

S.3 Ensuring access to equitable and sustainable livelihoods for forcibly displaced persons

1. What, in brief, is the solution?

The goal of this solution is to strengthen livelihoods of forcibly displaced persons (FDPs) -- a term that includes refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees -- while ensuring basic food and nutrition needs are met, encouraging an enabling environment for increased self-reliance.

Improving livelihoods is a key component of achieving protection outcomes and solutions for FDPs also contributes to their self-reliance and resilience, empowering them to meet their needs in a safe, sustainable and dignified manner; avoids aid-dependency and negative coping mechanisms; contributes to their host community's economy; and prepares refugees and IDPs for their future whether they return home, integrate in their country of asylum or resettle in a third country.

Many FDPs originate from rural areas and hold valuable agricultural skills as crop producers, livestock keepers or fishermen. Given the right support and productive assets, they have the potential to not only feed themselves, their families and their communities, but also enter lucrative markets and prosper. When provided with the opportunity and an enabling environment, they can also contribute to local economic development, benefiting themselves and host communities alike.

Humanitarian assistance efforts should progressively transition refugees and displaced populations from relying on humanitarian assistance to self-reliance. This necessitates working across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus through joined up programming which allows humanitarian development and peace actors to establish and support pathways to resilience and self-reliance. Long term solutions not possible just through humanitarian assistance efforts.

Host countries should formulate policies to ensure the protection of FDPs in the labour market including guaranteeing the right to work, freedom of movement and the right to pursue livelihoods and entrepreneurial opportunities in their host communities. Vocational training, off-farm income generating opportunities, and specific actions aimed at youth and women, and social protection interventions, are some of the actions required in ensuring access to sustainable livelihoods for FDPs. However, for FDPs livelihoods to be truly sustainable, host countries should also enact policies aimed at facilitating social and economic inclusion, including those which allow for access to social protection systems and savings and loans facilities. These also need to be supported by host government policy, for these to be sustainable.

Critical that FDPs also have access to sustainable agricultural livelihoods support on return to their origin communities. This also has a critical flow on affect to the food security, economic development and recovery of conflict and disaster affected communities.

2. What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?

The solution is built on existing international legal framework and guiding principles, including:

- The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and its Global Compact on Refugees including the call for the enhancement of refugee resilience and self-reliance, as well as the need for and benefit of taking on a whole-of-society approach.
- The ILO Conventions protect all workers, including FDPs who are working, seeking work or in need of income security, unless otherwise stated ^[2].

- The Guiding Principles on the Access of Refugees and other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labor Market (ILO 2016) provide an important framework for governments to promote refugees' full enjoyment of the right to work.

The solution has also emerged from programming experiences by host governments, as well as from UNHCR, ILO, FAO, CARE and other global organizations implementing programs in support to FDPs camps across the world, facing multiple constraints and limitations that hamper the access to long-term sustainable livelihoods.^[3]

3. What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

Policy and legal barriers for FDPs to access equitable and sustainable livelihoods:

FDPs often faces significant policy and legal barriers that limit their rights to access production assets (land, capital, equipment, business premises, business permits, etc), right to employment (formal and informal), right to engage in different value chains e.g., agriculture (production, processing, marketing), right to education/extension services, right to citizenship, and finally access to basic services, right to (timely) information, right to personal and other documentation (to enable travel, employment, access to services and assistance, amongst other rights.

In some countries, refugee and/or labour legislation may be outdated and no longer apply to the complexity of protracted displacement. Often, the government response relates to the failure to recognize the protracted nature of displacement. Approaches are usually short-term in nature, which discourage integration into host communities. Very few States have undertaken legislative or administrative reform to improve access to livelihoods and labour markets for refugees and IDPs. Indeed, the legislative machinery governing access to labour markets is often becoming more restrictive in so far as these populations are concerned^[4].

Often, refugees are not permitted to use land for agriculture purposes outside the camps. Water shortage is also a major issue in most of the refugee camps, which are often located in rural areas where natural resources are increasingly scarce due to the impacts of climate change. Competition for natural resources between host and displaced populations, can also cause or exacerbate tensions, eroding social cohesion. Most displaced persons do not have access to production inputs like vegetables seeds, different farm tools and initial capital, and they also often lack skills to undertake backyard agriculture or animal husbandry practices^[5]. FDPs households have less agricultural assets (land and livestock), often due to losses they have suffered during conflict and displacement, and produce a smaller range of crops; this results in high levels of food and nutrition insecurity, the adoption of negative coping strategies to deal with food shortages, and a persistent and high dependency on humanitarian assistance to meet basic needs^[6].

Agriculture in FDPs settlements, is also hampered because most families lack capital for investment, and lack of commitment from the government /host community to provide active support to access livelihoods^[7].

Limited long-term solutions for FDPs to access equitable and sustainable livelihoods:

Almost half of all FDPs in the world today are caught in protracted situations. In many cases, there are limited prospects for durable solutions, and refugees remain dependent on ongoing international

humanitarian assistance. Given that conflicts continue to grow in number, severity, and duration, it is likely that an increasing number of refugees will face similar circumstances in the future. Yet a traditional humanitarian assistance approach undermines their dignity and may not be financially sustainable in the long term.

A 'humanitarian assistance' approach still predominates in many protracted situations. This traditional approach presents two principal challenges. First, it undermines the dignity of refugees by not allowing them to utilize their full potential. Many FDPs have considerable capacities and skills that would permit them to become more economically self-reliant and benefit countries of asylum but are not supported to make these contributions under a traditional approach. Second, the cost of ongoing assistance may be financially unsustainable. Not only have the number of FDPs increased, but total humanitarian needs have risen dramatically, making it difficult for donor countries to provide adequate levels of assistance. The increases in humanitarian costs and "donor fatigue" are largely consequence to the increasing protracted nature of forced displacement.

The short term and often siloed nature of humanitarian funding streams does not allow for the investment in long term livelihood solutions; hence, the importance to promote the humanitarian, development peace nexus approach of joined up programming towards collective outcomes, namely, the achievement of durable solutions for FDPs.

FDPs are people with skills and abilities to operate in the value chains of the host countries (in production, processing, marketing...), and a strong motivation to build their own livelihoods. Many of them were farmers in the location of origin^[8]. FDPs possess knowledge and skills gained through the livelihood strategies in which they engaged in their countries of origin^[9].

There is growing consensus that access to livelihoods is key for a sustainable response to the presence of FDPs, enabling them to participate in and contribute effectively to the economies and societies of host countries and ensuring they can fulfil their basic food needs.

4. Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your working group?

Ensuring access to long-term sustainable livelihoods for the 71 million FDPs it is a key dimension for promoting equitable livelihoods in food systems and sustainable development globally.

Through strengthened policies and opportunities, as well as additional educational & sustainable technical opportunities (sustainable & climate-smart agriculture, food safety, food loss & waste, markets systems trainings, financial literacy, etc.), FDPs have the ability to combine their own existing knowledge with increased technical knowledge and contribute to not only feed themselves and their families, but become leaders in food and farm system, contributing to solutions to increase access to healthy foods and unique market systems, and conserve and bolster natural resources.

- Will save on money used for humanitarian response which can be redirected for use in building their livelihoods.
- The services provided by FDPs will benefit others and local economies in addressing the food security challenges.
- Their contribution in production in different sectors will result in increased access to sustainable livelihoods and economic growth.

5. How can this solution address that problem (theory of change)?

The underlying logic of this solution or gamechanger is that, achieving sustainable livelihoods for FDPs require both (a) inclusive legal frameworks in place, and (a) proactive support for building livelihoods.

The goal of this solution is to strengthen livelihoods of FDPs. while ensuring basic food and nutrition needs are met, encouraging an enabling environment for increased self-reliance.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to FDPs livelihoods. Interventions must be adapted to the local context. Factors such as whether refugees and IDPs, reside among the local population or stay in camps, whether they live in urban centers or rural areas, are facing a protracted crisis or temporary displacement, fundamentally change the way livelihood interventions should be designed^[10].

- A. Progressively and intentionally transitioning refugees from relying on humanitarian assistance to self-reliance is key to building resilience^[11]. Humanitarian assistance must link to longer term development work, and in conflict/post-conflict contexts, link to peace actors which invest in sustaining peace efforts, to avoid re-displacement.
 - a. Humanitarian assistance should prioritize the rebuilding of access to productive assets (including agricultural inputs and land); these efforts should complement social cohesion, gender and diversity, and protection interventions to ensure the inclusivity of access to assets and integrate refugees both economically and socially.
 - b. Initial assistance should help FDPs rebuild their livelihoods based on this existing know-how upon settlement or enable them to acquire new knowledge and skills to adapt to a different labour market.
 - c. This assistance should focus on FDPs households' safe and equitable access to information and productive assets, to enable them to adapt to new environmental factors (e.g. by adopting agricultural techniques suited to the ecological zone in terms of soil quality, rainfall patterns, etc.)^[12]
- B. Host countries should formulate national policies and action plans as appropriate, to ensure the protection of FDPs in the labour market, including the right to work and pursue sustainable livelihoods. FDPs should be included in the medium- to long-term policies of social and economic district development plans^[13]. These National policies and action plans should:
 - a. Foster opportunities for formal work and self-reliance for FDPs should at a minimum include measures to Consider removing or relaxing refugee encampment policies and other restrictions that hinder decent work opportunities, provide access to personal and other documentation to enable travel and employment (and minimize protection risks), promote discrimination or lead to irregular employment, or that limit access to arable land or the access to seeds and other production means.
 - b. Facilitate increased access to decent work opportunities for refugees and other forcibly displaced persons and host communities, including by fostering transitions of employment from the informal to formal economy. Creating an enabling environment for job creation and access to jobs for FDPs and host community members is key to enhance their income source generation.
- C. Inclusive and innovative formal transfer schemes should be set up to stimulate the development of markets by injecting cash into a system; they should be accompanied by training programs to strengthen agricultural and business skills.

- D. Vocational training programs should be developed with an eye to opportunities along the agricultural value chain, from primary production to processing^[14]. There is a need for skilled workers to operate and maintain production infrastructure (e.g. machinery), with a view to upscaling production processes.
- E. Policymakers should create an environment that enables FDPs households to exploit off-farm income generating opportunities^[15]. Private and public-sector stakeholders should collaborate to promote the social and economic integration of FDPs , and help leverage the economic potential created by the presence of refugees to support wider rural development. Economic integration should specify access to capital/finance e.g. ability to open bank account, access finance etc. Restrictions on these in host communities, prevent displaced populations from establishing more sustainable livelihoods, particularly about entrepreneurship.
- F. Specific actions should be responsive to the needs, priorities, and capacities of women and men, boys and girls, and youth^{[16][17]}. Integrated and holistic programs that promotes diversity and inclusion, as well as targeted program that address underlying inequalities – need to be designed and budgeted with the specific needs of target groups in mind. They should aim to develop business skills and technical capacities that allow them to participate in the development of value chains, and safe and timely access to information and services that support them^[18].
- G. There is a need for social protection system integration, that target persons with specific needs from the refugee population and extremely vulnerable individuals from the host community, as well as other marginalized segments of the population. Special attention should be given to women and girls, persons with disabilities, LGBTI, indigenous groups and other marginalized groups at heightened risk of abuse and exploitation.

6. Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?

- Impact potential at scale- There are 26 million refugees in the world—the highest ever seen; and more than 45 million IDPs.
- Actionability and sustainability- The potential to promote FDPs self-reliance livelihoods depends on collaboration with governments. While programs that enable access to labour markets for FDPs may entail costs in the short run for the host countries, there can be considerable long-term benefits, including ensuring social cohesion. Moreover, expenditure on inclusion policies and programs can be seen as a form of expansionary fiscal policy in advanced, emerging and more recently emerging economies and hence boost aggregate demand.

7. Existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least achieve the initial outcomes

Despite the challenges and constraints, some governments are reforming their refugee and/or labour legislation and have adopted positive strategies to promote refugee livelihoods through granting access to the labour market. In 2016 Turkey adopted the Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners under Temporary Protection, allowing Syrian refugees in possession of their temporary identity cards and residing in Turkey for six months, to apply for work permits.^[19] Uganda also offers a strong example of

refugee policy reform in alignment with the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). Uganda also provides a strong example of refugee policy reform in alignment with the CRRF.

Jordan is also engaged in labour market reform with respect to refugees' access to its labour markets and has developed a pioneering strategy, the Jordan Compact, 43 to provide work permits for up to 200,000 Syrian refugees in the coming years^[20]. The permits are both to help regularize the situation of refugees working in the informal economy, and to create new work opportunities for these refugees and Jordanians in special economic zones.

CARE International and other organizations are supporting agriculture-based livelihoods for Syria refugees in camps in Jordan by promoting hydroponic agriculture. In Georgia, IDPs have been supported by CARE^[21], FAO and other organizations with various livelihoods'-based activities, including vocational education and access to agricultural assets and access to small livestock. Other examples include: Community-based organizations facilitating access to work in Kenya^[22] and in Cameroon^[23]; refugees' self-help micro-enterprise support in Uganda^[24] while in Zambia, there have been several initiatives to support access to labour markets while promoting community cohesion through the formation of host and refugee networks and cooperatives.

UNHCR has developed a market-oriented, data-driven Global Livelihood Strategy and Minimum Criteria for Livelihoods Programming. Among other livelihood interventions, UNHCR promotes the Graduation Approach, intended to help the poorest of the poor, is a targeted, sequenced and time bound approach to livelihoods support including assessment, training, support for wage and self-employment, access to finance, and mentoring.

Resettled refugees in sustainable farming programs, across the United States, have proven, if provided with responsible farming and food systems opportunities, people can feed themselves, their families, and their communities; additionally, the ability to be reconnected to the land and community has been directly linked to improved physical and mental wellbeing. In Denver, through DeLaney Community Farm, which is dedicated to supporting resettled refugee farmers, refugees are tackling food insecurity, food access, as well as food loss and waste by providing the community with healthy, organic produce to restaurants, farm stands, farmers' markets, etc; they are doing this through agroecological methods that nurture the land and resources.

8. What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?

There is currently a high level of political support and a substantial corpus of work by UN System organizations to the notion of ensuring access to sustainable livelihoods by FDPs .

- ILO has a mandate to protect the interests of all workers “when employed in countries other than their own” including refugees.
- UNHCR helps refugee farmers to be economically empowered and food secure through sustainable, climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive agricultural livelihoods.
- WFP sets the framework for collaborative initiatives to enhance food security and self-reliance by synchronizing livelihoods interventions and food assistance in a sequenced and protection-sensitive strategy.

- FAO, conducts agriculture development and humanitarian assistance programmes for refugees and IDPs, including value chain development for livestock, forage, crops and vegetables, and emergency livelihood assistance through agricultural inputs^[25].

9. Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited?

The solution is especially well suited for FDPs who were working on agricultural production in their places of origin, and that are resettled in rural setups.

As mentioned above, there are examples of successful models to facilitate access to sustainable livelihoods for IDPs and refugees in many countries, but particularly in those with large refugees and/or IDP populations. Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees, with 3.6 million people. Colombia is second with 1.8 million, followed by Pakistan (1.4 million) and Uganda (1.4 million). There are 6.2 million IDPs in Syria, the largest IDP population in the World, and 5.6 million IDPs in Colombia.

^[1] This UNFSS 'gamechanger' or 'solution' was drafted by Juan Echanove (Senior Director for Food and Water Systems, CARE), with key contributions from Sally James (Forced Migration and Protracted Crisis Specialist, FAO), Melissa Joy (Deputy Director for Food Security and Resilience, CARE), Justus Liku (Senior Advisor for Emergency Food and Nutrition Security, CARE) and Heather DeLong (Technical Advisor for Agriculture and Market Systems, CARE).

^[2] ILO (2017)- *Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)*

^[3] UNHCR and WFP (no date) -*Enhancing Self-Reliance in Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Refugee Situations.*

^[4] ILO (2016)- *The access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market*

^[5] UNHCR (2015) - *Enhancing livelihood security among Mauritanian refugees*

^[6] De Vriese, Machtel (2006) -*Refugee livelihoods A review of the evidence. UNHCR*

^[7] Wtsadik, Mulugeta-*Enhancing Household Food Security in Refugee Camps in Ethiopia. Urban Agriculture Magazine, number 21 (2009)*

^[8] UNHCR (2013)- *UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth.*

^[9] UNHCR (2017) -*Guide to market-based livelihood interventions for refugees*

^[10] *Women's Refugee Commission- Building Livelihoods A Field Manual for Practitioners in Humanitarian Settings (2009)*

^[11] *Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (2017). Resilience and self-reliance from a protection and solutions perspective.*

^[12] OCHA (2020) *Enhancing resilient livelihoods and food security through sustainable agriculture for local communities and refugees from Syria in Lebanon and Jordan*

^[13] ILO (2017) *Guiding principles Access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market*

^[14] FAO (2018). *Agricultural skills training to address the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey*

^[15] CARE (2019) *UptakePreneur -Model for Uncovering and Accelerating Social Enterprises and Social Market Solutions in Fragile Settings.*

^[16] CARE (2016). *Syrian women and the struggle to survive five years of conflict*

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[25] FAO (2014) Resilient Livelihoods for Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security in Areas of Jordan Affected by the Syria Crisis

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