

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

[Education for the future and integration, Report from Government of Germany, 18 June 2019](#)



DAFI students attend a workshop in Berlin held by Kiron, an NGO providing open access to education for refugees through digital solutions. © UNHCR/Gordon Welters, 17 June 2019

The German Government reported that around the world, more than 25 million people are living as refugees or in a refugee-like situation. Just one percent of them have access to higher education, while 36 percent of all young people worldwide go on to study.

The Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) has therefore set itself the task of helping young refugees to gain access to higher education. The Federal Foreign Office provides 90 percent of DAFI's funding. These resources

have been used to award more than 15,000 scholarships to young refugees since 1992. In 2018 alone, around 6500 students in 51 countries around the world benefited from such a scholarship.

Fostering independence and future prospects for refugees is also a key aspect of the UN's Global Compact on Refugees, which was affirmed by a large majority of the international community in 2018. The first Global Refugee Forum on its implementation is due to take place in Geneva in December 2019. The focus will also be on the valuable contribution that refugees can make to their host communities.

What can be achieved by enabling refugees to enter into higher education is impressively underscored by the lives of many DAFI scholarship holders. As a major donor and host country, Germany wants to play an active role in the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees in order to promote a fairer division of international responsibility in the refugee context and to make use of refugees' potential.

Opinion: The Global Refugee Form and the case for education, Opinion piece by Joseph Nhan-O'Reilly of Save the Children, *Devex*, 20 June 2019

Joseph Nhan-O'Reilly, head of education policy and advocacy at Save the Children, writes that the Global Compact on Refugees provides a blueprint for governments, international organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure that host communities get the support they need and that refugees can lead productive lives. The next step is for concrete pledges at the first-ever Global Refugee Forum — hosted by UNHCR this December in Geneva — to support the compact's implementation. (...)

The excellent work of host countries, together with growing support for education in crises, means there is a real opportunity to ensure every refugee child has the chance to go to school. The compact promises to minimize the time refugee children spend out of education, with a target of no longer than three months after arrival in the country in which they have sought protection. (...)

Refugees know that education provides the building blocks needed to recover, to create new lives in their host countries, and to gain vital knowledge and skills to take back to their country of origin, should they have the opportunity to return. But the majority of refugee children face the double jeopardy of losing both their homes and their right to go to school.

Eighty-five percent of the world's refugees live in developing countries, which face big challenges in delivering education to their own populations. Unsurprisingly when refugees do have access to school, the education they receive is often low quality. It doesn't have to be this way. The Global Refugee Forum provides a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to set a plan to close the refugee education gap, delivering quality education to the world's 9 million refugee children and improving the quality of education of their host community peers in the process. (...)

In order to reduce the risk of existing funding being re-pledged, we must also establish the baseline of available financing and support, ensuring that new pledges are genuinely additional. A global plan, based on need, would act as an advocacy tool, crowding in government, philanthropic, corporate, and civil society support. It would assist in developing and coordinating a global response that can be adequately monitored and hold stakeholders accountable for delivering. (...)

Education Cannot Wait's replenishment in September is the perfect staging post, where donors will have the opportunity to support ECW's innovative multi-year education plans, the majority of which will be in refugee hosting countries. These plans are the perfect instrument for agreeing what's needed, providing catalytic funding, and then aligning financing.

In 2017, in response to the promise in the New York Declaration of a new way of responding to refugee movements, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda came together at the First Regional Ministerial Conference on Refugee Education in IGAD Member States. They adopted the Djibouti Declaration, which commits them all — some of the poorest countries in the world — to provide refugee children with access to their national education systems without discrimination. The IGAD countries have been meeting regularly since, and I've seen first-hand their impressive efforts to develop national plans to deliver on their commitment. The generosity that these and other refugee hosting countries have demonstrated ... must now be matched by practical support from the international community.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

- [Credit Where Credit Is Due, *Inside Higher Ed*, 29 May 2019](#)
- [DAFI 2018: refugees student voices – Annual Report, *UNHCR and DAFI*, 14 June 2019](#)
- [The Push to Expand Refugee Access to Higher Education, *Al-Fanar Media*, 20 June 2019](#)
- Please also see the [Conference Report](#) on the GRF website, on the Resources page

JOBS AND LIVELIHOODS

Closing the digital divide is ‘urgent’ global issue, UN task force warns, Devex, 11 June 2019



South Sudanese refugee Richard Maliamungu fled South Sudan in February 2017. Here in Rhino Camp Settlement, Richard hopes to open a business selling phones to fellow refugees now that internet access arrived in this remote part of northern Uganda. © UNHCR/Michele Sibiloni, 11 September 2018

A multistakeholder approach — and an unknown amount of funding — is needed to help ensure that every adult has affordable access to digital networks by 2030, according to a new U.N. expert panel on digital cooperation.

As the world becomes more digitized, the risks of leaving the most marginalized people offline increases, according to the U.N. Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, which briefed the U.N. General Assembly on the findings of its first report this week in New York.

The panel, co-chaired by Jack Ma and Melinda Gates, released “[The Age of Interdependence](#),”

5 ways refugee integration creates opportunities for business and society, *International Chamber of Commerce*, 20 June 2019

On World Refugee Day, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) highlighted the private sector contributions that are helping to integrate refugees into workforces worldwide, including a new ICC partnership with UNHCR to

on Monday, nine months after U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres first convened the group of private sector, civil society, and government experts. Guterres plans to create a roadmap for the role of the U.N. in the digital space, he told the General Assembly on Monday, citing the gaps in digital access as an “urgent, global issue.”

While the proportion of people online in the developing world grew from 14.5% in 2008 to 45.3% in 2018, the progress has recently slowed and for many people, internet access remains poor and expensive, the report finds. That’s despite an “active community” of donors and institutions working on universal digital technology, like the Alliance for Affordable Internet, according to the panel.

Living life offline can impact everything from access to digital identification and government services, to e-commerce and mobile money.

Investing in equal digital access will cost a significant, but unknown amount of money, Vint Cerf, vice president and chief internet evangelist at Google, and Nikolai Astrup, minister of digitalization of Norway, said. But there is a demand for the private sector to invest in lower-cost mobile phones, for example, simply based on needs. “There is enormous incentive for companies to engage,” Cerf said.

enhance business engagement in the international response to the global refugee crisis.

Refugees and internally displaced persons suffer from overbearing challenges on a daily basis, including language barriers, lack of resources,

unfamiliar legal systems, and limited access to capital. Despite dire conditions, there is however a potential for refugees to gain employment and positively contribute to the global economy. According to a collaborative report published by the Centre for Policy Development and Open Political Economy Network, it is estimated that the boost to the economy from launching 1,000 new refugee businesses each year in Australia could yield up to US\$1 billion in annual economic and fiscal gains within 10 years.

The ICC writes that the private sector has an enormous capacity to empower refugees as full participants in the global economy. As economic actors, policy influencers, employers and innovators, business has the tools and capacity to contribute to win-win solutions that support the integration of refugees into the workforce and bring value to society as a whole.

Here are 5 ways refugee integration creates opportunities for business and society:

Entrepreneurship. Supporting refugee-owned businesses can offer many opportunities for

companies, e.g. as avenues for product distribution to new places and customers.

Employment. Refugee entrepreneurs can become employers in the long run and contribute to the further integration of refugees. A recent study, conducted by the American-based Brookings Institution, found more than 10,000 Syrian owned businesses in Turkey, each employing 9.4 people on average.

Diversity. Hiring refugees diversifies the workforce. McKinsey & Company found that ethnic and cultural diversity correlate with profitability.

Skills. Evidence shows that refugees bring unique skills and experiences that companies may lack, which support entrepreneurial success.

Attractivity. Companies that support refugees are more attractive to potential employees. A majority of millennials (55.4%) believe host countries should “try to include refugees in the national workforce, according to the World Economic Forum”.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

- [Some good news from Afghanistan](#), *World Bank blog*, 12 June 2019

ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Hot water scarcity triggers the refugee crisis – and what tech can do to solve it, *World Economic Forum blog*, 4 June 2019

This piece, written by Maxim Pasik, the Executive Chairman of Watergen, gives examples of the many instances in which water was the beating heart of community displacement, and how recently developed solutions can prevent disastrous outcomes in the future.

With the changing climate leading to increased drought, flooding and water pollution, there is a higher risk of conflicts related to water use, poverty and migration. Countries facing increased water

insecurity need a true transformation based on water-related governance.

In August 2018, flooding and devastation hit the southern Indian state of Kerala. Clean drinking water was urgently needed for thousands of families. Water-to-air tech company Watergen provided its GEN-350 machine, which plugs into the electricity supply and makes use of air conditioning/dehumidifier technology to pull pure drinking water from the atmosphere. The GEN-350 generates up to 900 litres of clean water per

day, and was specially designed to be used in schools, hospitals, commercial and residential buildings.

Shortly after the floods hit Kerala, the machine supplied water to hundreds of thousands of people. Watergen has also successfully launched its large-scale water generator, known as the AWG (for “atmospheric water generator”), which was especially designed to meet the needs of villages, towns and large residential and office structures. It can generate up to 5,000 litres of clean water per day, and doesn’t require any special infrastructure other than an electricity supply. Watergen’s innovative solution filled the void created by the floods and the lack of infrastructure, and provided a stable and clean source of clean drinking water directly to the people on the ground.

In this vacuum, trail-blazing technologies can create a source of fresh, clean drinking water for vulnerable citizens while significantly improving the quality of life and providing an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty.

Cost-effective wastewater treatment solutions are another example of new technologies’ importance in helping populations facing water shortages. These solutions allow for the effective and smart management of water, which is critical as water needs rise around the world.

These examples show the critical importance of technological innovation in meeting the global demand for drinking water. This global demand is rising with the world’s booming population, just as the traditional methods of providing clean drinking water are becoming more scarce. Water insecurity is a primary cause of displacement. New technologies not only provide clean drinking water for immediate use, but also create pathways to stable work and livelihoods. With new devices being produced every day, technologies like those explored above are creating jobs and sources of income that never existed before – but will form a vital component of the future economy.

SOLUTIONS

Brazil welcomes first Central American refugees under regional resettlement programme, *UNHCR*, 4 June 2019



Brazil. São Paulo empowers refugees with shelter, school and work. © UNHCR/Gabo Morales, 19 November 2019

A group of 11 refugees from El Salvador and Honduras landed in Brazil on Thursday (30 May)

making the first movement under the country’s State-Funded Resettlement Program for people fleeing persecution and life-threatening situations in the North of Central America.

With the arrival of these refugees - on a flight from Costa Rica - Brazil is providing much needed support to the Protection Transfer Agreement (PTA).

Since the launch of the PTA programme, more than 383 refugees from the North of Central America have been resettled to the U.S., Australia, Canada and Uruguay.

The initiative is part of a broader collective action plan, the MIRPS, adopted by Mexico and five countries in Central America, as a regional

application of the Global Compact on Refugees that calls for a greater sharing of responsibility for refugee situations, an emphasis on refugee self-reliance and support to host communities, alongside stronger partnerships.

Violence and insecurity in the North of Central America have driven nearly 600,000 people from their homes in recent years, of whom 350,000 have sought asylum worldwide.

UK has updated the way it measures integration – now it's everybody's job to make refugees welcome, *The Conversation*, 5 June 2019



The Alaya family were brought to the UK back in the February 2017 as part of the SVPRS (Syrian Vulnerable Peoples Resettlement Scheme). © UNHCR/Katie Barlow, 26 August 2019

With the number of displaced people in the world at record levels and a growing global focus on the integration of refugees into new communities, the UK government has decided to update a set of indicators it uses to measure how well refugees are settling into their lives in Britain.

The Home Office's new Indicators of Integration are intended to be a tool to help national and local governments, NGOs and other providers plan interventions and to promote and measure integration. It's currently unclear how well refugees are integrating in different parts of the country, and the new indicators are designed to address this gap.

The new set of integration indicators are underpinned by a number of principles which represent a shift in thinking since the last indicators were drawn up in 2004. No longer is integration mainly the responsibility of refugees. Instead, it is now seen in the UK as being dependent on a wide range of factors, such as social, political and economic conditions, which vary according to a person's needs and the geographical context. Integration is also now considered the responsibility of everyone

including governments at all levels, the communities receiving refugees, and the newcomers themselves.

The 2019 indicators outline a set of 14 areas that can help support the development of integration policy and interventions. Housing, work, education, health and social care and leisure represent arenas in which integration takes place, but that can also be measured as integration "outcomes".

The indicators detail specific measures that can be adopted to reflect progress, or lack of progress, on integration – such as the extent to which refugees feel safe and secure in the area where they live. Crucially, these don't just measure what's happening to the refugees, but also consider the impact on local people. For example, they include the percentages of local people from incoming and receiving communities who report mixing with people from other backgrounds and report having friends from different backgrounds. Other measures included a focus on refugees' experiences and reporting of discrimination and harassment.

A key addition to the original indicators is an emphasis on how government immigration policy can play a part in integration. Refugees and asylum seekers often live in a sense of insecurity caused by only having short-term leave to remain, and so the indicators stress the importance of giving them routes to citizenship and permanent leave to remain, as well as for their families to join them in the UK.

The new indicators have the potential to reshape policy and practice around refugee integration towards an environment that helps create contexts that help support integration. If the new indicators are as influential as their predecessors, progress around refugee integration would see

local and national investment in more initiatives that encourage local populations to be more welcoming to refugees and asylum seekers. In the

longer term, the hope is that refugees will report greater levels of belonging and improved health.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

- [UNHCR welcomes meaningful new UK commitment to refugee resettlement](#), *UNHCR*, 17 June 2019

PROTECTION CAPACITY

Razzaz calls UNHCR visit 'clear' recognition of Jordan's humanitarian role, *MENA AFN*, 22 June 2019

Prime Minister Omar Razzaz of Jordan met with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Filippo Grandi on Thursday 20 June to discuss Jordan's efforts to host refugees.

The envoy's visit, which coincides with World Refugee Day, is a 'clear' recognition of the efforts the Kingdom, its leadership and people, has exerted to host refugees, not only in the last few years, but for more than 70 years, Razzaz said.

Razzaz stressed that Jordan always performs its humanitarian duty in receiving refugees of all nationalities, who are searching for security and stability, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

He also urged the international community to continue supporting the Kingdom so it can provide for Syrian refugees, referring to strains on

Jordan's education and healthcare systems, economy and infrastructure.

The refugee crisis is not a short-term issue and has a negative effect on host countries and communities, which requires the solidarity of all to face it, the premier said.

Razzaz also expressed the Kingdom's appreciation for the commission's role in raising international awareness on the refugee crisis and its effect on Jordan.

During the meeting, Grandi affirmed the date of the visit as a message to the world that Jordan plays a positive role in hosting refugees.

The high commissioner also highlighted the first global refugee forum, scheduled for this coming December in Geneva, and invited Jordan to attend the forum to discuss the challenges of hosting those affected by conflict.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR BURDEN- AND RESPONSIBILITY-SHARING

Putting prevention into action: Community approaches for conflict prevention, *World Bank blog*, 10 June 2019

The authors, Anna Wellenstein and Franck Bousquet, write that issues of fragility, conflict and violence (FCV) are increasingly central to today's global development challenges. By 2030, about half of the world's poor people will be living in

fragile and conflict-affected settings, with the impact of FCV particularly profound on the most vulnerable. To address this challenge, the World Bank Group has committed to an increased focus on conflict prevention, and has begun

consultations on their upcoming World Bank Group FCV strategy.

The authors report on a new effort across their two teams: the Fragility, Conflict & Violence Group and the Global Practice on Social, Urban, Rural and Resilience are working to operationalize the findings of the 2018 UN-World Bank Pathways for Peace report and integrate conflict prevention in community-driven development (CDD) approaches, one of their most frequently used models for engaging in FCV settings.

CDD operations allow communities a say in how development financing is used to better their lives. The approach of enabling local decision-making and putting resources in the direct control of community groups has led to the efficient delivery of basic services and, when sustained over time, measurable gains in access to vital services and poverty reduction, particularly among the poorest populations and communities. In fragile settings, CDD approaches offer governments a proven way to deliver services and local infrastructure at scale, including in remote, inaccessible or insecure areas.

Because of their ability to reach scale quickly and cost effectively, to operate even in remote or

insecure environments, and to provide meaningful channels for making communities partners in development, CDD approaches have increasingly become the modality of choice in FCV environments. As of June 2018, the World Bank's active CDD portfolio of projects in FCV situations totaled \$3.3 billion in committed funding, with an additional \$1.1 billion provided by borrowers and other donors. This CDD portfolio covers 44 projects in 29 countries, with almost half the financing going to countries in Africa.

Given the extensive support in FCV environments, the CDD community has worked hard to operationalize the findings from the Pathways report and support the approach to pivoting to prevention. With support from the State and Peacebuilding Fund (SPF), the Bank Group's largest, global multi-donor trust fund established to finance innovative approaches to state and peace-building in FCV-affected regions, the World Bank Group has launched a global innovation and learning program, which provides support to practitioners piloting innovative solutions for conflict prevention, shares knowledge and builds a network of practitioners developing promising approaches and common monitoring and evaluation strategies.

Faith actors call for global solidarity, *UNHCR*, 20 June 2019

Around 25 faith-based organizations signed a statement reiterating their commitment to upholding the dignity of refugees through offering effective protection, access to social services and fulfilment of human rights and enhancing peacebuilding efforts. "The Global Compact on Refugees specifically recognizes the contribution and long-standing experience of faith-based actors in supporting refugees and will highlight these contributions at the Global Refugee Forum.

Whether supporting refugees, including children, on their journey to safety including in reception and admission, meeting protection or service delivery needs and supporting communities to find solutions such as private sponsorship programmes, faith-based actors are committed to working alongside states and the rest of the global humanitarian community to deliver the promise of the Global Compact on Refugees."

Africa in the news: Prosper Africa, World Refugee Day, and DRC updates, *Brookings Institute*, 22 June 2019

Brookings Institute writes that Thursday, June 20 was World Refugee Day, a day declared by the United Nations to be used to "celebrate and honor the vast contributions that refugees make." The African Union also designated 2019 as the "Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced

Persons in Africa: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement."

In acknowledgement of World Refugee Day, on Wednesday, the United Nations announced that the number of people displaced by conflict (including refugees, internally displaced people, and asylum seekers) worldwide is at its highest

level ever, at over 70 million. According to the World Bank, the number of refugees and asylum seekers is more than the entire population of Australia. Two African countries, South Sudan and Somalia, are among the top five sources of refugees in the world. African countries, especially Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia, also host the most refugees in the world.

Just last year, the U.N. affirmed the Global Compact on Refugees, which includes a “program of action” with concrete measures to address the challenges facing refugees, internally displaced people, and asylum seekers, including arrangements to share burdens and responsibilities through a Global Refugee Forum to take place every four years, national and regional arrangements for specific situations, and tools for funding, partnerships, and gathering and sharing data.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

- [EU budget 2020: Commission focuses its proposal on jobs, growth and security](#), *European Commission*, 5 June 2019
- [Biometrics: The new frontier of EU migration policy in Niger](#), *The New Humanitarian*, 6 June 2019
- [Aid groups need a major shake-up to meet the challenges of a fractures world](#), *The Guardian*, 8 June 2019
- [Some good news from Afghanistan](#), *World Bank blog*, 12 June 2019
- [World Bank Financing to Support Refugees and Their Hosts: Recommendations for IDA19](#), *Center for Global development*, 17 June 2019
- [Opinion: How to make the Global Refugee Forum a success](#), opinion piece by Nazanin Ash of IRC, *Devex*, 19 June 2019
- [World Refugee Day 2019: Building a stronger international responses to the challenge of forced displacement](#), *Kristalina Georgieva in Voices*, 20 June 2019

**PLEASE CONTACT THE GLOBAL REFUGEE COORDINATION TEAM
IF YOU WISH TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE MONTHLY NEWS BRIEF**

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