

# FROM COMMITMENT TO ACTION

## HIGHLIGHTS OF PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPREHENSIVE REFUGEE RESPONSES SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE NEW YORK DECLARATION



*In Ethiopia, refugees and host community members use their training from Engineers Without Borders to maintain solar panels acquired with the assistance of the IKEA Foundation. © UNHCR / Diana Diaz*

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## Introduction: The New York Declaration and progress since its adoption

On 19 September 2016, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the **New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants**.<sup>1</sup> The New York Declaration is a milestone for global solidarity and refugee protection; the commitments agreed by Member States reflect an understanding that protecting those who are forced to flee, and supporting the countries and communities that shelter them, are shared international responsibilities that must be borne more equitably and predictably.

In addition to these commitments, the New York Declaration contains a **Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)** to guide enhanced international responses,<sup>2</sup> and set in motion two processes for the development of two ‘**global compacts**’—one on refugees and the other for safe, orderly and regular migration—to strengthen further the ways in which the international community addresses human mobility.

Since the adoption of the New York Declaration, noteworthy progress has been made in further developing and applying its core tenets. Whilst many of these areas—such as burden- and responsibility-sharing, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and refugee inclusion in host communities—were being discussed and developed before September 2016,<sup>3</sup> the New York Declaration consolidated them within a single framework and gave them the authority of unanimous endorsement by the 193 Member States of the United Nations. The New York Declaration thus served to catalyze the development of a number of pre-existing trends.

Much of the progress made since September 2016 has been in the context of the practical application of the CRRF and the process leading to the **global compact on refugees**.<sup>4</sup> Progress has also been made in other settings, including at the global level (the pledges made at the 2016 **Leaders’ Summit on Refugees**, work towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the follow-up to the World Humanitarian Summit, for example), within international and regional organizations and fora,<sup>5</sup> and in individual States.

Likewise, whilst UNHCR has taken a leading role in relation to some developments, others have been led by States, international and regional organizations, international financial institutions, and civil society partners, consistent with the whole-of-society, multi-partner approach advocated in the New York Declaration.

This document sets out examples of the progress that has been made since the adoption of the New York Declaration, both **(a)** in terms of the **sustained attention** that the Declaration and related processes have brought to refugee issues, and **(b)** in relation to each of the four objectives of the CRRF and the future global compact on refugees, namely:

1. to **ease pressures** on countries that host large numbers of refugees;
2. to enhance **refugee self-reliance**;
3. to expand **access to third-country solutions** (i.e. resettlement and complementary pathways for admission); and
4. to support **conditions in countries of origin** that enable refugees to return in safety and dignity.

The examples highlighted in this document are non-exhaustive in nature and—in line with the ever-evolving nature of refugee protection—the document will be updated regularly.

<sup>1</sup> See [www.unhcr.org/newyorkdeclaration](http://www.unhcr.org/newyorkdeclaration)

<sup>2</sup> See [www.unhcr.org/crrf](http://www.unhcr.org/crrf)

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, the [Wilton Park Principles](#).

<sup>4</sup> See [www.unhcr.org/refugeecom pact](http://www.unhcr.org/refugeecom pact)

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, the World Bank’s [Forcibly Displaced: Toward a Development Approach Supporting Refugees, the Internally Displaced, and Their Hosts](#) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s [Responding to Refugee Crises in Developing Countries: What Can We Learn From Evaluations?](#)



## Sustained global attention to refugee issues

The period since the adoption of the New York Declaration has seen sustained attention on refugee issues at the global, regional and national levels.

At the **global** level, the process leading to the development of the global compact on refugees has triggered—and benefited from—a high level of engagement from across the international community.<sup>6</sup> Of particular note is the attention that has been given to the contribution that hosting States make to the international refugee protection regime and to the need for more equitable and predictable burden- and responsibility-sharing. As is being increasingly recognized at the international level, the burden and responsibility for hosting the world's refugees falls disproportionately on a small number of countries; the vast majority of refugees live in developing countries that face their own economic and development challenges, and the development of arrangements to share this burden and responsibility more predictably has been a key focus of the process leading to the global compact on refugees.

**Regional and sub-regional** action has also been strengthened since the adoption of the New York Declaration, most notably in East Africa with the adoption of the *Nairobi Declaration on Durable Solutions for Somali Refugees and Reintegration of Returnees in Somalia* and in Central America with the *Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework* (also known by its Spanish acronym, 'MIRPS'). These regional approaches allow neighbouring countries facing similar problems to work together to protect and find solutions for refugees, with the support and assistance of the international community. The Executive Council of the African Union has recently urged AU Member States and the AU Commission to work in collaboration with UNHCR in implementing the New York Declaration and CRRF, and to contribute to the development of the global compact on refugees.<sup>7</sup>

At the **national** level, more than a dozen States have started to apply the CRRF,<sup>8</sup> meaning that they have committed to adopt a comprehensive approach to refugee issues under government leadership that engages all relevant stakeholders (including government ministries that have not traditionally focused on refugee issues, States, regional and international organizations, national and international NGOs, faith-based organizations, the private sector, and refugees themselves) to improve refugee protection and support the communities hosting large numbers of refugees.



*Members of the Makonde community discuss displacement and statelessness issues during a consultation in Kwale, Kenya. © UNHCR / Roger Arnold*

<sup>6</sup> See [www.unhcr.org/refugeecompact](http://www.unhcr.org/refugeecompact)

<sup>7</sup> See [Decision on Humanitarian Situation in Africa](#), adopted at the Thirty-Second Ordinary Session of the Executive Council in January 2018.

<sup>8</sup> As of July 2018, these States are Belize, Chad, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Mexico, Panama, Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda, and Zambia.

In addition, many States around the world are applying some or all of the elements of the CRRF approach without officially applying the Framework. The [Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis](#), for example, embraces many of the key principles of the CRRF.

At all levels, the potential role of the **private sector** in comprehensive refugee responses is being increasingly recognized and harnessed, particularly in the relation to livelihoods, infrastructure, connectivity and energy. The IKEA Foundation, for example, has helped to transform a remote refugee-hosting community in the Dollo Ado region of south-east Ethiopia, donating \$100m to improve living standards and foster self-reliance among 200,000 Somali refugees and locals. The money has been used to build irrigation systems, train farmers, provide small business loans, and create sustainable energy solutions. As a result, school enrolment rates are up, malnutrition rates are down, and youth employment is growing as economic activity picks up.

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*Being one of the 13 countries applying the CRRF as a roll-out country is not only a privilege, but also a positive and constructive national experience. It allowed us to evaluate – under an inter-institutional and inter-sectoral approach – the progress as well as gaps in the fulfilment of our regional and international obligations with regard to displacement.*

Delegation of Mexico  
71<sup>st</sup> meeting of UNHCR's Standing  
Committee, March 2018

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## Objective One: Easing pressures on host countries

The first objective of the CRRF and the future global compact on refugees—to ease the pressure on host States—recognizes the enormous role that host countries play in supporting the international refugee regime and the pressures that States face when hosting large numbers of refugees. The period since the adoption of the New York Declaration has seen increased recognition of these realities, and a more concerted effort to ease pressures.

In accordance with a request from the General Assembly,<sup>9</sup> UNHCR has commenced coordinating an effort to **measure the impact of hosting, protecting and assisting refugees on host countries**. It is envisaged that this work—which will be undertaken with technical expertise from Member States and relevant international organizations—will assist in the assessment of gaps in international cooperation and promote more equitable, predictable and sustainable burden- and responsibility-sharing.

**Humanitarian assistance** has a long history of helping to ease the pressures faced by countries hosting large numbers of refugees, and the increasing contributions of those providing humanitarian funding in times of increasing need continues this tradition.<sup>[1]</sup> Of particular note in this regard is **flexible funding** in the form of **unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions** to humanitarian actors. Flexible funding is invaluable in filling the gaps left by earmarked contributions, which make up 65% of financial contributions to UNHCR. Refugee operations in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, for example, made use of unearmarked funding in 2017 to respond to sudden inflows of South Sudanese refugees in need of basic and essential services and lifesaving protection assistance. When new earmarked funding was provided for operations in Ethiopia and Uganda, the unearmarked funds were reallocated to other operations in Africa, Europe and the Middle East. By the end of the year, \$3.6m of unearmarked funding remained in Kenya and Somalia received \$1.77m. In the Americas, a region whose displacement crises are often overlooked and forgotten, close to \$12 million of unearmarked funds were used to bolster MIRPs operations in 2017. The top contributors of unearmarked funding to UNHCR in 2017 were Sweden, private donors in Spain, the Netherlands and Norway, whilst the United States and Germany provided the largest contributions of softly earmarked funding.

Whilst humanitarian assistance will continue to be invaluable in meeting immediate needs, there is a growing recognition of the **development challenges posed by large-scale displacement**, particularly when such displacement becomes protracted. In response, clear evidence is emerging of bilateral and multilateral **development actors giving greater priority to forced displacement** and

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<sup>9</sup> See [A/RES/72/150](#).





*New classrooms under construction at Kutupalong High School in Bangladesh, which educates local and refugee children. © UNHCR / Adam Dean*

its developmental consequences, including by increasingly allocating funding to programmes that benefit displaced populations and their hosts. UNHCR is pursuing an ongoing dialogue with development partners to better measure this change, which the global compact on refugees aims to consolidate and build upon. Its full effects will take some time to materialise, but some changes can already be observed:<sup>10</sup>

- The **World Bank** has established a \$2bn sub-window for refugees and hosting communities as part of the International Development Association's (IDA) 18<sup>th</sup> replenishment for low-income countries. The purpose of the sub-window is to provide resources to countries hosting refugees for medium- to long-term investments that address the socio-economic impacts of forced displacement on refugees and host communities. Eight countries have been deemed eligible for IDA18 financing to date—including four countries officially applying the CRRF (Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Uganda)—and more are currently under consideration.
  - For middle-income countries hosting large numbers of refugees, the World Bank's Global Concessional Financing Facility is aiming to make approximately \$6bn in concessional financing available over the next five years.
  - The World Bank is also continuing to contribute \$175m for activities under the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project in refugee-hosting areas in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Uganda, and is in the process of establishing a joint data centre with UNHCR to improve population and socio-economic data on forced displacement and to strengthen the sustainability of a global data collection system.
  - Most recently, the World Bank (in partnership with Canada) has announced close to half-a-billion dollars to help the Government of Bangladesh address the needs of Rohingya refugees and local communities.

<sup>10</sup> NB: The figures referred to are increases in funding that benefit persons of concern. Although some of these funds may be provided to UNHCR, the majority are not. It is also important to note that these funds do not necessarily represent 'new' aid commitments, but include reprioritization of existing funding commitments. UNHCR invites all development partners to share their contributions to comprehensive responses in order to keep this list of examples up-to-date.

- Since 2016, the **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development** has been rolling out a Community Resilience financing package of €900m to address economic challenges and support resilience for refugees and host communities in Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon. Activities are focused on infrastructure development, access to finance, inclusion and gender.
- The **Inter-American Development Bank** is supporting MIRPS countries in quantifying and identifying suitable budget lines to finance their national action plans, aimed at enhancing protection and solutions for those forcibly displaced in Central America and Mexico, with a particular emphasis in addressing root causes in countries of origin.
- The **European Union** has stepped up its development assistance to address long term needs of refugees and host communities. The European Commission is investing nearly €250m in development support to the CRRF application in the Horn of Africa and Central America and is exploring further support. It has also increased development-focused investment to address displacement in other regions such as Asia and Western Africa, and has established the EU Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian Crisis and the Facility for Refugees in Turkey to address longer term economic, educational and social needs of Syrian refugees, and to support host communities that already contribute so much by hosting large numbers of refugees.
- **Denmark** has allocated significant amounts from Danida's development budget—in addition to generous humanitarian spending—for a range of countries affected by protracted displacement. This includes multi-annual grants for specific development-oriented projects in direct support of refugees and host communities, along with support channeled through multilateral displacement-related funds. This support amounts to more than \$300m, and approximately \$72m has been allocated to countries applying the CRRF.
- **Germany's** Development Cooperation is providing almost €140m to support CRRF-related projects across countries applying the CRRF. These have a strong focus on livelihoods and sustainable water supply for refugees and host communities.
- **Canada** is working to ensure close cooperation between its humanitarian and development programmes to support refugees and host communities. As part of its three-year Middle-East strategy (2017-2019), Canada is providing more than \$200m in development assistance to respond to needs in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan, alongside almost \$650m of humanitarian assistance. For example, Canada is providing nearly \$100m in development assistance to build resilient and quality education systems in Jordan and Lebanon that benefit host country and refugee children.
- **The Netherlands** has allocated significant amounts from its development budget, over and above humanitarian spending, for a range of countries affected by forced displacement. This includes multi-annual grants for specific development-oriented projects in direct support of refugees and host communities, along with multilateral support for forced displacement crises. The support towards refugees and host communities amounts to approximately €905m in the period 2016-2022.
- The **United Kingdom's** Department for International Development has launched a new Humanitarian Policy, which commits to adopting longer term approaches to protracted crises, including through multi-year funding for development responses as well as investments in basic services such as health, education and social protection. Programming currently underway in line with this policy includes £40m to bolster basic services in host and refugee communities and £24m to support market creation and strengthen longer term economic opportunities in refugee-hosting areas in Ethiopia, as well as the expansion of existing nutrition programming in Zambia to include refugees and host communities.
- The Government of **Japan** is investing approximately \$60m in Uganda through bilateral development channels via the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), with a focus on the 'humanitarian-development nexus'. This includes the Rice Development Project, which helps both refugees and host communities to manage the challenges they face.

- The **Korea** International Cooperation Agency has contributed both bilateral and multilateral funding of almost \$52m in support of CRRF countries (Rwanda, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Guatemala and Honduras) with a focus on education, livelihoods and capacity building.
- The **Swedish** International Development Cooperation Agency is contributing approximately \$4m to strengthen the health sector in West Nile, Uganda, where the large influx of refugees has put pressure on health services and entire communities.
- **Norway** has announced an additional \$270,000 for a regional legal aid project to assist persons with international protection needs in the Americas region, in support of the MIRPS.
- The **Spanish** Agency for International Development Cooperation has developed a public-private partnership with three leading energy companies (Philips, Accionna and Iberdrola) in the refugee camps of Tigray, in northern Ethiopia.
- In December 2017, the **UN Peacebuilding Fund** approved a landmark tri-national project for assisting the governments of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador to better address the protection and development challenges of displacement. The three implementing agencies in this project are UNDP, UNHCR, and IOM.
- The **United Nations Development Programme** and UNHCR have developed a joint action plan to expand UNDP's programming to strengthen resilience for host communities and refugee inclusion.
- The **global rule of law and governance community**<sup>11</sup> is increasingly including a refugee protection perspective in its rule of law and governance programmes. Following the adoption of the New York Declaration, for example, the United Nations Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections and UNDP's Rule of Law team opened up their rule of law and governance expert rosters and stand by capacities to UNHCR and have set aside seed funding to work with UNHCR to support countries in strengthening inclusive governance systems, promote social cohesion and enhance access to justice, human rights and community security for refugees, IDPs, returnees, stateless persons and their host communities.

In addition to improving burden- and responsibility-sharing, the process leading to the global compact on refugees has also examined ways to **broaden the base of support** available to hosting States, to ensure the **early involvement of development actors** in refugee situations, including through the engagement of countries of origin, to address all phases of displacement and to begin addressing root causes early, and to enhance **accountability for commitments** of support.

## Objective Two: Enhancing refugee self-reliance

Significant progress since September 2016 has also been made against the second objective of the CRRF: to enhance refugee self-reliance. Following on, in many cases, from the pledges made during the Leaders' Summit on Refugees, a number of States have revisited laws and policies (or are in the process of doing so) to support refugee inclusion and self-reliance, including by guaranteeing their rights and promoting their social and economic inclusion.

A number of States have enacted or are in the process of enacting **new refugee laws and regulations guaranteeing the rights of refugees and expanding refugee access to national systems and services**. Djibouti's new law, for example, reverses the previous encampment policy, strengthens the protection of refugees and safeguards their fundamental rights, including access to education, livelihoods, legal support and the national justice system. A new refugee law is also being enacted in Ethiopia to give refugees access to employment, education and greater freedom of movement. Ethiopia has also revised its Vital Events and Registration proclamation, with the support of international partners including the Netherlands, to grant refugees full access to the national civil registration system.

<sup>11</sup> Including the United Nations Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), the American Bar Association, Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI), Governance and Rule of Law Practice Groups in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), UN entities, and World Bank.





*Ariat Ochocka Odulla swaddles her three-week-old son and holds his birth certificate, one of the first issued to a refugee child in Ethiopia. © UNHCR / Diana Diaz*

The Executive Council of the African Union has recently requested that AU Member States consider taking similar steps.<sup>12</sup>

Refugee **education** has received particular focus since the adoption of the New York Declaration:

- Ethiopia has enrolled more than 50,000 more refugees across all levels of education, in line with its Leaders' Summit pledge to expand access to education for refugees. Chad has officially converted all refugee community schools into government public schools and has enrolled refugee teachers in official teacher training colleges affording them national certification. In 2018, refugee schools in Kakuma, Kenya were registered as public schools with the Ministry of Education.
- The countries hosting large numbers of Syrian refugees have increased the rate of inclusion of Syrian refugee children in national education systems, which have in turn been strengthened, with the support of the international community.
  - For example, since the 2016 decision of the Government of Turkey to include refugees in the national education system, the number of refugee children enrolled in Turkish schools has risen dramatically; today, more than 63% of all refugee children receiving an education in Turkey are attending Turkish schools. (In the 2014-2015 academic year, only 17.3% of Syrian refugees were enrolled in Turkish schools.) More than 20,000 Syrian students are enrolled in Turkish universities and benefit from a tuition fee waiver granted by the Turkish Government.
  - Across the five major host countries for Syrian refugees (Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt), the number of school-age Syrian children enrolled in formal or regulated non-formal education increased over the course of 2017 from 1.04 million (59%) to 1.25 million (65%).
- There have also been noteworthy developments relating to education at the regional level through the adoption of a range of commitments to strengthening national education systems for the benefit of refugees, including:
  - the *Djibouti Declaration on Regional Refugee Education*, wherein IGAD Member States commit to including refugees in national education systems by 2020;

<sup>12</sup> See [Decision on the Report of the 4<sup>th</sup> Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration](#), adopted at the Thirty-Second Ordinary Session of the Executive Council in January 2018.





*Syrian refugee children attend class in a Turkish cultural centre that has been converted into a school with the support of the Government of Turkey. © UNHCR / Diana Diaz*

- the [Buenos Aires Declaration](#), adopted by the Regional Meeting of Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean;
- the [Eastern Africa Ministerial Statement](#), adopted by the Regional SDG Forum of Ministers of Education for Eastern Africa;
- the [Nairobi Declaration and Call for Action on Education](#), wherein the Pan African High Level Conference on Education reaffirmed commitments to ‘making our educational systems more responsive, flexible and resilient to include refugees and internally displaced people’; and
- the [Dubai Roadmap for Education 2030 in the Arab Region \(2017-2018\)](#), wherein a wide range of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders note their dedication ‘to the inclusion of refugee children and youth systematically in national educational planning processes in order to monitor their participation and educational attainment’.
- Global efforts to mobilize funding for education in emergency contexts resulted in the establishment of [Education Cannot Wait](#) (ECW) in 2016. ECW aims to ensure that every crisis-affected child and young person is in school and learning, and is committed to aligning with the CRRF in multi-year funding. Funding to date has been allocated for refugee children in Uganda, Ethiopia, Chad and Bangladesh and for returnees in Afghanistan.
- The [Global Partnership for Education](#) (GPE) is working with UNHCR to support refugee inclusion in multi-year national education sector planning, to increase the inclusion of refugee data in national education information management systems, and to boost development education support from the international community to host governments. It has also encouraged governments to use the GPE Acceleration Fund in refugee emergency contexts; Chad accessed this funding for the Lake Chad crisis, using it to amplify services for refugee, returnee and local children and youth in the region.
- The [Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium \(CLCC\)](#) was founded in 2016, and is co-chaired by UNHCR and the University of Geneva. In 2017, the efforts of the Consortium’s fifteen members resulted in support for over 7,000 refugee and host community students in 12 countries to engage in connected learning courses. These courses expand access to face-to-face tertiary education by utilizing digital tools and connectivity to link students to content, peers and professors from around the world. They assist refugees and others to obtain relevant diplomas, degrees, and professional certificates from recognized institutions both in-country and globally, overcoming geographical and temporal challenges by enabling students to study where they reside and at times that adapt to their daily routines.
- In 2017, a record number of students received scholarships from the [Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative \(DAFI programme\)](#): 6,723 young refugees studied for undergraduate

degrees in 720 universities and colleges across 50 countries, thanks to substantial funding increases from the Government of Germany and private donors that have enabled the tripling of DAFI scholarships over the last three years. The DAFI programme provides students with a financial stipend and an array of additional support services including: protection interventions, academic and career-oriented trainings and workshops, language support, individual counselling and community engagement. The 12,000 applications received during the 2017 application period demonstrated that the demand from refugees for higher education opportunities continues to grow.

Strong progress has also been made in the field of **jobs and livelihoods**:

- In Djibouti, the refugee ID card now allows its bearer to seek employment.
- In Costa Rica, refugees and asylum seekers have also been included in the “My First Job” initiative, aiming to stimulate the private sector through a subsidy system for those hiring persons of concern, especially youth and people living with vulnerabilities. Mexico has taken steps to guarantee the access of refugees to livelihood training, employment programmes and financial services, and Guatemala is providing access to job support services.
- In Ethiopia, work is ongoing towards the development of the Ethiopia Economic Opportunities Program to create opportunities for refugees alongside Ethiopian nationals, including in industrial parks. The Government’s Roadmap includes a target of 100,000 economic opportunities, of which 30% will be for refugees. Funding to support this work is coming through the World Bank (which has committed \$200 million through the IDA 18 sub-window for refugees and host communities) and a Multi-Donor Trust Fund (which includes loans worth \$250m from the European Investment Bank and \$80m from the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development to support investment in Ethiopia, including for construction of an industrial park in Dire Dawa).
- In Zambia, regulatory action in March 2017 legalized refugees opening bank accounts and possessing mobile wallets.
- Sweden is rolling out a credit guarantee facility to incentivise impact investors to provide debt funding to financial service providers who, in turn, are willing to provide microcredit loans to refugees and residents of host communities for business or personal needs.
- In response to the CRRF, the **United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)** developed a Financial Inclusion Framework for refugees. As part of this Framework, UNCDF and UNHCR have



*Since fleeing Columbia, the Ángel Velásquez family have built a successful bakery business in Costa Rica. © UNHCR / Santiago Escobar-Jaramillo*



*South Sudanese refugees arriving in Kenya receive vaccinations for yellow fever. © UNHCR / Samuel Otieno*

launched a technical assistance facility to support financial service providers to enhance their efforts and strengthen their capacity to reach refugee and other displaced populations, as well as host communities.

- With the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, UNHCR has developed a [joint action plan for the employment of refugees](#) that offers a list of ten concrete actions to support the successful inclusion of refugees in labour markets.
- To support private sector engagement in support of livelihoods, the International Finance Corporation has conducted a consumer and market study of the town and refugee camp in Kakuma, Kenya, that highlighted the untapped potential for private sector investment and activity. UNDP and the Uganda Investment Authority have produced [investment profiles](#) in 11 refugee-hosting districts to support the business case for investment and development there.
- The International Labour Organization has developed and adopted two important instruments promoting decent work for refugees, namely the [Guiding principles on the access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market](#) (November 2016) and the [Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation](#) (June 2017).

Refugees have been included in the national **health** systems in a number of countries, including Uganda, Zambia, Kenya and Djibouti,<sup>13</sup> with the international community providing support to build the capacity of those systems for the benefit of refugees and host communities:

- UNHCR operations in Senegal, Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Mali, Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Kenya, Djibouti and Iran support the enrolment of refugees into national health insurance schemes (and into private health insurance in Malaysia).
- At the global level, the World Health Organization, in collaboration with UNHCR and IOM, developed in 2017 a [Framework of Priorities and Guiding Principles to Promote the Health of Refugees and Migrants](#). The World Health Assembly passed a resolution in May 2017 urging States to ‘strengthen international cooperation on the health of refugees’ and to consider promoting the Framework of Priorities and Guiding Principles.

<sup>13</sup> Refugees were given access to the national health system in Djibouti in January 2018.



- The [World Health Organization](#) has also mobilized funds for emergency health responses for refugees and migrants in transit through Guatemala and continues to advocate for strengthened government capacity in line with the priorities identified in Guatemala's MIRPS national chapter.
- [Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance](#) encourages governments to integrate refugees in their national immunization programmes. In 2017, it updated its [Fragility, Emergencies, Refugees Policy](#) to ensure greater flexibility and tailored support to Gavi-eligible refugee-hosting countries, including through additional vaccines to cover a broader age or antigen ranges and additional support for the operational costs of vaccination campaigns. Through this policy, Gavi has supported Governments and partners in Rwanda, Uganda and Bangladesh with vaccines to protect refugees. In 2018, Gavi supported the Government of Uganda to include refugees in the national targets for routine immunization programs, and also supplied vaccines to address the outbreak of diphtheria in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh.

Links between humanitarian assistance and [national social protection](#) systems are also being increasingly strengthened:

- UNHCR operations are enrolling refugees in safety net programmes in Ecuador, Costa Rica, Cameroon, Chad, Brazil, Bolivia, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela and South Africa. In Costa Rica, refugees living in poverty are now able to access welfare programmes on the same footing as nationals.
- The European Union is funding a programme to be operated by UNHCR, the World Bank and civil society actors that would link Somali refugees in the Jijjiga camps of Ethiopia to the National Productive Safety Net Programme of Ethiopia, while working to build livelihoods and labour opportunities enabling refugees to graduate out of safety net payments.
- UNHCR and UNICEF are working with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Interior in Iraq to build the Ministries' capacities to manage child protection and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), train social workers and put in place referral processes between humanitarian child and SGBV protection services and government social welfare services.

At the national and global levels, there has also been increasing recognition of the importance of the [participation of refugees](#) in processes that affect them:

- Refugees participate in CRRF facilitation mechanisms (Steering Groups and Secretariats) in Uganda, Djibouti and Ethiopia. Uganda is in the process of establishing a Refugee Advisory Forum to represent refugee voices. More than 1,000 persons of concern were consulted as part of the preparations for the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework,



*Aya Mohammed Abdullah, an Iraqi refugee and a member of the High Commissioner's Global Youth Advisory Committee, addresses the stocktaking meeting for the global compact on refugees.*  
© UNHCR / Jean Marc Ferré

particularly in designing national action plans in Mexico, Costa Rica and Panama. Refugees have also been key participants in the Geneva-based process for the development of the global compact on refugees.

- As part of the process following the Nairobi Declaration, Somalia committed to organising a National Forum on solutions for refugees and IDPs to 'build a national consensus on what needs to be done in order to create conducive conditions for sustainable solutions and reintegration'. The National Forum served as a starting point for countrywide consultations on the development of a National Action Plan on Durable Solutions and a Policy on IDPs and Refugees.
- In 2017, the High Commissioner for Refugees launched a Global Youth Advisory Council to give the voices and perspectives of refugee youth a global platform, and to advise UNHCR on issues relating to protection and young people. The Council has 15 members from around the world.

### Objective Three: Expanding access to third country solutions

The third objective of the CRRF is to expand access to third country solutions. In 2016, global refugee resettlement reached a twenty-year high as States continued to expand their programmes to welcome more refugees from Syria and other emergency situations. Although the number of refugee resettlement places has fallen since then, a number of underlying trends have emerged or expanded since the adoption of the New York Declaration that show promise in being able to support expanded access to third country solutions for refugees:

- A number of **traditional resettlement States**—including Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom—have expanded or are expanding the numbers of refugees they resettle. In November 2017, the European Commission proposed a new resettlement scheme encouraging EU Member States to resettle at least 50,000 refugees by October 2019. All 50,000 places have already been pledged.
  - A new Core Group for Enhanced Resettlement and Complementary Pathways along the Central Mediterranean Route was established in August 2017 to assume leadership in mobilizing support for efforts to increase resettlement for the most vulnerable refugees, as well as proactively pursuing opportunities for safe and regulated admission through complementary pathways to admission.
- The pool of States with resettlement programmes is also expanding thanks to a number of **emerging resettlement countries**. Although this trend pre-dates the adoption of the New York Declaration (the total number of resettlement States expanded from 21 to 35 in the period 2003-2017), it is being strengthened and consolidated through the **Emerging Resettlement Countries Joint Support Mechanism**, which was launched at the Leaders' Summit on Refugees and which provides a platform to facilitate strategic support and capacity-building efforts for the development of robust and sustainable resettlement programmes in new resettlement countries. The Mechanism is already providing support to Argentina, Brazil and Chile, and is looking to expand further.
- Access to resettlement is also being facilitated through the establishment and expansion of **private and community sponsorship** programmes for refugees. In addition to providing more opportunities to protect refugees and offer them durable solutions, these sponsorship programmes strengthen community and civil society engagement in supporting refugees, create a more welcoming environment for refugees, and build more diverse and inclusive societies. The **Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative**, which seeks to promote and support this trend, was launched in September 2016. The Initiative is currently assisting the establishment or expansion of sponsorship programmes in a number of established, new and emerging resettlement countries.
- The use of **Evacuation Transit Facilities**—both as a protection tool for refugees in need of urgent or emergency resettlement and as an alternative site for refugee processing—has expanded.



*Somaya Alchabli, a Syrian refugee, and Dr Nhung Tran-Davies, her Canadian sponsor. Dr Tran-Davies herself came to Canada as a sponsored refugee from Vietnam. © UNHCR / Jimmy Jeong*

- Since being established in late 2017, the Emergency Evacuation and Transit Mechanism has been used to evacuate more than 1,500 people (as at 2 July 2018) from Libya to Niger for onward solutions, including resettlement, voluntary return or local integration, as well as access to labour mobility schemes, family reunification, humanitarian admissions, and scholarships in third countries.
- In Central America, the Protection Transfer Arrangement (PTA), with the strong support of the United States of America, has been a practical, life-saving protection tool providing safe access to durable solutions for individuals at heightened risk. The United States, Canada, Australia and Uruguay have resettled persons at high risk from Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala through the PTA. Brazil and Argentina have also committed to joining, as part of their cooperation with the MIRPS.
- Noteworthy progress has also been made in the development of **complementary pathways for the admission of refugees to third countries**. The United World Colleges Refugee Initiative is supporting refugee students to move to a third country to study for the International Baccalaureate (with the support of UNHCR), and Japan and France have established university places for Syrian refugees. In 2018, Canada initiated a pilot programme to provide labour mobility opportunities for refugees living in Kenya through Canada's economic migration program. Talent Beyond Boundaries has established a talent register of 9,000 refugees seeking employment through labour mobility schemes, and the adoption in January 2018 of the African Union's protocol on *Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment* holds great promise in allowing refugees to access third-country solutions within the region. UNHCR and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) are also mapping non-humanitarian, safe and regulated entry and visa pathways used by refugees to enter OECD countries to assist in the development of guidance on complementary pathways.

#### **Objective Four: Supporting conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity**

In relation to the fourth objective of the CRRF, there have been some promising developments that hold the promise of future success in this area:

- The regional CRRF application for the Somalia refugee situation has a strong focus on supporting conditions in Somalia that are conducive to refugees' return in safety and dignity. IGAD Member States, including Somalia, have committed to taking concrete steps to improve the security situation in Somalia, to build the capacity of relevant authorities to undertake urban planning and



resilience programming, and generally to support activities in line with Somalia's national development planning processes. A landmark development in this respect is the explicit recognition of the need for durable solutions to displacement and the reintegration of former refugees in Somalia's 2017-2019 National Development Plan, which will help to ensure the sustained attention of the government and development actors on these key issues.

- The MIRPS incorporates countries of origin, transit and destination into its framework, reflecting the circular displacement patterns in the region. It highlights the need to work on the root causes of forced displacement, especially through the strengthening of national protection mechanisms. The framework includes forward-looking national action plans to address forced displacement and the protection and inclusion of returnees in countries of origin. This includes galvanising bilateral and multilateral development actors to address root causes sustainably.
- Canada is supporting several resilience and capacity building initiatives in countries of origin, including to enable greater food security for returnees and local populations. In Central America, for example, it has committed almost \$35m for a range of projects aimed at addressing the impact of violence, especially violence involving children, and increasing national legal capacities.
- The United Nations Secretary-General's reform agenda, in particular in relation to [peacebuilding and sustaining peace](#), is aiming to make the UN system more effective in preventing conflict, and in restoring peace when it does break out. The peacebuilding fund has increased financing for activities aimed at understanding and addressing the root causes of forced displacement and supporting countries in addressing the barriers of sustainable reintegration and return.
- A range of peacebuilding and development actors are paying increasing attention to preventing and addressing issues related to abandoned land, housing and property as a major obstacle to durable return in safety and dignity, including UNDP, UN-Habitat and OHCHR.
- In the discussions leading to the global compact on refugees, States and others have reiterated their determination to work together to address the root causes of large refugee situations, including through heightened international efforts in the fields of conflict prevention and resolution, upholding international humanitarian law, poverty alleviation in and development assistance to countries of origin in line with the 2030 Agenda, and promotion of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

## **Conclusion: Towards a global compact on refugees**

As the examples in this document highlight, noteworthy progress has been made since the adoption of the New York Declaration in the operationalization of its core principles and towards the achievement of the four objectives of the CRRF and the future global compact on refugees. The continuation of these trends—with the support of the international community as a whole and with a focus on all four objectives—will be essential to the effective implementation of the global compact on refugees following its adoption in late 2018.