams, JDC staff selected the activities that shaped JDC operations

throughout 2020. These activities, grouped in six thematic areas, cover the full spectrum of the evidence-production process, from the design of new methods for the collection of data, to the dissemination of reports that accompany the release of new data products. Specifically, in line with objectives developed in the theory of change, the JDC funds and supports: the integration of refugees, IDPs, and stateless persons into national statistical systems; the development of innovative methods for data gathering and analysis; the collection of original socioeconomic microdata; the production of data-based analytical research; the responsible dissemination of the data; and knowledge-sharing activities. While JDC staff lead some of these activities, most are carried out by World Bank or UNHCR staff (at times working together within the same team and usually in collaboration with external partners), to whom the JDC offers financial and technical support, and oversight. The selection and design of these activities has been the result of a rigorous process, based on the submission of detailed concept notes

and their review by experts from within and outside the JDC.

One of the core elements of the JDC is its role in convening collaborative efforts and establishing partnerships with relevant stakeholders. This has already led to concrete results, with a strengthening of the collaborations between the World Bank and UNHCR. But the JDC has interpreted this role to extend also to other actors in the field of forced displacement. In this respect, the JDC has established important partnerships with the governments of affected countries, in the pursuit of its mission to inform policies and operations on forced displacement. The first *Research Conference on Forced Displacement*, which took place in January 2020, has been another important element shaping the modus operandi of the Center. The Conference, in fact, not only helped position the JDC as an important player in the academic sector on forced displacement, but also offered a platform for the development of new forms of collaboration with both research and policy institutions. Throughout the year, new collaborative efforts have been developed, covering the entire spectrum of JDC activities.

Given the well-established data capacities and mandates of its parent institutions, the JDC is exposed to the risk of duplicating existing efforts. To avoid this, the Center has been established as a catalyst of change. A concrete example of the nature of the Center is its design as a “Data Center without a Server.” The JDC does not directly collect new data or host the data it helps to collect; instead, it supports the work of others to do so and works with partners to enhance the impact of all activities. One illustration is the support to organization-specific data repositories. The World Bank already had a microdata library, and one of the JDC's first investments was to support the establishment of the UNHCR's Microdata Library.<sup>6</sup> All data collected as a result of JDC activities must be made available through these two libraries, demonstrating the commitment to regard data as a global public good.

The work that the JDC conducts in collaboration with its partners and parent organizations helps to deliver better data, and through this, inform relevant policy actions and operations; it translates results into public goods, made widely available, that will cumulatively improve global understanding of forced displacement. To illustrate the Center's work, the next section presents a description of selected activities which are representative of the way the JDC has interpreted its role and mandate in 2020.

## BOX 1: THE JDC FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM



*As a JDC Fellow and a scholar aware that better data drives better decisions, I am living a rich and fascinating experience in research on forced displacement; all this within an experienced and very available team.*

(Sosso Feindouno, 2020 JDC Fellow)

**The Fellowship program** represents a pivotal element in the JDC effort to support capacity building for young scholars and professionals from displaced or host communities in middle- and low-income countries, and to facilitate their work on topics related to forced displacement. Three young Fellows, selected from the existing pool of candidates for the DFID-World Bank-UNHCR-Young Fellowship Program, have joined the JDC since the summer of 2020. Despite the complications due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all three have already significantly contributed to JDC-funded operations with work at country and global levels (one of JDC Fellows co-authored the “*Highly vulnerable yet largely invisible*” JDC Paper). They are also progressing toward publishing working papers by June 2021 on (1) the environmental costs of hosting refugees in Bangladesh, (2) the state of evidence on refugees' financial inclusion globally, and (3) the dynamic relationship between forced displacement and violence outbreaks in the Sahel.

*As a JDC fellow, I appreciate the institution's teamwork, trust, and confidence in delegating responsibilities, enabling me to analyze the High-Frequency Phone Survey (HFPS) data in Ethiopia and co-author two reports for the first and second rounds of the HFPS data collections.*

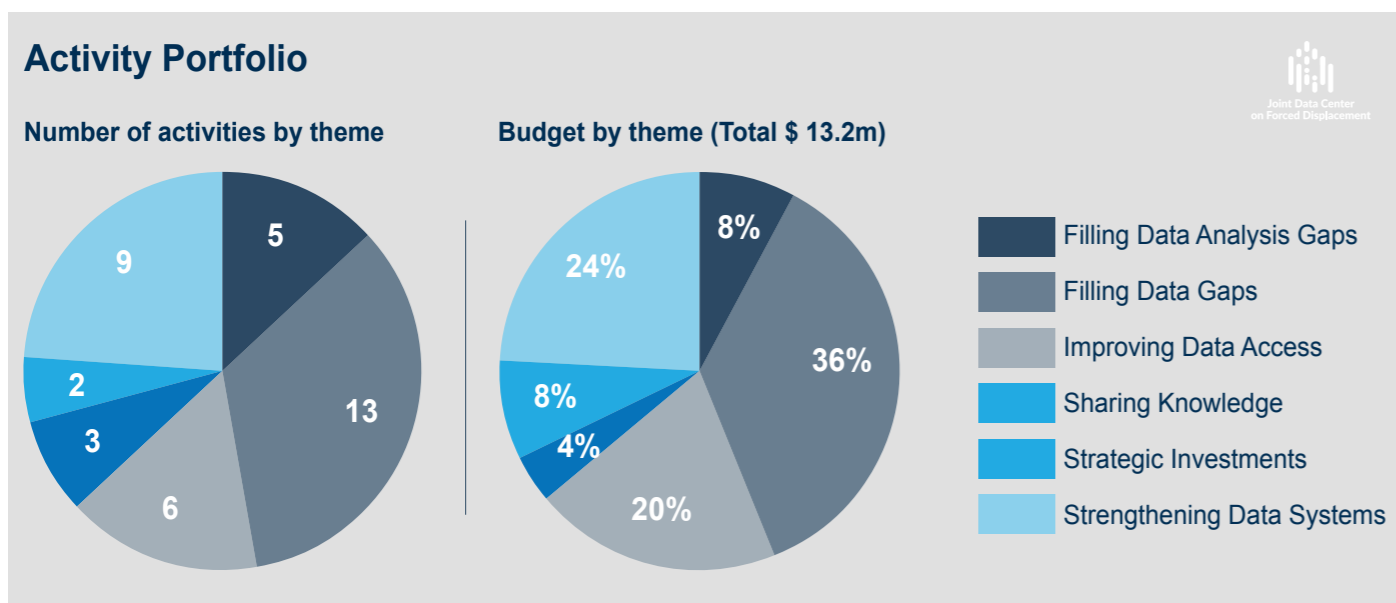
(Nfamara K. Dampha, 2020 JDC Fellow)

*During my wonderful experience of working with JDC on the topics related to forced displacement, I have had the chance to learn about various challenges researchers face, particularly due to lack of relevant data.*

(Leila Aghabarari, 2020 JDC Fellow)

6 The UNHCR Microdata Library can be accessed online at: <https://microdata.unhcr.org/>. The World Bank Microdata Library can be accessed online at: <https://microdata.worldbank.org/>.

# First Year in Figures



### Achievements

#### Collaborations with NSOs

- Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Exercises with **6** National Statistical Offices
- Forced Displacement Module Integration in **4** Countries

#### Publications

- 2** Full Reports
- 1** JDC Paper
- 1** Primer on COVID-19
- 1** Blogpost
- 1** Article for FM Review
- 1** High Frequency Phone Surveys Brief

#### Surveys

- 11** Rounds of High Frequency and Rapid Monitoring Surveys Completed

#### Periodic Releases

- 10** Newsletters
- 8** Literature Review Updates
- 2** Quarterly Digests

#### Scientific Events

- 1** Research Conference
- 2** Workshops
- 5** Seminars/Webinars

#### Data Sets

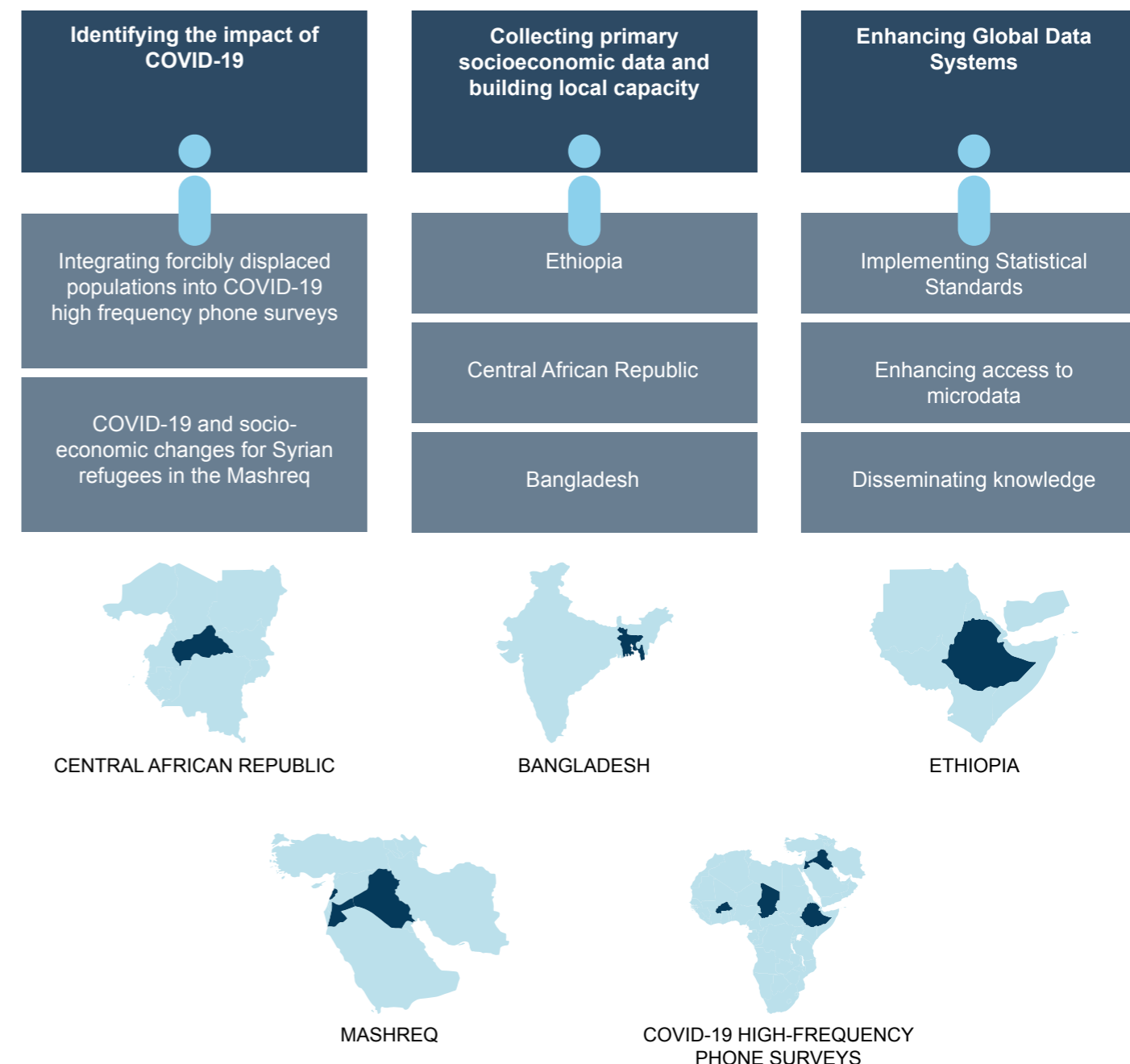
- 86** Data Sets Published with JDC Support in UNHCR Microdata Library

# 3. JDC Actions and Activities - illustrative examples

## Key achievements in 2020

The next few pages summarize a selection of activities and key achievements from the first year of the JDC's operations. The eight examples illustrate the breadth of the activities and progress made through the second half of 2019 and throughout 2020. These include activities undertaken at global, regional, and country levels providing examples of JDC's overall work program for 2020 and its 40 activities. All activities showcased have progressed during 2020, and most are still ongoing. The diagram below provides an overview of the activities included in the annual report. The Table in the Annex summarizes JDC's ongoing or already planned and approved activities.

For further information on all JDC activities, please visit the [JDC Website](#).



## MULTI-COUNTRY: Integrating forcibly displaced populations into COVID-19 High-Frequency Phone Surveys

### Motivation

The COVID-19 pandemic has torn through lives and livelihoods across the globe with alarming pace and impartiality. There is reason to believe that the most vulnerable populations may be the most affected, but without sufficient data it is difficult to understand the gravity of the challenge or design countermeasures to alleviate suffering.

In particular, the lower incomes and often crowded and poor living conditions of populations affected by forced displacement likely make them more susceptible to both the health and economic effects of the pandemic.

Timely data and evidence will be critical to help monitor and mitigate the social and economic effects of the crisis on these specific vulnerable groups, and to support the inclusion of forcibly displaced populations in national COVID-19 responses.

### Activity

The JDC is supporting extensions of existing and new high-frequency phone surveys on the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 on the national populations to include forcibly displaced persons in these activities.

The JDC conducted an assessment of opportunities to support data collection and analysis exercises that are feasible and meaningful for JDC stakeholders in countries with forcibly displaced populations.

To date, the six countries selected to move forward are Chad (Refugees), Djibouti (Refugees), Ethiopia (Refugees), Jordan (Refugees), Iraq (IDPs and Returnees), and Burkina Faso (IDPs).

The data collection and data analysis supported under this work will help answer questions about the changes in welfare, vulnerabilities, and prospects of those forcibly displaced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding will also facilitate further analytical work for each country and a cross-country analysis of the experience of displaced populations and their hosts in the selected countries.

### Results

1. At country-level, include refugees and/or IDPs in data collection and subsequently include them in the policy dialogue and response.
2. A better understanding of the socioeconomic implications of COVID-19 on the forcibly displaced across populations and geographical levels.

### Activity Outputs

- I. Short briefs at the end of each data collection round—comparing the forcibly displaced populations with the national sample.
- II. Methodological pieces around data collection and instruments.
- III. Data sets from Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Jordan, and Iraq, published on World Bank Microdata Library for all rounds of all countries' data.
- IV. Country-specific reports at the end of the data collection exercise.
- V. Cross-country analyses (reports and analytical papers) by region and by populations of interest (refugees/IDPs) and how they compare to hosts.

An inaugural issue of the JDC Paper Series on Forced Displacement was published in November 2020. This paper provides an insight on the macroeconomic implications of the global recession induced by COVID-19 for major hosting countries and nations affected by internal forced displacement. Providing a conceptual mapping of the potential household and individual-level impacts of the recession for forcibly displaced populations, the paper highlights how investments in data and analytics are urgently needed for evidence-based programming to protect and include forcibly displaced populations efficiently. Read the paper here: [Highly vulnerable yet largely invisible: Forcibly displaced in the COVID-19-induced recession](#)



**Budget:** \$500,000  
**Timeframe:** 2020-2021

**BENEFICIARY**  
Forcibly displaced populations and their hosts

**INTENDED USER**  
Governments, World Bank, UNHCR and development partners

**IMPACT**  
Forcibly displaced populations are made visible data-wise and represented when assessing the consequences of COVID-19

© UNHCR/Sylvain Cherkaoui

# MASHREQ: Measuring changes in socio-economic welfare since COVID-19 on forcibly displaced populations and host communities

## Motivation

Across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the protection and poverty impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable people—specifically refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs, and stateless persons—appears to be devastating. UNHCR and other partners have been collecting information on the impact of COVID-19 on persons of concern through call centers and helplines. These initiatives have yielded initial results. However, survey methodologies are primarily defined by country operations, with sampling and questionnaires and indicators varying from country to country. While some of the COVID-19 assessments have included host communities, this has not been done systematically, and the understanding of how COVID-19 has impacted host communities and refugees remains very limited. This activity focuses on two related problems: siloed data that could be of greater use if combined, and a deficit of shared and cohesive insight into the welfare dynamics experienced by displaced and host populations in the region. The primary objectives are to assess changes in the socioeconomic welfare since COVID-19 for Syrian refugees in the Mashreq, and to lay a foundation for a longer-term collaboration between the UNHCR regional and country offices in the Mashreq region and the World Bank MENA Poverty and Equity Global Practice.

## Activity

Despite past successful engagement, the UNHCR and the World Bank currently lack the resources needed to integrate institution-specific data sources and provide actionable analysis on poverty among both hosts and refugees in order to facilitate program design and policy dialogue for both institutions' efforts in MENA. The project uses data available to either the World Bank or UNHCR to prepare welfare analytics for countries which host a large number of refugees, particularly refugees from the Syria crisis. Data from multiple sources are available: Phone surveys implemented by UNHCR, as well as household surveys completed by the World Bank, ILO, and National Statistical Offices (NSOs).

These data will be harmonized and used in combination. The

activity specifically relies on the Syrian Refugees and Host Communities Survey (SRHCS) undertaken by the World Bank in 2015/2016. The survey collected information on households' sources of income and assistance, and provides information on labor market characteristics. These data were complemented with auxiliary macroeconomic data, as well as microdata for refugees provided by UNHCR, such as the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) from Jordan, the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR) from Lebanon, and the Vulnerability Assessment Tool in the Kurdistan Region or Iraq (KRI).

## Results

1. Welfare analytics for countries hosting a large number of Syrian refugees.
2. Harmonized data and triangulated trends inform UNHCR, World Bank, and Governments' decisions in the region.
3. Build long-term, in-depth regional collaboration between UNHCR and World Bank.

## Activity Outputs

- I. Methodology presented at the Brussels IV Conference on Syria.
- II. Consultation of draft results with officials in Jordan, Lebanon, and KRI.
- III. Report on the socio-economic changes since COVID-19 on the well-being of host communities and Syrian refugees in Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan.
- IV. Report dissemination to inform international humanitarian and development organizations' assistance.



**Budget:** \$50,000  
**Timeframe:** 2020



**BENEFICIARY**  
Syrian refugees



**INTENDED USER**  
The World Bank and UNHCR



**IMPACT**  
Policy dialogue in the Mashreq region regarding Syrian refugees

© UNHCR/Bassam Diab

## ETHIOPIA: Including refugees in a national socioeconomic household survey

### Motivation

Ethiopia hosts almost 800,000 refugees—the sixth largest refugee population in the world. Despite efforts by the government and international community, refugees face various challenges in terms of accessing services and socioeconomic outcomes, and may also put pressure on their host communities.

Quality data and evidence on these issues are needed to support the design and implementation of the recent Refugee Proclamation and its associated National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy (NCRRS).

The national household survey of Ethiopia (Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES)) presents a timely opportunity to address this data gap. Through this activity, a refugee survey is being undertaken and partially integrated with the HCES, to improve available information on refugees and their host communities, and to inform the implementation of national inclusion policies for refugees.

### Activity

This activity aims to solve two existing problems: (i) gaps in data on socioeconomic conditions of refugees and (ii) gaps in analytical work that enables comparison between the socioeconomic outcomes of refugees and hosts.

Since most refugees in Ethiopia live in camps, refugees are not systematically included as part of the HCES and little information is available on their socioeconomic outcomes and poverty levels compared to Ethiopians. To fill these existing data gaps, a refugee stratum will be included as part of the national household survey, including both refugees in camps and those residing in Addis Ababa.

To finalize planning, work is ongoing between CSA, the Agency for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA), the World Bank, and UNHCR, with support from the JDC. This includes efforts to finalize the questionnaire to ensure it best captures the refugee population, integrates the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics, and aligns, where possible, with priority indicators from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### Results

1. Inform the development of the 10-year National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy (NCRRS) and the implementation of the new Refugee Proclamation policy more broadly.
2. Inform World Bank programs responding to the development needs of refugees and hosts.
3. Better-informed dialogue on how to strengthen the socioeconomic integration of refugees through promoting self-reliance, freedom of movement, rights to work, and access to basic services.
4. Enhance capacity of the NSO (Central Statistics Agency (CSA)) for integration of refugees in national surveys.

### Activity Outputs

- I. Successful alignment/integration of refugees in national poverty survey process.
- II. Partnership with ARRA and CSA strengthened.
- III. National ownership of survey data and results.
- IV. Improved operational collaboration between World Bank and UNHCR.





**Budget:** \$500,000  
**Timeframe:** 2020-2021



**BENEFICIARY**

Refugees (in camps and in Addis Ababa) and host communities



**INTENDED USER**

Governments, World Bank, UNHCR and partners



**IMPACT**

Enhanced socioeconomic integration of refugees and improved social cohesion

© UNHCR/Petterik Wiggers

# CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: IDP Survey as part of the 2021 Harmonized Living Conditions Survey

## Motivation

Nearly 15 percent of CAR's national population are IDPs (an estimated 702,000 as of February 2020), but detailed data on this vulnerable population are lacking. The National Statistical Institute is currently preparing the Harmonized Household Living Conditions Survey (EHCVM)—which will provide nationally representative data on household welfare, poverty, and inequality.

Although the upcoming EHCVM survey covers IDPs by virtue of its national scope, an analysis of the IDP situation is not the primary focus of the survey. As such, the IDP sample risks being insufficiently powered, and the questionnaire lacks important modules to adequately identify IDPs and to assess their displacement-related socioeconomic challenges and opportunities. Thus, this activity aims to increase the IDP sample size and provide capacity building and technical support to the NSO to strengthen the IDP survey modules, thereby enriching the information collected during the survey in order to inform the national response to internal displacement.

## Activity

Data on IDPs is collected as part of the EHCVM household survey being implemented by the CAR national statistical institute, with technical assistance from the World Bank and JDC.

The extra module on forced displacement will be added to the existing EHCVM modules and will be a supplement to the existing EHCVM household survey questionnaire which covers a range of topics.

The household questionnaire characterizes IDP respondents in the general population and includes some questions specific to IDPs in selected modules. A dedicated sampling strategy will be applied to IDP sites. IDPs living with host families have a probability of being selected as part of the main sampling procedures for the EHCVM.

The IDP subsample will then be compared to the rest of the sample. Beyond this comparison, specific variables will be analyzed separately for IDPs.

## Results

1. IDPs are sampled and characterized in the upcoming CAR national EHCVM Survey.
2. Sample frame, survey instrument, and statistical capacity for the 2020 EHCVM and for similar future surveys.
3. Data produced under this activity might inform the design and implementation of programs targeting IDPs and host communities.
4. Enhance capacity of the NSO for sampling and characterization of IDPs in forthcoming national household surveys.

## Activity Outputs

- I. NSO staff trained. Modules on forced displacement are added to the typical demographic and living standards survey modules. A dedicated sampling strategy is applied to select IDP respondents living in sites, and a dedicated module captures information characterizing the IDPs in the general population.
- II. Nationally representative survey data, including and characterizing IDPs.
- III. Report on the socioeconomic conditions of IDPs.





**Budget:** \$270,000  
**Timeframe:** 2019-2021



**BENEFICIARY**  
IDPs and host communities.



**INTENDED USER**  
Governments, World Bank, UNHCR and partners.



**IMPACT**  
Strengthened statistical capacity and improved data on IDPs for anti-poverty programs benefitting ultra-poor households.

© UNHCR/Adrienne Surprenant

# BANGLADESH: Cox's Bazar Humanitarian Development Statistics Center/Analytical Program

## Motivation

Since August 2017, more than 725,000 refugees have crossed into Cox's Bazar from Myanmar, joining around 300,000 people displaced from Myanmar in previous years. This influx required urgent humanitarian services and strained already resource-constrained service delivery systems. The transition from a humanitarian to a medium-term development response will require learning based on a multi-pronged approach that addresses the key challenges in the current data ecosystem. These challenges include multiple data collection efforts, comprising different types of data, often not driven by a systematic assessment of user needs; the lack of attention to learning from short-term monitoring data, during project implementation; and the limited partnership between local and international academics and actors in the generation of data, and in an evidence-based policy dialogue.

The Cox's Bazar Analytical Program is designed to deliver the information needed for regular monitoring of key welfare indicators for hosts and Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, and for program and project design. In addition, it activates the use of short-term data from ongoing large-scale project interventions in Cox's Bazar to build the evidence on what can work in this context.

## Activity

In response to the urgent need for data to support action at the time of a humanitarian crisis, the World Bank initiated two activities in 2017: (i) Short-term monitoring of the economic welfare of Rohingya refugees and their hosts, in partnership with the World Food Program; and (ii) Setting up an evidence-base to systematically measure the welfare of refugees and hosts. These early activities serve as important inputs to generate an evidence base that can inform the policy dialogue and action. To catalyze this multi-pronged approach, the analytical program aims to: (i) Build a locally owned data and research platform that can track key welfare indicators for displaced Rohingya and hosts in medium- and long-term contexts; coordinate and assess data needs; and identify critical areas for policy action.

This platform will be designed to be led by local researchers and stakeholders, through the creation of a Cox's Bazar

Humanitarian Development Statistics Center. Organizers will initiate a locally driven, evidence-based policy dialogue on refugee focused policies and interventions. This will be done by fostering the creation of a national research network (the Bangladesh Refugee Research Network) that will bring together practitioners and researchers to generate actionable evidence to inform the response and actively feed this evidence into the policy dialogue.

## Results

1. Regular monitoring of key welfare indicators for hosts and refugees in Cox's Bazar.
2. Review and generate data and develop robust statistical findings to inform an economic growth diagnostic.
3. The data and diagnostic will inform the locally-driven evidence-based strategic policy dialogue between partners (World Bank, UNHCR, WFP, IOM, academics) and the Government of Bangladesh for hosts and Rohingya.

## Activity Outputs

- I. Cox's Bazar Humanitarian Development Statistics Center, integrating survey data, admin data and cloud-based monitoring.
- II. Cox's Bazar Spatial Database.
- III. High Frequency survey system tracking panel of hosts and Rohingya to monitor labor market impacts of COVID, coping, and access to assistance, and aspirations among the forcibly displaced.
- IV. Cox's Bazar inclusive growth diagnostic.
- V. Support the co-production of data and research by establishing a CB Research Network with local and international academic institutions; Analytical partnerships with WFP, UNHCR, and IOM.
- VI. Joint analytical products, including briefs on education (aspirations) and work (opportunities) to inform medium-term response; joint UNHCR-World Bank-WFP briefs.





**Budget:** \$1,800,000  
**Timeframe:** 2020-2021



**BENEFICIARY**

Refugees, policymakers (see below), implementing partners, and local and global researchers.



**INTENDED USER**

Policymakers (local and national Governments, World Bank, UNHCR, WFP, IOM) and academics.



**IMPACT**

Inform the medium-term policy response to the Rohingya crisis and the development of Cox's Bazar through data and evidence.

© UNHCR/Roger Arnold

# GLOBAL: Supporting phase III of the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS)

## Motivation

Producing high-quality data on forcibly displaced persons is critical to inform both policy and operational response; ensuring this data is nationally owned and integrated into regular practices of national statistical systems in affected countries helps to further ensure this data can be used as a basis for national policy and development planning processes.

However, in many contexts, refugees, IDPs, and related population groups are not included in these systems for a range of political, technical, and operational reasons. The Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics, mandated by the UN Statistics Commission, brings together a large group of stakeholders including host countries and affected states to help implement the International Recommendations on Refugee and IDP Statistics (IRRS and IRIS) through advocacy, capacity building, and technical guidance.

This work will, in turn, improve evidence-based national response, increase comparability of data across contexts through standardized definitions, enhance comparison to host communities, and help disaggregation of priority SDGs by migratory status.

## Activity

At the 47th session of the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) in March 2016, Statistics Norway, Eurostat, the Turkish Statistical Institute, and UNHCR presented a joint report acknowledging the importance of quality data on refugees and IDPs, as well as the challenges associated with the production of statistics on these populations. In its decision 47/111, the UNSC endorsed the proposal to establish EGRIS, mandated to develop a set of international recommendations on refugee and IDP statistics.

To date, EGRIS has successfully completed the IRRS, the Technical Report on Statistics of Internally Displaced Persons, the IRIS, and an online Compilers' Manual, all of which have been endorsed by the UNSC.

During the third phase of EGRIS' mandate (2020-2025), the group will focus on implementation of both sets of recommendations through promotion, capacity building, and

enhanced technical guidance.

## Results

1. Strengthen official statistics on refugees and IDPs; increased quality, comparability, and national ownership of forced displacement data.
2. Enhance data and evidence for informing national policy, policy dialogue, and operations, particularly as they pertain to inclusion of refugees/IDPs in national systems and development processes.
3. Improve comparability of refugees/IDPs with national/host populations; improve visibility of refugees/IDPs in SDGs.
4. Strengthen capacity of NSOs and other relevant national actors to produce official statistics on forcibly displaced populations.

## Activity Outputs

- I. Promotion and dissemination of the IRRS and IRIS: Publication and translation into Russian, French, Spanish and Arabic. Advocacy strategy and related materials targeting country-level. Webinar series. High-level participation in key events. Online platform management.
- II. Capacity building: Conference. Mapping of existing opportunities and roadmap for action. Development of training material. Delivery of four regional workshops. Integration of modules in relevant training programs. Deployment of technical advisors.
- III. Continuous learning and Compilers Manual: Consolidating lessons learned. Improvement of the Compilers Manual. Technical webinar series to facilitate peer-to-peer exchange.



**Budget:** \$1,286,000  
**Timeframe:** 2020-2023



## BENEFICIARY

NSOs, forcibly displaced persons, and host communities.



## INTENDED USER

Governments, World Bank, UNHCR, and development partners.



## IMPACT

More inclusive, evidence-based, and impactful national policies through inclusion of refugees/IDPs in national statistical systems and related policy/budgeting processes.

# GLOBAL: Compiling and Curating UNHCR's Datasets for the Microdata Library

## Motivation

While UNHCR routinely collects a wealth of data, both directly and through its partners, the organization as a whole has not historically been able to capitalize fully on the significant investment made to collect these data. The collection of these data is expensive in terms of financial cost, human resource cost, and the time provided by respondents to provide information. In the interest of promoting efficiency, transparency, and the best use of public funds, open access and dissemination of data is increasingly promoted and sometimes even mandated by those funding data collection efforts, and many NSOs now maintain open data portals. To date, data that UNHCR has shared openly and publicly has mainly been aggregated data, and access to microdata has largely been regulated by ad-hoc data sharing agreements. This project is taking to scale UNHCR's commitment to sharing data openly and responsibly by discovering, cleaning and cataloguing microdata collected by UNHCR and its partners through complementary internal and external online catalogues. The dissemination of microdata enables and facilitates analysis and research that will inform and improve future programs and policies that aim to improve the lives of persons affected by forced displacement, generating a positive impact on their well-being.

## Activity

The internal-facing Raw Internal Data Library (RIDL) and the external-facing Microdata Library (MDL) are platforms designed to provide a secure location for the storage and re-use of diverse datasets in a user-friendly format.

In addition to being the repository for new data activities, these platforms will also host a large backlog of datasets previously collected. Internally, the project will help improve data quality, prevent data loss, prevent duplication of data collection efforts, and reduce the burden of finding data and responding to personalized requests from other staff members.

Externally, it will contribute to the data value chain by promoting, through ease of access, further analysis by academics and research centers, the private sector, development actors, and

other humanitarian organizations, so it that can be used to inform programming, policy, and advocacy efforts

## Results

1. Enhance the effectiveness of UNHCR's investments in microdata collection.
2. Support a growing and thriving research community on forced displacement.
3. UNHCR positioned as a trusted leader in the data field.

## Activity Outputs

- I. UNHCR microdata repositories up and running, and continuously enhanced to meet user demands.
- II. Microdata from recent years cleaned, documented, anonymized, and uploaded to the libraries.
- III. Guidance material for the documentation and anonymization of microdata developed and institutionalized.
- IV. Data curator function sustainably established in UNHCR.
- V. Communications around the Microdata Library for greater visibility and use.

In May 2020, the JDC, in partnership with the Government of Estonia, organized a two-day workshop bringing together UNHCR, the World Bank, as well as top data protection, anonymization, and de-identification experts to generate discussion and enhance understanding around data anonymization and aggregation. With a specific focus on registration data, the consultations offered a first step toward creating a robust data anonymization standard for forcibly displaced populations. See [website](#).



**Budget:** \$850,000  
**Timeframe:** 2019-2021



## BENEFICIARY

Forcibly displaced populations.



## INTENDED USER

Researchers—in academia, international organizations, Governments.



## IMPACT

Improving the lives of forcibly displaced populations by unlocking the full potential of UNHCR's microdata investments.

# GLOBAL: Knowledge Sharing - Disseminating evidence and data on those forcibly displaced

## Motivation

The JDC pursues its mission by sharing relevant data and information in a systematic manner to better inform decision making for forcibly displaced populations.

These 'Knowledge Sharing' activities represent a crucial element in defining the JDC as a key facilitator of data-based knowledge exchange between different stakeholders, with the aim to enhance connections and build networks, and to exchange knowledge while strategically disseminating publications and other knowledge products through targeted groups of experts and general audiences.

## Activity

The JDC aims to collect evidence from data-based research, either financed and supported by the JDC or originating from other rigorous studies.

This evidence is then disseminated among a wide audience of academic scholars, practitioners, staff in international and non-governmental organizations, and policy-makers, with an ultimate goal of informing policy design, implementation, and programming.

Special attention is devoted to reaching researchers in affected countries, in order to improve their awareness of relevant data and evidence-based products.

## Results

1. Increase policy and academic debate on forced displacement.
2. Reinforce links between the JDC, think tanks, research institutions and other evidence-driven actors.
3. Better-informed policy dialogue, processes and decisions.
4. JDC positioned as a key facilitator of knowledge exchange of data-based evidence between relevant stakeholders.

## Activity Outputs

- I. Publications: two full reports, one JDC Paper, a Primer on COVID-19, one article in FM Review, one blogpost, one High Frequency Phone Surveys brief.
- II. Periodic Releases: 10 Newsletters, eight Literature Review Updates, two Quarterly Digests.
- III. Scientific Events: one Annual Research Conference, two workshops, five seminars/webinars.
- IV. Website.
- V. Other ad-hoc activities: two background papers for the UNHCR The State of the World's Forcibly Displaced publication.





**Budget:** \$832,000  
**Timeframe:** 2020-2023



**BENEFICIARY**

Forcibly displaced populations, researchers, and policymakers.



**INTENDED USER**

The World Bank, UNHCR, governments, academics, and practitioners.



**IMPACT**

More informed and evidence-based policies on forced displacement.

© UNHCR/Antoine Tardy

## 4. From concepts to transformation - reflections and lessons so far

Recognizing the fundamental challenges and the resulting persistent nature of the gaps (see Chapter 2), any meaningful transformation of the forced displacement data landscape will need to go beyond stop-gap measures. It needs to focus on the underlying issues. Filling urgent data gaps is certainly necessary, but a mid- to long-term perspective is needed for meaningful and sustainable change.

After the initial 18 months of the JDC's existence—including a year of overseeing a broad portfolio of activities—a set of reflections and lessons around what it takes to truly transform the agenda has been developed, including:

- **Be driven by policy and/or operational relevance**

Given the vast array of data gaps in many displacement and statelessness contexts, simply identifying what they are—while critical—is not adequate to guide prioritization. To identify the most operationally relevant, timely, and potentially impactful investments requires appropriate consultations with governments as well as humanitarian and development partners. Further, impactful prioritization also requires adequate contextual knowledge and technical expertise, as well as clear decision-making frameworks for guidance and accountability. This observation has resulted in the development of concrete selection criteria for future activities—built into our 2021-2023 Strategy—and a robust mechanism for ongoing portfolio management. It has also informed our use of a rolling window of flexible funding to respond to developing needs, such as evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on forcibly displaced persons.

- **Invest in capacity building**

With 85 percent of the world's refugees<sup>7</sup> and the vast majority of IDPs and stateless persons residing in developing countries, it is perhaps not surprising that national statistical capacity is limited or constrained. Given the need for mid- to long-term development support, ensuring adequate statistical capacity to meet the ongoing data needs for such a response is vital.

However, capacity development can be a slow process and is too often overlooked or inadequately addressed. It is therefore a core priority of the JDC to prioritize well-coordinated and effective capacity building for the inclusion of forcibly displaced persons in regular data collection efforts of national systems. The support and participation in the third phase of the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS) has hence been a key priority for 2020 and beyond.<sup>8</sup>

- **Meaningfully engage with national statistical systems**

As with other vulnerable groups, data on forced displacement is often omitted or delinked from national statistical systems, even when national authorities are involved in its production. To be truly incorporated into regular data collection efforts that underpin national development planning processes, it is important to strive towards this goal. This includes identifying relevant opportunities (planned census or survey activities), strategic use of seed funding (to include additional samples of the target population), and the provision of relevant capacity building and technical support. Results can be slower to come to fruition when compared to data collected under different circumstances, however they can generate more impactful results for forcibly displaced persons and the implementation of inclusion policies in the long term. During 2020, the JDC has been supporting such efforts in a range of countries, including Ethiopia and Central African Republic.

- **Tackle recurring methodological challenges**

There are several methodological challenges that repeatedly arise in different displacement contexts, affecting data quality and comparability. A few examples: Shaping a clear and meaningful yet consistent definition of the “host community” to include in survey sampling strategies; developing a comprehensive yet manageable and statistically sound approach to measuring integration or the achievement of durable solutions; advancing

statistical recommendations for stateless populations; and standardizing survey modules for forced displacement. These are all recurring methodological challenges—or gaps—which are important to address and confront directly. The JDC in 2020 has initiated, or is contributing to work with partners, in all of these areas. Most notably, the JDC is working closely with UNHCR, the World Bank, and various host countries to help develop common methodologies for measuring the impact of protecting and assisting refugees through the process outlined in the Global Compact on Refugees.

- **Embrace and scale up successful innovations**

The focus on innovative approaches is an indispensable element of the work of the JDC. In 2020, the JDC embarked on activities applying innovative tools and methods, such as the use and application of advanced machine learning techniques to improve data analysis and regular monitoring; the development of tools, guidelines and methods to strengthen data production and quality; and the use of geospatial data and imagery in forced displacement situations.

- **Enhance responsible data access and celebrate quality research**

The safe and responsible access to existing microdata on forcibly displaced and affected populations is a key gap in the current data landscape. While the reasons for this persistent reality are complex, they are not insurmountable. Solving them require significant investments in developing and maintaining strong platforms, in addition to responsibly collecting, anonymizing, and disseminating relevant datasets. To this end, the JDC has lent its strong support to the efforts of UNHCR's *Global Data Service*. Further, the JDC has found it important to engage in complementary activities for broader systemic change, including working closely with academic partners to promote the use of microdata in research and celebrate policy-relevant results that are produced (e.g., through our research conference, literature reviews, seminars, and thematic workshops). In addition, the JDC has also initiated work with UNHCR and partners to develop an agreed framework and tools to support decision-making and implementation of responsible data access on an ongoing basis.

- **Prioritize partnerships for wider impact**

Across all our activities in 2020, the value of partnerships has been a key observation. The JDC

therefore relies on partnership and collaboration to enhance the operational or policy relevance of certain activities, the quality of specific outputs, and the achievement of results and impact. Through sharing expertise and building on the comparative advantage of different stakeholders at national, regional, and global levels, all JDC investments in 2020 have been strengthened. At the same time, the JDC has played a critical role in the partnership between the World Bank and UNHCR. One example of this joint work is the support that the World Bank provided to UNHCR for the enhancement of its Microdata Library, an activity which was funded and facilitated by the JDC. Moreover, the Center acted as a catalyst, stimulating collaborations beyond those strictly linked to its work program. Looking forward, this experience has been built upon to highlight the role of partnerships and clarify the various collaborative mechanisms at our disposal in our 2021-2023 Strategy. In this respect, the JDC can replicate the collaborative model between the World Bank and UNHCR, using it as a prototype in the enhancement of partnerships with other stakeholders.

Improving the quantity of relevant data and filling urgent data gaps remains critical, especially for capitalizing on key opportunities in a timely fashion. The JDC's decision to invest significantly in new primary data collection in our 2020 work program is a testament to this. A prominent and topical example is the efforts to improve global knowledge of the impact of COVID-19 on forcibly displaced persons. Capitalizing on flexible funding modalities, ongoing investments, and close working relations with key stakeholders in both the World Bank and UNHCR, the JDC was able to facilitate the inclusion of refugees and IDPs in high-frequency phone surveys conducted in six countries to better understand the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 and related public policies on the socioeconomic situation of households. Building out from the call for data embedded in an earlier global piece by the JDC on the potential impact of the COVID-19-induced global recession on refugees and IDPs,<sup>9</sup> these investments will help fill critical data gaps on forced displacement that arose in 2020. The evidence built under this workstream will be particularly relevant in 2021, as countries affected by forced displacement will need to include and protect those forcibly displaced and their hosts efficiently in economic recovery planning.

<sup>7</sup> UNHCR Global trends: <https://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/5ee200e37/unhcr-global-trends-2019.html>

<sup>8</sup> Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS): <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/expert-group-on-refugee-statistics>

<sup>9</sup> World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement, Tara Vishwanath, Arthur Alik-Lagrange, Leila Aghabarari, Dec 2020, Highly vulnerable yet largely invisible Forcibly displaced in the COVID-19-induced recession: [https://www.jointdatacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/JDC-Paper-Series-on-Forced-Displacement\\_No.1\\_Final.pdf](https://www.jointdatacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/JDC-Paper-Series-on-Forced-Displacement_No.1_Final.pdf)

## 5. Conclusion

This report has attempted to identify a set of persistent data and evidence gaps, look back at the JDC's work in 2019-2020, and reflect on its experiences and lessons that have helped shape the design of its future work. With a continued focus on the fundamental, substantive, and persistent challenges at hand, the JDC looks forward to embarking on its work program 2021 and Strategy for 2021-23.

In closing, we thank the many individuals and organizations for their collaboration and support towards the JDC's mission in 2020. We are particularly thankful for the guidance from the members of the Management Committee and Strategic Advisory Council. The JDC would also like to thank its partners for their generous contribution to JDC funding in 2020: the Government of Denmark represented by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the European Union represented by the department for International Partnership (INTPA) at the European Commission; and the United States Government represented by the U.S. Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM).



## 6. ANNEX. The JDC Work Program: Ongoing and Planned Activities

Objective	Activity	Start	End
Strengthen systems and standards	Strengthening IDP statistics	2019	2023
	Supporting phase III of the Expert Group on Refugee and IDP Statistics (EGRIS)	2019	2023
	Automated Text Analytics for the Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement	2020	2021
	Enhancing Kobo Toolbox for Data Collection and Analysis	2020	2023
	Expanding statistical methods and tools on forced displacement	2020	2023
	Exploring innovative methods to strengthen data	2020	2022
	Filling information gaps on Forcibly Displaced Populations through geospatial data	2020	2021
	Improving Statistics on Statelessness	2020	2022
	Improving the quality of survey data on forcibly displaced populations (Survey Solution)	2020	2022
	Making forcibly displaced persons visible in the SDG indicators	2021	2023
	Supporting UNHCR's creation of an integrated and standardized survey series	2021	2023
Produce data and analysis	<b>Central African Republic:</b> IDP survey as part of the 2020 Harmonized Living Conditions Survey	2019	2021
	<b>Bangladesh:</b> Cox's Bazar Humanitarian Development Statistics Center/ Analytical Program	2020	2022
	<b>Chad:</b> Refugees in Chad - the road forward	2020	2021
	<b>Djibouti:</b> Identifying and Monitoring Displaced Populations	2020	2022
	<b>DRC:</b> Crisis Observatory and Household Forced Displacement Survey in Eastern DRC	2020	2022
	<b>Ethiopia:</b> Including refugees in a national socioeconomic household survey	2020	2021
	<b>Kenya:</b> Integrating Vulnerable Populations into Continuous Household Survey Framework	2020	2022
	<b>Rwanda:</b> Socio-Economic Assessment (SEA) of refugees and host communities	2020	2021
	<b>Turkey:</b> Agricultural labor market and socioeconomic status for Refugees and Turkish Citizens: Baseline Data Collection for Impact Evaluation	2020	2021
	<b>Venezuelan Crisis:</b> Regional data collection and analysis on Venezuelan Refugee-like population	2020	2023
	<b>Yemen:</b> Forced Displacement Monitoring Systems	2020	2021
	<b>Burundi:</b> Forced displacement and host community surveys	2021	2022
	<b>Somalia:</b> Rapid monitoring of socio-economic conditions for displaced people	2021	2021
	Integrating Forcibly Displaced Populations into COVID-19 High-Frequency Phone Surveys:		
	<i>Burkina Faso</i>	2020	2021
	<i>Chad</i>	2020	2021
	<i>Djibouti</i>	2020	2021
<i>Ethiopia</i>	2020	2021	
<i>Iraq</i>	2020	2021	
<i>Jordan</i>	2020	2021	

Objective	Activity	Start	End
Produce data and analysis	<b>Mashreq Region:</b> Measuring changes in socio-economic welfare since COVID-19 on FDPs, and host communities	2020	2020
	<b>Mashreq Region:</b> Mitigating the poverty impact of COVID-19 on host communities and refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and the KRI	2020	2021
	Strengthening UNHCR's capacity at country level to use socio-economic data and evidence	2019	2023
	COVID-19 Analytics	2020	2021
Enhance safe and responsible data access	Compiling and curating UNHCR's datasets for the Microdata Library	2019	2021
	Enhancing the capabilities of UNHCR's global registration system	2019	2021
	Supporting the development and operation of Microdata Libraries at UNHCR and the World Bank	2019	2021
	Enhancing microdata accessibility to improve policy and response in forced displacement situations	2020	2022
Build evidence and share knowledge	Developing methodologies for measuring the impact of hosting, protecting and assisting refugees	2019	2023
	Knowledge Sharing Activities of the JDC: Disseminating evidence and data on those forcibly displaced	2019	2023
	Knowledge Sharing Activities of the JDC: Fellowship Programs	2020	2023
	Developing World Refugee and Asylum Policy (DWRAP) Online Data Platform	2021	2022
	JDC Knowledge Agenda	2021	2023



Joint Data Center  
on Forced Displacement



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- 🌐 Visit our website: [www.jointdatacenter.org](http://www.jointdatacenter.org)
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