

High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges: Development Cooperation Concept Note

Introduction

This note sets out the concept for the 2022 High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges. The Dialogue provides a forum for an informal, open, and lively multi-stakeholder discussion on emerging issues linked to displacement and statelessness. In 2022, it will focus on the theme of development cooperation to advance protection, inclusion, and solutions for displaced and stateless persons and will be held in Geneva on 7 and 8 December. Further information will be made available on UNHCR's [website](#).

With the number of forcibly displaced persons now reaching 100 million worldwide, a broad spectrum of actors is recognising that forced displacement and statelessness are not only humanitarian concerns but also longer-term development issues. Key initiatives underscore a global consensus that humanitarian, development, political, and peace actors all have a role to play in promoting and achieving solutions for refugees, stateless persons, internally displaced persons, and returnees. This includes the United Nations Secretary-General's report on "Our common agenda", 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and its commitment to leave no one behind, Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), #IBelong Statelessness campaign, High-Level Panel report on internal displacement and accompanying Secretary-General's Action Agenda on internal displacement, and the OECD DAC Recommendation on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

Many actors have accelerated efforts to improve development cooperation in displacement and stateless contexts. This has translated into positive tangible gains with significantly more donor and host governments placing displacement firmly on their development agendas. The rise in official development assistance to host countries with developing economies has resulted in innovative legal, administrative, and trade policies and country financing mechanisms. New development cooperation partnerships have supported comprehensive responses and policy measures to mitigate poverty, realise solutions, and strengthen institutional responses.

Despite the promising steps made, longer-term solutions still need to be found as many persons remain living in limbo in protracted displacement situations for extended periods of time – an average of ten years – due to the lack of opportunities to return home or access other durable solutions. In 2019, fragile States hosted over half of the world's refugees. These States are often the origin, transit, or hosting countries for refugees and face internal displacement situations. They can face challenges in including forcibly displaced and stateless persons in broader development strategies and ensuring the requisite enabling policy environment to facilitate inclusion. This, combined with limited return and integration opportunities, can further exacerbate hardship, trigger onward movements, and contribute to displacement situations becoming protracted.

UNHCR has continued to advance its engagement in humanitarian-development cooperation. An [evaluation](#) of UNHCR's work highlights the organization's growing role in acting as a catalyst for development engagement in the context of forced displacement, and its ability to leverage development cooperation to improve protection and policy environments, link services for refugees with national systems, and expand support for self-reliance within refugee and host communities. UNHCR's [Strategic Directions 2022 – 2026](#) also emphasize the importance of accelerating efforts to mainstream development engagement from the outset of responses to displacement. The 2021 [GCR](#)

[indicator report](#) demonstrated the need for increased development cooperation and official development assistance to support the GCR objectives and advance burden and responsibility sharing.

The United Nations Secretary-General's [High-level panel on internal displacement](#) stressed the need for a development-oriented approach to internal displacement within government policies and responses and strengthening public systems and services.

Building upon these commitments, practices, and learnings, UNHCR will need to further adapt its work and broaden and deepen its partnerships in this area. Development actors can bring their influence and financial and technical support to foster protection, inclusion, solutions to displacement and statelessness over the longer term. Involving regional organizations, governments, sub-national authorities, and displaced, stateless, and host communities in these efforts can further humanitarian-peace-development cooperation in these contexts.

Expected outcomes

The 2022 High Commissioner's Dialogue will contribute to strengthening development cooperation to advance protection, inclusion, and solutions in forced displacement and stateless contexts through:

- Identifying **challenges, opportunities, and recommendations**
- Launching **concrete multi-stakeholder initiatives** to address specific challenges in a sustainable, coherent, and coordinated manner
- Informing **pledge cultivation and mobilization** related to development cooperation for the next Global Refugee Forum in 2023

A **summary** of key discussion takeaways related to good practices, lessons learned, multi-stakeholder engagement, recommendations, and initiatives will be compiled in an online outcome document following the Dialogue.

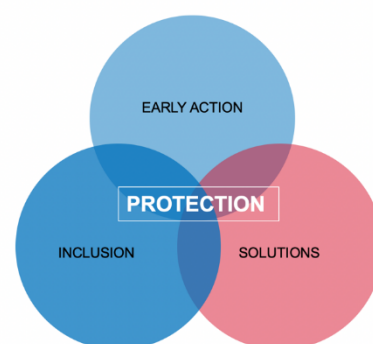
Framing themes

The Dialogue will focus on development cooperation across the cycle of displacement, from early action, to inclusion, to solutions, with protection central and cross-cutting throughout.

Early action: Enhancing development cooperation to anticipate, respond, and foster longer-term approaches to emergencies

In the face of the 42 new emergencies declared in 30 countries since early 2021, as well as the growing numbers of refugees living in protracted situations, UNHCR has committed in its [Strategic Directions 2022 – 2026](#) to bolstering preparedness and response capacities and transitioning from shorter-term to longer-term approaches at the outset of an emergency.

Development cooperation at the outset of an emergency can complement humanitarian responses, support efforts to strengthen the protection environment, and facilitate greater burden and responsibility sharing. By integrating longer-term risk reduction, self-reliance, and resilience strategies into national and local policies, plans, programmes, and budgets, development approaches can encourage resilience, inclusion, facilitate solutions, and support access to protection from the start. Such approaches improve the ability and capacity of national and local systems to anticipate and



respond to shocks and crises and ensure that displaced and stateless persons receive effective protection and support.

The dialogue will explore how to facilitate early development cooperation through preventive and responsive policy and response approaches, integrate development and humanitarian assistance around common priorities, track development financing comprehensively and systematically to inform planning, and facilitate development financing at the onset of an emergency.

Inclusion: The role of development cooperation in facilitating inclusion in national systems

Inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless persons in national development planning and systems for education, health, work, social protection, and other services is key to rebuilding resilience and strengthening self-reliance. It further enables persons to contribute to the social and economic lives of the communities that host them rather than depending on parallel humanitarian assistance systems for years and even decades. Inclusion is fundamental to the principle of leaving no one behind, which is central to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. It is also underpinned by international protection principles, as enabling law and policy frameworks and participatory structures need to be in place to access national systems. Through inclusion, governments are better able to ensure protection and support for displaced and stateless persons on their territories.

A significant challenge outlined in the [GCR Indicator Report](#) in 2021 is that while access to certain rights and systems may be permitted in law, there are often obstacles to achieving access in practice. With most displaced and stateless persons hosted in low and middle-income States, a key obstacle is the lack of resources and absorption capacity to include them in national systems and services that would enable them to benefit from socio-economic opportunities.

Development cooperation through financing, capacity building, and strengthened data and analysis is key to addressing these obstacles and facilitating inclusion in national planning and systems. It supports governments to address the needs of displaced and stateless persons more predictably and reliably. Data and analysis informing development cooperation is key both for planning and assessing the impact of inclusion on host economies and displaced and stateless persons.

The Dialogue will explore notable examples, interventions, and tools and frameworks for development cooperation that can facilitate inclusion and an enabling protection environment. Examples will be drawn from development financing by banks, bilateral donors, and the private sector; technical assistance to build the capacities of national and local systems; and analysis of data to support national statistics and planning and help stakeholders better understand and address the barriers to inclusion.

Solutions: Unlocking solutions through enhanced development cooperation

Record levels of new displacement are far outpacing the best efforts to unlock solutions for displaced persons. Durable solutions are also urgently needed for the nearly 10 million stateless persons worldwide, a situation which has also contributed to significant internal and external displacement. Enhancing development cooperation in support of solutions was identified as a [key recommendation](#) from the High-Level Officials Meeting convened in 2021 to take stock of progress towards the GCR objectives.

Development cooperation in support of comprehensive approaches to solutions can be facilitated through cross-border initiatives, compacts, and regional arrangements. The three support platforms, launched at the Global Refugee Forum in 2019, for example, have contributed to regional responses to forced displacement in Central America (MIRPS), Afghanistan (SSAR), and East Africa (IGAD) and

offer promising practices and lessons learned to further advance regional and sub-regional approaches in support of solutions.

Development cooperation is critical to creating the conditions for sustainable voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their places of origin. Development cooperation can support the rebuilding of the necessary infrastructure and the capacities of national and local systems to facilitate access to civil documentation; justice, protection, and security; housing, land, and property; and socio-economic services. It can also play a role in supporting efforts to address root causes and build peace. Ensuring these elements are in place is essential to ensuring sustainable reintegration and preventing secondary displacement.

While for some displaced persons, return will be the preferred solution, it will not be an option for all. Where local integration or local solutions are possible, development cooperation can play a supportive role. Investments, capacity building and support, and data and analysis are particularly needed to facilitate integration and address specific needs in urban environments, where most displaced and stateless persons live.

The Dialogue will provide an opportunity to consider the role of development cooperation in comprehensive approaches to solutions, including regional initiatives, focusing specifically on creating conditions for sustainable return, facilitating local integration, strengthening local solutions, and preventing and resolving statelessness.

Roadmap

October - November: Situational roundtables

To ensure that the Dialogue benefits from learnings grounded in experience, UNHCR will host a series of roundtables from October to November 2022, exploring the themes for this year’s Dialogue in the context of specific displacement and stateless situations in each region around the world. The roundtables will stimulate reflection on learnings, challenges and opportunities in these situations.

7-8 December: High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges

Building on the outcomes of the situational roundtables, the Dialogue will pursue the discussions at the global level. The event will be chaired by the High Commissioner, and circumstances allowing, will be held over the course of two days at the Centre International de Conférences Genève (CICG) in Geneva. The event will be livestreamed and will offer opportunities for online participation to ensure a broad audience. The outcomes of the Dialogue will also help to inform pledge cultivation and mobilization related to development cooperation for the next Global Refugee Forum in 2023.

