

HLOM Pre-Stocktaking Event Global Compact on Refugees Jobs & Livelihoods

GCR Objective #2: Enhance Refugee Self-Reliance

29 September 2021

PLEDGE UPDATES

In total, 201 JOBS & LIVELIHOODS PLEDGES were made at the GRF 2019. 14 pledges have been fulfilled, 75 are currently in progress and 112 are in the planning stages. 100 pledge updates were submitted through September 2021. States account for the majority of all pledges (38%), followed by NGOs (36%), private sector (19%) and international organizations (7%).

HLOM Jobs & Livelihoods Pre-Stocktake Event (29/9):

150 Attendees, mainly from traditional actors in refugee space

- Int'l orgs (56%), NGOs (23%), Governments (17%), Private sector (2%)

Pledges represented covered a range of priorities

- Econ dev (31%), Training (19%), Policy (14%), Jobs (14%), Financial Inclusion (13%)

Actions to enhance the implementation of pledges

- More efforts needed to activate & mobilize private sector & refugee voices
- Where funding gaps hinder implementation, UNHCR can support matching process

MAIN PRE-STOCKTAKE THEMES

INCLUSION IN DECENT WORK

According to a 2021 UNHCR global survey across 123 country operations, 62% of refugees live in countries with restricted access in practice to formal employment. Refugees are often forced to participate in informal labour markets and remain vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Inclusion in national programs for social protection, recognition skills, and freedom of movement are keys to ensuring access to decent work.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

Coordinated partnerships facilitate the effective design and implementation of livelihoods programming. Leveraging the complementary expertise of a diverse set of stakeholders & the contextualized knowledge of local institutions builds a holistic approach to self-reliance and helps identify new market-based solutions for refugee inclusion.

DATA DRIVEN PROGRAMMING

Evidence is crucial to understand the specific needs of refugees & design tailored interventions. Data should be used to highlight the essential contributions of refugees to the local economy & advocate for policy changes at the national level. Its collection should be consistent to allow comparison across countries, but also flexible enough to be applied in different contexts.

KEY CHALLENGES TO PLEDGE IMPLEMENTATION

- Lack of skill recognition
- Restricted movement
- No access to financial services
- AGD & mental health effects
- Global information-sharing

Watch the full recording of the Pre-Stocktake event [here](#)



Examples of Resilient Adaptation & Opportunities Arising From COVID-19

Government of Nigeria:

Government programs adjusted to the changing market demand by providing IDP women with relevant skills-training. Women were trained in sewing & selling face masks, supporting the healthcare needs of the local host community & simultaneously generating an income to become more self reliant.

UNDP:

COVID-19 accelerated the push towards digitally enabled livelihood solutions. UNDP is providing support on a demand driven basis, developing diagnostic tools to help countries and organizations design & implement digital solutions to leverage the needs of local populations. Projects include [entrepreneurial support in Peru](#) & [digital work matching in Turkey](#).



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INCLUSION IN DECENT WORK

“Those refugees who find work still face high levels of discrimination in their wages and working conditions. And we see that skills are not recognized or utilized. Treating refugees fairly and protecting their rights is a central prerequisite to helping countries move from humanitarian crisis to better development outcomes” -Michelle Leighton, Chief of Labour Migration (ILO)

MAIN SUB-THEMES



IMPLEMENTING GLOBAL STANDARDS

56 pledges focus on the inclusion of refugees in employment & economic development. Int'l organizations are supporting these pledges by providing technical assistance in meeting global standards for economic inclusion.

The ILO is collaborating with stakeholders to improve compliance with International Labour Standards and facilitate decent work. Initiatives include:

- **Jordan:** Implementation of a new bylaw for agricultural workers that clarifies their rights, entitlements & gives them a voice through workers' management committees.
- **Nepal:** Collaborating with UNHCR to analyse value chains and provide recommendations for market-based livelihood strategies.

In Sierra Leone & the Philippines, the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) is reviewing legal frameworks and drafting a roadmap to eliminate laws that discriminate against refugee women and impede their economic empowerment.



ENABLING PUBLIC POLICY MEASURES

28 countries made legal framework pledges towards economic inclusion. At the pre-stocktake, some notable country pledges were highlighted.

The Government of Nigeria implemented several measures to include refugees, such as:

- Inclusion in the 2017-2020 National Development Plan
- Non-encampment policy, which allows free movement
- Central Bank ensuring access to bank account with refugee ID

In the Philippines, the Government is working to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on refugees by:

- Providing financial assistance that supports day-to-day needs
- The Department of Labor & Employment (DOLE) is working with the Dept. of Education to certify the educational qualifications of PoCs lacking documentation.

KEY CHALLENGES

Lack of Skill Recognition:

Refugees can be excluded from host labor markets due to a lack of skills recognition. For example, an ILO [study](#) found that the majority of Venezuelan refugees with secondary & university education were underemployed in host communities.

Inclusion in Social Protection:

A large number of refugees live in countries with low fiscal space & limited coverage of social protection. For example, an OECD [study](#) found that only 11% of the poorest 20% of households are covered by social assistance in sub-Saharan Africa.

Resources:

- [BMZ Partnerships for Prospects](#)
- [ILO Guiding Principles](#)
- [ILO Digital Livelihoods & Decent Work](#)
- [Institute for Dev Studies BASIC Project](#)
- [IRC/ODI Research: Empower Women](#)
- [Asylum Access: Labor Market Access](#)



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DATA DRIVEN PROGRAMMING

“The Danish Refugee Council is an active member of the Poverty Alleviation Coalition (PAC) & the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative (RSRI). In these coalitions, we have found many challenges that require joint effort. We need to work together on learning with each other & learning from each other, including by building a common shared evidence base”
-Camille Strauss-Kahn, Global Economic Recovery Advisor (DRC)



MAIN SUB-THEMES



EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH

Evidence is important in designing and implementing the right public policies and livelihoods programs.

To consolidate evidence across programs and identify overall themes, DRC, in collaboration with [RefugePoint](#), is conducting the first comprehensive review of existing evidence on refugee self-reliance programming. The study will identify best practices and approaches to refugee livelihoods, as well as highlight outstanding knowledge gaps.

The Graduation Approach (GA) is one example of an evidence-based program that has been used to fight extreme poverty in refugee & host communities. To date, the [Poverty Alleviation Coalition \(PAC\)](#) has used the GA to reach ~31% of the 160,000 households targeted in its GCR pledge.

To standardize livelihoods evidence and create comparative benchmarks, [RSRI](#) launched the Self-Reliance Index, which is a multi-dimensional tool to measure the progress of refugee households towards self-reliance. So far, it has been used by 21 agencies in 14 countries to assess the self-reliance status of over 5,000 households.



INCLUSIVE DATA: AGD & LOCAL CONTEXT

To capture the diversity within the refugee population & understand the impact of livelihoods programming on particularly vulnerable subgroups, data that is disaggregated for age, gender and diversity (AGD) can yield important insights.

The Government of Rwanda is utilizing gender mainstreaming to promote joint agricultural projects between refugees & host members. From beneficiary selection to specific training modules on female empowerment, diversity is embedded in the pledge implementation framework. Reporting requirements for all partners also include separate data on men, women & youth to effectively monitor outcomes across different groups.

To advocate for the adoption of targeted public policies that address the needs of specific subgroups, the OECD is disaggregating AGD data in a study on the inclusion of refugees in social protections systems. Phase 1 - data collection - is complete and the final study will help identify where gaps exist in social protection and how impact can be achieved with limited resources.

KEY CHALLENGES

Flexible, but Standardized Data:

Data must be flexible so it can be applied to different contexts; however, some standardization is key to allow for comparisons.

Data Collection Privacy Concerns:

Protecting privacy is important in the collection of refugee data; information on AGD characteristics can be particularly sensitive.

Inclusion of Refugee Voices:

Directly involving refugees in the design of programs is an important complement to data. Only 4 jobs & livelihoods pledges were submitted by refugees and/or mention them as a partner.

Resources:

- [RSRI Pledge Update](#)
- [RSRI Global Survey](#)
- [OECD Sustainable Solutions](#)
- [OECD Humanitarian Development Nexus](#)
- [UNDP Somalia: Impact Assessment](#)
- [Asylum Access: Refugee Leadership](#)

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MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

"All these efforts can only be successful through collaboration with implementing partners. For example, due to close collaborations with ILO and the Governments of Jordan and Lebanon, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) was able to advocate for access to work for Syrian refugees, which has resulted in the issuance of thousands of work permits in neighboring countries" -Linda Kuentzelmann, Sector Project Displacement (GIZ)

MAIN SUB-THEMES



FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNERS

25% of all pledges were joint submissions. Although this is encouraging, there is room for improvement at the local level, as most of the joint pledges were either of a global nature or donor driven. The following joint pledges were highlighted:

A private sector partnership between IKEA and the Jordan River Foundation (JRF) leverages the [artisanal skills](#) of Syrian refugee & local Jordanian women to develop products that are supplied to IKEA and sold through select IKEA stores. IKEA has consistently placed large orders with JRF, which has contributed to the women's self-reliance. During the pandemic, IKEA has remained committed to the partnership, resulting in stable income for the women involved.

The Tent Partnership for Refugees & Africa Private Sector Coalition are also mobilizing partners in the private sector. They are creating the structures to help companies identify & match refugees into job opportunities based on labor demand. However, more action is still needed to active actors in the private sector and unlock the full potential of market-based livelihoods.



PARTNERING WITH HOST COMMUNITIES

36% of all pledges mention host communities. Host communities should be included in initiatives to foster peaceful coexistence.

The Government of Eswatini has partnered with local enterprises to revitalize agricultural land & provide adequate water supplies for its entire population. Similarly, the Government of Rwanda has used agricultural projects to increase peaceful coexistence and social cohesion. Consolidated bulk purchases of seeds & fertilizers created cost savings for refugees & host members alike.

[MADE51](#), a global UNHCR initiative, partners local social enterprises with refugees to develop artisanal products, which are sold through the sales enterprise's sales channels. This model creates mutual benefits for refugees & local enterprises.

Through the Partnership for Prospects (P4P) Initiative, BMZ has created 50k+ jobs for refugees in the Middle East. An [independent evaluation](#) found a positive impact on social cohesion in host communities as many of these jobs supported public infrastructure projects enjoyed by local residents.

KEY CHALLENGES

Attracting Stable, Multi-Year Funding:

Upfront investments may be necessary to attract long-term private sector partners & drive fundraising efforts.

Mobilizing Private Sector Actors:

None of the 36 private sector pledges have been fulfilled and just 15 private sector entities provided a pledge update.

Global Information Sharing:

[Sharing best practices globally](#) can help countries establish optimal criteria for finding the right partners

Resources:

- [MADE51 DW Afghan Women Artisans](#)
- [MADE51 Website](#)
- [Maple Leaf Early Years Foundation](#)
- [IKEA-Jordan River Foundation](#)
- [TENT Business Investments in Bangladesh](#)
- [African Entrepreneur Collective](#)



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OUTCOMES OF PRE-STOCKTAKE



The outcome of the pre-stocktake is the following list of recommendations and challenges related to the implementation of GRF pledges made in 2019:

- Several states have made progress in opening their labour markets to refugees and must continue efforts for recognition of skills & inclusion in decent work, social protection programs & access to finance
- The COVID-19 pandemic exposed challenges to refugee economic inclusion, but also opened opportunities for innovations in digital work
- Funding gaps have been reported as a challenge to implementation for 6 job & livelihoods pledges
- Collaboration with local institutions that provide tailored & contextualized livelihoods programming is crucial to successful implementation
- States & traditional actors in the refugee space are actively reporting on the progress of pledge implementation, but more efforts are needed to activate and mobilize the private sector
- Investments in agricultural & artisanal global supply chains are important to enhance refugee self-reliance
- Data and evidence are important tools for advocacy and effective design of livelihoods programming

NEXT STEPS:



This report summarizes key themes from the September 2021 Pre-Stocktake Event on Jobs & Livelihoods. The information will be used in preparation for the upcoming events related to the High-Level Officials Meeting in December.

KEY DATES

29 November 2021: Self-Reliance Roundtable

Preparatory roundtable discussion on the GCR objective on Self-Reliance. The purpose is to bring outcomes of regional, thematic and stakeholder stocktaking to the global discussion. Outcomes of the roundtable will be used to inform the HLOM.

14-15 December 2021: HLOM Meeting

The event will be an opportunity for high-level officials and representatives of relevant stakeholder groups to take stock of progress and maintain the momentum towards achieving the objectives of the GCR.

Track & submit pledge updates on the GCR Digital Platform:
<https://globalcompactrefugees.org/article/about>

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