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UNHCR  
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# Cities and Towns Learning Academy Event in Africa

Deep Dive into Sustainable Human Settlements in FCV Contexts

Nairobi, 17<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> November 2025

OUTCOME REPORT



## Purpose

The Deep Dive convened national and local government leaders from six countries, **Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritania, Mozambique, and Somalia**, together with experts from the World Bank, UN-Habitat, and UNHCR, to strengthen capacities for planning, financing, and managing inclusive, climate-resilient, sustainable human settlements in contexts of fragility, conflict, and displacement.

**Alignment with GRF 2023 Human Settlements Pledge.** The Deep Dive operationalizes the pledge by enabling a shift from camps and parallel humanitarian approaches to integrated territorial approaches that strengthen municipal systems and national leadership.

## Strategic Outcomes



### 1. Country-Specific Action Plans Developed:

Each participating country produced actionable, context-specific plans covering governance, land, services, and resilience. These plans included agreed priority actions, responsible actors, and next steps to follow up with the World Bank, UNHCR and UN-Habitat.



### 2. Clear National Government–Local Government –Humanitarian Coordination Frameworks Identified

Countries agreed on the need for stronger local government leadership in areas hosting the forcibly displaced, clearer coordination frameworks, strengthened territorial governance and planning systems. This marks a shift toward government-led (not humanitarian-led) settlement governance, aligned with sustainable responses.



### 3. Shared Agreement on Inclusion from the Start:

The Deep Dive produced a consensus that parallel humanitarian systems must be phased out, planning and budgeting for inclusion must begin before displaced persons arrive, and settlements should be integrated into national and local government/municipal service systems from day one. This is a major conceptual and operational shift.



### 4. Adoption of Risk-Informed, Spatial and Data-Driven Planning Approaches

All actors committed to risk-informed urban planning, spatial diagnostics (using JDC<sup>1</sup> tools, satellite imagery, GIS), integrated climate/disaster and displacement analysis, and building bankable, evidence-driven investment proposals. This represents a concrete move toward modern, data-guided settlement planning.



### 5. Strengthened Multistakeholder Partnerships and a Joint Roadmap

The Deep Dive achieved reinforced partnerships across UN-Habitat, UNHCR, the World Bank, governments and private sector; a shared roadmap to support durable solutions, economic inclusion, and municipal capacity and alignment with the [Sustainable Human Settlements Pledge](#) launched at the GRF 2023. This lays the foundation for joint follow-up missions, technical assistance and financing.



### 6. Financing Positioned as a Lever for Policy Reform, Not an End in Itself

The longstanding collaboration between the World Bank, UNHCR and UN-Habitat must be leveraged globally and nationally so that financial and technical support drives the policy changes needed to transform displacement hosting areas into sustainable human settlements.

## Lessons Shared

- ➔ Integrated human settlements strengthen long-term resilience for both displaced and host communities.
- ➔ Rethinking the geography of displacement unlocks new opportunities for integration and resilience.
- ➔ Inclusion from the start prevents parallel systems and long-term dependency .
- ➔ Local Governments/Municipalities are the real first responders and central to sustainability.
- ➔ Broadening government counterparts supports more coherent and sustainable responses.
- ➔ Spatial, risk-informed, multi-scalar planning guides effective investments
- ➔ Diversified and predictable financing is essential for scalable and sustainable solutions.
- ➔ Natural resources and environmental pressure are core stability risks that must be addressed.
- ➔ Sustainable solutions require aligning people based and place based investments.



## Strategic Recommendations

- ➔ Institutionalize area-based and risk informed planning across all levels of government and link to existing development, spatial and urban planning frameworks.
- ➔ Strengthen and operationalize governance frameworks for coordinated urban resilience.
- ➔ Mobilize innovative financing solutions, including municipal, climate, and blended instruments.
- ➔ Deliver climate resilient infrastructure and essential services in vulnerable settlements.
- ➔ Advance fit for purpose land and tenure solutions to improve security and equity.
- ➔ Promote economic inclusion and catalyze private sector co investment in local development.
- ➔ Build government led, interoperable data ecosystems to guide evidence based decision-making.



## Next Steps



Support countries to advance sustainable responses through the implementation of national and sub-regional roadmaps, including quick win activities, with integrated support from UNHCR, UN-Habitat and the World Bank



Build on the deep dive to strengthen strategic advocacy and to broaden political and financial support to advance the human settlements approach to displacement situations



Continue the generation of knowledge and lessons learned, including through additional deep dives with other countries and using the Global Refugee Forum to monitor progress



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