

Notes

UNHCR Quarterly online Consultations with NGOs

Date	9 November 2022
Session Title	UNHCR's Engagement with Development Banks
Speakers <i>(name, title)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Khadra Elmi, Senior Policy Officer, Global Compact on Refugees Coordination Team, UNHCR • Mr. Sajjad Malik, Director of the Division of Resilience and Solutions, UNHCR • Ms. Jade Ndiaye, Senior Operations Officer on Forced Displacement for the Fragility, Conflict and Violence Unit, World Bank • Ms. Lilian Achieng Otiego, Senior Development Officer, UNHCR Uganda
Moderator	Mr. Jerome Elie , Head of Forced Migration, ICVA
Participants	100+, NGOs and UNHCR staff
Executive summary <i>(max 10 sentences)</i>	
<p>Considering the upcoming 2022 High Commissioner's (HC) Dialogue on Protection Challenges, the objective of this Quarterly Consultation was to update NGOs on UNHCR's approaches to partnerships with development actors, with particular focus on multilateral development banks and how it supports strengthening development cooperation to advance protection, inclusion and solutions for refugees, internally displaced persons, and stateless persons. This was an opportunity for NGOs to better understand UNHCR's strategic partnership with the World Bank including the IDA Window for Host Communities and Refugees (WHR) and Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF), as well as the Joint Data Center (JDC). This consultation also reinforced the fact that forced displacement is both a humanitarian and development challenge, particularly in protracted situations, requiring a long-term development approach including policy reforms and the inclusion of the forcibly displaced in national systems, as highlighted through Uganda's case.</p>	
Major points arising from speakers	
<p>UNHCR (Ms. Khadra Elmi)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The upcoming High Commissioner's (HC) Dialogue on Protection Challenges will take place from 7-8 December 2022 at the Centre International de Conférence Genève. • The HC Dialogue will be centered on the theme of development cooperation; to advance protection, inclusion, and solution for forcibly displaced and stateless persons as well as host communities. It builds on the UNHCR's Strategic Directions (2022-26) which emphasizes the importance of development and development action early on. • The three crosscutting protection themes the HC Dialogue will focus on are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Early action: Enhancing development cooperation to anticipate, respond to, and foster longer term approaches to displacement. ○ Inclusion: Strengthening the role of development cooperation in facilitating inclusion in national systems. ○ Solutions: Unlocking solutions for the displaced through enhanced development cooperation. • The outcomes of the HC Dialogue will have a strong linkage with the next Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in 2023. • In preparation for the HC Dialogue, UNHCR has been convening a series of regional roundtables which are meant to provide case studies. They have been led and implemented by regional offices, and have involved multiple stakeholders including development actors, bilateral donors, NGOs and refugees. They explore the themes for this year's event in the context of the unique displacement and stateless situations in each region. The summaries of these roundtables will be available online, as well as highlighted in the opening plenary at the HC Dialogue. 	

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- To keep it informal each session at the HC Dialogue will be facilitated by two-three co-moderators, as well as have a set of questions open to the audience who can intervene and facilitate a conversation.
- The modalities for engagement include the opening and closing plenaries being livestreamed on the HC Dialogue page and UN WebTV, an NGO joint statement in the opening plenary and a Digital Resources Hub where publications and good practices will be shared ahead of the HC Dialogue.

UNHCR (Mr. Sajjad Malik)

- Forced displacement cannot be tackled by humanitarian interventions alone but requires a longer-term approach. Education statistics reflect this with enrollment decreasing from primary (68%), secondary (37%) to tertiary (6%) education.
- The forcibly displaced have specific and higher vulnerabilities including legal vulnerabilities. These risks are amplified when there are shocks as demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic with lockdowns, problems around isolation areas, hospitalizations, prevention and vaccination.
- The pandemic also highlighted the lack of socio-economic data which is an important factor development actors use for their programming. The World Bank-UNHCR's Joint Data Center (JDC) is producing this much-needed data in collaboration with other partners.
- UNHCR's conversations with development partners and financial institutions are not just focused on the support that goes to countries but also on policy reforms centered on the inclusion of refugees and their access to national services.
- Inclusion requires resources, and a policy and legal framework with explicit rights given to refugees as seen in the EU countries with Ukrainian displacement. Furthermore, inclusion requires engaging host governments in policy dialogue which should lead to concrete changes in policy tradeoffs.
- However, most refugee hosting countries like Pakistan and Kenya (low-income countries) have been hosting refugees for decades and cannot be asked to include refugees in their development programming without being supported with development assistance.
- The motivation of development partners is becoming increasingly important, especially when looking at areas of poverty and fragility.
- UNHCR works with a multitude of partners including OECD, UNDP, ILO and several bilateral partners. UNHCR's work with OECD is centered on development policy and data analysis through tracking financial resources going to host countries. The first data set from the tracking will be produced in 2023, in time for the GRF. UNHCR is also conducting research projects with OECD which will highlight the inclusion of refugees, IDPs and host communities.
- UNHCR will also conduct refugee financing surveys with DAC members to see how much development funding has been provided from 2021-2022.

World Bank

- The World Bank's partnership with UNHCR is strategic and based on complementarity of mandates with each institution having its own comparative advantage.
- The partnership is operational at both a country and global level. At the country level there are joint eligibility missions and assessments for the IDA Window for Host Communities and Refugees (WHR) and Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF). UNHCR conducts a refugee protection assessment that is shared with the Bank and updates it every six months.
- Through the IDA Window the Bank has financed 87 refugee and host community operations:

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- **WHR:** \$3.12 billion from the Window for 61 projects in 17 IDA countries (least developed countries including Bangladesh, Uganda, Burkina Faso and Liberia).
- **GCF:** \$725 million concessional grants for 26 projects in 5 IBRD countries (middle-income countries including Lebanon, Jordan, Moldova, Colombia and Ecuador).
- GCF helps catalyze additional financing and these grants have helped unlock over \$5 billion in concessional financing.
- Under the next cycle of financing, \$2.4 billion is committed under the IDA Window and eligibility requirements consist of 1) The country has an adequate refugee protection framework. 2) There is a minimum number of refugees hosted with that threshold being 0.1% of the population. 3) There is a government plan or strategy for the medium-long term integration of refugees in government systems.
- At the global level, the partnership focuses on data and evidence through the Bank's participation in the HC Dialogue and 2023 GRF as well as tools such as the Refugee Policy Review Framework (RPRF). This tool is in all countries accessing WHR and is the first attempt to formally consolidate information on refugee policies. NGOs were also part of the consultation process. The goal going forward is to use information gathered from the RPRF to support refugee policies.
- The JDC was established in 2019 to enable stakeholders to make timely and evidence informed decisions by improving the quality and amount of accessible data on forced displacement. Currently, there are around 55 activities across 30 countries with many focusing on producing data and analysis such as high frequency phone surveys trying to understand the impact of COVID-19 on poverty.
- The JDC is also working on the International Recommendations on Statelessness statistics which will establish a framework to better enhance the quality and comparability of national stateless data.
- Lessons learned from financing and engagement on forced displacement demonstrate that:
 - Concessional and grant financing in addition to regular country allocation has been critical to motivating governments to address the development needs of refugees and host communities.
 - Policy dialogue has been critical to maintaining political will and advancing policy reforms.
 - The introduction of a development perspective in the forced displacement agenda continues to be highly relevant and welcomed by the Bank's partners.
- The Bank's focus going forward is to continue to provide a development lens to forced displacement, further operationalize global analytical work, leverage partnerships with UNHCR and beyond, help advance the forced displacement agenda in strategic directions and strengthen internal capacity.

UNHCR Uganda

- There are over 1.5 million refugees in Uganda with about 92% in rural areas and 8% in urban areas.
- Despite the mixed refugee situation in Uganda, there are continuous emergencies in a protracted situation due to the geopolitics of the region.
- Uganda's collaboration with development partners has greatly evolved over the past five years since Uganda became eligible for the WHR. This engagement with the World Bank has been a big piece with critical key outcomes and has also led to greater engagement with other development partners, as well as greater resources.
- This engagement has also enabled the inclusion and transition of some of the facilities that have traditionally been developed by humanitarian partners.

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- UNHCR collaborates with both the World Bank and government entities through joint knowledge exchange forums, joint consultations, identification of strategic investments, co-financing, data sharing and analytical work (e.g., WASH deep dive studies and financial modelling).
- Given the protracted nature of displacement in Uganda, there is a need for the inclusion of refugees in national systems which the government has also recognized. In certain sectors such as water, health and education, the systems are not sustainable, there are capacity constraints, lack of integration of systems, inconsistencies in integrating refugees particularly in the local area and insufficient funds.
- This has led to a discussion between the government, humanitarian and development partners, and the government's leadership has been essential to lead this transition with the inclusion of refugees in national development and district level planning processes, in development funding and in national statistics. However, humanitarian assistance remains essential in refugee protection/assistance.
- Inclusion is ongoing with multiple grants attached to concessional loans, utilities now providing services in the refugee response, governments coding and taking over some of the facilities and the provision of innovative financing.
- In the water sector, between 2019-2025 there will be a handover of this facility to government systems through an integration phase. This has involved a radical shift by the ministry itself taking over and signing a MoU with UNHCR. However, some challenges have been the capacity of rural facilities (which is being addressed with the support of development partners) and delays in implementation.
- The comparative advantage of inclusion in Uganda has been enhanced opportunities for social cohesion of refugees and host communities, more resources, opportunities for innovation with private sector, access to long-term development funding and opportunities for national systems strengthening.

Major points arising from discussions

- **UNHCR's Partnerships:** UNHCR's partnership with the World Bank has been critical in shifting the discussion on forced displacement with more recognition that it is a humanitarian and development challenge, which is a conversation UNHCR is undergoing with other development partners. UNHCR's partnership with IMF is also evolving with a focus on how macro-critical aspects of displacement issues can be looked at and the first area being examined around that is the Venezuela situation.
- **Refugee Participation:** Upcoming World Development Report highlights the need for more inclusion of refugee voices. Currently, the World Bank has processes where refugees' voices are included in the way projects are designed, for example through stakeholder consultations with all potential beneficiaries of the project before it is approved. In Uganda's water sector transition, communities including refugees were consulted through a 'willingness and ability to pay' assessment which highlighted their different needs and helped inform the design of solutions.
- **Allocation to WHR from the Overall IDA Portfolio:** Current IDA 20 cycle which runs from 2022-2025 has a total replenishment of \$93 billion and of this around 2.5% is for WHR. It is relatively small and reflects that the World Bank is not engaged in all countries hosting the forcibly displaced, some countries do not meet the eligibility requirements and for others it is not a priority. The WHR is primarily focused on refugees and host communities and the Bank's approach to internal displacement is mainly about mainstreaming this agenda in their existing operations.
- **Successful Engagement of Development Actors from Emergency Onset:** In Moldova, its eligibility for GCF, and development actors and bilateral donors stepping in early on to help manage displacement is an example. Most multi-lateral development banks have fragility and conflict strategies, and UNHCR has gone in to introduce forced displacement in those strategies as a policy discussion, which will lead

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to more predictable response and financing. With the Ukrainian crisis, the World Bank was able to quickly disperse funds to governments through tools such as development policy operations. In Uganda, the Bank funds a project which has a disaster crises response mechanism component, allowing for quick disbursement to the government and districts to respond to influxes.

- **Climate Change and Resilience:** UNHCR, with strong collaboration with development partners, is working with KFW to ensure the launch of the Refugee Environment Protection Fund. Project Floor is an innovative financing project that looks at energy needs of refugee hosting areas and communities and going greener for example the solarization of UNHCR's boreholes (roughly 40% have been solarized). UNHCR is also looking at work around adaptation and risk reduction. In the World Bank's conversations with UNHCR in different regions, the need to do more to address climate displacement has been highlighted and increasingly that will be a focus going forward.

Background documents/reports/guidance/websites

- **HC Dialogue:** <https://www.unhcr.org/high-commissioners-dialogue-on-protection-challenges-2022.html>
- **Digital Resources Hub:** <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/digital-resources-hub-development-cooperation>
- **World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center on Forced Displacement:** <https://www.jointdatacenter.org/>