

Inputs to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2024

Inputs from functional commissions of ECOSOC, other intergovernmental bodies and forums to the 2024 HLPF

UNHCR

Impacts of multiple crises on the implementation of SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17 from the vantage point of your intergovernmental body.

SDG 1: Forced displacement and poverty are becoming increasingly interconnected. As forced displacement spikes dramatically across the globe, its impact on SDGs progress cannot be disregarded. The poverty rate of refugees, including children, is higher than nationals and may vary from 5% in Chile, up to 120% in Ethiopia. SDG1 and the 2030 Universal Social Protection Agenda cannot be achieved unless forcibly displaced persons gain access to national social protection services. However, they are often left without coverage either by law or by operational barriers, such as limited local government capacity (53%), lack of documentation (52%), and/or insufficient funding (46%). The same can be said for access to employment and decent work. 55% of refugees live in countries with restricted or no access to formal employment and 61% live in countries requiring a work permit .

SDG 2: Refugee food security is largely dependent on the legal frameworks governing refugees' access to rights including access to land, employment, financial services, association and freedom of movement. 85% of refugees are hosted in developing countries where national resources and capacities are insufficient to meet the need. Burkina Faso, Mali, South Sudan, Sudan are among the countries where acute food insecurity is expected to significantly deteriorate. Refugee rations have been reduced significantly in half of refugee operations , while tens of thousands of refugees are cut off from assistance altogether due to lack of funding. Various forms of malnutrition persist among the refugee population with a global GAM and stunting prevalence of respectively 10%, and 30% against the global 7% GAM and 22% stunting . Refugee children in emergency situations experiences even higher levels of malnutrition (in the Sudan situation 1 in 3 children are affected by acute malnutrition). The global food crisis is not just about hunger, it is also exacerbating acute protection risks, especially for forcibly displaced, with a heightened risk for women and girls.

SDG 13: The climate crisis is a human crisis: forcibly displaced people are among the most vulnerable, least able to adapt, and hardest hit. Forcibly displaced people often live in impoverished conditions, in precarious shelters in degraded/peripheral locations or in overcrowded camps/informal settlements and highly exposed and vulnerable to climate impacts. Climate change is throwing fuel on the embers of crises – contributing to new displacement and adding obstacles to safe and sustainable return home.

SDG 16: Over 114 million people worldwide are forcibly displaced, 1 in 73 people worldwide. SDG 16 is essential to ensure that those forcibly displaced have their status recognized, and get equitable access to services, including justice. An estimated 4.4 million people are stateless or of undetermined

nationality as of mid-2023. The true extent of statelessness is likely to be much greater as approximately half of the countries do not report on it. Discrimination and deliberate exclusion underlie most situations of statelessness. Two-thirds of the world's stateless populations belong to minority groups. In some contexts, women are subjected to gender discriminatory nationality laws resulting in statelessness for their children. The eradication of statelessness is critical in the achievement of SDG16 and in leaving no one behind.

Three key areas where sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions for achieving the SDGs are being effectively delivered, especially related to the cluster of SDGs under review in 2024, bearing in mind the three dimensions of sustainable development and the interlinkages across the Goals and targets.

SDG 1

- Data Inclusion Agenda: UNHCR engages with and supports National Statistical Offices, to ensure refugee inclusion in national statistics. At the last Global Refugee Forum (GRF), the 60 pledges received demonstrate an increased political will towards inclusion of displaced and stateless persons in national census, surveys and administrative data systems.

SDG 13

- Mobilize and scale-up climate action and resources for frontline countries and communities. UNHCR's multistakeholder pledge on climate action made at the GRF, encourages parties to scale-up accessible finance and have inclusive laws, policies, and plans. 62 pledges from key contributors have already been made.
- Promote inclusive early warning systems also ensuring participation of forcibly displaced in displacement's preparedness for anticipatory and early action.
- Support governments in developing/revise legal and policy frameworks for climate action inclusive of forcibly displaced and their hosts.
- Enhance the availability, quality and accessibility of data, knowledge, tools and resources to inform evidence-based policy and action addressing climate-related risks, impacts and protection needs in displacement contexts
- Enhance protection for displaced communities and their hosts by scaling up parametric insurance coverage for refugee settlements exposed to climatic hazard events.

SDG 16

- Several pledges presented at the 2023 GRF advance SDG16. The Legal Community Pledge localize legal practice and advocacy, including direct resourcing of host community and refugee-led legal initiatives; develops local and regionally led efforts to increase collaboration, mutual-learning, joint legal advocacy and strategy building. Multistakeholder pledges include Peace building and conflict prevention (creating conducive conditions for return of forcibly displaced in safety and dignity. 112

pledges supporting seven countries of origin); ending statelessness (135 pledges; 24 entities, including 11 Member States, already committed to join the Global Alliance to End Statelessness); Accelerate and better leverage humanitarian-development-peace- nexus approaches (74 pledges addressing the immediate needs and uphold the rights of displaced people).

- Access to civil registration and identity documentation, and prevent risks of statelessness. Several countries have taken positive steps in this direction. Indonesia (new regulation providing a legal basis for children born to mixed descent parents to be registered as nationals); Ukraine (new, simplified procedure for birth registration in areas without access to registration office); Burkina Faso (issuance of 20,706 birth certificates); Kenya (recognized citizenship to 7,000 people from the Pemba community); Colombia (extension a programme providing nationality to children born from Venezuelan parents); Tanzania (naturalization of 3,319 long term migrants at risk of statelessness).

- Improve quality data on statelessness, the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons, and Statelessness Statistics developed the International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS) aimed at promoting greater harmonization of this data regionally and globally.

SDG 17:

- The 2023 GRF marked a significant evolution in addressing the challenges of forced displacement and statelessness, showcasing an unprecedented level of engagement from a broad spectrum of stakeholders. The forum received a remarkable 1,684 pledges, (600 from states, 1,100 from non-state actors), representing a 'modern approach to multilateralism, characterized by its inclusivity and diversity of its participants. With over 4,200 attendees from 168 countries, including 320 refugees, the GRF demonstrated a holistic engagement across societal sectors. This approach not only broadens the base for innovative solutions to displacement but also amplifies the impact of collective efforts in addressing one of the most pressing humanitarian challenges of our time.

Three examples of specific actions, policies and measures that are most urgently needed to effectively deliver sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions to eradicate poverty and reinforce the 2030 Agenda, building on interlinkages and transformative pathways for achieving the SDGs.

SDG 1

- Inclusion of forcibly displaced in national census and household surveys

- Regularization and documentation to facilitate socio-economic integration. Granting the right to work and access to formal labour market to refugees is essential to redress the disproportionate impact of poverty on refugee households.

- Inclusion of forcibly displaced persons in the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection and the SDG Fund Window on Decent Jobs and Universal Social Protection. The Global Accelerator's ambition to scale up social protection systems to cover 4 billion people is unrealistic unless the rapidly growing numbers of displaced people are not left further behind.

SDG 13

- Mobilize additional finance for climate vulnerable countries to minimize and address loss and damage related to displacement through: 1) Investing in early warning systems, community-based preparedness and anticipatory action ahead of predictable displacement scenarios, addressing the specific risks faced by women, children, and people with limited mobility, including in conflict-affected and fragile contexts; 2) Reducing vulnerability to climate-related risks in areas of return or settlement for displaced people to enable safe, informed, and dignified solutions. ; 3) Supporting planned relocation as a last resort measure that respects the human rights of communities living in increasingly unsafe and uninhabitable home areas. ; 4) Ensuring displaced people's access to the Loss and Damage Fund and funding arrangements to restore their lives and livelihoods and move out of their displacement situations.; 5) Making a portion of climate funding accessible and dedicated to high-risk contexts including through simplified or fit-for purpose processes and specialized windows for local actors to independently access multilateral funds.

- Consider formulating laws, policies and strategies reflecting the importance of integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement taking into consideration their respective human rights obligations and, as appropriate, other relevant international standards and legal considerations. Apply existing refugee and human rights law where relevant to grant international protection to people displaced across borders in the context of climate impacts and disasters .

SDG 16

- Generate political will and action to address insecurity, conflict, and human rights violation as the root causes that force people to flee and to create conditions for people to voluntarily return.

- Collaboration across the peace, humanitarian and development nexus can help affected countries and communities avert and respond to crises and advance protection and solutions. Participation of refugees, IDPs and stateless people in these processes is critical. In Colombia, The Truth Commission, calls to refugees to participate in peace and reconciliation processes, including on conditions for return and preventive actions tackling root causes.

- Inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless people in national systems including legal identity and access to justice. Lack of accurate and comprehensive data remains an ongoing challenge. Too often, justice data is not disaggregated to highlight the specific justice needs and challenges faced by forcibly displaced and stateless people. This was evidenced in a series of reports commissioned by UNHCR with the Hague Institute for Justice and Law in amongst others, Ethiopia and Burkina Faso. Likewise, without reliable data, it is difficult to understand the full extent and the root causes of statelessness and design targeted interventions to address it.

- Legal information and legal aid are critical to ensure access to justice for forcibly displaced and stateless people. Investments in people-centered justice inclusive of forcibly displaced and stateless people, in accordance with the SG's New Vision for the Rule of Law is urgent to achieve the promise of SDG16.

Follow-up actions and measures being undertaken by your intergovernmental body or forum to support implementation of the Political Declaration of the SDG Summit.

Recommendations and key messages for inclusion into the Ministerial Declaration of the 2024 HLPF.

SGD 1

☑ Strengthened and inclusive national social protection systems. UNHCR calls for concerted measures including alignment of humanitarian assistance, socioeconomic profiling of displaced populations to identify those most in need, assessment of existing social protection capacities, and provision of technical or financial assistance to reinforce national social protection systems for both displaced and host communities, with a view to facilitate transition from humanitarian assistance to government-led social protection programmes.

☑ UNHCR continues to advocate for refugee access to economic opportunities and means to achieve greater self-reliance, including by removing legal and administrative barriers to the right to work, support access to land and to financial services, among others. This would enhance livelihood opportunities, reduce the need for humanitarian assistance over time, promote self-reliance and build resilience.

SDG 2

☑ Increase food security, improve nutrition levels, and reinforce resilience of refugee, IDPs and hosting communities including through transformation of local food systems and expanded programmes to treat and prevent malnutrition. UNHCR calls for continuous bilateral and multilateral donors' support to the most exposed refugee-hosting countries, in the spirit of burden sharing promoted by the GCR. Such support will allow these countries to maintain the level of public resources invested in social protection systems, safety nets and pro-poor policies, enhancing the ability of poor and vulnerable populations, including refugees and other displaced populations, to cope with adversity.

SDG 13

☑ Urgently scale up additional, accessible finance and support for adaptation, preparedness, and response to loss and damage including in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

☑ Keep 1.5 alive: Rapidly phase out dependence on fossil fuels and make deep and urgent cuts in GHG emissions to slow the pace of climate change and avoid the worst-case scenarios for current and future generations.

☑ Enable highly vulnerable countries and communities, including forcibly displaced, to meaningfully participate in policy discussions, recognizing the capacities and leadership they bring as critical to inclusive solutions. This must include the national legal and policy frameworks supporting climate action, National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Nationally Determined Commitments (NDCs).

SDG 16

☑ Strengthening justice and institutions in fragile and conflict-affected regions, addressing underlying drivers of vulnerability, is essential to break cycles of dependency. Fragile countries are already furthest behind in achieving the SDGs, despite the fact that they sit on immense potential that could be tapped into to change the development curve, for the benefit of all.

☒ Leave no one behind must remain front and center in the implementation of SDG16. Concrete steps must be taken to promote an enabling framework inclusive of forcibly displaced and stateless persons, particularly towards eliminating gender discriminatory nationality laws and practices, and ensuring legal identity for all, including birth registration, so no one is left behind.

SDG 17

☒ Expanding partnerships, particularly with private sector, are central to strengthen protection and pursue solutions for forcibly displaced and stateless populations. They are essential to (i) influence legal and policy dialogue and institutional and programmatic frameworks; (ii) include marginalized populations within SDG related legal, social and economic development processes; (iii) strengthen the implementing capabilities of central and local government; and (iv) mobilize additional resources through increased public and private investment.