

Brussels VII Conference Side Event – Summary Note

Integrating humanitarian and development approaches in the context of forced displacement: 3RP's role in enhancing national and local capacities in host countries

Hosted by the Regional Refugee Resilience Plan (3RP) represented by its co-leads, UNHCR and UNDP, and the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO); and supported by UNFPA

Date: 8 June 2023; Location: Virtual

Background

The 3RP, co-led by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the GFFO co-organized an online side event for the 7th Brussels Conference 'Supporting the future of Syria and the Region', with support of the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA), focused on the role of the 3RP in integrating humanitarian and development approaches through localization and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus. The event was co-chaired by Ayman Gharaibeh, Director for the Middle East and North Africa Bureau, UNHCR; Abdallah Al Dardari, Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States, UNDP; and Susanne Fries-Gaier, Director for Humanitarian Assistance, GFFO. Moderated by Rula Amin, UNHCR Senior Communications Adviser/ Spokesperson for Middle East and Africa, the panel featured distinguished speakers from donors, UN agencies and civil society organizations (CSOs). With 170 participants, the side event revitalized the momentum for the [3RP coordination architecture](#) as a global pioneer in bridging humanitarian and resilience-based development responses, by coordinating humanitarian assistance for Syrian refugees while addressing the resilience and development needs of impacted host and refugee communities and institutions in Türkiye, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Egypt.

Opening Remarks

Mr. Ayman Gharaibeh
Director for the Middle East and North Africa Bureau:

- The 3RP was launched in December 2014 as a response to the ongoing crisis in Syria. As an integrated humanitarian and development plan, the 3RP recognized the long-term nature of the crisis. It replaced the previous purely humanitarian response plan, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive strategy. Over the years, the plan has received substantive support from donors, offering a clear and shared approach to address the Syrian refugee crisis and allowing for measuring clear targets and objectives.
- The 3RP is recognized as a successful example in integrating humanitarian and development responses and has informed the basis of the Global Compact on Refugees. It has also shaped discussions at the first Global Refugee Forum in 2019, and with its continued learning and experience, is contributing to the next one in December 2023.

- The 3RP has introduced innovative approaches in refugee response, which have been replicated in other crises for instance in Ukraine. During this side event and the Brussels VII Conference, the efforts and best practices in integrating humanitarian and development approaches in forced displacement contexts will be highlighted by 3RP partners and supporters. Challenges include the widening gap between funding requirements and actual funds received, especially in a time of multiple equally large-scale emerging crises, such as in Ukraine and Sudan.

Dr. Abdallah Al-Dardari

Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States, UNDP:

- Considering the protracted refugee displacement and socio-economic pressures host countries are under, 3RP partners must increasingly consider the interplay of push and pull factors in the region. For instance, linking economic growth and job creation in Lebanon and Jordan to the situation of refugees is critical. Rising tensions in Lebanon regarding refugees are linked to its economic crisis. More is needed to develop models that illustrate the linkages between what employment and growth in 3RP countries mean for Syrian refugees, and the pull and push factors for them in their hosting countries.
- Twelve years into the crisis, 3RP partners need to assess how to move forward with declining resources and increase efficiency in responses. Going forward, it is critical to redouble the focus on resilience-based development, including on job creation and livelihood activities.
- UNDP will work closely together with UNHCR and partners over the coming period to find solutions to forced displacement, including of how to graduate populations from dependency on humanitarian assistance into being more self-sufficient and resilient, with the support of donor governments.

Ms. Susanne Fries-Gaier

Director for Humanitarian Assistance, GFFO:

- Germany acknowledges the challenges faced by host countries and appreciates their hospitality, as Germany also hosts many refugees. While most refugees want to return home one day, the conditions for large-scale returns are not yet in place, and Syria remains a protection crisis with various risks, including gender-based violence (GBV) and child protection risks. Consequently, reliable protection guarantees are required.
- As needs increase while funding does not keep pace, prioritization becomes crucial. Ms. Fries-Gaier outlined three actions Germany is taking to provide support in response to the Syria crisis. Firstly, it has allocated over EUR 200 million in humanitarian aid for UNHCR's regional response to the Syria crisis in 2022, with an additional EUR 137 million committed already in 2023, hoping to increase the amount further. Germany provides flexible funding and encourages other donors to follow suit. Secondly, the increasingly challenging economic situation in host communities, notably in Lebanon, must be considered. In Lebanon, Germany adopts the Nexus approach, providing humanitarian and development assistance that focuses besides life-saving assistance on community capacity-building, self-reliance, basic services, livelihoods, and local economic development, with the aim of reducing humanitarian needs. The German "Partnership for Prospects" is highlighted as an exemplary initiative for creating job opportunities and enhancing self-reliance for refugees and host community members. Lastly, the importance of focusing on durable solutions, refugee self-reliance, and increased support in host countries during the 2023 Global Refugee Forum is highlighted, with appreciation for Jordan's role as a regional co-convenor.

Panel Discussion

Ms. Meryem Aslan

Country Director at Oxfam Türkiye, and founding member of the Refugee Council of Türkiye (TMK) (current position: Global Human Mobility Program Lead at Oxfam):

- A good practice in localization and advancement of the HDP Nexus in Türkiye is the TMK, which, in collaboration with refugee-led organizations and international agencies implemented multiple successful practices. Established in 2016, the TMK serves as a platform for bringing together refugee and host community organizations. It facilitates policy development and engagement with local government institutions, national governments, and other international bodies. Notably, programs based on the principles of participation, solidarity and equal partnership have been especially successful.
- Another good practice involves building holistic programs that encompass both host and refugee communities in order to address common problems and find solutions, such as supporting women entrepreneurs' and women cooperatives' digitalization and access to markets. The programs focus on addressing the immediate needs, while at the same time building tools for long-term engagement. Finally, networking opportunities between host community and refugee-led organizations have also been valuable.
- TMK's efforts have contributed to the launch of the National Reference Group (NRG) for advancing localization of the aid agenda under the framework of the Grand Bargain 2.0. The NRG now includes the membership of the TMK; Localization Advocacy Group; 3RP leads (UNHCR and UNDP), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund; European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations; Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration; German Agency for International Cooperation; and Concern Worldwide. The NRG has facilitated the representation of refugee-led organizations in the UN Humanitarian Country Team and involvement and coordination of refugee-led and local organizations in the response to the February earthquakes.

Ms. Alessandra Viezzer

Head of Cooperation at the European Union (EU) Delegation to Lebanon:

- The EU has made extensive contributions to the 3RP over the years. Firstly, the EU's financial contribution to 3RP has been significant, but the EU also made important policy contributions. EU actors have been exploring ways of how to enhance engagement through the HDP Nexus, which is reflected in the development of joint humanitarian-development frameworks that ensure complementarity between humanitarian assistance and development efforts. In this regard, EU actors are working together to identify urgent humanitarian needs while also establishing a clear policy roadmap to build resilience and find solutions for displaced Syrians. Secondly, the EU has linked policy and financial assistance through the Compacts in Jordan and Lebanon, and commitments made at the London Conference are monitored, with targeted support provided to help governments achieve their commitments.
- Recently, the EU conducted an evaluation of the EU Madad Fund since 2015. The evaluation found, among others, that funding has increased access to quality services and local capacities, and refugees were reported to be more likely to utilize these services.
- Lebanon is currently facing multiple crises, including a severe economic crisis since 2019. As Lebanon has the highest per capita number of refugees globally, the deteriorating economic situation has impacted refugee support and has led to increased anti-refugee rhetoric. Moving forward, donor coordination, streamlined budget lines, and clear prioritization are needed. Lastly, an improved accountability framework for results achieved with funding is necessary for effective advocacy with the Government of Lebanon.

Ms. Elke Mayrhofer

Humanitarian Program Advisor, UNFPA Arab States Regional Office:

- In humanitarian crises, including in the recent earthquake response, programs often overlook the specific needs of women and girls, neglecting their skills, interests, and potential contributions. In the context of the 3RP response, UNFPA focuses on two crucial areas: preventing and responding to GBV and ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health services.
- Twelve years into the Syria crisis, UNFPA observes that GBV has become normalized, greatly affecting the lives of women and girls in Syria. The Nexus approach, resilience and recovery can only be achieved by addressing GBV. UNFPA collaborates with a series of women's rights and women-led organizations not just as recipients of training but also as those with the knowledge and expertise to provide training to others. UNFPA implements several best practices, such as working with grassroots organizations across the country, considering language specificities to ensure clear communication, and tackling language barriers in interagency coordination meetings that often exclude non-English-speaking staff. UNFPA also aims to empower local women-led organizations in coordination settings. For example, in 2023, for the first time in Lebanon, a local women-led organization has been elected to co-chair the sub-national GBV working group in the North of the country.
- Regarding sexual and reproductive health, UNFPA is supporting the Jordan Women's Union in Jordan, which has started a reproductive health clinic that offers services to survivors of violence, alongside integrated care in protection, health, and mental health, etc., accessible to refugees and host community members.

Ms. Samar Muhareb

Chief Executive Officer of Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development,
and General Coordinator of the Jordanian National Forum:

- Local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and NGO networks in Jordan appreciate that 12 local NGOs have been invited to participate in this year's Brussels Conference, following extensive advocacy efforts to have equal representation of national and international agencies.
- Local NGOs are increasingly concerned about the decrease in funding and the potential impact it may have on local organizations and persons of concern. In addition, NGOs are concerned about how the funding continues to be channeled. Reports have illustrated that only four per cent of total funding was directly accessed by local actors. As a result, local partners and women-led organizations often lack the capacities to be at the forefront of the response. It is important to rethink the role of civil society actors and their possibilities to participate in decision-making, and better coordination and more partnerships are needed that focus on equitable distribution.
- The Localization Taskforce, co-chaired by UN Women, and the Jordan INGO Forum, was highlighted as a best practice. A baseline report has been created to assess the current state of localization in Jordan, and it is set to be released in June. This report will serve as a roadmap to improve and support localization.

Ms. Eman Ismail

MENA Regional Representative, International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA):

- ICVA represents a diverse NGO membership network and places localization at the core of its strategy. The 3RP evaluation and research carried out on the Nexus in 2022 revealed that in order to enhance the integration of components across the Nexus, there needs to be a greater emphasis on the peace and stabilization component of the Nexus, and different actors from the private sector, humanitarian, development, and International Financial Institutions need to be engaged.
- UN agencies need to continue to lead on the development of collective outcomes and on a strategy for operationalizing the integration of all Nexus components, with a clear monitoring mechanism. The monitoring mechanism needs to be transparent and engage local actors to become the agents of change and the drivers of integrated programmes.
- Last March, 120 NGOs from Syria and neighboring countries and diaspora came together, and one of the main topics was the Nexus and localization. Participants asked donors and international actors to demonstrate their commitment to local leadership and the increased access of local actors in key policy decision-making platforms on a global, regional and country level. A key way forward is for local actors to collectively have dialogues with local authorities, member states and donors, especially considering the shrinking protection space in certain countries, as well as the fast-changing environments and political contexts in 3RP countries.

Closing Remarks

Mr. Ayman Gharaibeh

on behalf of the Co-organizers:

- Recalled the importance of working on graduating vulnerable populations from dependency, as mentioned by Dr. Dardari, and of moving from humanitarian to development responses, with a strong focus on job creation. Syrians should be equipped with the necessary tools and enabling environment in order for them to be able to support themselves without humanitarian assistance, accessing the market, economy and without any local tensions or discrimination.
- UNHCR together with UNDP will be focusing on how to create legal pathways to enable greater self-reliance. There has not been a single year where localization and nationalization were not on the agenda of the 3RP. Moving 12 years into the crisis, certain sectors should no longer be covered by international actors, but by national NGOs.
- There is a need to redefine the relations between NGOs, their governments, and the public. There needs to be a greater awareness created in the countries of the crucial role of national NGOs, especially in addressing non-traditional issues, such as the refugee crises.