

# GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM

## MONTHLY NEWS BRIEF

This monthly news brief provides a summary of recent publications on topics relating to the key areas of focus for the first Global Refugee Forum. The content is for informational purposes only and does not represent the views of UNHCR. The full article is hyperlinked to the title.

### EDUCATION

Making “Generation Educated” a Reality, *Project Syndicate*, 30 May 2019



*Pupils at Al Shuhada School in Souran, western Syria, enjoy the visit of UN Refugee Chief Filippo Grandi. © UNHCR/Andrew McConnell, 06 March 2019*

Gordon Brown, UN Special Envoy for Global Education, writes that continuous declines in international education aid are depriving half of all young people in the developing world – some 800 million children – of the education they will need to secure meaningful employment in the future.

Though the international community has committed to achieving universal primary and secondary education by 2030, at least 200 million children will be out of school each year between now and then; another 400 million will not advance past the primary level.

At the global level, the share of total aid dedicated to education has fallen steadily from its 2007 peak of 11% to its current level of 7%, even though it is

common knowledge that education is one of the most effective ways to achieve the SDGs for health, employment, and quality of life.

The international community has chalked up some relative successes, such as providing classroom seats for almost 60% of Syrian refugees. But the fact remains that a significant share of the world’s 30 million displaced children – 12 million of whom are refugees – will go through their school-age years without ever having set foot in a school. Across the world’s 35 conflict zones, 75 million children are currently being denied both education and the prospect of future employment.

He argues that obviously, international education aid will have to increase. Yet with a \$40 billion annual funding gap for primary and secondary education alone, it is also clear that we need a new approach. In addition to mobilizing private sources of finance, we must make the already available aid (this year’s \$13 billion) go much further than it has in the past, by incentivizing recipient governments to increase their own investments in education.

He turns to private ESG (environmental, social, and governance) and SDG funds as important vehicles to meet the growing demand for investments based on social impact.

Chief among the new financing instruments is the Education Commission’s International Finance Facility for Education (IFFEd), which will be

inaugurated at the UN General Assembly this September and has plans to raise an additional \$10 billion for education funding.

The IFFEd is designed to end the stop-go nature of education aid flows. Instead of relying on a funding tap that is periodically turned off, it will ensure continuous and consistent education financing for children from age five to 16. With \$2 billion in funds

pledged by a coalition of committed governments, the World Bank and various regional development banks will be able to generate four times more financing through capital markets. And by creating a \$2 billion buy-down facility to reduce the costs of interest payments, they can provide an additional \$10 billion in education aid – nearly doubling the current level.

## ADDITIONAL READINGS

- [The Educator: In Lebanon, a local push brings the classroom to out-of-school refugees](#), *The New Humanitarian*, 1 May 2019

# JOBS AND LIVELIHOODS

## Doing Business in Dadaab – Market Systems Analysis for Local Economic Development in Dadaab, Kenya, Report by ILO and UNHCR, 30 April 2019



*A group of women tend to a crop of tomatoes in a greenhouse at Dadaab refugee camp. ©UNHCR/Tobin Jones, 15 November 2017*

Kenya has been hosting refugees and asylum-seekers for nearly three decades. The Dadaab refugee complex is home to 44 per cent of the 471 000 refugees and asylum-seekers (situation at end 2018). There is optimism about the potential of the CRRF/GCR process to contribute to a vibrant and economically strong “Dadaab city” which would benefit both refugees and host communities, linking Dadaab town and camp with Garissa county, Nairobi and other parts of the country.

In parallel to these developments, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNHCR developed the Approach to Inclusive Market Systems (AIMS) to facilitate the development of market-based

interventions for the economic inclusion of refugees and other forcibly displaced.

A joint UNHCR-ILO report focusing on Dadaab provides a market system analysis for interventions aimed at enabling the self-reliance of refugees and host communities, and thereby contributing to a broader local economic development agenda.

Two complementary pieces form the basis of this report:

- A socio-economic assessment and context analysis that seeks to lay out the challenges and opportunities that Dadaab offers
- A rapid value chain analysis that aims to identify sub-sectors and value chains that have the potential for inclusive growth.

Stakeholders recognize the importance of investing in local economic development and livelihood interventions in refugee hosting settings, which are often the most marginalized lands in Kenya where livelihoods are scarce for refugees and hosts alike. However, so far, partnerships on local economic development for refugee and their hosts in Kenya have primarily focused on Kakuma and Kalobeyei. In Dadaab, stakeholders report mostly a vulnerability-based approach to livelihood interventions. The starting point of

this assessment is therefore to find sustainable market-based approaches to local economic development for refugees and their hosts.

The report finds that contrary to popular narratives surrounding Dadaab, there exist strong opportunities for building on already existing growth, development, and fledgling value chains in the area. There are effective environmental conditions that have already begun to be exploited in Dadaab, and a generally positive relationship between host and refugee community members ensures that cooperation and sustainable partnerships within these communities is not only possible but already present.

The humanitarian community needs to be aware that market systems development works on multi-

year time horizons and not on one-year cycles, as is the norm with humanitarian interventions.

Therefore, planning and intervention horizons need to look toward how the value chains can be amplified in the medium-term (3-5) years rather than expecting short-term results (within a year).

A market systems approach can work in Dadaab assuming this longer-term scale, a multi-dimensional understanding of financial, social and environmental sustainability, coordination between all stakeholders and an initial financial or technical support from development agencies. Development actors will have to play a supporting role (financially, technically, and as coordinators/guarantors) on the short to-medium term.

## ADDITIONAL READINGS

- [Unique study compares how Denmark, Norway and Sweden integrate refugees](#), *The Nordic Labour Journal*, 29 April 2019
- [In a Kenyan refugee camp, business ideas but little access to credit](#), *The New Humanitarian*, 1 May 2019
- [Refugee Afghan entrepreneurs building successful businesses](#), *The Japan Times* 13 May 2019
- [Six Ways your Company can Help Refugees](#), *LinkedIn*, 15 May 2019
- [Banking refugees in Uganda](#), *Euromoney*, 15 May 2019

## ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Measuring electricity access amidst active conflict: Lessons from Yemen, Sustainable Energy for All, *World Bank Blog*, 7 May 2019

The blog, written by an Energy Specialist in the World Bank's Energy & Extractives Global Practice, explains how, in the midst of conflict, today more than half of all Yemenis use solar power as their main source of lighting.

The author explains that access to electricity has always been an issue for many households in Yemen. Little more than two thirds of the poor had access to electricity when it was last formally measured in 2014, the lowest such rate in the Middle East.

But things deteriorated rapidly when the conflict started. In March 2015, the country's largest power plant in Marib, responsible for powering most of the country, went offline and represented a turning point for the country's electricity sector. The high price of power from private generators and frequent fuel shortages meant that most Yemenis were thrown into the dark.

What followed the collapse of the public utility was a surprising and unlikely success story amid otherwise troubling circumstances. "Ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit helped the private sector

step in to fill the void left by the absence of public utilities. Several firms started importing cheap solar photovoltaic systems. The number of solar importers in the country multiplied, while many small electronic retailers started selling solar home systems, encouraged by surging demand. Solar panels started dotting more and more rooftops in Sana'a.

The bottom line - solar power has emerged as a beacon of light during Yemen's darkest times and is a prime example of the Bank's 'building back better' approach as the electricity sector will have to integrate distributed energy as part of any post-conflict reconstruction. Yemen's experience can be an inspiration for war-torn countries like Syria and also for those fleeing such conditions and taking refuge in other countries.

## ADDITIONAL READINGS

- [UN calls upon member states to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels](#), *UN News*, 9 May 2019
- [New UK aid secretary pledges £1B more for climate](#), *Devex*, 30 May 2019

# SOLUTIONS

## New German resettlement program enlists members of civil society as mentors to help refugees integrate better, *InfoMigrants*, 7 May 2019

A new German resettlement program titled NesT ("Neustart im Team", or "a team for starting over") wants to provide a new home for an initial 500 refugees who are in particular need for protection: victims of torture or rape, unaccompanied minors, pregnant women or frail people. The crux: teams of "mentors" — individuals, associations and other members of civil society — will guide and support them in every aspect of life.

At a launch event in Berlin on Monday, different stakeholders presented the program. The way it stands out — at least in Germany — is that the government and civil society will work hand in hand from the get-go: Groups of at least five mentors are supposed to help one individual or one family with their arrival and support them financially and offering advice to help navigate their new situation.

"NesT sends a strong signal of solidarity put into practice," Annette Widmann-Mauz, Federal Government Commissioner for Migration,

Refugees and Integration, said at the event. "Mentors help with running errands, apartment-hunting and finding apprenticeship or jobs, thereby facilitating the successful societal integration."

Beneficiaries of the resettlement program receive resettlement-refugee status and a residence permit for at least three years, which can be renewed. They are also entitled to welfare and educational opportunities including language courses.

"In principle, the first refugees could arrive as soon as late summer," UNHCR Germany representative Dominik Bartsch told *InfoMigrants*, adding that it depends on finding enough mentor groups and training them in time. "Right now, we have all the basic parameters for the program in place. I'm really encouraged by the positive sentiment around it, by the spirit of collaboration between different entities of government, civil society."

NesT is a complementary program to the EU resettlement scheme, whose goal is to bring at least 50,000 people in need of protection to Europe in 2018/2019. Germany has pledged to take in 10,200 of those 50,000.

The centerpiece of NesT is community sponsorship by mentors from civil society. The groups of five must commit to finding 'their' refugee a suitable place to live and pay the rent for two years. As the refugee's main contact persons, they can also foster social participation. The hope is that this 'guided' approach will lead to an improved and faster integration.

A recent study by the European Commission titled "feasibility and added value of sponsorship

schemes as a possible pathway to safe channels for admission to the EU, including resettlement" found that the number of different sponsorship schemes has "proliferated across the EU."

To help mentors do their job, a new "civic contact point" will provide information on the project and trainings for mentors. Germany's Federal Office for Migration and Refugees is responsible for the operational implementation of resettlement procedures and, therefore, NesT. Other partners include the Federal Ministry of the Interior, both the Catholic and Protestant churches, the German Red Cross and the Bertelsmann Foundation and UNHCR.

## Private sponsorship: Refugee resettlement another way, *InfoMigrants*, 15 May 2019

The article focuses on private sponsorship programs around the world. For a long time, Canada was the only country with a private sponsorship program, which started in the late 1970s and has seen the resettlement of 300,000 privately-sponsored refugees, including at least 13,000 Syrians. Since the start of the Canadian program, other countries, including Australia, New Zealand and Argentina, have launched programs, as well as several European countries.

Private sponsorship programs began in Europe in response to the Syrian and Iraqi refugee crises and have been growing ever since. Between 2013 and 2018, more than 30,000 people entered the EU under private sponsorship – over three quarters of them were admitted by Germany. Other countries included the UK, Italy, France, and Belgium, which have ongoing programs, as well as Portugal, Ireland, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic and Poland, where they were discontinued. Earlier this month, Germany launched a new pilot program "NesT" which will allow groups of at least five private citizens to sponsor a refugee, paying their rent and offering social support to help them to become part of their new community.

The status and rights granted to people resettled under the scheme vary from country to country. In

Canada, sponsored beneficiaries are recognized refugees and when they arrive in the resettlement country, they are granted permanent residency. Some countries in Europe grant a protection status to the beneficiary which means they have the same rights as anyone with international protection, while in others, beneficiaries have a status equal to that of asylum seekers.

Once the refugee arrives in the resettlement country, the sponsor bears some of the responsibility for them – how much, depends on the country. At a minimum, the sponsor must provide accommodation, but in Canada, for example, they also cover utilities, food, transport, furniture, clothing and school registration, as well as the cost of enrolling in language training or employment counseling.

The sponsor is responsible for the refugee for between three months and five years. Most schemes require one to two years. In Canada, the sponsor is responsible for up to 12 months or until the refugee becomes self-sufficient, whichever comes first. When sponsorships break down, the responsibility for the well-being of the refugee generally passes onto the state.

## Achieving durable solutions for returnee children: What do we know?, *Save the Children*, 27 May 2019



*Refugee returnees from Ban Don Yang Temporary Shelter in Tak Province, Thailand cross the border at the Mae Sot Friendship Bridge into south-east Myanmar. © UNHCR/Rungtiva Karphon, 22 February 2019*

When refugee and internally displaced children return home, they rarely return to the life they used to know. Instead, they must regularly reintegrate into societies that are not sufficiently resourced to support them, or that even infringes on their human rights. As returns reach record highs, two fundamental questions arise:

- how do we guarantee minimum standards for safe and dignified returns, and equally important
- how do we measure the extent to which children have successfully reintegrated into their communities?

There is very little data available on the subject, partly because the existing tools used to answer these questions are ‘child blind.’ Consequently, to address this gap, Save the Children’s Migration and Displacement Initiative built upon existing return and reintegration frameworks and incorporated what they believe are particularly relevant child-

specific indicators. They then piloted this indicator framework in four major return contexts: Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Syria.

This study is the first to use these child sensitive durable solutions indicators and generate a preliminary set of data, and provides the first comparative analysis of return conditions using this data. With the ‘baseline’ analysis provided in this report, stakeholders can make more informed programming decisions for returnees and commission more in-depth and longitudinal research into this vital area of study.

According to the authors, this report demonstrates the clear value of viewing durable solutions frameworks through a child-focused lens. Initial data show us that, across the four return contexts, core elements of a safe and dignified return are typically missing. There is a widespread lack of focus on child mental health, and returnee children appear to suffer comparative disadvantages in access to legal safety – including access to legal identity, a functional judiciary, and freedom of movement.

These findings underscore the need for better data and evidence around children’s return and reintegration environments to accurately understand both the challenges, and potential future opportunities, which face children, unaccompanied or within families, returning to their countries of origin. At the same time, the study provides a call to action for all migration mandated actors and child protection agencies to work together in establishing minimum standards for rights-based returns and reintegration cognisant of the risks and potential vulnerabilities that surround children, and in particular unaccompanied minors.

### ADDITIONAL READINGS

- [Preparing for the unknown: designing effective predeparture orientation for resettling refugees](#), *Migration Policy Institute Europe*, May 2019
- [New Refugee settlement location announced](#), *Scoop*, 6 May 2019
- [Private sector can change refugees situation](#), *Africa News*, 13 May 2019
- [Japan to Accept More Refugees under Resettlement Program](#), *Jiji Press*, 22 May 2019
- [Refugees and internally displaced persons in cities – the “hidden” side of forced displacement](#), *World Bank blog on sustainable cities*, 22 May 2019

# ARRANGEMENTS FOR RESPONSIBILITY-SHARING

Why the World Needs National Development Banks, *Project Syndicate*, 15 May 2019



*Refugee and host community technicians have been trained by Engineers Without Borders, colleagues working within UNHCR, to ensure solar energy sources are sustainable. © UNHCR/Diana Diaz, 27 June 2018.*

José Antonio Ocampo, former Minister of Finance of Colombia and United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, and Stephany Griffith-Jones, Financial Markets Director at the Initiative for Policy Dialogue at Columbia University, write that national and multilateral development banks play a crucial role in supporting economic growth. Countries that already have national development banks (NDBs) should aim to expand their role, while others should consider establishing them. According to the authors, development banks help to counteract the pro-cyclical nature of the private financial system, which lends too much in booms and rations credit during crises. The private sector also often fails to provide enough financing for small and innovative companies and infrastructure projects. Nor does it support enough of the investments in innovative activities, credit to small producers, and environmental projects that are urgently needed to make economies more dynamic, inclusive, and sustainable.

Their research identifies five crucial functions of NDBs in the development process: providing

counter-cyclical finance; encouraging innovation and structural transformation; enhancing financial inclusion; supporting infrastructure financing; and promoting environmental sustainability, in particular by combating climate change. NDBs were strongly counter-cyclical in the wake of the global financial crisis. According to World Bank data, NDBs increased their lending from \$1.16 trillion in 2007 to \$1.58 trillion in 2009. This 36% increase was far greater than the growth in private bank credit in the same countries over that period.

NDBs have been innovative, notably in supporting new activities. China's CDB, Germany's KfW, and Brazil's BNDES have financed technological advances, for example, while others, including Chile's CORFO, have supported entrepreneurship. Such banks have also introduced guarantees and established new equity (including venture capital) and debt funds. Furthermore, they have developed new programs to increase financial inclusion, such as "correspondent" stores and post offices that provide financial services from one or more banks.

In addition, NDBs have been prominent supporters of important new sectors, such as renewables and energy efficiency. For example, KfW was initially the sole lender to private companies investing in solar energy in Germany; private banks got on board later. In China, CDB helped to design policies to encourage investment in renewable energy – particularly solar – and provided significant initial funding. As a result, Germany and especially China have been major global promoters of solar power, helping to make it increasingly competitive relative to fossil-fuel energy.

## To bolster conflict prevention, US House passes Global Fragility Act, *Devex*, 21 May 2019



*Samiullah Haidari, an Afghan refugee, makes his way home after finishing his shift at the Blue Bottle Coffee Shop in San Francisco. ©UNHCR/Nick Otto, 21 July 2016*

The U.S. House of Representatives on Monday passed the Global Fragility Act, a bipartisan bill that mandates the government develop and implement a 10-year strategy to address the root causes of violence and fragility and streamline U.S. stabilization efforts.

The bill, co-sponsored by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Eliot Engel and Ranking Member Michael McCaul, passed by a voice vote.

Engel, a Democrat from New York, and McCaul, a Republican from Texas, have championed the bill as a strategy to unite the Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, and Department of Defense behind a whole-of-government approach to violence and conflict prevention.

The House version of the bill requires the U.S. government to launch a Global Fragility Initiative that would select five to six pilot countries or regions to employ a 10-year strategy aimed at preventing conflict in fragile states.

A coalition of civil society organizations led by the Alliance for Peacebuilding and Mercy Corps supports the legislation and says the strategy is a much-needed change in the U.S. policy approach to conflict, fragile states, and stabilization.

The Senate version of the bill also includes a third fund: A pooled multilateral fund recommended by a fragility task force out of the United States Institute for Peace that would galvanize money from international partners and encourage other countries to align behind the new conflict and prevention strategy outlined in the bill.

## Forced Displacement in Africa Not Just a Tale of Human Tragedy, *In Depth News*, 26 May 2019



*Uganda. Influx of South Sudanese refugees in northern Uganda. ©UNHCR/Frederic Noy, 12 January 2014*

The estimated 24 million and more Africans who have been forced from their homes in recent years is placing a growing burden on the continent's economy, environment and communities hosting those displaced.

This was the backdrop to a May 21-23 event held at UN headquarters as part of the Africa Dialogue Series (ADS) focused on finding durable solution for displaced person in Africa. It brought together a wide range of actors with a stake in finding ways to deal with the issue, including representatives of national governments, the African Union, civil society, the private sector and the UN.



Speaking at the opening session, María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the UN General Assembly, commended the contribution African countries are making to strengthen multilateralism. Espinosa said that she resolved to make Africa the focus of her activities at the outset of her General Assembly presidency, adding that she believes Africa's contribution to the United Nations is under-appreciated, and that the region's voice remains under-represented in the international system.

Espinosa stressed that African leadership "time and time again, has led the way, be it through expanding the definition of 'refugee' in 1969, or through the Kampala Convention, the first legally-binding framework to address internal displacement, which was adopted in 2009."

In his opening remarks, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said that by building strong coalitions of stakeholders, the series was an important element in the effort to boost international cooperation. With regard to the 2019 ADS theme, the UN chief paid tribute to the solidarity and hospitality of African countries, many of whom continue to set the global standard:

"Countries like Uganda, Djibouti, Rwanda and Ethiopia are taking innovative action to recognise and promote the rights of refugees. And African countries played a key role in securing the approval of the Global Compact on Refugees last year," he said.

Guterres urged delegates to "consider the issue of displacement in the broadest context, in your search for sustainable and durable solutions," taking into consideration international issues such as the global emergency of climate change, financing for development and universal health coverage.

Deputy Secretary-General and former Nigerian Government minister, Amina Mohammed, told delegates: "You can count on the United Nations to be a strong partner for Africa ... ensuring the involvement of youth as agents of change in all conflict resolution and political processes."

She praised the recent Joint UN-African Union (AU) Frameworks on Peace and Security and Sustainable Development, noting they would "contribute to strengthening our shared efforts to promote inclusive sustainable development and tackle many of the drivers of conflict and forced displacement." Mohammed called for all to "pledge today to keep working together to transform the narrative and transform the future for Africa, its young people and our world."

Bience Gawanas, the UN's Special Adviser on Africa, whose office was instrumental in setting up the Africa Dialogue Series, echoed the UN chief's recognition of African solidarity, in personal testimony shared during her opening remarks: "I, myself, am a product of African solidarity. Having left home in my teens during the war of liberation against apartheid in Namibia, I spent years in refugee camps in Angola and Zambia and benefited immensely from the generosity of the Angolan and Zambian people. I want to take this opportunity to personally thank you for your big heart."

Gawanas said that the ADS is just one of several activities being organised throughout 2019 to raise global awareness of the challenge of forced displacement: "Africa is home to over 24 million forcibly displaced persons, representing one-third of the world's total. Forced displacement is not only a tale of human tragedy, it also poses a real threat to achieving peace, prosperity and development."

This, explained Gawanas, is because the vast amount of resources spent on forced displacement, which is caused mainly by conflict and natural disasters, divert vital funds away from critical areas with potentially greater impact for sustainable development in Africa; and because it contributes to a significant loss of human potential, with highly skilled and educated people unable to use their skills in meaningful ways: "These are brainpowers that could be harnessed in service of Africa to address some of the intractable problems facing the continent. This is a loss to society."

The Africa Dialogue Series was launched in 2018 to promote topics of importance to the continent, such as peace, humanitarian assistance and human rights.

**ADDITIONAL READINGS**

- [Ethiopia: Creating opportunities for refugees and their hosts](#), *World Bank Video*, 16 May 2019
- [From Afghanistan to Zambia, Supporting the World's Poorest Countries](#), *The World Bank*, 30 May 2019

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