



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



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Partnership on Forced Displacement

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) work together for displaced people and their host communities.

Strengthening governments to prevent, prepare, respond and recover is needed more than ever as forced displacement hits record highs.

Cover photograph: UNDP/Aurélia Rusek

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Introduction

Bringing together humanitarian, development and peacebuilding, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) work together for people forcibly displaced from their homes and for the communities that take them in.

One percent of the world's population has fled as a result of conflict or persecution, the average length of their displacement is 17 years and more than eight of every 10 refugees are in developing countries. Forced displacement is driven by a web of social, economic, environmental, human rights, political and security issues.

Coordination between humanitarian and development actions is required to resolve such complex crises. UNDP and UNHCR have worked together since the 1960s, especially where people are vulnerable, marginalised or suffer abuse and where mass displacements give rise to social tensions or exceed the capacity of the host or return state to manage.

A Global Joint-Action Plan was launched in 2017, supporting governments to include refugees in their planning and programming on governance, rule of law, access to justice, peacebuilding, internal displacement, livelihoods and preparedness.

In 2018 in the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), governments agreed to greater international cooperation to ensure that host communities get the support they need and that refugees can lead productive lives. That cooperation is vital. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) say that forced displacement “threatens to reverse the development progress made in recent decades.”

Building on the Global Joint-Action Plan, UNDP and UNHCR are launching the Global Joint Initiative for Inclusion and Solutions. They will strengthen joint programming, focusing on preparedness before a crisis; protection, assistance and recovery during a crisis; and stabilisation and development afterwards.

Together, UNDP and UNHCR will go beyond reacting to events, instead reducing risks and supporting institutions, so nobody is left behind.



UNHCR/Oksana Parafeniuk

Snapshot on forced displacement

- Over the last ten years, the global population of people forced to flee has grown from 43.3 million to 80 million, a record high.
- Crises in Syria, Myanmar, South Sudan, Ukraine, Venezuela, Yemen and the Democratic Republic of Congo have forced millions from their homes.
- Climate change and environmental degradation could result in anywhere between 25 million and one billion displaced people by 2050.
- Only 3.9 million refugees were able to return to their country of origin in the last 10 years, compared to almost 10 million refugees who had returned home during the previous decade.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the needs of displaced populations, while also making those needs more difficult to address.
- Sixty percent of refugees originate from just five countries, while almost two-thirds of refugees reside in just 10 countries, nine of which are developing countries.

Our collaboration

“Humanitarian and development actors will work together from the outset of a refugee situation and in protracted situations.”

Global Compact on Refugees in 2018

UNHCR and UNDP set out a vision of enhanced collaboration in 2017 in the Global Joint-Action Plan. Together, they are working to strengthen policy and programmatic coordination at the global, regional and country level.

The plan covers Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. It focuses on the rule of law, local governance, peacebuilding, the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees, internal displacement and livelihoods. The plan also involves regional work including in and around Syria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Action Plan has led to the development of a Joint Sustainable Development Goals Tool for Forced Displacement and Stateless Contexts and a Joint Theory of Change on Protracted Displacement Framework for country offices.



UNHCR/Anthony Karumba

Timeline

1960s

- UNDP and UNHCR work begins on rural integration of refugees in Africa.

1984

- The 2nd International Conference of Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA).

1987

- First global cooperation agreement.

1989

- The International Conference on Central America Refugees (CIREFCA).

1997

- Follow-up agreement to global cooperation agreement of 1987.

2011

- UNHCR and UNDP designated to provide technical expertise and support for durable solutions on forced displacement.

2016

- At the World Humanitarian Summit, UNDP and UNHCR endorsed the “Commitment to Action”.
- The New York Declaration laid out a vision for a more comprehensive response to forced displacement crises, known as the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF).

2017

- UNDP and UNHCR Communiqué leading to the Global Joint-Action Plan.

2021

- New Global Joint Initiative for Inclusion and Solutions.

Our plans on inclusion and solutions

At the Global Refugee Forum in 2019, UNDP committed to working with UNHCR and governments, justice, security and human rights actors, the private sector, civil society, host communities and displaced populations on:

- Addressing root causes of forced displacement;
- The UNDP-UNHCR Rule of Law and Local Governance Partnership Framework;
- Promoting decent work through innovative digital initiatives.

In response, UNDP and UNHCR are launching a Global Joint Initiative for Inclusion and Solutions for refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), stateless persons and host communities, supporting them with protection, safeguarding their freedom and human rights and promoting durable solutions. It will include multi-year implementation of joint humanitarian, development and peace programming.



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