

Global Refugee Forum

FAO Statement: High-level dialogue on Jobs and Livelihoods

More than 80 percent of refugee crises last more than 10 years and 40 percent of refugees globally live in already vulnerable rural areas, where both host and refugee communities rely on agriculture as their main source of food and income. In this context, FAO, UNHCR and their partners acknowledge the need for new and innovative partnerships in the search for durable solutions to forced displacement.

These specific challenges, particularly the erosion of resilience and destruction of livelihoods in situations of protracted displacement, require concerted collaborative responses on the part of all relevant humanitarian and development agencies and host governments. Furthermore, participatory planning and management are essential to ensuring the voices of refugee, returnees and host communities are heard, and that the protection needs, particularly those of women and children, are met.

In protracted displacement settings, FAO supports refugee and host communities across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. FAO prioritises addressing the immediate food security needs of both host and refugee communities, while setting them on the path to self-reliance through the strengthening of livelihoods and creation of jobs in the agricultural sector.

Utilising this approach, FAO is currently working with over 900 000 people from host and refugee communities in more than 20 countries. For example, through

our joint pledge with UNHCR in Turkey, we are investing in agricultural skills development through vocational training for Syrian refugees to find jobs and meet the local demand for agricultural sector.

FAO recently signed global Memoranda of Understanding with both UNHCR and IOM. These partnerships are currently being scaled up and operationalized globally. For example, FAO is in the process of forming a Joint Unit with UNHCR in Nairobi to develop and support agricultural livelihood opportunities for refugees and host communities.

In Uganda and Kenya, FAO will also partner with the local private sector to create job opportunities and strengthen agricultural livelihoods through the integration of refugee populations into agricultural value chains for ground nuts and passion fruits. This activity is the subject of a pledge under the Jobs and livelihoods theme.

As co-sponsor of the Jobs and Livelihoods Sub-group of the Global Refugee Forum, FAO firmly believes that together with our partners, we can further our common goal of addressing the immediate and longer term food security and livelihood needs of refugee and host populations, and work together with host governments to capitalise on opportunities to assist refugee populations to move towards self-reliance, in a way which not only facilitates their socio-economic inclusion, but also contributes to the economic prosperity of refugee hosting countries.