



IEO | INDEPENDENT
Evaluation Office
United Nations Development Programme

EVALUATION

**OF UNDP SUPPORT TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE
CRISIS RESPONSE AND PROMOTING AN
INTEGRATED RESILIENCE APPROACH**



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FOREWORD

Refugee crises globally are not only increasing in scale but are also protracted and have significant development consequences. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), currently more than 79.5 million people are displaced worldwide—the highest number on record.

As the Syrian crisis has entered its tenth year, this assessment of UNDP support to the Syrian refugee crisis response and promoting an integrated resilience approach is especially timely. The evaluation covers the Syrian refugee crisis-response programmes in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt for the period 2015-2019. The evaluation assessed the coordination structure of the Regional Refugee Response Plan (3RP) and key streams of the UNDP country-level response.

The protracted nature of the crisis warranted a response that is distinct from the response during the initial stages of the crisis, one that would bridge the humanitarian and development programming divide. There is a renewed emphasis at the global and country levels on putting into practice intergovernmental agreements adopted in recent years to promote resilience and strengthen the humanitarian-development nexus. The importance of resilience-based approaches through institutional strengthening and sustainable solutions cannot be overemphasized.

UNDP supported national and local governments in refugee host countries to address the development impacts of the crisis. UNDP helped bring a development approach to humanitarian refugee response, thus contributing to consolidation of the humanitarian-development nexus. The UNDP contribution has been important in transforming the international discourse on protracted refugee crises by adding a development and resilience approach.

The 3RP, which UNDP coordinated jointly with UNHCR, provided a framework for the activities of United Nations and other agencies at the regional and country levels, to address humanitarian and development issues simultaneously, using a resilience approach. The 3RP was successful in bringing to the Syrian refugee response a combined framework that provided humanitarian support and a resilience-based development approach to strengthening institutions, communities and households. Uniting these two support frames has contributed to strengthening municipal capacities and provides a replicable model for future refugee crises.

Notwithstanding such successes, further efforts are needed to bridge the refugee and host community programming silos. While national resilience plans are an important step forward, more practical programme models are needed to demonstrate the nexus approach. Building on its substantive engagement in the 3RP, UNDP is well positioned to provide thought leadership in promoting practical approaches to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus at the country level. There is scope for UNDP to play a catalytic role in enabling private sector-based solutions to promote the resilience of both host communities and refugees.

I hope this evaluation will serve to inform both future UNDP corporate refugee and displacement programme strategies and debates on the humanitarian-development nexus.



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

3RP	Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan
CEDRE	International conference in support of Lebanon development and reforms (Conférence économique pour le développement, par les réformes et avec les entreprises)
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
GAP	Turkish Government's Southeastern Anatolia Development Project (Turkish acronym)
ICPE	Independent Country Programme Evaluation
IDP	Internally displaced person
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
IFIs	International financial institutions
ILO	International Labour Organization
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
LHSP	Lebanon Host Communities Support Project
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SRF	Sub-Regional Response Facility
TFP	Total factor productivity
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

EVALUATION SUMMARY

Background

Refugee crises globally are not only increasing in scale but are protracted and have significant development consequences. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are currently more than 79.5 million people displaced worldwide—the highest number on record since such statistics have been collected. As a result of the Syrian conflict, there are 5.6 million refugees in the region, severely impacting neighbouring Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and to a lesser extent Iraq, Egypt and some European Union countries. Since 2010, at least 15 conflicts have significantly increased the number of refugees globally. Although not of the same scale as the Syrian crisis, other refugee crises originating in Sudan, South Sudan, Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic and Venezuela have slowed both the pace of development and efforts in addressing conflict drivers. In addition to the significant needs of the refugee populations, host countries are facing equally daunting development challenges of their own.

UNDP supports a total of about 40 countries that are hosting refugees and/or are countries of origin, with the aim of strengthening government processes and capacities to address the developmental consequences of the influx of refugees on the host communities, facilitating the inclusion of refugees in national development planning, and improving conditions for both refugees and host communities. For the Syrian refugee crisis response, UNDP supported national and local governments in host countries, in a diversity of contexts, to address the development impacts of the crisis. With the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNDP coordinated the Regional Refugee Response Plan (3RP) which provided a framework for the activities of United Nations and other agencies at the regional and country levels,

to address humanitarian and development issues simultaneously, using a resilience approach. The 3RP is considered a paradigm shift from predominantly humanitarian response plans.

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has evaluated UNDP support to the Syrian refugee crisis response and promotion of an integrated resilience approach. Part of the IEO workplan approved by the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2018, the evaluation assessed the contribution of UNDP to the Syrian refugee crisis response and the 3RP at the national and regional levels. While the primary focus of the evaluation was the Syrian refugee crisis response, for a broader understanding of UNDP support to refugee response, the evaluation also assessed the UNDP positioning and approaches in its response to other refugee crises. The evaluation assessed the extent to which the UNDP resilience-based development approach contributed to bridging the humanitarian and development divide; and the extent to which resilience-based development approaches have underpinned the Syrian refugee crisis response framework as well as other UNDP refugee responses and corporate frameworks.

The evaluation will be presented to the Executive Board at the first regular session of 2021. The evaluation will contribute to the consolidation of the Syrian refugee crisis response as well as the development of corporate refugee response programming and strategies. The evaluation will strengthen the accountability of UNDP to global, regional and national programme partners and the Executive Board.

The evaluation covered Syrian refugee crisis-response programmes in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt for the period 2015-2019. The evaluation assessed the 3RP coordination structure and key streams of the UNDP country-level response

(i.e., livelihoods and employment opportunities, service delivery, energy and social cohesion at the country level, strengthening national capacities). The evaluation covered UNDP regional and national contributions to the 3RP in terms of leadership, coordination, partnerships, funding and advocacy, building on four Independent Country Programme Evaluations conducted by IEO in 2019 in Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic (hereinafter Syria). The evaluation carried out a case study and field visit for the UNDP Syrian refugee crisis response in Jordan and a desk study of the response in Egypt.

UNDP programme scope and scale

UNDP has over the years supported refugee crisis response as part of its development and conflict prevention and response programmes. UNDP programme strategies reinforced that the refugee crisis as a development issue needs more direct engagement, to address the development consequences of displacement and durable solutions for the refugees. The UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 explicitly recognized displacement as an emerging issue for which specific signature solutions could be developed in partnership with relevant agencies. The previous Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 did not explicitly prioritize support to refugee response although broadly considered it as part of conflict-related displacement and response.

Globally from 2011 to 2016, UNDP had 125 projects in 39 countries pertaining to refugee-related displacement worth US\$1.3 billion. When compared to UNDP spending on internally displaced persons (IDPs), the refugee-related response is a smaller component. At the onset of refugee crises, UNDP interventions range from supporting early recovery coordination to comprehensive, resilience-based responses for host communities and refugees. This includes support to core government functions at local and national levels, job creation and livelihoods, enterprise recovery, environmental rehabilitation, social cohesion and conflict prevention, protection and access to rule of law and justice. In the medium and longer terms, UNDP supports initiatives addressing the root causes of forced displacement

and where applicable, the return and reintegration of displaced persons.

Responding to the scale and protracted nature of the Syrian crisis required agencies to rethink their collective development and humanitarian responses and to act beyond their traditional mandates. In this context, the UNDP resilience-based development approach was formulated to support communities and institutions to respond to increased demand and pressure (“coping”), promote household recovery from the negative impacts of the crisis (“recovering”) and strengthen local and national economic and social systems to protect development gains from current and future shocks (“transforming”). The resilience approach aimed to address multiple dimensions of the crisis and, as pointed out in many evaluations, the focus on the concept of resilience was a concrete effort to create greater linkages between humanitarian and development approaches. This approach was conceived in alignment with the United Nations Policy for Post-Conflict Employment Creation, Income Generation and Reintegration (2009) and was anchored in the need to simultaneously target refugees and host communities to recover with long-term development prospects.

In 2015, a structured United Nations regional response plan, the 3RP, was launched to respond to a growing need for an integrated humanitarian and development approach, as by then it was evident that refugees would be in the host countries for a longer period and that it was a protracted crisis of an unprecedented scale.

The key activities of UNDP in response to the Syrian refugee crisis entail support to livelihoods and employment, improving basic service delivery, enhancing social cohesion and peace, promoting resilience-based approaches and the humanitarian-development nexus, coordination of 3RP at the regional and country levels and mobilization of resources and advocacy for 3RP. A theory of change was developed for this evaluation. Expenditure for the Syrian refugee crisis response for 2014-2018 was \$317 million, with Lebanon having significantly higher expenditures compared to other host countries, including Turkey which hosts the highest number of refugees.

Key findings

This section presents the UNDP contribution to different areas of the Syrian refugee crisis response, its strategies and concepts, and operationalization of the 3RP framework. It also analyses UNDP positioning and strategies based on the assessment of the response to the Lake Chad Basin, Rohingya and Venezuelan migrant/refugee crises.

A. Syrian refugee crisis response

National policy support and institutional capacity development

UNDP is well regarded for its development support and played a visible role in the Syrian refugee crisis response. UNDP has been responsive to municipal service needs which were critical given the significant increase in the demand due to the influx of refugees. With its well-established working relationships with national entities, UNDP is widely perceived as a trusted and “go to” agency by governments. Support for policy analysis and knowledge-sharing informed institutional reform processes and strengthening. Across the host countries, the reputation and reach of UNDP enabled engagement with a range of government entities at the national level.

There were several unused opportunities in leveraging UNDP work at the subnational level. UNDP has yet to build on its comparative strengths and organizational expertise for policy engagement. Long-standing work at the municipal level has yet to be used to play a more comprehensive role at the subnational level and enable local and national government linkages. Government entities recognize the significance of resilience-based policy and programme approaches as the way forward, but sustainable programme models have yet to be promoted to respond to development needs and priorities.

UNDP role and contribution to 3RP

3RP-Setting a precedent: The 3RP was successful in bringing together two interrelated dimensions of Syrian refugee crisis response: humanitarian support and a resilience-based development approach

to strengthening institutions, communities and households, under a common framework. UNHCR and UNDP should be credited for developing this joint framework going beyond the terms of their respective mandates. UNDP played a key role in leading the United Nations in the conceptualization of the resilience approach to refugee crisis response.

A flexible 3RP framework allowed for context-specific national response plans. There were constraints in the extent to which 3RP could enable development solutions for improving the condition of refugees. A key accomplishment of the 3RP was bringing together humanitarian and development actors on a single platform at the regional and national levels to address the humanitarian and development needs of Syrian refugees and affected host communities and national systems in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. UNDP rallied all United Nations development agencies to support the adoption of the resilience-based approach within the United Nations Development Group.

UNDP support to the coordination of the 3RP, jointly with UNHCR, had some tangible outcomes which include significant mobilization of financial resources, strengthened coordination among United Nations agencies and information exchange for a more coordinated response among various actors. The 3RP also served as an effective platform for advocacy with the Governments concerned to promote resilience-based programming. The partnership between UNDP and UNHCR has immense potential to strengthen the humanitarian-development nexus. Some areas need to be addressed by both agencies to reinforce this partnership for enhanced contributions to host communities and refugees.

The 3RP has been successful in mobilizing resources, thus meeting the international commitment of the Grand Bargain, an agreement between key donors agreed at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. The inter-agency appeal for the resilience component has increased over the years. High-level events such as the Resilience Development Forum and continued advocacy for resilience at the regional level by UNDP resulted in an increase

of 3RP resilience funding from \$2 billion in 2015 to \$2.3 billion in 2019, of which UNDP received \$396,673,918. The UNDP contribution to resource mobilization with UNHCR is significant.

Enabling coordination: The large number and wide range of 3RP partners required considerable investment in coordination processes for UNDP. UNDP co-led coordination processes with UNHCR at the regional and national levels and led sectoral coordination in livelihoods and social cohesion. UNDP also played a key role in monitoring the 3RP implementation. There are several examples of joint programmes with United Nations agencies where complementarities and comparative strengths of the agencies were optimized. UNDP is credited with bringing in stronger government engagement in the 3RP at the national level.

There are multiple refugee and host community responses and coordination mechanisms at the country level, besides the 3RP. While these coordination mechanisms reflect the preferences of donor agencies in programme response, the 3RP nevertheless had limitations in providing a viable alternative for a more comprehensive response. Although coordination was important in the initial years of the refugee crisis, a heavy coordination architecture has had many redundancies as the crisis became protracted. UNDP and UNHCR should assess the present architecture to adapt it to evolving needs.

Facilitating a resilience approach: UNDP promoted a common understanding of the concept of resilience at planning and programme levels through workshops, training and advocacy at multiple levels in the first years of the 3RP. The Dead Sea Resilience Agenda was a key milestone in furthering the resilience strategy at the regional level and increasing funding for resilience since 2015. Developed by UNDP in the second year of the 3RP, the principles and actions of the Dead Sea Resilience Agenda provided a common basis for resilience-based responses across the 3RP countries. UNDP organized the Resilience Development Forum, which boosted new partnerships and enabled setting the stage for resilience-based programming. While

3RP is a significant step forward in providing an opportunity to promote development approaches in humanitarian response, there remain areas where sustained efforts are needed by both UNDP and UNHCR as well as donors to strengthen humanitarian-development-nexus approaches. Implementation of the resilience approach was difficult when funding was fragmented and change processes to consolidating nexus initiatives were slow.

The UNDP Sub-Regional Facility for the Syria Crisis (SRF) played an important role in setting the resilience agenda, enabling 3RP deliberations and financial decision-making processes. The UNDP investment in SRF was an important contribution to its co-leadership with UNHCR and in positioning UNDP in the centre of the Syrian refugee crisis response. It strengthened UNDP engagement and partnerships with the international community, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and among United Nations agencies. A significant contribution of SRF is the success in bringing resilience into financial discussions and decision-making.

Employment generation and livelihoods

UNDP employment and livelihood support to the Syrian population and vulnerable host communities comprised support to vocational training to increase work opportunities, small businesses, improving the supply capacity for skills and labour absorption in the value chain, improving institutional processes, networking with the private sector and cash for work.

UNDP was the only United Nations agency with a presence in the poorest areas such as Akkar in Lebanon and was among the first to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis. UNDP was able to respond quickly, building on its continuous presence, previous interventions and strong partnerships with local authorities. Similarly, in Turkey, UNDP had long-standing programme engagement in the Southeastern Anatolia region which received the highest number of refugees. Support to job creation as part of both development and refugee-response initiatives for host communities and refugees had tangible short- to medium-term outcomes.

UNDP programme support contributed to the development of inclusive and sustainable value chain models. Micro examples of success need to be scaled up to address the employment challenges of host communities and Syrian refugees. The support for small and medium-sized enterprises and value chains are areas where joint efforts can enable strategic thinking or models that would generate employment at scale and inform policies.

There are good examples of value chain support in Lebanon and employment-generation models of scale in Turkey. In Turkey, where economic inclusion is seen as a model for ensuring effective social inclusion, programmes ensured that Syrians and Turkish nationals work together in the same workplaces. UNDP contributed to the promotion of modern practices, enhancing productivity and competitiveness in strategic sectors through a mix of national policy support for total factor productivity and the establishment of model industrial modernization centres. Such efforts are important in generating employment at scale that would provide work for Turkish nationals as well as Syrian refugees. Also in Turkey, UNDP has well-established relationships at the subnational level with the private sector and chambers of commerce and has been successful in establishing links with the emerging Syrian business sector.

UNDP and other 3RP agencies recognize the need for well-targeted long-term vocational training that would lead to employment. However, there is no planned approach to vocational training that enables linkages to employment or financing for enterprise development, and it was not evident that the 3RP platform could address some of these challenges. Except for Turkey, a major constraint in supporting vocational training that has job prospects is the restrictions concerning areas where refugees are allowed to work. Partnerships with United Nations agencies show the potential of joint initiatives.

Strengthening services and local development

Local-level engagement by UNDP is highly relevant and efforts to strengthen municipalities assume importance given the capacity and resource

challenges. Support for infrastructure development and service delivery has been critical for both host communities and the Syrian population. The refugee influx has put considerable pressure on the already overstretched municipal services in all the countries hosting Syrian refugees. The municipalities which received refugees were already facing huge gaps in the provision of services and it is was challenging both in terms of resources and capacities. Disrupted local services increased vulnerabilities and have been drivers of tensions between the refugees and host communities. In all the host countries, it was also an opportunity to improve service infrastructures, strengthen service delivery processes and adopt more efficient models. Municipalities needed to increase their capacities in proportion to the increase in population created by the presence of Syrians. UNDP supported the strengthening of local services and municipal capacity development. Support for solid waste and wastewater management, firefighting services and municipal capacity enhancement are high priorities identified by the Governments and the international community as an essential part of the Syrian crisis response.

A strength of the UNDP response is its strong programmatic engagement at the local level. Building on its previous development partnerships, UNDP has made significant contributions at the local level to respond quickly to the crisis. UNDP contributed to addressing immediate basic services which were under pressure due to the influx of Syrian refugees.

Support for strengthening municipal services has been well structured, enabling municipalities to address institutional challenges. The municipalities considered the development approach used by UNDP to tackle the service delivery challenges as appropriate to address both immediate requirements and institutional bottlenecks. Partnerships built on long-term relationships enabled rapid strategizing and implementation. Technical support for capacity enhancement was critical in moving forward with the implementation of the plans, particularly in the area of solid waste management. Municipalities also consider UNDP

administrative and procurement procedures as efficient, enabling a speedy response. There were contributions to strengthening the capacities of local institutions to develop and implement integrated local development plans that respond to priority community needs.

UNDP support to solid waste management assumes importance given the significant challenges it posed across the host countries. UNDP demonstrated that a development approach to strengthening services, rather than a humanitarian approach of substituting services, has the potential for positive long-term outcomes, contributing to strengthening the capacities of the municipalities. The subnational programme models which UNDP promoted have yet to inform national strategies, reducing the level of contribution to development outcomes. Across the host countries, in addition to the infrastructure-related investments, there has been technical support to ensure a coherent approach to waste management and municipal services. In Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and to some extent Egypt, support to solid waste management eased the pressure on the municipalities.

Although the Syrian refugee crisis worsened solid waste management, this has been a long-pending issue in most of the host countries. Despite a high per capita amount of humanitarian aid, there were challenges in finding a sustainable solution and the reasons for this are beyond funding and require political will, clarity on institutional roles and an enabling policy environment.

B. Cross-cutting issues

Private sector development: Across refugee contexts, there is an urgent need to derisk investments and address institutional bottlenecks for private sector development and engagement. Attention to private sector engagement was mixed in the countries hosting refugees, including in middle-income countries where there is a comparatively better enabling environment. There are some good examples in Lebanon and Turkey, and important lessons to draw from positive examples of support to competitive and inclusive industrial

transformation for long-term income-generation and employment solutions in Turkey. However, in most initiatives, there is often a disconnect between UNDP business development support and value chain engagement. Linking its interventions to a well-coordinated strategy spanning the full range of the value chain has been a challenge for UNDP programmes, which did not reflect this urgency. With exceptions, support was lacking for fostering transformative partnerships with the private sector in refugee and host communities.

Gender-inclusive refugee response: UNDP had more success in its women-specific initiatives at the micro level in promoting income generation, enterprise skills and access to services. UNDP has contributed to advancing women's empowerment at the micro level. In all livelihood interventions, there has been due effort to include women as beneficiaries. Opportunities for gender-informed programme design and implementation remain underutilized. Lack of a coordinated response at the 3RP level undermined tackling multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against women and girls in the refugee and host communities. With women comprising about half of refugees and more than half of the host populations, the efforts on the ground are not commensurate with the response needed.

C. Global, regional and country-level positioning

Global positioning: Globally, UNDP contributed to bringing a development approach to humanitarian refugee response and efforts towards consolidating the humanitarian-development nexus. The UNDP contribution has been important to enabling the transformation process in the international discourse in protracted refugee crises by bringing in a development and resilience approach. Undertaken jointly with UNHCR, the Syrian refugee crisis response through the 3RP set a precedent for a joint humanitarian and development programme. Although the 3RP was not used to its full potential, it was successful in bringing resilience to the refugee response, addressing the challenges of refugees and host communities.

In 2016, UNDP and UNHCR endorsed the Commitment to Action and the new way of working at the World Humanitarian Summit, which was a turning point towards operationalizing the humanitarian-development nexus, along with the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). Fundamental to the New York Declaration and CRRF is the affirmation that protecting refugees and supporting host countries that shelter refugees are both international responsibilities. It is noteworthy that the CRRF was informed by the 3RP resilience approach. Also, UNHCR went beyond humanitarian response, adopting a resilience and self-reliance approach for its work. These milestones established international norms for sustainable solutions simultaneously during the humanitarian response, where the UNDP contribution was important. Although the implementation of the CRRF is gathering momentum, it is nevertheless significant given the intergovernmental endorsement. Despite contributions, UNDP has not asserted its comparative advantage in furthering the centrality of development in protracted crises at the global and country levels.

Regional positioning: The 3RP enabled UNDP to position the resilience approach to refugee crises at the regional level and the momentum generated is a value addition in responding to other crises such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Besides the 3RP, there were efforts such as the Regional Stabilization Facility for Lake Chad Basin to facilitate the implementation of the regional strategy. The Facility, launched in 2019, is modelled on the successful experience of the UNDP Stabilization Facility in Iraq. It is intended to serve as a coordination tool for harmonizing complementary projects and programmes for stabilization, security, governance and early recovery, and to facilitate regional knowledge management. This is a promising initiative with the support of key donors (Governments of Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the European Union).

Country-level positioning: UNDP support to development and crisis response for several decades, together with subnational engagement and trust of national counterparts, placed UNDP in an advantageous position at the country level. To varying degrees, UNDP has supported refugee response and host country policy, programme and institutional strengthening in about 40 countries. Building on its development mandate, UNDP formulated the resilience approach as its offering for anchoring development support during humanitarian response.

In response to the Syrian refugee crisis, the resilience approach enabled the positioning and systematic engagement of UNDP to address the development challenges that were intensified by the influx of refugees. The resilience approach reinforced the international position that the humanitarian-development nexus is critical to providing effective solutions for host communities and refugees. The ambiguity of the resilience concept to some extent also provided country offices with the flexibility to adapt the concept and apply it according to their particular contexts. More importantly, it provided a neutral concept when development investments were not acceptable, particularly providing more flexibility for donor funding.

The programmatic positioning of UNDP in a fast-emerging situation such as the Syrian refugee and Rohingya crises has been comparatively stronger compared to the slow-onset refugee crises such as the Lake Chad Basin. Part of the reason for a comparatively better response in the rapid-onset refugee crisis is early positioning by UNDP to address the development challenges of the influx of refugees. Funding for the development dimensions in slow-onset refugee crises remains challenging in coordinated partnerships. This is also a reason for duplication of initiatives and efforts to accelerate the transition from humanitarian response to medium-term strategies to reduce the vulnerability of displaced populations and host communities and strengthen their resilience to future crises.

The UNDP comparative advantage is its continuous engagement through interventions to progressively build capacities and policies/regulatory frameworks in key development areas. However, the extent to which UNDP leveraged its comparative advantage and opportunities to build on its development support varied across countries and programme areas. UNDP has yet to play a catalytic role in enabling sustainable long-term development and peace solutions through institutional development and policy processes. While the Syrian refugee crisis response provided opportunities for promoting the resilience approach, UNDP has yet to harness it to provide medium-to long-term sectoral solutions at the country level.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1. The UNDP contribution to global debates and formulation of intergovernmental agreements to further the humanitarian-development nexus in refugee response has been significant. UNDP is well regarded for its multi-stakeholder engagement in a range of development and crisis areas. UNDP has a niche in the global humanitarian-development nexus policy space. UNDP has yet to assert its role in accelerating the humanitarian-development nexus at the global and country levels.

Since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the international community has continued its efforts to advance the humanitarian-development nexus through global summits and intergovernmental agreements. The global consensus expressed in the endorsement of the Commitment to Action and the new way of working at the World Humanitarian Summit, followed by the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the CRRF, are significant steps in giving renewed thrust to bridging the humanitarian-development divide. The global engagement and contribution of UNDP in the intergovernmental events and discussions have been important in reinforcing the importance of development linkages in humanitarian response. The UNDP collaboration with the humanitarian agencies enabled efforts to reinforce the importance of development linkages

in refugee response and of enabling durable solutions. Through its resilience approach, UNDP continued to advocate for concerted global action to advance the humanitarian-development nexus in refugee response.

A lack of an explicit commitment to address the development dimensions of displacement as a corporate priority is undermining UNDP positioning. Prioritization of engagement to strengthen the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in conflict-related refugee crises—particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States region in the context of multiple crises—is not commensurate with the challenges in these regions. Although not exclusively focused on refugee and displacement issues, the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (2013) and the more recent Regional Stabilization Strategy of the Lake Chad Basin Commission are important initiatives. Such initiatives have yet to develop wider partnerships and funding mechanisms to address significant challenges of complex and multiple crises. In the Arab States region, UNDP has yet to outline its plan for engaging in refugee-related and other displacements and to harmonize its programmes in Africa and the Arab States region for more strategic engagement.

There is a lack of practical models to address the complexity of the protracted crisis-response contexts in which Governments and international actors intend to implement the humanitarian-development nexus, the triple nexus or the new way of working. With the urgency and intensity of growing refugee and other displacement crises, UNDP at the corporate level did not rise to expectations to provide thought leadership in spearheading the United Nations nexus agenda.

The UNDP refugee response has evolved in the past decade with programmes at different levels in over 40 countries. Building on its long development presence, UNDP strategically consolidated its refugee programming and contributions at the country level in responding to the Syrian refugee crisis. Because UNDP works with national as well as subnational government actors, its programmes

have the potential to inform policy and planning in the areas of employment and social services.

Conclusion 2. UNDP was successful in bringing a resilience approach to the Syrian crisis-response discourse, which is a significant contribution by itself, notwithstanding the implementation challenges.

Its long programme presence in the areas that received Syrian refugees enabled UNDP to respond to the crisis and facilitate response by other United Nations agencies. UNDP was better prepared than several other agencies in analysing and responding to local challenges, contributing to strengthening institutional processes and public service delivery. While there were missed opportunities, efforts to address service delivery challenges contributed to reducing the pressure of a large refugee presence on local systems.

At the country level, UNDP brought a resilience approach to the centre of the Syrian refugee crisis response. Further concerted efforts were lacking to integrate resilience-based approaches in protracted humanitarian response. The lack of shared understanding among United Nations agencies on linking humanitarian and development initiatives led to a lost opportunity in improving the conditions for both refugees and host communities.

Humanitarian assistance continues to focus predominantly on refugee populations while resilience activities entail support to host communities and refugees. The lack of more holistic models that would generate employment of scale and enable service delivery solutions by addressing institutional bottlenecks continues to be an issue.

An extended humanitarian phase in a protracted crisis, when the response that is needed is medium- to long-term development support, has negative implications for both the host communities and refugees. The high per capita financial response to the Syrian refugee crisis response predominantly achieved humanitarian aims and addressed immediate development concerns. The 3RP could not keep pace with mounting development needs that also underpin the Syrian refugee response. A skewed funding architecture predisposed

towards humanitarian support undermined more sustainable development solutions that would benefit host communities and refugees. While UNDP has been consistent in its support to host communities, without an overall framework for addressing the interlinking dimensions of refugee and host community development challenges, the scope of programme outcomes reduced.

Conclusion 3. The partnership between UNDP and UNHCR has been significant in bringing a resilience perspective to the Syrian refugee crisis response. UNDP jointly with UNHCR played a key role in the coordination of 3RP, a formidable task given the large scale of response.

The UNDP-UNHCR partnership contributed to effective coordination of the Syrian refugee crisis response in the host countries and enabled resource mobilization. The commitment by the senior management of UNHCR and UNDP to strengthen programme collaboration has been important in maintaining the momentum to bridge the humanitarian-development divide. The extent to which such collaborations are taken forward in other crises varied, with promising collaborations in the Lake Chad Basin. While there are ongoing efforts to strengthen the partnership between the two agencies at the corporate level, these have yet to be institutionalized for engagement to further the humanitarian-development nexus.

The partnership has yet to consolidate programmes based on the comparative advantage of the two agencies for enhanced development and humanitarian outcomes. The Syria partnership shows that lack of common outcomes and multi-year programme frameworks reduced the contribution of the 3RP. An issue that can blur the mandates and increase humanitarian programme windows is the interest of humanitarian agencies to venture into the development space instead of collaborating with agencies with a development mandate. Although a sensitive issue, reducing the humanitarian programme window has the potential to accelerate development processes and improved outcomes for host communities and refugees. While the humanitarian-development nexus is seen

as a way forward, agencies have yet to deliberate on this for meaningful solutions.

Conclusion 4. UNDP was successful in providing employment models when there was a longer programme time frame and interventions were anchored in its development support.

The UNDP Syrian crisis response was aligned with the priorities identified by the host countries. It aimed to address income-generation and service delivery challenges of both the Syrian population and the host communities. The support for competitiveness in Turkey and agri-value chain support in Lebanon and Turkey addressed institutional bottlenecks for refugee and host community employment. Notwithstanding such important successes, UNDP livelihood interventions tend to be scattered, small-scale and uncoordinated, which reduced the contribution to sustainable employment

Balancing short-term interventions with long-term livelihood and employment support is critical for income generation for the Syrian population. UNDP programmes are evolving to achieve this balance. Livelihood support focused more on issues such as vocational training, with mixed outcomes in terms of sustainability and scale. 3RP interventions remain individually small-scale and fragmented, with a focus on short-term income generation.

The 2016 London Conference pledged the creation of 1.1 million jobs by 2018, mostly in Lebanon and Turkey, which host a substantial proportion of the refugee population. While there are commitments to open their labour markets and improve the domestic regulatory environment, this is yet to manifest. The international support to employment-creation programmes and access to external markets notwithstanding, there remain significant gaps in durable solutions in employment and livelihoods. The enabling environment for Syrian labour integration has not been favourable, especially when coupled with the economic downturn in host countries which added to existing employment challenges with further limitations for labour-market absorption. The number of work permits provided by the host countries continues to be low although

there are ongoing efforts to accelerate it. The varying levels of economic recession require more concerted strategies to create additional employment opportunities for refugee and host populations. Barring examples such as the support to improve competitiveness, UNDP engagement has been limited in responding to some of these challenges.

Conclusion 5. The development approach to strengthening services in refugee contexts contributed to strengthening municipal capacities and providing replicable models.

As a key actor in strengthening local services in the areas where refugees are concentrated, UNDP support to municipal services is well conceptualized, contributing to stronger municipal capacities in solid waste management and social services. However, the scale of the deterioration of solid waste management services is not matched by the scope of effort at the policy and institutional levels. In Jordan and Lebanon, efforts are still aimed at coping with the situation rather than enabling transformative solutions in improving services. Another area where UNDP has the potential to engage and there are ongoing efforts is in the renewable energy sector. There is considerable scope for demonstrating renewable energy models, informing policies for systemic changes and sustaining the interest of the private sector.

UNDP has invested in municipal development needs and conflict analysis and other assessments, which are highly relevant for strengthening local planning and financing. Strengthening and institutionalizing municipal-level development needs assessments and linking them to SDG data collection has the potential to inform refugee and host community development responses. Efforts are slowly evolving in making linkages between refugee response and SDG planning, an area where joint United Nations efforts will be important.

Conclusion 6. The 3RP approach is relevant with a much needed emphasis to bring a resilience dimension to humanitarian response. The compartmentalization of the humanitarian and resilience support has significantly undermined the contribution of the overall Syrian refugee crisis response.

While there is a realization among the 3RP agencies that addressing the development challenges of host communities is essential for an effective refugee response, such a realization did not result in their pursuing a coordinated resilience approach. The continued humanitarian mode of response was not appropriate in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey when more advanced development solutions are needed. The United Nations system had limitations in enabling a long-term approach to the protracted crisis, and in addressing underlying development constraints in host countries which are critical for a comprehensive and conflict-sensitive refugee response. The argument that middle-income host countries will fund their development activities does not hold in the context of an enormous refugee influx which must be included in development efforts.

The narrative of a resilience approach underpinning national 3RP responses is evolving. While UNDP prioritized engagement in coordination, it has yet to position itself with a strong value proposition to promote medium- to long-term resilience approaches. The 3RP at the country level continues to operate in a mode that is most suitable during immediate crisis response, undermining a holistic approach to sustainably address the development consequences of the Syrian refugee crisis response. A related issue that needs wider discussion among humanitarian agencies is the longer humanitarian programme windows that are now sidling into development programme windows with implications for resilience and durable solutions for refugees and host communities alike.

The 3RP did not address the issue of safe return, an important but at the same time politically sensitive and contentious issue. The Brussels conferences on support to Syrian crisis response have been consistent in emphasizing that there will not be any support for a safe return unless outstanding political issues in Syria are resolved. In all host countries, there was tension between the refugees and host communities accompanied by intermittent political posturings. There were minimal advocacy efforts by the 3RP in bringing into the Brussels deliberations the issues of a safe and voluntary return. As the global experiences of refugee crises have shown,

the longer the delay in addressing the issue of safe return, the lesser the possibility of returning to the home country.

Conclusion 7. With exceptions across the 3RP countries, private sector engagement received limited attention and is a critical gap in host community and refugee support. The low scale and slow pace of UNDP private sector engagement impacted efforts towards more sustainable solutions.

Private sector development and engagement that are well adapted to address resilience and humanitarian challenges, create employment of scale and catalyse municipal development are critical to crisis response. While there are examples of private sector partnerships across UNDP programmes, a more structured approach to private sector development is in the early stages and has yet to be strategically pursued. This impacted the scope of UNDP responses and the nature of outcomes for the host communities and refugees. As the UNDP support for improving competitiveness in Turkey shows, the private sector can play an important role in creating jobs of scale. Such examples have yet to be scaled up by UNDP.

The UNDP comparative advantage in policy development and programme implementation provides it avenues to play an interface role for the private sector with government. While UNDP corporately has shown a commitment to private sector development, it is not addressed in refugee and host community programming, even in the Syrian refugee crisis response which is predominantly in middle-income countries, reducing the UNDP contribution. The host countries present varied policy and development contexts which necessitate innovative private sector finance tools. UNDP lacked country-level strategies for sector-specific engagement to derisk the policy space. The scale of UNDP private sector engagement continues to be low when compared to the possibilities the country contexts present.

Conclusion 8. The UNDP contribution to furthering gender equality and women's empowerment in refugee response reflects the lack of priority to this

area. Specific measures to address institutional gaps and other capacity challenges in gender-inclusive policies and programmes that would benefit both host communities and refugees were not prioritized.

UNDP paid attention to including women as recipients of its support across interventions, at times exceeding the expectations set out in the results frameworks. However, efforts to systematically address constraints in enabling gender-inclusive policy frameworks and resource investments for mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment are lacking. Limitations were especially apparent in contexts where there were enormous gender-related challenges that needed comprehensive solutions for achieving peacebuilding and development outcomes.

UNDP has yet to clarify its role and contribution to gender-inclusive programming and practice in crisis contexts and how this will be pursued. There is considerable scope for strengthening strategic partnerships in advocacy efforts and addressing institutional constraints. While there are joint projects, partnerships between UNDP and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) lack a strategic work programme that identifies their respective roles and division of labour to enhance the overall contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Addressing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in crisis contexts, including refugee contexts, is critical to achieving the SDGs. UNDP should now invest resources to provide thought leadership in promoting practical humanitarian-development-peace nexus approaches at the country level.

UNDP should outline its corporate strategy for engagement in protracted crises that affect refugees and the areas and approaches it will prioritize. UNDP should clarify the concepts it offers, invest resources in their operationalization and take specific measures to promote them for

wider use. Steps should be taken to ensure that the UNDP resilience offering promotes linkages with humanitarian response rather than as a parallel activity. Measures also should be taken to strengthen regional strategies to comprehensively address protracted refugee crises and their interface with conflict.

Recommendation 2. UNDP should build on its 3RP experience on municipal assessments to prioritize data and subnational assessments that would inform humanitarian, development and nexus initiatives as well as the consolidation of data for the SDGs.

Learning from the 3RP experience, in conflict and refugee contexts, UNDP should prioritize support to SDG data as well as the capacities to collect, manage, analyse and feed the data into policy processes. UNDP has supported the development and conflict-sensitivity analysis at the municipal level in countries hosting refugees but needs a streamlined approach to institutionalize data collection processes and ensure uniformity and quality to be able to link them to the SDGs and policy processes. UNDP should forge corporate-level collaborations with United Nations agencies to avoid duplication of efforts at the country and local levels.

Recommendation 3. UNDP should play a catalytic role in enabling private sector solutions to promote the resilience of both host communities and Syrian refugees. UNDP should develop private sector country strategies as its 3RP offering, to address context-specific issues and institutional bottlenecks; and develop mechanisms to derisk the policy environment to facilitate investments for sustainable livelihoods and employment.

The UNDP corporate private sector strategy was approved recently and assessments were carried out to inform its engagement with the private sector in crisis contexts. Moving forward, UNDP should be consistent in the implementation of private sector development initiatives in 3RP countries, prioritizing this as a key offering. UNDP should strengthen its capacities to increase the pace of its engagement with appropriate tools, particularly in contexts of

conflict in the least developed countries. UNDP should adapt tools for engaging the private sector in value chain development and investment in the service sector and where possible, leverage impact investment, capacities and policy frameworks. UNDP should partner with financial intermediaries that are expanding their businesses in areas of UNDP support.

One of the areas of UNDP strength in 3RP countries is substantive engagement at the local level, which should be used to leverage private sector engagement in addressing development challenges. To be successful, there should be considerable flexibility in the use of tools, combining long-term goals with short-term milestones.

Recommendation 4. UNDP should consolidate partnerships with UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies to promote approaches based on the humanitarian-development nexus in the Syrian refugee crisis response. UNDP and UNHCR have embarked upon a significant partnership to bridge the humanitarian-development divide and there is need for continued commitment to further strengthen this alliance.

UNDP should further consolidate partnerships with UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies to promote programming based on the humanitarian-development nexus in 3RP countries and reduce compartmentalization of refugee-related development support and other development programming in the country.

The joint UNHCR-UNDP action plan is an important step forward in outlining areas of global and country-level collaboration. The action plan should clarify the way forward in enabling linkages between development and humanitarian initiatives at the country level, rather than programmes in two areas implemented in parallel. Lessons from 3RP will be important, particularly in developing common outcomes for future collaborations at the country level. UNDP should clarify expectations regarding its resource investments and explore cost-sharing mechanisms.

Recommendation 5. UNDP jointly with UNHCR should consider scaling down the 3RP architecture so it is fit for purpose.

An almost decade-long crisis response needs catalytic initiatives and advocacy that demonstrate a holistic approach to humanitarian challenges rather than investments primarily in a heavy 3RP coordination mechanism. Refocusing the 3RP and anchoring it in medium- to longer-term development outcomes would enable durable solutions for refugees and sustainable outcomes for the host countries. Such refocusing may necessitate alternate structures, strategic selection of intervention areas and a renewed resource mobilization agenda. Leveraging 3RP resources for additional private sector financing should be prioritized.

Recommendation 6. UNDP should build partnerships to boost the scale and scope of support for gender-related initiatives. Resource constraints in addressing gender equality in refugee response are no different than challenges in development programming.

UNDP should outline sectoral areas where it will have consistent engagement. A sectoral focus will enable UNDP to provide well-tested transformative solutions, engage the private sector and build partnerships for enhanced gender outcomes.

Support for gender equality and women's empowerment needs resources. UNDP has been a pioneer in institutionalizing measures such as the minimum budget of 15 percent of programme resources for gender programming in crisis contexts, which is now a United Nations system-wide policy. UNDP should follow the standards it set and take measures to strengthen organizational capacities to respond appropriately to gender challenges.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and purpose

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has evaluated UNDP support to the Syrian refugee crisis response and promoting an integrated resilience approach. Part of the IEO workplan approved by the Executive Board at its first regular session of 2018,¹ the evaluation assessed the contribution of UNDP to the Syrian refugee crisis response, the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), at the national and regional levels.² While the primary focus of the evaluation was the Syrian refugee crisis response, for a broader understanding of UNDP support to refugee response, the evaluation also assessed the UNDP positioning and approaches in its response to other refugee crises. The evaluation assessed the extent to which the humanitarian-development nexus and resilience-based development approaches have underpinned the Syrian refugee crisis response framework as well as other UNDP refugee responses and corporate frameworks.

The evaluation will contribute to the consolidation of the Syrian refugee crisis response as well as the development of corporate programming and strategy for refugee response. The evaluation will strengthen the accountability of UNDP to global, regional and national programme partners and the Executive Board. The evaluation will be presented to the Executive Board at the first regular session of 2021.³

Refugee crises globally are not only increasing in scale but are protracted and have significant development consequences. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are currently more than 79.5 million people displaced worldwide—the highest number on record since statistics on refugees have been collected.⁴ Since 2010, at least 15 conflicts have significantly increased the number of refugees, with the Syrian Arab Republic (hereinafter Syria), Afghanistan and Somalia contributing half of the refugee population (this is excluding Palestinian refugees). Although not of the same scale as the Syrian crisis, other refugee crises originating in Sudan, South Sudan, Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic and Venezuela have slowed both the pace of development and efforts in addressing conflict drivers.⁵ In addition to the significant needs of the refugee populations, host countries are facing equally daunting development challenges of their own. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and subsequent intergovernmental agreements such as the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants,⁶ the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration,⁷ and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), have enhanced efforts to bridge the humanitarian and development divide.

¹ Independent Evaluation Office workplan (2018-2021), Executive Board document [DP/2018/4](#).

² Although initially envisaged, this evaluation could not be carried out jointly with UNHCR because of differing evaluation schedules. UNHCR completed its evaluation in 2018.

³ The evaluation was carried out within the framework of UNDP Evaluation Policy (<http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/Evaluation-Policy.pdf>) and United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards (http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=22).

⁴ Figures at a Glance, UNHCR.

⁵ Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and Greece in the case of the Syrian refugee crisis, Bangladesh in the case of Rohingya crisis, Niger, and neighbouring States in the case of Lake Chad Basin.

⁶ New York Declaration, see https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/1

⁷ Global Compact on Refugees and Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, see https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf and https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/73/195

BOX 1. Concepts as used by the evaluation

- Refugees— According to the 1951 Convention Related to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, refugees are persons who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, are outside the country of their nationality and are unable or, owing to such fear, are unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of their former habitual residence as a result of such events, are unable or, owing to such fear, are unwilling to return to it.
- Humanitarian-development nexus: Although there is no common definition of the concept, it broadly entails working collaboratively across institutional boundaries based on comparative advantages to build on the synergies of humanitarian and development support.
- Resilience: The ability of individuals, households, communities, cities, institutions, systems and societies to prevent, resist, absorb, adapt, respond and recover positively, efficiently and effectively when faced with a wide range of risks, while maintaining an acceptable level of functioning and without compromising long-term prospects for sustainable development, peace and security, human rights and well-being for all (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination).
- Resilience-based development entails support to communities and institutions to respond to increased demand and pressure (“coping”), promote household recovery from the negative impacts of the crisis (“recovering”) and strengthen local and national economic, social systems to protect development gains from current and future shocks (“transforming”).⁸
- Durable solutions are enabling refugees to rebuild their lives and live their lives in dignity and peace. This hinges on three durable solutions, viz., local integration, resettlement and voluntary repatriation.⁹

UNDP supports a total of about 40 countries that are hosting refugees and/or are countries of origin. This support is designed to strengthen

government processes and capacities to address the developmental consequences of the influx of refugees on the host communities; facilitate measures for the inclusion of refugees in national development planning; support refugees and host communities; and improve conditions for the refugees. The Syrian refugee crisis is a humanitarian emergency resulting from conflict in the country of refugee origin, which impacted countries hosting refugees. In other cases, such as in the Lake Chad Basin, the impact of a changing climate is an additional factor.

The term “refugee” is often a sensitive political issue for host countries and communities “as it entails obligations under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, more so if the country is a signatory.¹⁰ Some countries use other terms which are less obligatory, for example, “Syrians under temporary protection” in Turkey, or “forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals” in the case of the Rohingya. For uniformity, the term refugee/s is used here for situations of asylum-seeking and related forced displacement.¹¹ In the case of the Venezuelan refugee crisis, the evaluation refers to it as a mixed flow of refugees and migrants.

1.2 Objectives and scope

As a result of the conflict in Syria, there are 5.6 million refugees in the region, severely impacting neighbouring Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan and to a lesser extent Iraq, Egypt and some European Union countries.¹² UNDP supported national and local governments in the countries hosting refugees, in a diversity of contexts, to address the development impacts of the crisis. UNDP along with UNHCR coordinated the 3RP, which provided a framework for the activities of United Nations and other agencies at the regional and country levels, to address the humanitarian and development issues simultaneously,

⁸ United Nations Development Group, 2014. A resilience-based development response to the Syria crisis, a Position Paper, <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/SyriaResponse/A%20resilience-based%20development%20response%20to%20the%20Syria%20crisis.pdf>; Sarah Bailey and Veronique Barbelet, 2014. Towards a resilience based response to the Syrian refugee crisis: A critical review of vulnerability criteria and frameworks. UNDP.

⁹ UNHCR <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/solutions.html>

¹⁰ Persons recognized as refugees by States under the eligibility criteria in Article 1 of the 1951 Convention and entitled to the enjoyment of a variety of rights under that treaty. See Convention and Protocol Relating to the status of refugees, 1951, <https://www.unhcr.org/5d9ed32b4>

¹¹ See Convention and Protocol Relating to the status of refugees, 1951, <https://www.unhcr.org/5d9ed32b4>

¹² UNHCR, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria#_ga=2.99930974.1756418787.1600700746-1954629203.1581881321

using a resilience approach. The 3RP is considered a paradigm shift from predominantly humanitarian regional refugee response plans. The 3RP integrated humanitarian and resilience interventions in a single response platform. It brings coherence across country crisis response plans and was designed to cover the needs of refugees and host communities. This evaluation assessed UNDP strategies, response mechanisms, partnerships and achievements with regard to the Syrian refugee crisis response at the regional and country levels for the period 2015-2019.

To have a broader understanding of the UNDP refugee response approach, the evaluation also considered the UNDP approach in other refugee crises: Rohingya refugees from Myanmar (2017-2019), the Lake Chad Basin (2016-2019) and Venezuelan refugees (2017-2019). Consideration of these crises is not meant to be a comparison with the Syrian crisis, but rather to provide a broader understanding of the UNDP refugee crisis response.

The main objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Assess the role and contribution of UNDP in countries affected by the Syrian refugee crisis
- Assess the contribution of the 3RP in enhancing a coordinated response to the Syrian refugee crisis
- Identify the factors that have affected the UNDP contribution
- Assess the extent to which the UNDP resilience-based development approach has bridged the humanitarian and development divide
- Assess the extent to which the corporate approach has built upon the 3RP and the resilience-based development approaches

The evaluation covered Syrian refugee crisis response programmes in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt for the period 2015-2019. The evaluation assessed the 3RP coordination structure and key streams of the UNDP country-level response (i.e., livelihoods and employment opportunities, service delivery, energy, social cohesion at the country level, strengthening national capacities). The evaluation covered UNDP regional and national

contributions to the 3RP in terms of leadership, coordination, partnerships, funding and advocacy, building on four Independent Country Programme Evaluations (ICPEs) conducted by the IEO in 2019 in Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria. The evaluation carried out a case study and field visit for the UNDP Syrian refugee crisis response in Jordan and a desk study of the response in Egypt.

Desk studies were carried out on the UNDP positioning and approaches used in the response to the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh; Venezuelan refugee/migration crisis in Peru and Ecuador; and the Lake Chad Basin in Cameroon, Chad and Niger. Although some of the UNDP initiatives are not explicitly labelled as responding to refugee or displacement crises, they were implemented in areas with an influx of refugees, to address both refugee and host community local services and livelihood challenges and related institutional capacity development.

In making the overall assessment of the UNDP contribution, the evaluation examined the conceptualization of an integrated resilience-based development approach as an overarching regional strategy to address protracted refugee and displacement situations. The underlying assumption is that a resilience dimension to development strengthens host countries and communities to address their development challenges and accelerate sustainable solutions more effectively. The improvement in the absorption capacities of the host countries and communities in employment and social services will in turn increase the probability of more durable solutions for the refugees. The evaluation examined how UNDP corporate approaches, guidance and practice have incorporated a resilience approach as well as the contribution of UNDP to global policy debates and advocacy.

1.3 Approach and methodology

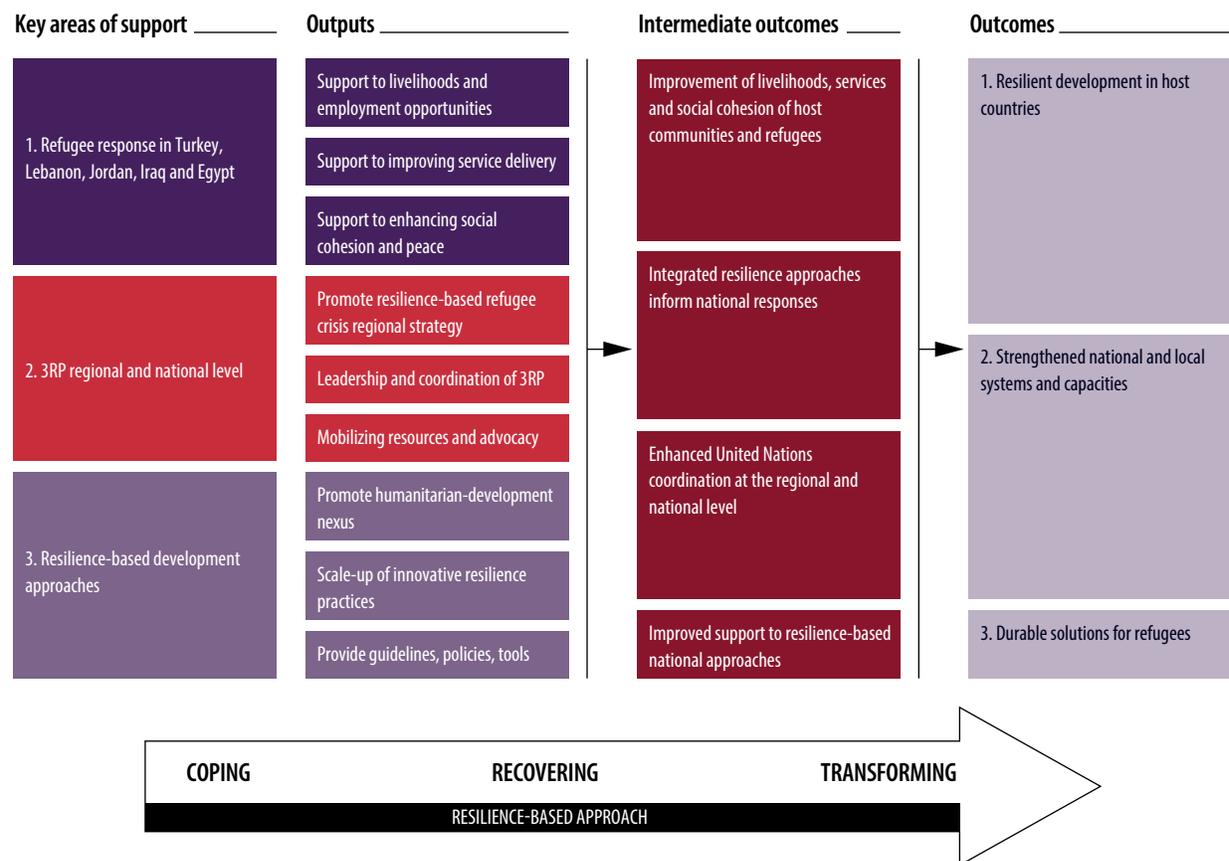
The evaluation has developed a theory of change for determining the UNDP contribution to countries affected by the Syrian refugee crisis. The theory of change provides a framework for assessing three outcomes: resilient development in host countries; strengthened national and local systems and

capacities; and durable solutions for refugees. The theory of change is schematically presented in Figure 1.

The theory of change distinguishes between immediate, intermediate and long-term outcomes, recognizing that some of the components are iterative. UNDP initiatives result in intermediate outcomes,

which comprise initiatives to strengthen humanitarian and development linkages and resilient national development policies, processes and programmes for the social and economic development of refugees and host communities. The line of accountability of UNDP programmes was considered to be at the intermediate outcome level.

FIGURE 1. A theory of change for assessing the UNDP contribution



Source: Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP

The evaluation recognizes that while UNDP contributes to programme outcomes, such as the resilient development of host communities, reinforced national and local capacities and the resilience of affected populations, the extent of achievement depends on a range of factors beyond the scope of UNDP support. Beyond the intermediate outcome, the UNDP contribution must be considered as part of complex,

multi-causal pathways of refugee response and the strengthening of resilience outcomes. Given the complexity of the refugee crisis and the diversity of national-level contexts, the level of visibility of UNDP programme outcomes or results achieved is not uniform. There are differences in the scale and scope of UNDP support as well as in the continuity of its engagement across and the involved countries. The theory of change presumes that the scope

and scale of UNDP programmes are reasonably sufficient to contribute to intermediate outcomes.

The evaluation considers the contribution to four key outcomes for refugee response and resilience support: (a) contribution to improved livelihoods, services and social cohesion of host communities and Syrian refugees; (b) contribution of resilience approaches to addressing development and migration challenges; (c) contribution to 3RP and joint United Nations efforts; and (d) corporate learning to respond to other migration and displacement crises. The line of accountability of UNDP programmes is however considered in this evaluation to be at the intermediate outcome level. Beyond the intermediate outcome, the UNDP contribution will be considered as part of complex, multi-causal pathways of refugee response and strengthening resilience outcomes. The evaluation will, therefore, be giving more emphasis to the immediate and intermediate outcomes where the contribution of UNDP programmes is more likely to be evident. The theory of change, however,

leaves the possibility to establish different levels of contribution to outcomes and results, wherever it takes place; and enables an understanding at which level the contribution of UNDP has been greater.

1.4 Data collection and analysis

The evaluation methodology adheres to the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards. Mixed methods for data collection, both qualitative and quantitative, were used to gather evidence. These included desk reviews; financial flows and trend analysis; country missions; and interviews with key stakeholders including community visits and interviews with the beneficiaries. The data collected from multiple sources were triangulated before applying the analysis tools presented below. An abridged theory of change was developed at the preparatory stage. The evaluation was carried out in a phased manner between February 2019 and June 2020. Table 1 summarizes the evaluation questions and key parameters used in the evaluation.

TABLE 1. Key parameters of the evaluation and what is judged

Key parameters	What is judged
Programme positioning for improved contribution to livelihoods, services and social cohesion for host communities and refugees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The extent to which the refugee context and special development situations are taken into consideration by UNDP 2. The extent to which the programmes respond to national priorities in addressing the refugee situation 3. The extent to which UNDP strategies were appropriate in supporting host countries and communities and addressing gaps in refugee response 4. The positioning of UNDP to promote gender equality in refugee response and host community support 5. The positioning of UNDP to promote global and regional debates on resilience and the humanitarian-development nexus
Contribution to strengthening national (and local) capacities and institutional processes in the Syrian refugee crisis response	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The contribution of UNDP to strengthening government capacities 2. Specific approaches used by UNDP to enable sustainable institutional capacities and strengthening 3. Contextual and programming factors that facilitated or constrained the UNDP contribution 4. Emphasis given to gender-sensitive, protection and inclusive approaches in refugee response

Contribution of resilience approaches to addressing development drivers of refugee response	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The extent of promotion of resilience approaches to address development issues in the host countries that had implications for the refugee response 2. The extent to which UNDP resilience-based programme choices enabled bridging the humanitarian-development nexus and improved sustainable development outcomes
Contribution to 3RP and joint United Nations coordination efforts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The relevance of the 3RP strategy at the regional and national levels 2. Contribution of UNDP to 3RP coordination and defining a 3RP resilience-building strategy 3. The extent to which UNDP has taken a leadership and coordination role in promoting resilience in the Syrian refugee crisis response 4. The extent of the UNDP contribution to joint United Nations efforts

Data collection instruments

The evaluation included multiple methods and took an iterative approach to gather multiple perspectives to measure UNDP performance. A multi-stakeholder consultation process was followed, and the consultations included a range of development actors at the country level. Protocols were developed for each method to ensure rigour in data collection and analysis.

- *Document review:* The evaluators reviewed a wide range of UNDP policy and programme documents; independent and quality-assessed decentralized evaluations; credible external reviews; and reports on UNDP performance (i.e., Syrian refugee crisis-response management analyses, country-level results-oriented annual reports and performance factor analyses; refugee crises programme and management reports). The evaluation reviewed strategies, studies and documents on refugee response and the humanitarian-development nexus from national Governments, non-State actors and international agencies. See Annex 2 for a full list of the documents consulted.
- *Meta-analysis* of relevant UNDP decentralized evaluations (project/outcome, country programme and thematic) since 2013; 34 evaluations were analysed for specific insights on refugee response and promotion of a resilience approach.
- *Desk studies* of the refugee crises in Egypt (Syrian refugees); Lake Chad Basin (Niger, Chad, Nigeria and Cameroon); Myanmar and Bangladesh (Rohingya); and Venezuela (Peru and Ecuador) to broaden the evaluative evidence of the UNDP refugee response approach, contribution and related processes.

- *Country studies:* In-depth country studies were undertaken in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey as part of the ICPEs as well as a country case study to assess the Syrian refugee crisis response in Jordan. The country studies are not intended to draw generalizations about the UNDP contribution but rather to provide further insights into processes and outcomes, and factors impacting the UNDP performance and contribution to refugee and host community resilience. The country case studies covered the entire range of refugee and host community support of UNDP.
- *Interviews* were conducted at the country, regional and headquarters levels to get the perspective of representatives of the Governments, United Nations agencies, donors and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs); in-country interviews were conducted with United Nations and UNDP management and programme staff, as well as other stakeholders. (See Annex 3 for a full list of the individuals interviewed.)

Data analysis instruments

The evaluation used a rating scale for analysis to determine the strength of the evidence collected, weighted scoring, quantification of the meta-analysis of evaluations and a rubric for determining the resilience approach.

Strength of evidence: The evaluation used a three-point rating system (strong/high, medium/moderate, low/weak) to rate the strength of evidence used to answer the evaluation questions. For the Syrian refugee crisis response assessment, there was strong evidence with four comprehensive ICPEs (Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey), a case study for Jordan and a desk study for Egypt.

When determining the overall strength of the evidence, attention was paid to ascertaining the influential issues that emerged and reasons for ascribing more or less strength to particular evidence; and acknowledging when there was concurrence or contradiction among pieces of evidence.

Approach to a weighted scoring: The evaluation used weighted ratings to assess UNDP contributions, for systematizing analysis and for consistency of assessment across countries. This enabled the evaluation to distinguish between context-related variations and UNDP programme approaches and to map patterns in cross-country analyses. Weights aggregating to 100 percent were assigned to the judgment considerations for each question. The positioning of UNDP global and regional policy advocacy and enabling partnerships was given a weight of 25 percent, contribution to national capacity development a weight of 30 percent, contribution to promoting resilience-based approaches a weight of 25 percent, and coordination and convening role a weight of 20 percent. A four-point scale was used for rating the five parameters used for assessment (where performance was 1 for Poor, 2 for Average, 3 for Good and 4 for High). The ratings are not stand-alone assessments but were used to substantiate qualitative judgments. Annex 4 presents further details about the scoring.

Evaluation criteria, key parameters and a set of evaluation questions and judgment considerations were used to arrive at ratings for the UNDP contributions to addressing refugee and host community challenges. Multiplying the individual evaluation scores by the weight and aggregating the results yielded the overall scores for rating programme performance for the five parameters. Before applying scores, the evaluation established a degree of confidence in the evidence and findings to minimize errors in applying ratings and appropriately using evidence in arriving at the UNDP contributions.

Analysis of the resilience approach: Using a set of parameters, the evaluation assessed the use and

application of the resilience approach in refugee and host community support at the community, local and national levels and its promotion in the 3RP.¹³ The parameters for analysing the application of the resilience approach are: anchoring 3RP programmes in national systems; strengthened policy process; institutional capacities at the national and local levels; integration of refugee issues in development processes; sustainable and durable solutions; and diversifying development financing. The parameters used for promotion of the resilience approach in 3RP were: a shared understanding of the resilience approach; the resilience approach applied to both humanitarian and development interventions (mutually reinforcing humanitarian and development programmes); strengthened coordination of resilience initiatives to promote linkages, programme collaboration and common outcomes; shared measurement approaches; adaptive capacity to adjust the design and implementation; and flexibility in funding including multi-year funding. In Lebanon, responding to the contextual realities and sensitivities, UNDP used a stabilization approach instead of a resilience approach, although the emphasis on resilience was there.

1.5 Structure of the report

The report is organized as follows: Chapter 2 sets the global programme context regarding refugee crises in different regions and how they evolved. Chapter 3 reviews the specific UNDP response to the Syrian refugee crisis and other key corporate programmatic strategies used in other refugee settings. Chapter 4 presents key findings on the contributions of UNDP to refugee responses based on the evaluation criteria and factors explaining performance. It also elaborates the extent to which corporate learning has taken place and has guided the UNDP response in other refugee and migration crises and presents findings on how UNDP programmes addressed principles such as gender equality and women's empowerment. Chapter 5 sets out the conclusions and recommendations.

¹³ The resilience lens was introduced as part of the planning process for 2016 and is now in its third year of use. It provides sector working groups with a set of four key criteria to use as they develop their sector response plans. See also for resilience-based approach: A position paper on Resilience-Based Approach, 2013. http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/SyriaResponse/UNDP_Resilience-3RP_final-lowres.pdf

REFUGEE CRISES AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

2.1 Scale of refugee crises

Globally, displacement levels have significantly increased in the past decade. According to UNHCR, the global displaced population rose from 43.3 million people in 2009 to 79.5 million people in 2019. The number of refugees has been growing for seven consecutive years, reaching a new high of 25.9 million at the start of 2019.¹⁴ This includes 45.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), 26.0 million refugees and 4.2 million asylum seekers.¹⁵ In 2019, five countries of origin accounted for over two thirds of the world's refugees: Syria (6.6 million); Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (hereinafter Venezuela) (3.6 million); Afghanistan (2.7 million); South Sudan (2.2 million); and Myanmar (1.1 million). In 2019, an estimated 11.0 million people were newly displaced due to conflict or persecution, which corresponds to an average of over 30,000 new displacements per day.¹⁶

Overall, the number of refugees, IDPs and asylum seekers has dramatically increased in the last 10 years – almost doubling between 2010 and 2019 (see Figure 2). This is in part due to an increase in the duration of displacement situations in recent

years. Many refugee crises have become protracted situations, defined by UNHCR as “25,000 or more refugees from the same nationality [who] have been in exile for five or more years in a given asylum country.”¹⁷ At the end of 2019, UNHCR recorded 51 protracted refugee situations, with over 15.7 million refugees in 32 host countries.

Developing countries are more impacted by refugee influx, with the Syrian and Venezuelan crises skewing this trend. Over 40 percent of the refugee population is in lower-middle-income and low-income countries.¹⁸ The Syrian refugee crisis has increased the number of refugees in middle-income countries. For the sixth consecutive year, Turkey hosted the largest refugee population in the world, with 3.6 million people, followed by Colombia (1.8 million), Pakistan (1.4 million), Uganda (1.4 million) and Germany (1.1 million). Displacement has also increased in other regions such as the Middle East and Central Africa due to violence. Low-income countries host about 20 percent of the refugees, representing a significant burden given the multiple crises and high poverty levels in a majority of these countries.

¹⁴ OECD, 'Responding to Refugee Crises in Developing Countries: What Can We Learn from Evaluations', OECD Working Paper No 37, 2017. See: <https://doi.org/10.1787/ae4362bd-en>

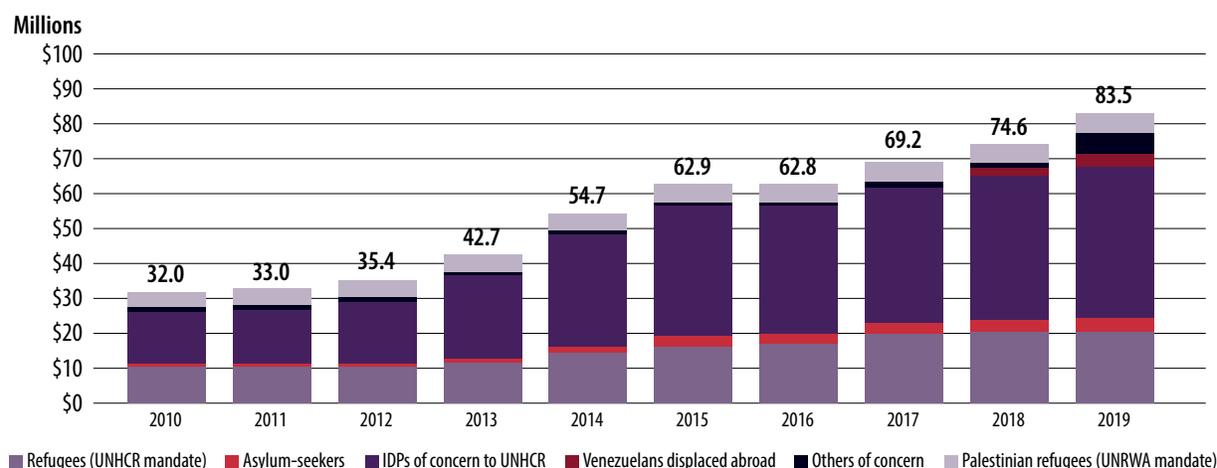
¹⁵ <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2019/>

¹⁷ UNHCR, Global Trends – Forced Displacement in 2019, 2020. See: <https://www.unhcr.org/5ee200e37.pdf>

¹⁸ Ibid.

FIGURE 2. Trends in global forced displacement, 2010-2019 (millions US\$)



Source: UNHCR (2020) Global Trends – Forced Displacement 2019; UNRWA population statistics (2020).

UNRWA = United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

Note: Venezuelans displaced abroad included in “others of concern” prior to 2017.

While the principles for host countries were established by the 1951 Refugee Convention and further international agreements, the implementation of policies regarding refugee hosting have varied across countries, with some countries having an open-door policy while others restrict refugee inflows or contain their presence geographically. Yet movements remain fluid and cannot be fully monitored or controlled. Although the international community has decades of experience responding to refugee crises of different natures, the Syrian crisis presented some unique characteristics or new trends which challenged the responses. For instance, the Syrian crisis involved neighbouring middle-income countries. This meant that national and local governments already had capacities in place in terms of public service delivery and infrastructure, lessening the need to create parallel humanitarian service delivery structures.

Although relief efforts originally focused on temporarily displaced populations living in camps, modern protracted refugee crises have underlined the need for a different response. In many places, the majority of refugees reside in non-camp

settings, dispersed across urban and peri-urban areas among host communities. These dynamics can be seen in the countries neighbouring Syria and in East and Central Africa, Pakistan, Central America or in the response to the Venezuelan crisis, among others, where refugees and displaced people are increasingly organized in formal and informal settlements in urban areas. Some refugees attempt to blend in with the host communities and are reluctant to register. This has represented important challenges to reach them on the part of the international community, whose tools, methods and approaches had to be adapted.

The displacement and refugee crises are part of other complex crises. For example, since 2014, the Lake Chad Basin crisis has affected some of the world’s poorest and most vulnerable people in Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad. The Boko Haram insurgency that started in 2005 by armed groups in Nigeria escalated in North-Eastern Nigeria and the region in 2014-2015.¹⁹ The crisis, caused by non-State armed groups, the onset of violent communal clashes and climate change, has led to the forced displacement of nearly 4.5 million people, including

¹⁹ UNDP, ‘Resilience for Sustainable Development in the Lake Chad Basin’, 2018.

IDPs, returnees and refugees.²⁰ In addition to driving factors around marginalization, weak governance and lagging human development, the conflict is exacerbated by the environmental degradation of the Lake Chad ecosystem. Once one of the largest freshwater bodies in Africa – supporting around 30 million livelihoods – the lake has shrunk by 90 percent in the last 60 years, due to water over usage, drought and climate change. This situation gave rise to increasing conflicts between farmers and herders as natural resources were lost and livelihoods destroyed. With the affected countries now battling both the armed groups of Boko Haram and the drying of the lake, the Lake Chad Basin crisis highlights the nexus around environment, conflict and poverty.

In Bangladesh, the high concentration of Rohingya refugees is putting intense pressure on the local host communities and existing facilities. The Kutupalong refugee settlement has grown to become the largest in the world, with over 600,000 people living in an area of only 13 square kilometres.²¹ This extremely high density, and the evolution of other spontaneous settlements, have raised concerns over the lack of adequate shelter, water and sanitation, access to basic services and personal safety. These precarious circumstances are further exacerbated by the heavy impacts of seasonal monsoons and cyclones, as well as by the proneness to diseases, including coronavirus disease (COVID-19), leading to United Nations agencies reporting that Rohingya refugees are “more vulnerable than ever” in 2020.²²

2.2 Intergovernmental efforts

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs emphasized attention on the humanitarian-development nexus. The 2030 Agenda acknowledges that “conflict and related

humanitarian crises and forced displacement of people threaten to reverse much of the development progress made in recent decades”.²³ The SDGs consider forced displacement, as well as the welfare of IDPs and refugees, as development challenges that need greater investment and efforts from the international community. Increasingly, the concept of resilience is providing a framework for cooperation between humanitarian and development actors to tackle protracted refugee crises. In the “formulation of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, the principle of ‘leaving no one behind’ will require both development and humanitarian actors to work together to address the needs of the most vulnerable and to create conditions for building resilient States and societies.”²⁴

The increase in the scale and number of protracted refugee crises has started to receive more intense attention from the international community. The World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016 was a landmark global United Nations humanitarian conference which brought together the humanitarian community with other actors working in development, peacebuilding and peacekeeping to argue for a more coherent approach and durable solutions.²⁵ Within the SDG framework, the summit was successful in bringing more attention to some of the long-standing and unresolved challenges to making humanitarian assistance more effective, including how to forge better linkages between humanitarian approaches and longer-term development. While there is no wide consensus among humanitarian agencies on the summit proposals, there is an acceptance that humanitarian response in isolation cannot be effective.

In 2016, led by the United Nations, the international community adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants²⁶ and developed the Global

²⁰ International Organization for Migration, 2019. With and beyond borders: Tracking displacement in Lake Chad Basin. <file:///C:/Users/vijayalakshmi.vadive/Downloads/LCBC%20Regional%20DTM%20-%20Human%20Mobility%20Analysis%20-%20March%202019.pdf>

²¹ See UNHCR, ‘Rohingya emergency’, <https://www.unhcr.org/rohingya-emergency.html>

²² See <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/08/1070962>

²³ The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/7891TRANSFORMING%20OUR%20WORLD.pdf>

²⁴ Mowjee, Garassi and Poole, ‘Coherence in conflict: Bringing humanitarian and development streams together’, Danida, 2015, p.13.

²⁵ World Humanitarian Summit, see <https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/resources/world-humanitarian-summit>

²⁶ New York Declaration, see https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/1

Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration²⁷ to shape the global policy agenda to facilitate safe and beneficial migration. The New York Declaration highlighted the need to protect and uphold human rights principles regardless of migratory status. The Global Compact on Refugees is implemented through the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), piloted in six Latin American countries, eight African countries and Afghanistan.²⁸ The CRRF in many ways demonstrates a global commitment to support local and national institutions and communities receiving refugees and to expand opportunities for solutions.²⁹ The four key objectives of the CRRF are to ease the pressures on host countries; enhance refugee self-reliance; expand access to third-country solutions; and support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity. Amid populist backlashes to refugees and migrants across Europe as well as in the United States, the attempt to create more humane refugee policies through efforts like the Global Compact raised hopes for a new direction. Initiatives such as CRRF assume significance to break the humanitarian silo in refugee response addressed separately from development planning. An issue in achieving coherence among humanitarian and development programmes that remains to be addressed is the divergence in programme principles and approaches and more importantly, significant funding differences often in favour of humanitarian programmes.

2.3 Syrian refugee crisis and international response

The Syrian crisis, which started in March 2011, has marked an inflexion point in the international community in terms of humanitarian and development responses, refugee displacement and migration. As the Syrian crisis enters its tenth year, the conflict's complex, protracted nature has led to the largest refugee displacement in the world and huge humanitarian and development impacts. The displacement and movement of Syrians have been massive, with almost 6.6 million Syrian refugees registered for asylum in bordering countries and 6.2 million displaced within Syria.

The United Nations Security Council has adopted 23 resolutions on Syria since 2012, demanding that all parties take all appropriate steps to protect civilians and stressing that "the only sustainable solution to the current crisis in Syria is through an inclusive and Syrian-led political process that meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people".³⁰ These calls urged parties to adhere to the principles of "Syria's unity, independence, territorial integrity and non-sectarian character".³¹ As mandated by Security Council resolution 2254 (2015),³² the United Nations has convened eight rounds of intra-Syrian talks since 2016 to achieve a military ceasefire and find a political solution to the conflict.³³ Most of the discussions focused "on governance, a schedule

²⁷ Global Compact on Refugees and Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, see https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf and https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/73/195

²⁸ UNHCR Evaluation Service, Two Year Progress Assessment of the CRRF Approach, 2018. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/5c63ff144.pdf>

²⁹ Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, Annex I to United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/71/1, 2016. See https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/1

³⁰ S/RES/2254 (2015) at [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2254\(2015\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2254(2015))

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ <https://news.un.org/en/focus/syria>

and process to draft a new constitution and the holding of elections as the basis for a Syrian-led, Syrian-owned process to end the conflict".³⁴ Some resolutions established a mechanism to assist in the investigation and prosecution of those responsible for the most serious crimes under international law committed in Syria since March 2011;³⁵ authorized cross-border and cross-line humanitarian access to Syria; established sanctions to specific individuals; and condemned the destruction of cultural heritage, among others. However, different international efforts to broker a ceasefire have been unsuccessful and hostilities continue in some parts of the country.

As needs increased in the countries hosting refugees, many forums and international donor conferences have taken place to promote continuity of assistance and avoid funding shortages. In January 2013, Kuwait hosted the first pledging conference which raised US\$1.5 billion in pledges, of which \$915 million was confirmed. United Nations inter-agency humanitarian appeals for the Syria regional response have ranged in the billions of dollars, starting at \$488 million in 2012 and quickly increasing to \$2.98 billion in 2013, \$3.74 billion in 2014, \$4.32 billion in 2015 and up to \$5.4 billion in 2020. Conferences held in Kuwait (2013, 2015), London (2016) and Brussels (2017, 2019) renewed the political, humanitarian and financial commitments of the international community. Advocacy efforts increased contributions from \$375 million in 2012 to \$2.3 billion in 2019.³⁶

Despite strong calls to action, appeals remained underfunded. Donor support has averaged 60 percent of the total funding needs but varied across components. There remains a gap in the appeal funding and the unmet requirements. The unmet requirements increased from 27 percent in

2013 to 46 percent in 2017, to 77 percent in 2020 (See Annex for the figure on appeal funding and unmet requirements). The 3RP refugee component received most of the Syrian refugee crisis response funds, which totalled \$10.8 billion from 2015 to October 2019, while the resilience component received \$3.8 billion in the same period, two thirds less.³⁷ Within Syria, the scale of needs also remained extensive. In 2019, the appeal for Syria response envisaged a total of \$8.83 billion required, of which 58 percent was received.³⁸

The international community committed grant funding of \$7 billion for the 2019 response and \$2.38 billion for 2020 and beyond. European Union Member States and the European Commission represent the bulk of grant commitments, with over \$5.5 billion in 2019 and \$2.1 billion in 2020 and beyond.³⁹ In addition, multilateral banks pledged \$21 billion in loans, including the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (\$8.9 billion in loans), European Investment Bank (\$6.9 billion), World Bank (\$2 billion) and the Islamic Development Bank (\$1.62 billion). For 2020, the overall requirement for the basic needs sector is estimated at \$1.1 billion, followed by \$880 million for education and \$854 million for food security.⁴⁰

While there is growing global consensus at international level on the need for longer-term development responses to displacement, funding continues to be for humanitarian and short-term programming. Responding to the immediate needs of displaced people and simultaneously working for longer-term solutions remains one of the main challenges. For several decades, the international community has tried to bring together humanitarian and development assistance programmes but both streams often continue to be

³⁴ https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/%28httpPages%29/4d6470dbeaf92917c1257e59004fac2d

³⁵ See: A/RES/71/248 at http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/a_res_71_248.pdf

³⁶ 2019 data as of 31 October 2019. Regional Strategic Overview, 2020-2021, 3RP. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/73116.pdf>

³⁷ 3RP Regional Strategic Overview 2020-2021, see http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/rso_150dpi.pdf

³⁸ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Regional Funding Update as of 1 January 2020. See: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/regional_funding_update_1january2020_200101_en.pdf

³⁹ Co-chairs' Statement Annex: Fundraising, Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region - Brussels III Conference Brussels, 14 March 2019. https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/38579/14-03-2019-pledging-statement_final_rev.pdf

⁴⁰ 3RP Regional Strategic Overview 2020-2021.

implemented separately based on development plans and annual humanitarian strategies, with different funding processes. A 2017 working paper by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) concluded that “the scale, unpredictability and complexity of the crisis have overwhelmed the international community in general. [...] Most donors and agencies began to respond only in 2013 when the massive internal displacement of people and the flight of refugees from Syria began.”⁴¹

The large scale and the protracted nature of the Syrian crisis have impacted refugees and host communities. Despite the pre-existing capacities at local and national levels, there are significant pressures placed on host communities, the economy and development processes by the arrival of massive numbers of refugees. Basic service provision and market capacity were significantly affected. Municipal institutions, usually weak and overstretched, are not in a position to effectively address the increased demand for services and resources as they often cannot self-finance. Deteriorating infrastructure, particularly water, electricity and solid waste management services, can become a significant burden on public resources.⁴² The municipalities, which are at the forefront of the response, face financial difficulties and budgetary constraints but have to respond to overwhelmed systems which present significant risks in terms of health and environment. Besides, there are challenges related to the loss of trade and accelerated inflation further complicating the refugee situation.

Across the refugee-hosting countries, citizens and governments demonstrated extraordinary openness in providing refuge to the Syrians, despite the stress on social services and employment opportunities. In Lebanon, where refugees comprise a quarter of the population, willingness to accommodate refugees was often at the cost

of social services to the host communities. A large influx of refugees has also accelerated urban growth, putting pressure on infrastructure and housing stock, in some places resulting in rent inflation and exacerbating existing conflict over land tenure, leading to evictions from informal settlements. In Lebanon for example, it caused a demographic shock wave, dramatically shifting the demographic balance between nationals and refugees in some communities.⁴³ This situation has created delicate asymmetries as social cohesion has been affected, particularly with price inflation in food and declining wages. Yet in many countries dealing with the Syrian refugee crisis, legislation on access to essential services and work is not implemented, which has exacerbated pre-existing political tensions and presented unique challenges to local governance. Progress towards expanding economic opportunities is usually slow, and unemployment rates remain high. Work permits and employment opportunities tend to remain limited and present special challenges for women’s entry into the workforce.

2.4 International assistance to global refugee crises

Official development assistance (ODA) plays a vital role in the response to refugee crises. Acknowledging this central role, the Global Compact on Refugees was established in 2018 to improve equitable sharing of responsibility among United Nations Member States and strengthen international cooperation with regard to refugee crises, along with bringing in more cooperation from non-State actors such as the private sector and civil society. In response to the increasing fragmentation of response programming and funding, the Global Compact attempts to provide a framework for the coordinated global refugee response.

⁴¹ OECD, ‘Responding to Refugee Crises in Developing Countries: What Can We Learn from Evaluations’, OECD Working Paper No 37, 2017. See: <https://doi.org/10.1787/ae4362bd-en>

⁴² 3RP Annual Reports 2017 to 2019.

⁴³ Ratio’s host versus refugee population.

FIGURE 3. ODA to programmes and projects supporting refugees and their host countries, 2015-2017 (billions US\$)

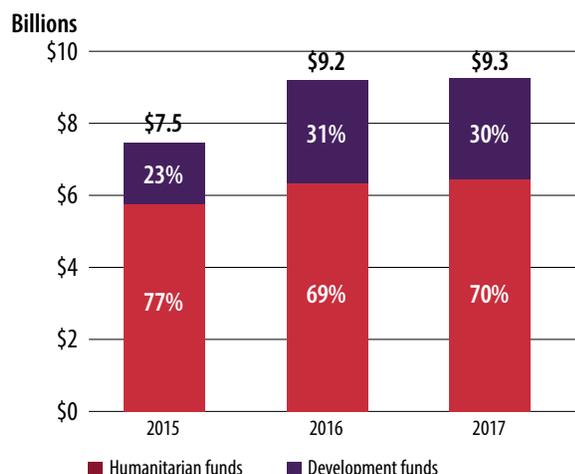
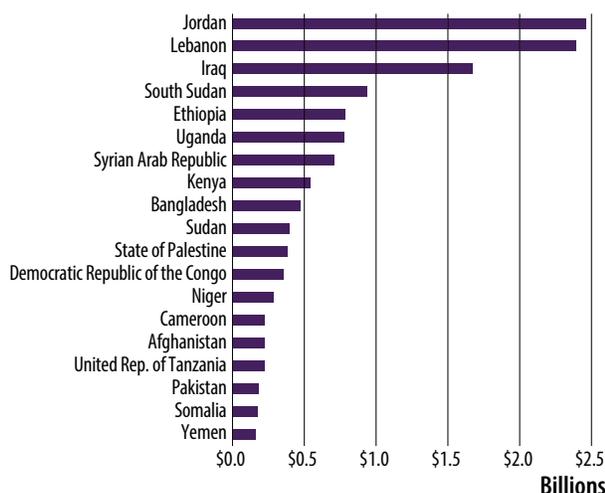


FIGURE 4. Top recipients of refugee-related ODA, 2015-2017



Source: Forichon, K. (2018), "Financing Refugee Hosting Contexts: An analysis of the [Development Assistance Committee's] contribution to burden- and responsibility-sharing in supporting refugees and their host communities", OECD Development Co-operation Working Papers, No. 48, <https://doi.org/10.1787/24db9b07-en>

Presenting a baseline for the Global Compact, a recent OECD/UNHCR working paper highlights that although donors provide a considerable amount of ODA to refugee and host community support, many of these contributions are short-term and unequally distributed across different crisis contexts.⁴⁴

The OECD analysis shows that ODA levels consistently increased from 2015 to 2017, given the multitude and protracted nature of many crisis contexts.⁴⁵ Figure 3 shows the growth of refugee-related funding over the years, disaggregated by humanitarian and development funds. The graph shows that there is a clear focus on humanitarian projects with a share of around 70 percent of all assistance, often leading to underfunding of development-oriented projects. This imbalance exists across all geographical regions and most countries, especially in Africa. The survey highlights the short-term orientation of ODA for refugees, as

a majority of donor countries allocated 50 percent or more of their budgets only over a period of one year or less.

The regional distribution of funds for the period 2015 to 2017 shows that the Middle East received 35 percent of ODA for refugee response, while Africa received 26 percent, Europe 15 percent and South and Central Asia 5 percent.⁴⁶ While the high share of ODA to the Middle East is partly a reflection of the scale of the Syrian refugee crisis, it also reflects differential political and financial attention towards different refugee contexts. As presented in Figure 4, the four countries with the highest number of Syrian refugees in the Middle East received the most ODA of all countries – with Turkey receiving more than three times as much assistance as the first country not related to the Syrian crisis, South Sudan. This trend appears to be consistent across many different crisis settings in Africa and South Asia.

⁴⁴ Forichon, 'Financing Refugee Contexts – An analysis of the DAC's contribution to burden- and responsibility sharing in supporting refugees and their host communities', OECD Development Co-operation Working Paper 48, 2018. The paper, conducted in partnership with UNHCR, builds on a survey of 29 donor countries and their contributions towards the global refugee response in 2015 to 2017.

⁴⁵ Here and in the following: see Forichon (2018).

⁴⁶ Ibid, Forichon (2018).

Chapter 3.

THE UNDP RESPONSE

This chapter provides a brief overview of UNDP support to refugee response during the period 2014-2019. This focuses on the support to the Syrian refugee crisis, while also recognizing UNDP responses to the Lake Chad Basin, Rohingya and Venezuela refugee crises.

3.1 UNDP strategic response to refugee crises

UNDP has over the years supported refugee crisis response as part of its development and conflict prevention and response programmes. The Syria refugee response in many ways was a turning point for UNDP. In this instance, UNDP programme strategies underscored the development aspects of the crisis. Direct engagement was seen to be necessary to address the development consequences of displacement and offer durable solutions for refugees. Another compelling factor for the shift in UNDP engagement was a reorientation in the international discourse since the adoption of the SDGs, placing development in the centre of international refugee response. The World Humanitarian Summit and New York Declaration that followed argued for a more coherent approach by improving linkages between humanitarian approaches and longer-term development goals. UNDP support to refugee response is guided by these intergovernmental agreements. The UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 explicitly recognized displacement as an emerging issue for which specific signature solutions could be developed in partnership with relevant agencies.⁴⁷

The Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 emphasized support to conflict- and disaster-related displacement, particularly engagement in early recovery and

addressing the development dimensions of displacement. It acknowledged the need for “assistance for better planning and coordination of early recovery and transition, ensuring that local planning processes are inclusive of and accountable to displaced populations, women and other excluded groups [...] relying on early local economic recovery, employment and livelihoods stabilization and creation and reintegration (particularly for IDPs and returning refugees).” The Strategic Plan made explicit references to stabilization interventions, encouraging a more integrated and holistic approach to resilience. It thus builds upon the resilience-based development approach and the stabilization approach, noting that UNDP work on crisis response and recovery (including early recovery) was expected to “help ensure that responses by humanitarian actors are complemented by a developmental focus to ensure a rapid return to sustainable development pathways, within the framework of country ownership and leadership”. The previous Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 did not explicitly prioritize support to refugee response although broadly considered it as part of conflict-related displacement and response.

Responding to the scale and protracted nature of the Syrian crisis required agencies to rethink their collective development and humanitarian responses and to act beyond their traditional mandates. In this context, the UNDP resilience-based development approach was formulated to support communities and institutions to respond to increased demand and pressure (“coping”), promote household recovery from the negative impacts of the crisis (“recovering”) and strengthen local and national economic and, social systems to protect development gains from current and future shocks (“transforming”). The resilience approach

⁴⁷ In the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 along with eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions and accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development.

aimed to address multiple dimensions of the crisis and, as pointed out in many evaluations, the focus on the concept of resilience was a concrete effort to create greater linkages between humanitarian and development approaches.⁴⁸ This approach was conceived in alignment with the United Nations Policy for Post-Conflict Employment Creation, Income Generation and Reintegration (2009) and was anchored in the need to simultaneously target refugees and host communities to recover with long-term development prospects.

UNDP used a stabilization approach in Lebanon and Iraq in responding to the Syrian refugee crisis, and the approach has been taken in other refugee crisis situations, such as in the Lake Chad Basin. Refugee response typically entails efforts to quickly provide basic services and create employment at the local level. The stabilization approach largely addresses the coping and recovering elements of the resilience approach, paving the way for long-term development and transformation. Adopting a stabilization approach was seen as more suitable to quickly respond to demands to restore services. For example, in Lebanon under the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), UNDP supported the Government and international and national partners to work together to deliver integrated and mutually reinforcing humanitarian and stabilization interventions, which aimed to restore and expand economic and livelihood opportunities for vulnerable groups and build resilience to enable equitable access to and quality of sustainable public services, and strengthen social stability.

3.2 Scope of UNDP support to the Syrian refugee crisis response

In the first years of the Syrian crisis, the response of most United Nations actors was characterized by humanitarian assistance of a short-term nature to cover the most basic needs in terms of food security,

protection and emergency local services. In March 2012, the first regional response plan was formulated to address the need for protection and assistance to Syrian refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq, followed by Egypt in 2013.⁴⁹ Although regional response plans set the overall high-level framework and channelled support for the response, it took some time for the United Nations to realize the need for a strategic shift in its response.

In 2015, a structured United Nations regional response plan, the 3RP, was launched to respond to a growing need for an integrated humanitarian and development approach, as by then it was evident that refugees would be in the host countries for a longer period and that it was a protracted crisis of an unprecedented scale. The 3RP was unprecedented in many ways, including the joint coordination mechanism set up with UNDP and UNHCR, which brought together refugee and resilience dimensions under one programme framework. The 3RP included commitments to invest in resilience; make progressive shifts in the funding architecture towards multi-year predictable funding; and acknowledge the centrality of using and supporting national systems and local responders. Considered a new strategic direction for other regional refugee responses, many reports and interviewees stressed that the 3RP inspired and influenced global processes (such as the SDGs, World Humanitarian Summit, the Grand Bargain, New York Declaration and the CRRF).

The 3RP was established on the principle of national leadership and ownership, with country-driven yet intended to be regionally coherent plans. This move towards integrated and nationally-owned response plans with regional coherence, with one regional plan and five stand-alone country chapters, allowed the development of unique models to fit the specific national contexts while all country chapters subscribed to the minimum requirements. The 3RP is a common planning document which helped to establish an

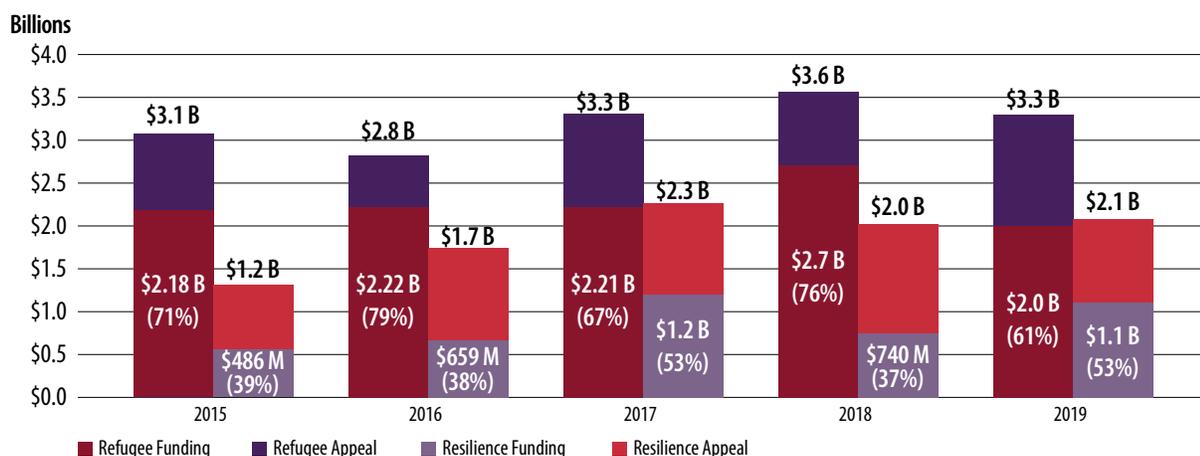
⁴⁸ UNDP, 2013. Resilience-based development approach to the Syrian crisis, <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/crisis-prevention-and-recovery/undp-s-resilience-based-approach-to-the-regional-syrian-crisis.html>; See Also, UNDP, 2012. Putting resilience at the heart of development.

⁴⁹ Syria Regional Response Plan, 2012. <https://www.unhcr.org/5062c7429.pdf>

overall strategic framework, which is also used for resource mobilization to advocate for greater financial predictability. It included two different components, one on resilience convened by UNDP and one on the refugee response led by UNHCR. The 3RP also

dedicated substantial efforts for advocacy initiatives at different levels and region-wide reporting, mainly through the establishment of a joint regional UNHCR and UNDP secretariat.

FIGURE 5. 3RP refugee and resilience component funding, 2015-2019 (billions US\$)



Note: The percentages represent the funding received against the funding requirements.

Source: 3RP Regional Strategic Overview 2020-2021

An important assumption underlying the resilience-based approach taken in the 3RP is that the immediate vulnerabilities of affected populations can be reduced while also addressing some (pre-existing) development challenges, even as it was not meant to be a prime response to the broader development challenges facing countries. The 3RP was designed to redress the imbalance between support to refugees (as in previous refugee response plans) and support to host communities, to the extent possible given political economies, funding and links to broader development challenges.

Funding requirements for the resilience component of the 3RP, as a share of total requirements, rose from 28 percent (or \$1.82 billion) in 2015 to 45 percent (or \$2.5 billion) in 2020. The resilience funding received has also increased significantly to 53 percent of the resilience appeal (or \$1.1 billion) in 2019, while it was only 39 percent of the appeal (or \$486 million) in 2015. In recognition that gaps

remain, this expansion of the resilience component reflects an important acknowledgement by 3RP partners of its importance in protracted crises.

Key areas of the 3RP include increased access of Syrian refugees to national systems such as health, education, employment and social services, in support of the pledges made by host countries at international conferences; protection, from promoting registration and access to territory, supporting efforts to end violence and exploitation and setting up referrals to specialized services; strengthening the capacities of municipalities and local authorities who are among the primary responders to the Syria crisis; giving beneficiaries the dignity, choice and flexibility to prioritize their own needs while supporting local economies and laying the foundations for recovery and resilience; and including vulnerable host community members in the response.

UNDP and UNHCR have a long history of collaboration in a wide range of crisis and conflict

settings. Although the two agencies have always cooperated, recent changes in the international arena have widened the scope to expand their collaboration on the transition from short-term relief to longer-term recovery and development. In the Syrian refugee crisis, the two agencies set up a joint regional secretariat and jointly coordinated the humanitarian and resilience dimensions of the refugee response at the national level.

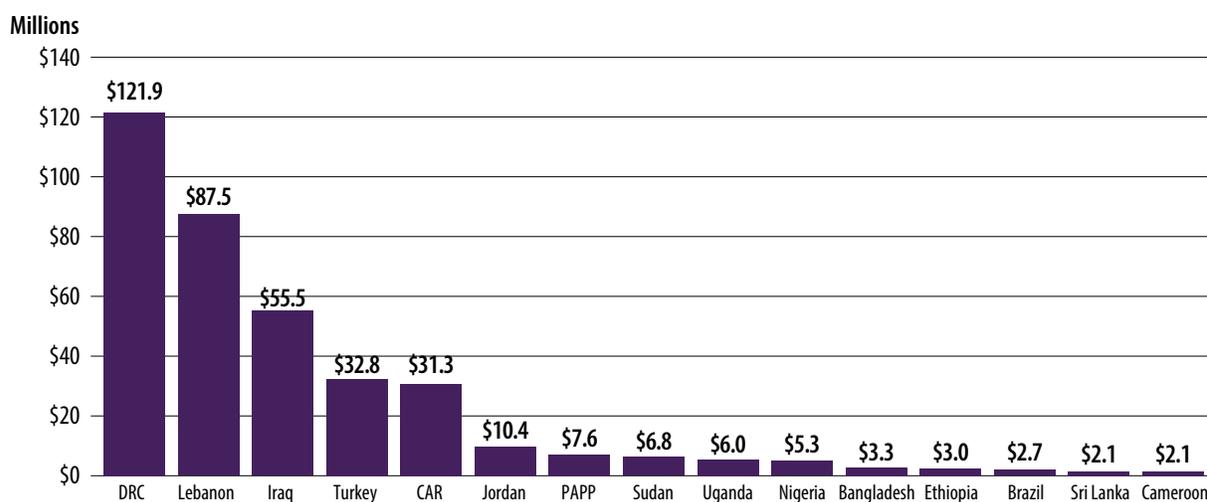
3.3 UNDP refugee response portfolio

Globally during the period 2011 to 2016, UNDP had 125 projects in 39 countries pertaining to refugee-related displacement worth \$1.3 billion.⁵⁰ When compared to UNDP spending on IDPs, the refugee-related response is a smaller component. At the onset of refugee crises, UNDP interventions range from supporting early recovery coordination to comprehensive, resilience-based responses

for host communities and refugees. This includes support to core government functions at local and national levels, job creation and livelihoods, enterprise recovery, environmental rehabilitation, social cohesion and conflict prevention, protection, access to rule of law and justice. In the medium and longer terms, UNDP supports initiatives addressing root causes of forced displacement and where applicable, the return and reintegration of displaced persons.⁵¹

Figure 6 shows the 15 countries with the highest expenditure on programming for refugees. Programme size varies widely, ranging from over \$119 million in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to \$3 million in Ethiopia. In total around 39 countries have reported projects with refugee or IDP beneficiaries. Most of these country programmes are relatively small in size, significantly below \$10 million in 2018 and 2019.

FIGURE 6. Top 15 countries by refugee programme expenditure, 2018-2019 (millions US\$)



Note: DR Congo = Democratic Republic of the Congo; CAR = Central African Republic; PAPP = Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People

Source: UNDP Atlas refugee project marker data provided by UNDP Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, 9 November 2020

⁵⁰ UNDP Technical Working Group on Migration and Displacement, 'Global Mapping of UNDP Initiatives on Migration and Displacement', 2016.

⁵¹ UNDP Technical Working Group on Migration and Development, 'Development Approaches to Migration and Displacement: Key Achievements, Experiences and Lessons Learned 2016-2018', 2018, p. 12.

The high expenditure in the Arab States region largely is a reflection of the programmes related to the Syrian refugee crisis. Refugee support in Africa is lower and is part of other crisis programmes. The Rohingya and Venezuela refugee responses are also relatively small in scope. Figure 7 shows a vast difference in funding in the countries affected by these three crises, which reflects their different contexts and international response.⁵²

The distribution of funds in terms of human development level shows that although the majority of expenditure is in countries with a low level of human development (in large part due to substantial programmes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo), UNDP also provided support to medium and high human development countries, mainly in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis response (Figure 8).

FIGURE 7. Expenditure on refugee programmes, 2018–2019, by region

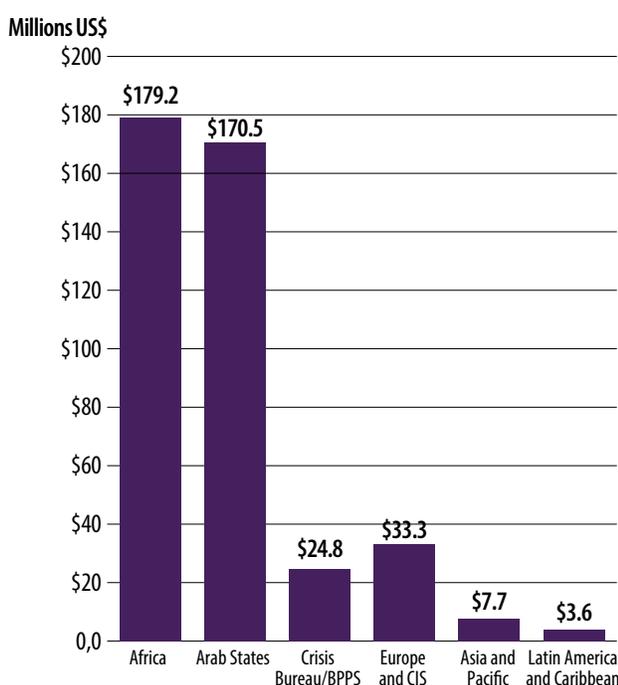
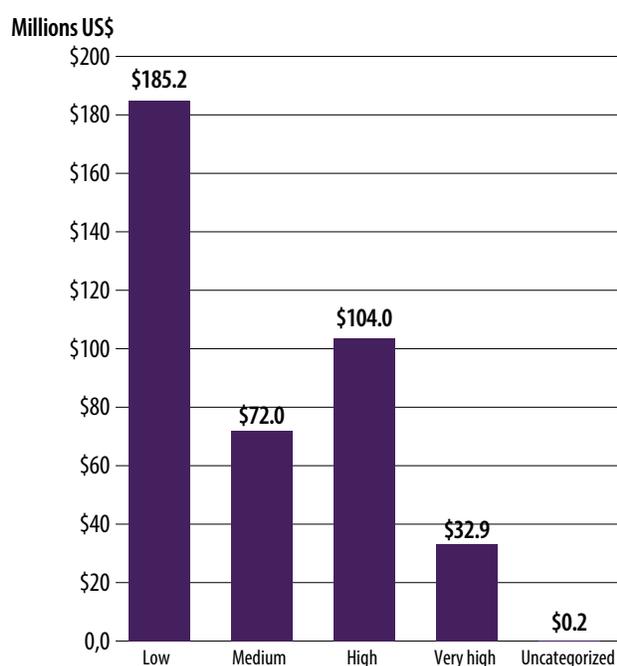


FIGURE 8. Expenditure on refugee programmes, 2018–2019, by human development category



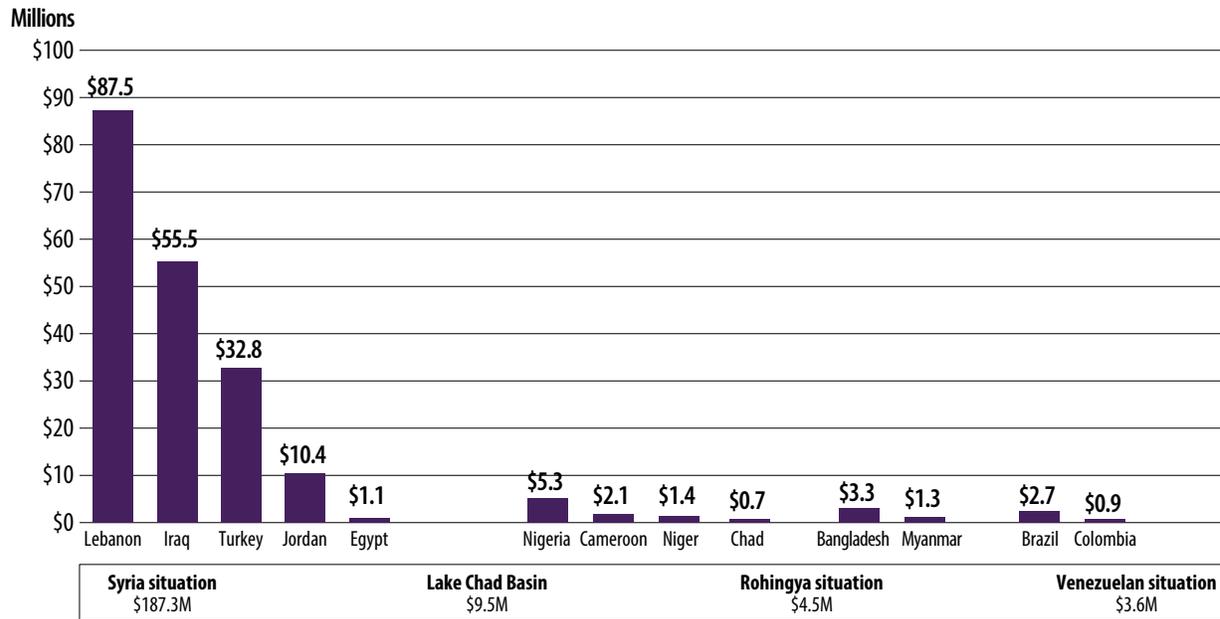
Source: UNDP Atlas refugee project marker data provided by UNDP Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, 9 November 2020. UNDP 2019 Human Development Index data available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>.

⁵² UNHCR reports approximately 6.6 million Syrian refugees; 1.7 million IDPs and over 834,000 refugees in the Sahel crisis and 2.7 million Nigerian IDPs and over 292,000 refugees in the Boko Haram crisis; and 860,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh as of June 2020. UNHCR Refugee Situation Operational Portal, accessed 23 July 2020. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations>

Expenditure for the Syrian refugee crisis response for 2014-2018 was \$317 million, with Lebanon having significantly higher expenditure compared to

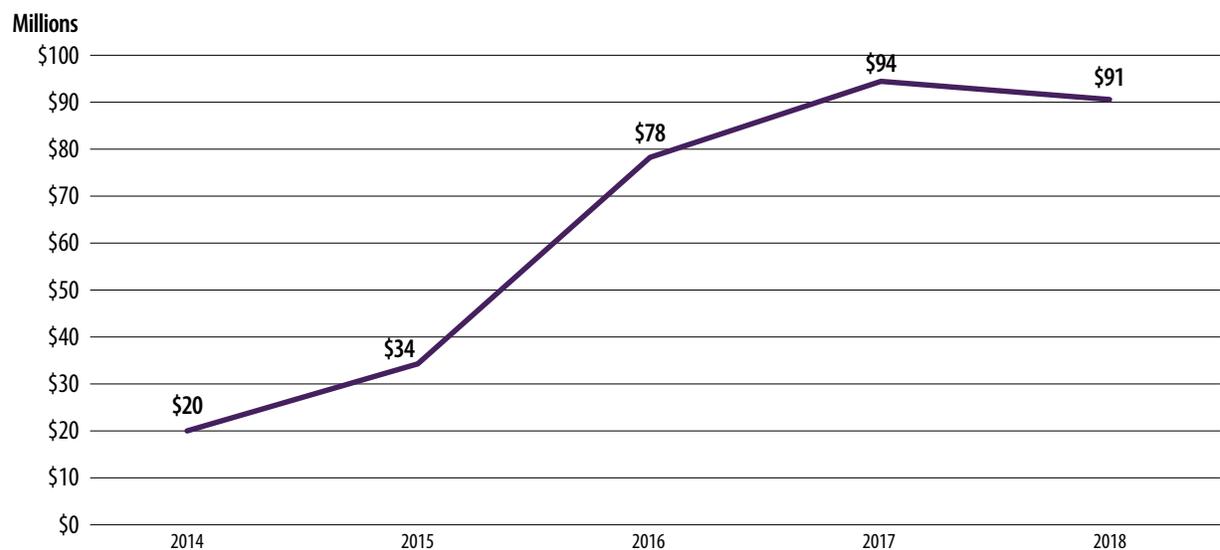
other host countries including Turkey, which hosts the highest number of refugees (See Figure 9).

FIGURE 9. UNDP funding for the Syrian, Lake Chad Basin, Venezuelan and Rohingya crises, 2018-2019 (millions US\$)



Source: UNDP Atlas refugee project marker data provided by Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, 9 November 2020

FIGURE 10. Annual expenditure for Syrian crisis refugee response, 2014-2018 (millions US\$)



Source: UNDP Atlas data extracted 9 Nov 2020; includes refugee projects in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt

FINDINGS

This chapter evaluates the UNDP contribution to different areas of the Syrian refugee crisis response, its strategies and concepts and operationalization of the 3RP framework. The analysis of findings is presented under nine sections in four parts. Part A assesses UNDP support to the Syrian refugee crisis response in terms of its contribution to policy, employment generation, strengthening services and local development, and private sector engagement. Part B presents the assessment of cross-cutting themes, viz., support to private sector development and accelerating gender equality and women's empowerment in refugee and host community support. Lastly, part C analyses the UNDP positioning at the global, regional and country levels and promotion of the resilience approach.

The analysis considers contextual factors such as the varied policy environment, the protracted nature of the refugee crisis and the intensity of country-level dynamics. The evaluation acknowledges the specificities of the host country contexts, variations in UNDP support and the challenges in promoting a resilience agenda. The analysis also takes into consideration the financial resource constraints for the resilience component of the refugee response. The analysis does not cover the challenges COVID-19 presents for the refugee and host communities, although some observations based on interviews are included.

A. SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS RESPONSE

The following sections analyse the UNDP engagement and contribution to the Syrian refugee crisis response. The areas covered are national policy support and institutional capacity development, contribution to the 3RP, support to employment and livelihoods and strengthening services and local development.

4.1 National policy support and institutional capacity development

The discussion in this section includes an assessment of initiatives within and outside the 3RP mechanism with relevance for promoting resilience and sustainability in policy options.

Finding 1. Prioritization of policy engagement varied across country programmes and there were several unused opportunities in leveraging UNDP work at the subnational level. UNDP has yet to build on its comparative strengths and organizational expertise for policy engagement. Long-standing work at the municipal level has yet to be used to play a more comprehensive role at the subnational level and enable local and national government linkages.

Support for policy analysis and knowledge-sharing informed institutional reform processes and strengthening. In Turkey, concerted efforts have been made by UNDP to provide long-term, bottom-up solutions in the areas of employment and service delivery, which are important for Turkish nationals as well as Syrian refugees. Medium- to long-term engagement in the areas of the competitiveness agenda, industrial productivity and organic agriculture contributed to progressively strengthening capacities and enabling policy and regulatory frameworks. In Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, long-standing UNDP work with ministries and institutions contributed to policy engagement in the areas of competitiveness, energy, environment and solid waste management, among others. In the refugee-hosting countries, support for strengthening services in municipalities hosting Syrians has improved services, further discussed in Finding 10. The UNDP thrust on longer-term development solutions over temporary fixes to address fundamental

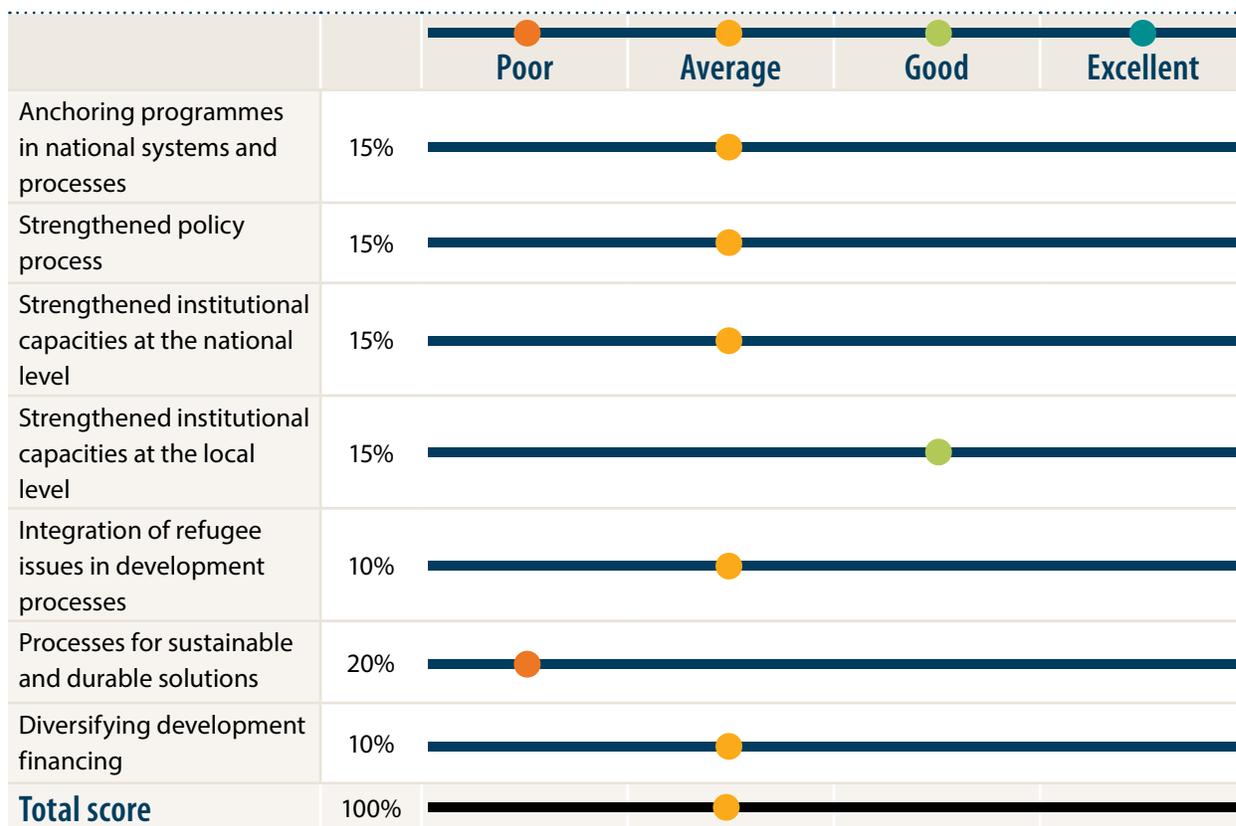
development issues was well conceptualized at the national level through programmes such as the Lebanon Host Communities Support Project (LHSP). While UNDP programmes responded to key national and government priorities, opportunities for policy strengthening were not fully maximized, particularly in the area of services.

Overall, the performance score for contributions to national policy and institutional strengthening is average (see Figure 11). UNDP received a good score for strengthened institutional capacities at the local level. For parameters such as anchoring programmes in national systems and processes, strengthened policy processes, strengthened institutional capacities at the national level, integration of refugee issues in development processes and diversifying development

financing, UNDP received an average score. An area which was harder for UNDP is enabling processes for sustainable and durable solutions. Durable solutions for refugees is a sensitive issue in most countries and challenging in terms of support in that area.

Across the refugee-hosting countries, the reputation and reach of UNDP enabled engagement with a range of government entities at the national level. UNDP is well regarded for its development support and played a visible role in the Syrian refugee crisis response. UNDP has been responsive to municipal service needs which were critical given the significant increase in the demand due to refugee influx. With its well-established working relationships with national entities, UNDP is widely perceived as a trusted and “go to” agency by the Government.

FIGURE 11. Performance score for contributions to national policy and institutional strengthening



Score: 1= Poor; 2= Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent

Source: IEO Evaluation Assessment

Government entities recognize the significance of resilience-based policy and programme approaches as the way forward, but sustainable programme models are evolving to respond to development needs and priorities. In Lebanon, policy deadlock posed constraints but also implies that programme strategies should be responsive and adaptive to political economy factors. Although well positioned to function as a change actor, UNDP has yet to leverage this for sustained policy dialogue and engagement. Given the middle-income country status of Lebanon, donors have contributed more to refugee response and stabilization concerns. While the 2018 CEDRE⁵³ conference made a commitment of \$11 billion in infrastructure funds and loans⁵⁴ for political and economic reforms, international support for governance reforms is modest when compared to refugee response, with reduction of the fiscal deficit a primary focus. Another area where UNDP has the potential to engage and there are ongoing efforts is in the renewable energy sector. There is considerable scope for demonstrating renewable energy models, informing policies for systemic changes and sustaining the interest of the private sector. In Jordan, subnational initiatives have yet to inform national programme processes. Individual activities achieved project-related objectives, however, as can be seen from the subsequent sections of this report, UNDP programmes did not respond to the policy needs of the country or provide viable programme models in the areas of inclusive growth or local development. In contexts with multiple crises where there are different frameworks for an international response, for example in Iraq, better coordination is needed for policy engagement. In Iraq, opportunities were lost in streamlining the Syrian refugee crisis response with stabilization initiatives.

4.2 The UNDP role and contribution to 3RP

This section analyses the overall contribution of UNDP to the 3RP mechanism in promoting an integrated refugee and resilience response. In doing so, the section also analyses facilitating

and constraining factors of the 3RP architecture in furthering resilience within a protracted humanitarian response.

As discussed in chapter 3, the 3RP was launched in December 2014 to respond to both the growing demand for protection and humanitarian assistance for Syrian refugees, and the need to build the resilience of individuals, communities and institutions in host countries to cope with the refugee situation. The coordination mechanisms include regional and national steering committees, regional and national technical committees co-chaired by UNDP and UNHCR and 40 sectoral working groups, with 270 partners across the five countries.

3RP: Setting a precedent

Finding 2. The 3RP was successful in bringing together two interrelated dimensions of Syrian refugee crisis response: humanitarian support and a resilience-based development approach to strengthening institutions, communities and households, under a common framework. UNHCR and UNDP should be credited for developing this joint framework that goes beyond the terms of their respective mandates. UNDP played a key role in leading the United Nations in the conceptualization of the resilience approach.

The 3RP assumes significance given its sustained efforts to bring together humanitarian and development agencies. Decisions of the United Nations Security Council in 2003 and later 2011 for enabling durable solutions during a humanitarian crisis, while significant, lacked measures for implementation. Improving collaboration between humanitarian and development agencies at the international level is therefore recognized as critical for protecting development gains during crises as well as enhancing development outcomes, through a nexus approach. The 3RP also got a push from the global frameworks including the SDGs in 2015 and the commitments of the World Humanitarian Summit and the New York Declaration for Refugees

⁵³ International conference in support of Lebanon development and reforms.

⁵⁴ CEDRE Joint Statement, 6 April 2018. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/cedre_statement-en-final_ang_cle8179fb.pdf

and Migrants in 2016. The 3RP was conceptualized as an effective mechanism to deliver United Nations assistance in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis, moving beyond short-term humanitarian priorities.

A key accomplishment of the 3RP was bringing together humanitarian and development actors on a single platform at the regional and national levels to address the humanitarian and development needs of Syrian refugees and affected host communities and national systems in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. To facilitate this paradigm shift in the response, UNDP rallied all United Nations development agencies to support the adoption of the resilience-based approach within the United Nations Development Group.⁵⁵ Sustained efforts by UNDP and UNHCR to overcome the humanitarian-development divide within the United Nations, in sending a unified message to the respective organizations to make 3RP work, are noteworthy and set a strong precedent.⁵⁶

Enabling 3RP coordination

Finding 3. UNDP support to the coordination of the 3RP, jointly with UNHCR, had some tangible outcomes which include significant mobilization of financial resources, strengthened coordination among United Nations agencies and information exchange for a more coordinated response among various actors. The 3RP has also served as an effective platform for advocacy with the concerned Governments.

The 3RP has been successful in mobilizing resources and enabling multi-year funding, thus meeting the international commitment of the Grand Bargain, an agreement between key donors agreed at the

2016 World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul.⁵⁷ The inter-agency appeal for the resilience component has increased over the years. High-level events such as the Resilience Development Forum and continued advocacy for resilience at the regional level by UNDP resulted in an increase of 3RP resilience funding from 28 percent (or \$2 billion) in 2015 to 42 percent (or \$2.3 billion) in 2019, of which UNDP received \$396,673,918 (16.5 percent of the total funding received).⁵⁸ The UNDP contribution to resource mobilization with UNHCR is significant.

The large number and wide range of 3RP partners required considerable UNDP investment in coordination processes. UNDP co-led coordination processes with UNHCR at the regional and national levels and led sector coordination in livelihoods and social cohesion. UNDP also played a key role in monitoring the 3RP implementation. There are several examples of joint programmes with United Nations agencies where complementarities and comparative strengths of the agencies were optimized. These programmes included, for example in Lebanon, collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to strengthen local service delivery and local governance; the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on sexual and gender-based violence; the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme to support temporary employment targeting Syrian refugees and Lebanese; ILO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to strengthen the linkages between the provision of livelihood opportunities and the reduction of tensions at the community level; and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the

⁵⁵ The resilience-based development response was published as a United Nations Development Group Position Paper in 2014 entitled "A Resilience-based Development Response to the Syria Crisis". The 2018 United Nations Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies identifies 3RP as a key flagship initiative on development approaches to displacement which brings a resilience lens into crisis response programming.

⁵⁶ The 2014 memorandum of understanding between UNHCR and UNDP for regional cooperation in Syrian refugee crisis response and the establishment of the Sub-Regional Response Facility with a strong advocacy role were important steps in the implementation of 3RP at the regional and national levels. This was followed by another high-level memorandum of understanding in 2019 to reinforce the sustained commitment to the 3RP approach. Such agreements enhanced collaboration between the two organizations that were already in the process of implementing the CRRF global framework. At the country level, formulation of joint operational frameworks in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, strengthened UNDP promotion of the resilience approach at country level. UNDP investment in human resources, jointly with UNHCR, enabled enhanced leadership and coordination of 3RP at the country and regional levels.

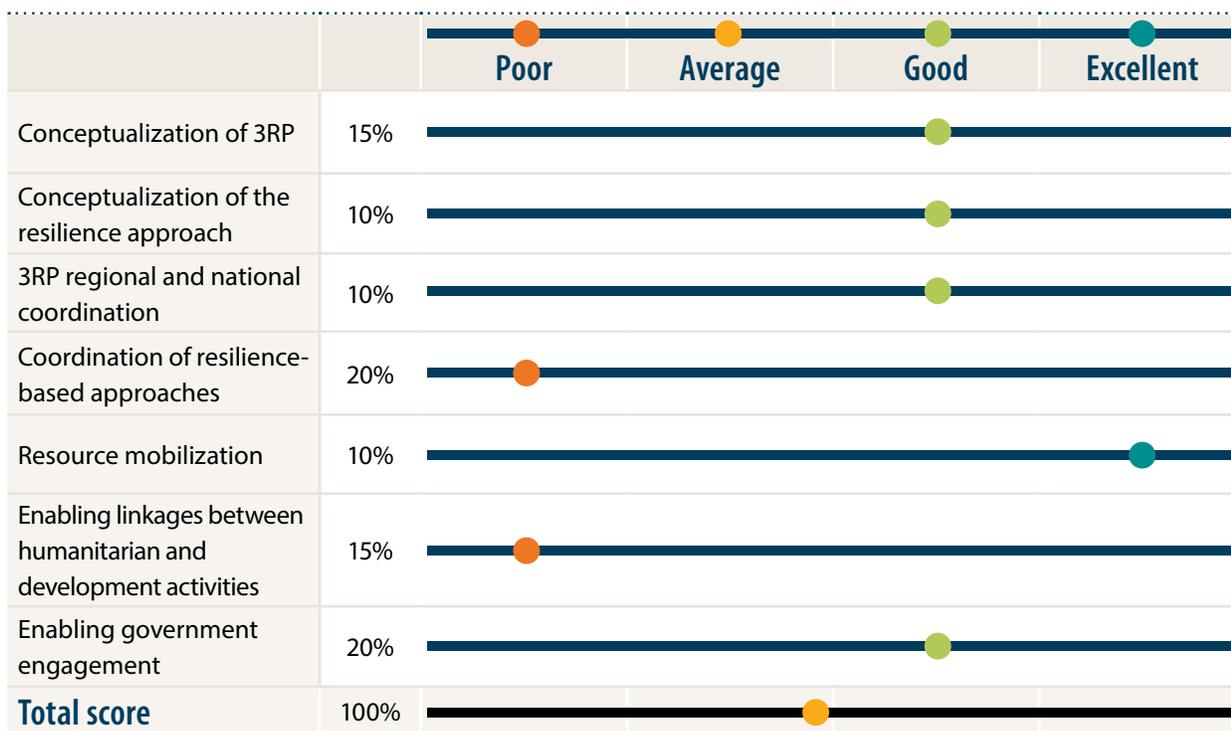
⁵⁷ The Grand Bargain commits donors and aid organizations to providing 25 percent of global humanitarian funding to local and national responders by 2020, along with more un-earmarked money and increased multi-year funding to ensure greater predictability and continuity in humanitarian response, among other commitments. See <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain>

⁵⁸ 3RP 2017 Annual Report, 2018. See <https://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/3RP%202017%20Annual%20Report%20-%20Executive%20Summary%20%5BEN%5D%20-%20May%202018.pdf>

Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon as part of joint initiatives around women's political participation, women, peace and security and human rights. UNDP collaboration was viewed positively by programme partners. In Turkey,

strong partnerships with United Nations agencies, international agencies and international financial institutions (IFIs) provided a major advantage for engagement on a wide range of issues and structural challenges facing Turkey. Partnerships with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development have been important in promoting viable and comprehensive competitiveness models.

FIGURE 12. Performance score for the UNDP contribution to the 3RP mechanism



Score: 1= Poor; 2= Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent
 Source: IEO Evaluation Assessment

The level of coordination of the range of actors varied across countries, with comparatively more success among United Nations agencies, compared to wider coordination with other agencies, particularly donors with large programmes (including bilateral programmes) and IFIs. Although coordination was important in the initial years of the refugee crisis, a heavy coordination architecture came to have many redundancies as the crisis became protracted. UNDP and UNHCR should assess the present architecture to adapt it to evolving needs.

UNDP is credited with bringing in stronger government engagement in the 3RP at the national level. The 3RP aligns with national strategies in all countries but varies in the extent to which various activities are located within national systems. However, the 3RP mechanism did not evolve over the years, particularly in anchoring at least part of the response within government frameworks. While national institutions participate in the 3RP discussions, the 3RP platform has yet to be linked to government structures to leverage and inform

public policies, programmes and financing. While Governments lead the national plans, disconnect between the refugee response plans and the national programmes remains an issue.

There are multiple refugee and host community responses and coordination mechanisms at the country level, besides the 3RP. In Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, the large IFI programmes and European Union Madad Trust Funds⁵⁹ have coordination mechanisms with the Governments to address strategic and development challenges. The European Union coordination mechanism under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey is interested to see the 3RP aligned with those efforts. In Lebanon, the European Union established parallel coordination systems for social protection, health, water and municipal governance to enable strategic discussions on needed development approaches. In Jordan, links to long-term policy issues were enabled through development approaches outside the 3RP in the health and education sectors (through budgetary support by donors). While these coordination mechanisms reflect donor agencies' preferences in programme response, the 3RP nevertheless had limitations in providing a viable alternative for a more comprehensive response.

The overall UNDP performance was good on most parameters, except for enabling linkages between humanitarian and development activities and coordination of resilience-based approaches, which brought down the overall performance score (See Figure 12). While there are initiatives under the 3RP that address development dimensions of the Syrian refugee crisis response, such efforts are activity-based, not linked to humanitarian activities, lacked coordination of host community efforts and were fragmented. The LCRP, for example, continues to

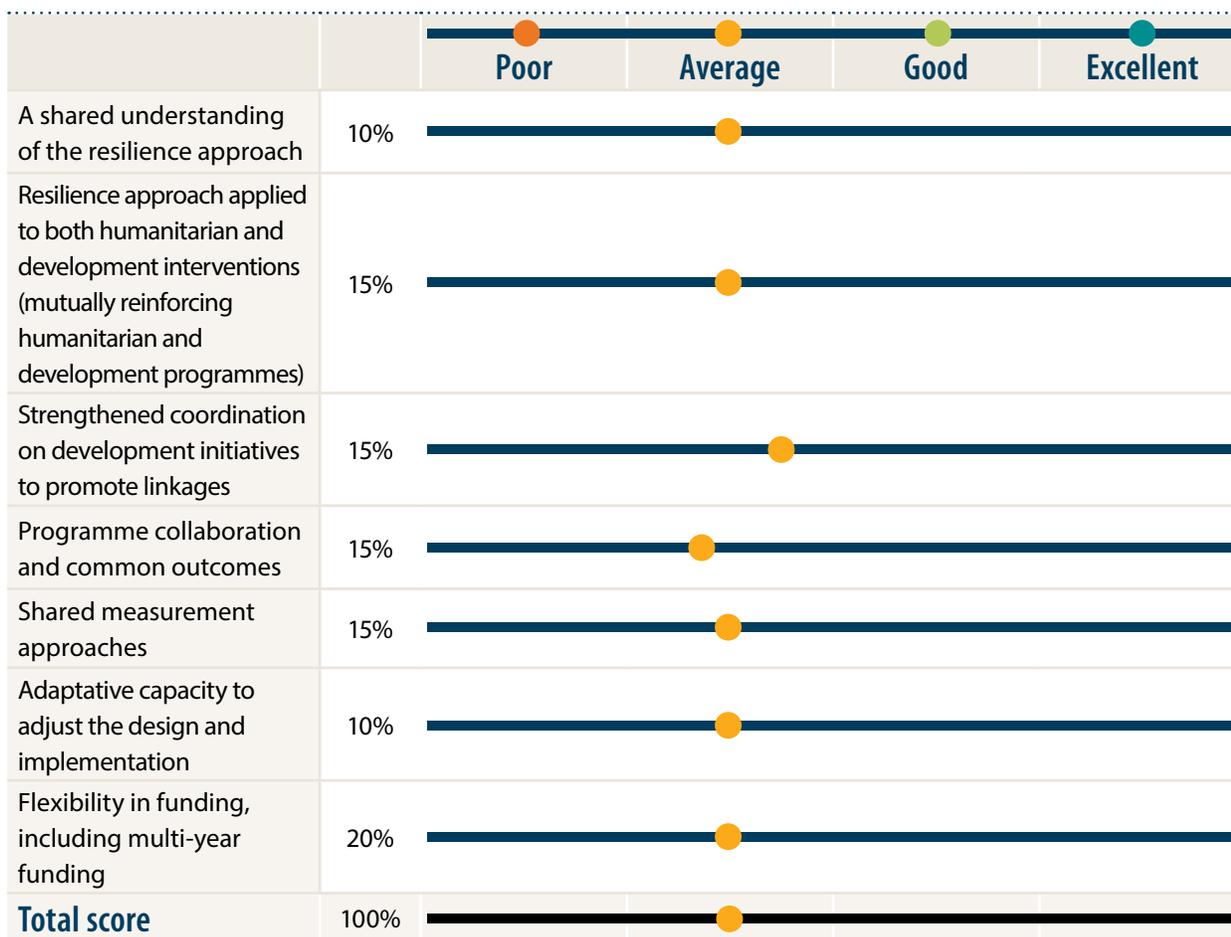
operate more in a crisis-response mode primarily due to a lack of multi-year programme frameworks, also considering the multiple crises that Lebanon is facing including seasonal shocks and the economic situation. LCRP linkages with the CEDRE development process are evolving. Although 3RP includes the National Poverty Targeting Programme, which was launched in 2011 with support from the World Bank, synergies have yet to be established to systematically link various initiatives under 3RP to the programme.

In Lebanon and Turkey, there was more consistent support to coordination, a formidable task given the large scale of response. The bulky coordination architecture reflects national institutional structures and their complexities as well as United Nations system operational silos; several compartmentalized sectors remains an issue. Coordination between the field and capital administration is not a strong point. In Jordan and Lebanon, parallel United Nations initiatives in high-priority municipalities remained in a prolonged emergency mode. Despite its record of aid coordination support in Jordan, UNDP did not play a major role in coordination or monitoring the 3RP resilience component to the extent it did in Lebanon or Turkey.

In Iraq, UNDP has not substantively contributed to overall 3RP coordination, although this was not an issue of great concern because of the relatively low number of Syrian refugees compared to other host countries. The 3RP had minimal linkages with the large Stabilization Facility, which provides a contrasting example of the value UNDP attaches to coordination. The pressing need for faster implementation of stabilization projects was a factor in not linking with 3RP where the coordination processes can lead to delay.

⁵⁹ Established in December 2014, the 'Madad' Fund is the European Union's non-humanitarian aid for Syrian refugees and their host countries which is provided through the European Union Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis.

FIGURE 13. Performance score for promoting the resilience approach within the 3RP



Score: 1= Poor; 2= Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent

Source: IEO Evaluation Assessment

The UNDP Sub-Regional Facility for the Syria Crisis (SRF) played an important role in setting the resilience agenda, enabling 3RP deliberations and financial decision-making processes. UNDP established the SRF to lead resilience efforts in the regional 3RP approach jointly with UNHCR. UNDP investment in SRF was an important contribution to its co-leadership with UNHCR and in positioning UNDP in the centre of the Syrian refugee crisis response. It strengthened UNDP engagement and partnerships with the international community, NGOs and among United Nations agencies. The SRF provided UNDP greater visibility and made it possible to articulate important resilience strategies and objectives. Some of the success in bringing resilience into financial discussions can be attributed to SRF. Its effort to advocate for

mainstreaming the SDGs into Syria crisis response plans provided an opportunity for intersectoral coordination at the country level, particularly in establishing linkages between the 3RP and Global Compact for Refugees, as well as between 3RP country response plans and the SDGs.

Although SRF provided programme tools for UNDP country offices as well as organized regional and country-level knowledge, it had limited capacity to engage in advocacy and knowledge transfer that could accelerate resilience approaches and scale up good practices from 3RP countries. In 2019, UNDP started scaling down SRF to a small team with no senior-level positions, although the rationale for this has yet to be clarified.

While UNDP cannot be held entirely accountable for all the limitations of the 3RP, as far as the resilience approach is concerned, UNDP did not make a concerted effort to promote it. While there were efforts on the part of UNDP to inform a development approach, such efforts were insufficient to enable change in the parallel implementation of development and humanitarian programmes. Also, advocacy at the global level was not strong enough for a paradigm shift in the Syrian refugee crisis response.

Facilitating resilience approach

Finding 4. The effectiveness of the 3RP strategy in enabling regional programme coherence and bringing the resilience dimension to humanitarian response was limited. There was a gap between what was intended for the 3RP and its actual manifestation. A predominant emphasis on humanitarian goals, a lack of collective outcomes and a weak common regional measurement framework for resilience-building activities reduced the effectiveness of 3RP as an integrated regional humanitarian and development strategy.

UNDP promoted a common understanding of the concept of resilience at planning and programme levels through workshops, training and advocacy at multiple levels in the first years of the 3RP. The Dead Sea Resilience Agenda was a key milestone in furthering the resilience strategy at the regional level and increasing funding for resilience since 2015. Developed by UNDP in the second year of the 3RP, the Dead Sea Resilience Agenda's principles and actions provided a common basis for resilience-based responses across the 3RP countries. UNDP organized the Resilience Development Forum which boosted new partnerships and enabled setting the stage for resilience-based programming. The 10 elements focused on actions for a more robust resilience approach linked to longer-term development. While the Dead Sea Resilience Agenda

was an important step in clarifying resilience-based refugee response, there remain challenges in its implementation. The regional 3RP strategy on resilience was not able to scale up promising approaches or identify those that demonstrate a holistic approach to humanitarian challenges for transfer across the region. Systematic learning from resilience approaches between interventions and across countries was not established.⁶⁰ The overall score for promoting the resilience approach within 3RP was average (See Figure 13).

One of the positive outcomes of the Syrian refugee crisis response is the adoption of the resilience concept by United Nations agencies, including humanitarian agencies. UNHCR established a global resilience and solutions division at its headquarters⁶¹ and UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) include resilience in their strategic plans. There remain, however, challenges in promoting medium- to longer-term strategies and practices alongside humanitarian and social cohesion efforts for strengthening resilience. While UNDP is leveraging its development support in promoting medium- to longer-term strategies in that support, promoting resilience approaches in humanitarian response and establishing linkages to development processes is evolving and lacks concerted focus.

While 3RP is a significant step forward in providing an opportunity to promote development approaches in humanitarian response, there remain areas where sustained efforts are needed by both UNDP and UNHCR as well as the donors to strengthen nexus approaches. Despite the consistency in terms of the strategic objectives and key sectors of the 3RP plans across the five countries addressing refugee and host community needs, the excessive emphasis on coordination of immediate needs activities within sectors did not promote synergies between interventions, and between humanitarian and development actors, to enable greater resilience processes. Both the scale of resources for the host

⁶⁰ UNDP, 'The State of Resilience Programming: The Syria Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP)', 2016. See http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/SyriaResponse/UNDP_Resilience-3RP_final-lowres.pdf

⁶¹ The UNHCR Division of Resilience and Solutions was set up in February 2018, working on livelihoods, economic inclusion, education and partnerships with development actors including the World Bank.

communities as well as the approach to addressing development challenges that underpin refugee response have yet to be addressed. A predominantly humanitarian approach, as opposed to the resilience approach, to address the refugee crisis exacerbated development challenges and reduced the outcomes of 3RP at the country level. Concerns remain about the condition of the vulnerable host communities and inadequate development initiatives. One of the indicators of this disconnect is the heightened tension in host communities regarding the disproportionate attention paid to refugee support at the perceived cost of development and employment efforts for the Lebanese. Host communities are severely affected by existing development and governance challenges, in addition to the huge influx of refugees.

Although the 3RP emphasizes medium- to longer-term development outcomes, it does not explicitly emphasize collective outcomes, which was pointed out in several assessments. After four years of 3RP implementation, it was evident that opportunities have yet to be used to consider the humanitarian and development aspects of the response simultaneously and in an integrated manner.⁶² Implementation of the resilience approach was difficult when funding was fragmented and change processes to consolidating nexus initiatives were slow. While there are several individual initiatives by agencies that promoted transformational processes, these were despite, rather than a result of, 3RP. Lastly, the process of leveraging humanitarian aid and exploring alternate funding opportunities such as the private sector to provide a more holistic humanitarian-development nexus response is in the early stages.

Finding 5. A flexible 3RP framework allowed for context-specific national response plans. There were constraints in the extent to which 3RP could enable development solutions for improving the condition of the refugees.

The regional 3RP strategy acknowledges that the policy and institutional environment in refugee-hosting countries is different and needs specific responses. However, the consolidation of initiatives for addressing the systemic challenges and institutional strengthening is still in the early stages. A disconnect between the concept of the integrated resilience approach and its practice at the national level, particularly in the livelihoods and employment, social cohesion and social protection sectors, reduced the possibility of informing public practices. There were efforts by UNDP, for example, the regional strategy on employment and economic opportunities,⁶³ which provided a common basis for a national response. It aimed to promote strategic and coordinated use of existing scattered short-term and emergency employment initiatives under the 3RP alongside the creation of sustainable economic opportunities. Implementation was a challenge and livelihood activities implemented at the national level largely generated short-term jobs, cash for work and some stand-alone enterprise development and value chain successes.

As the countries affected by the Syrian refugee crisis have middle- and upper-middle-income profiles, diversification of development funding was not evident. In the absence of partnerships and private sector engagement, UNDP dependence on short-term resilience-related funding posed constraints in pursuing long-term solutions. In Turkey, where UNDP promoted longer-term solutions in competitiveness and job creation or service delivery, it was mostly due to its long-term development engagement and establishing programmatic and funding partnerships.

Finding 6. The “resilience lens” promoted by UNDP by itself was not sufficient in enabling regional coherence or in the integration of resilience in the 3RP. It has been challenging to measure resilience beyond its coping and recovery elements.

⁶² ‘State of Resilience Programming in the Syria Crisis Response: Strengthening Resilience Capacities’, 2018.

⁶³ Jobs Make the Difference was drafted in 2017 in partnership with UNDP, ILO and WFP to support efforts by the five host nations, the international donors and the private sector to achieve the targets established in London of creating 1.1 million jobs by 2018. It was a joint United Nations Multi-Country Economic Opportunities Assessment conducted in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Syria. The assessment identifies promising approaches to creating economic opportunities for refugees and host communities.

While there have been efforts to include resilience-relevant indicators for sustainable livelihoods, the 3RP predominantly has a standard humanitarian reporting system and failed to reinforce monitoring of resilience-based programming. Timelines for measuring the impact of humanitarian and development interventions also differ, making an integrated humanitarian and resilience framework measurement a challenge. For example, vocational training and several short-term jobs created were monitored and reported in the same way as before the 3RP. The complexity of the concept has been challenging to measure beyond coping and recovery. Despite efforts to improve the monitoring and reporting on resilience, and the introduction of the Resilience Lens, there is no structured monitoring of resilience at the regional level for determining a collective impact and outcome.

There were several iterations of the “Resilience Lens” since it was first piloted in 2014 to assess the level of integration of resilience in both refugee and host community support, and was formally adopted in 3RP planning in 2016. While the Resilience Lens was a result of consensus among 3RP partners, several weaknesses remain. Notwithstanding limitations in the measurability and applicability of the parameters of the Resilience Lens across sectors, its use was optional and there was resistance to its use, which reduced its influence on programming. The 3RP assessments noted this challenge as well as the need for a common measurement of resilience outcomes, but no sufficient actions were taken to address the issue. Despite repeated guidance and training, it was difficult to apply the approach and its key programming principles. In Lebanon and Turkey, which piloted the Resilience Lens, it was not possible to effectively measure collective impact due to a lack of critical data and challenges in merging the systems and practices of humanitarian and development agencies. Also, integrating the resilience concept into a humanitarian monitoring and reporting system has not worked so far. Inter-agency multisectoral and

multi-year programming either did not get sufficient attention or did not succeed within individual agency mandates.

Opportunities were missed to systematically transfer learning between interventions and across countries, to transfer resilience successes and innovations into scaled-up models that could better bridge refugee response with development approaches. Country office staff lacked the necessary direction and support to strengthen and scale up promising areas of resilience-based programming. Currently, development and resilience dimensions are pigeonholed as host community support, which includes both host and refugee communities, and does not reflect the nexus approach needed for the protracted Syrian refugee crisis response. There were inter-agency efforts and commitment to disseminate good practices from the 3RP to other crises. While UNDP has some accountability, in general, the United Nations system had limitations in enabling a long-term approach to the protracted crisis, addressing underpinning development constraints.

UNDP led several inter-agency analyses of integrated approaches across themes and sectors. For example, in Turkey, efforts were prioritized to build linkages between the basic needs and livelihoods sectors to promote the transition of beneficiaries from basic needs (cash transfer) support towards self-reliance (jobs) through more joined-up programming and planning. Similarly in Lebanon, the “graduation out of poverty” approach attempted to move out of the humanitarian approach but has not yet integrated a development model to ensure sustainability. There were efforts by UNDP and UNCHR to support public institutions to clarify concepts and their application.⁶⁴ But the application of complex concepts such as resilience needs sustained efforts and time. The LCRP midterm review report identified the need to harmonize definitions of systems strengthening and capacity-building to report more accurately on work being done in this area.⁶⁵ The review also identified

⁶⁴ See, https://www.pseau.org/outils/ouvrages/un_habitat_unicef_unhcr_support_to_public_institutions_in_lebanon_under_the_lebanon_crisis_response_plan_lcrp_2017_2020_2017_results_2018.pdf

⁶⁵ LCRP Mid Term Review, 2019.

the need for 3RP to shift from measuring access to services to reporting on strengthened systems for delivery of services. Difficulties in measuring the outcome indicator for improved access to services at the municipal level are acknowledged by UNDP (for example, technical support for project management and coordination that contributed to increased capacity at selected municipalities).

Measurement and reporting of capacity development among agencies and development actors is an area that is often overlooked. In Lebanon and Turkey, even after four years, critical information and resilience impact analysis on how the 3RP was contributing to longer-term approaches, including vulnerable host country individuals and linking to broader development efforts, is missing. In Lebanon, there were not sufficient data available on the number of vulnerable Lebanese who required assistance through the cash transfer programme. In Turkey, gender-disaggregated data are limited, which hinders robust gender analysis on access to rights, services and opportunities. The 2019-2020 3RP guidance note calls for the adoption of a clear results framework at the outcome level for each country, but despite considerable effort by UNDP, it has not been put in place in the 3RP.⁶⁶ Key lessons learned from the 3RP articulated in the UNDP global report confirm that “investment in strategy development, as well as theories of change in certain sectors, are needed to be able to communicate how several projects or components link to each other and lead to higher-level objectives, particularly in protracted displacement contexts.”⁶⁷

Finding 7. Given decades of humanitarian and development programme divide, the partnership between UNDP and UNHCR is significant in many ways, enhancing contributions to global policies and the Syrian refugee crisis response at the country level. The partnership has immense potential to strengthen the nexus agenda. There are areas that need to be addressed by both agencies to reinforce this partnership for enhanced contributions to host communities and refugees.

Despite their diverse mandates, the Syrian refugee crisis response was in many ways a successful demonstration of commitment on the part of both UNHCR and UNDP to take forward the agenda of the humanitarian-development nexus. Specifically, the commitment by the heads of the agencies enabled a joint plan of action which emphasized the resilience approach. The non-typical role UNDP has successfully played in jointly coordinating the Syrian refugee crisis response with UNHCR, and through which the two organizations have been able to leverage their different mandates, is widely acknowledged in the countries hosting Syrian refugees.

Partnerships with UNHCR in other refugee crises are not comparable to the Syrian crisis. In the Lake Chad Basin, the partnership is being forged, whereas in the Rohingya and Venezuelan crises there has been limited engagement between the two agencies, particularly in pursuing initiatives related to the humanitarian-development nexus.

A joint UNHCR-UNDP assessment carried out in 2017 points to certain challenges in collaboration, which this evaluation confirms.⁶⁸ Neither agency outlined a common plan of action that would clarify joint engagement as against compartmentalized humanitarian and host community support. The UNDP longer-term programme windows typical of development support were perceived as incompatible with short-term humanitarian programme windows. Common outcomes between the two agencies would have sorted this issue to a large extent but were not actively pursued within the 3RP framework. There remain challenges in managing expectations. The comparative strengths of UNDP are the scope of its development engagement, ability to provide sustainable solutions that have national ownership and partnership with the government. Financial resources are not always a UNDP strength, particularly in middle-income countries. There were expectations on the part of UNHCR that UNDP should scale up its development support in communities hosting refugees. However, there was no agreement between

⁶⁶ 3RP 2019-2020 Planning Guidance Note 2.

⁶⁷ 3RP Global Report.

⁶⁸ Lawry-White, 'Defining UNDP-UNHCR Collaboration In Key Areas of Work', 2017, unpublished document.

the two agencies that humanitarian resources would be channelled for such engagement by UNDP. While UNDP was engaged in host community support, it was either not on the scale that UNHCR wanted or not always in the areas of UNHCR support. UNHCR made its orientation to development engagement apparent by recruiting staff for development activities. The expectation on the part of UNDP was that UNHCR as a humanitarian refugee-focused agency would not engage in development support directly but instead collaborate with UNDP. UNDP for its part did not demonstrate commitment and consistency in its contributions. With IFIs coming into the crisis space, particularly the World Bank, UNDP has yet to communicate a clear value proposition. Clarifying these issues will be fundamental to successful collaboration at the country level, which both the agencies are embarking upon in other refugee contexts.

UNHCR has demonstrated on several occasions, including an engagement at the Brussels IV conference in June 2020, its preference for the World Bank over UNDP. One of the reasons for this engagement is the resources the World Bank can contribute. Although UNDP cannot match the resources, in crisis contexts it has a comparative advantage of engaging at the local and national levels, implementing programmes of different scales at the community level and flexibility of working with the government, which agencies such as the World Bank do not have. But UNDP has yet to leverage its comparative advantage to engage in partnership from a point of strength.

4.3 Employment generation and livelihoods

UNDP was supporting development programmes in the host communities even before the Syrian refugee crisis and continued thereafter. This section analyses UNDP support to employment and livelihoods of Syrian refugees and vulnerable

host communities. The assessment also covers programmes that have relevance for the Syrian refugees and host communities that are not necessarily under Syrian refugee crisis response funding.

Finding 8. UNDP support to employment and livelihoods for Syrian refugees and host communities contributed to temporary employment and enabled medium-term community-level income-generation processes. The institutionalization of such initiatives is inadequate for promoting sustainable solutions.

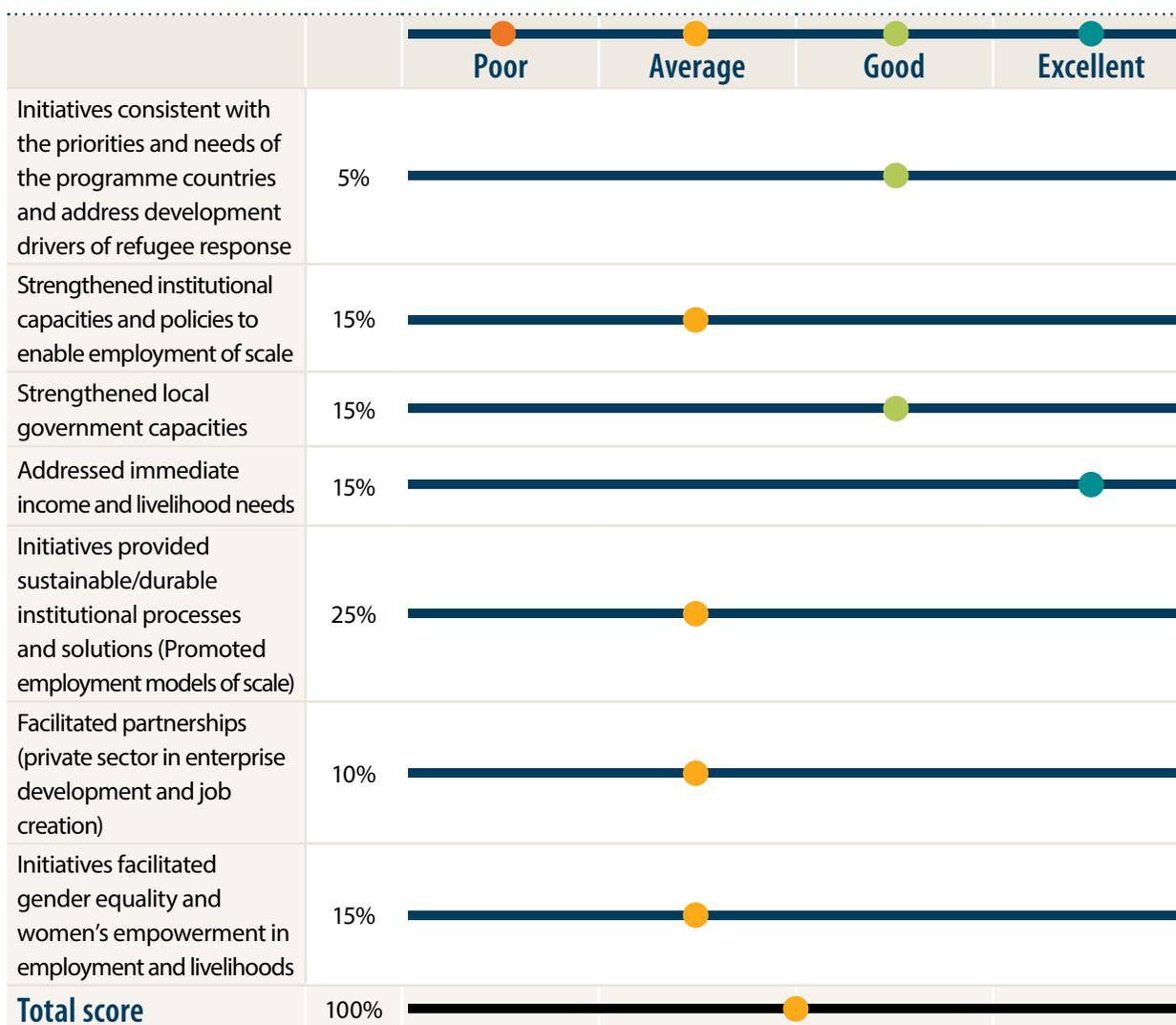
Across the refugee-hosting countries, a key challenge facing host communities and refugees is lack of employment and economic opportunities, and in some cases negative economic growth. The economies of the host countries have long faced difficulties in creating sufficient economic opportunities for their populations. This difficulty has been compounded by the Syrian refugee crisis and the resulting instability throughout the region, which has slowed already weak economic growth. The UNDP response should be seen in this context where tailored responses in providing viable employment and income-generation models are needed within a less congenial economic situation.

UNDP employment and livelihood support to the Syrian population and vulnerable host communities comprised support for vocational training to increase work opportunities; support for small businesses; improving supply capacity for skills and labour absorption in the value chain; improving institutional processes; networking with the private sector; and cash for work. There were country-specific interventions as well, such as language training in Turkey. UNDP is a key agency in the facilitation of language skills training for Syrians, which is important for employment of Syrians in Turkey.⁶⁹

In job-creation programmes as part of both development and refugee-response initiatives,

⁶⁹ Syrians are Arabic speakers and face language barriers in the absence of Turkish language proficiency, which limits basic employability. UNDP programme support contributed to the development of inclusive and sustainable value chain models. Institutional capacity development, while prioritized, was not pursued, often resulting in missed opportunities in informing government initiatives.

FIGURE 14. Performance score for the UNDP contribution to employment and livelihoods



Score: 1= Poor; 2= Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent
 Source: IEO Evaluation Assessment

host communities and refugees were included as beneficiaries to address livelihood needs as well as to ensure social cohesion. In Lebanon, enhancing stability and alleviating social tensions between refugees and host communities is an explicit goal of the LCRP. In Egypt, the primary organization supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the Social Fund for Development, has taken measures to ensure that both financial and non-financial services were available to Egyptians and Syrian refugees alike and likewise in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, programmes typically

included host, refugee and displaced populations. In Turkey, where economic inclusion is seen as a model for ensuring effective social inclusion, programmes ensured that Syrians and Turkish nationals work together in the same workplaces.

Cash for work as a temporary work option in infrastructure development needs consideration, particularly in protracted crisis contexts in middle-income countries. UNDP cash-for-work initiatives contributed to quick and temporary income generation. In Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon,

the cash-for-work initiatives moved UNDP away from more efficient infrastructure development options suitable for the middle-income-country context, and from those that will also provide long-term solutions. In Lebanon, infrastructure initiatives that underpin livelihoods were well managed with quality standards built into their design and management. A positive impact of the infrastructure created is that it will benefit the local economy in the long term, as rural roads and irrigation will promote access to markets and value chain development for other sectors or raise income for the municipality. The other dimension, however, is the limitations of temporary work in a protracted Syrian refugee crisis context when more durable employment-generation solutions are required. There is also a risk of the extended delivery time frame of infrastructure assets and possible quality implications of manual versus technology-centred approaches. The evaluation points out that for the upper-middle-income country contexts, labour-intensive infrastructure development was not an appropriate option for temporary work creation.

The overall performance assessment of support to employment and livelihoods was above average (see Figure 14). While UNDP performed well in addressing immediate employment and livelihood needs, there remain challenges in enabling solutions for employment at scale or sustainable livelihoods. Slow progress in enabling income generation and livelihoods is not unique to UNDP, as other organizations working in this area faced similar challenges. UNDP, as well as other 3RP agencies, recognizes the need for well-targeted long-term vocational training that would lead to employment. However, there is no planned approach to vocational training that enables linkages to employment or financing for enterprise development, and it was not evident that the 3RP platform could address some of these challenges. Wider collaboration among agencies engaged in Syrian crisis response is critical for promoting longer-term solutions, such as support for SMEs and developing innovative products and processes. UNDP and other agencies were content supporting one-off vocational training.

Typical to short-term vocational training initiatives, the outcomes in finding employment or enabling participants to establish businesses were limited. In Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, support to vocational training under the Syrian refugee crisis response programmes had limited outcomes in generating income when there was a lack of engagement with the private sector or lack of medium-term productivity efforts to provide post-training employment opportunities. In the absence of linkages with sectors that would absorb the trainees or financing mechanisms for small enterprises, the outcomes of the vocational training were limited. Lack of orientation to establish a business or an understanding of the marketability of their proposals was a challenge common to those who received training. Participants who were more advanced in their business plans with a good sense of market feasibility did not need such vocational training but rather financing linkages, which was beyond the scope of vocational training programmes. While there are instances of job creation, given the short duration of vocational training, the prospect of employment has been limited. Jordan is a case in point where UNDP used its “3x6” approach which focuses on linking short-term employment creation through community initiatives such as cash for work, introducing savings and more sustainable livelihoods through micro-business development based on savings. The implementation of the second and third phases of the 3x6 approach, that entail medium- to long-term sustainability initiatives, is fraught in terms of funding challenges.

Except in Turkey, a major constraint in supporting vocational training that has job prospects are the restrictions concerning areas where refugees are allowed to work. Despite such constraints, there are ways to improve the inclusion of refugees in employment across productive sectors with holistic employment-generation models. UNDP support to the competitiveness agenda in Turkey or value chain development in Lebanon demonstrates viable models, but such examples are limited. With exceptions, demonstrating livelihood and employment models for informing public policy and programming lacked the attention it deserves.

In the livelihood sector, there are several actors engaged in micro-level activities similar to the support provided by UNDP. A majority of efforts lacked partnerships for consolidating individual efforts that were short-term income-generation opportunities. The SME and value chain support are areas where joint efforts can enable strategic thinking or models that would generate employment at scale and inform policies. Improving the legal and institutional framework for SMEs to accelerate job creation that would benefit both refugees and affected host communities has yet to be addressed.

In Lebanon, UNDP developed an agricultural sector development strategy early in the crisis to inform donor and government responses. This strategy seeks to mitigate the negative impact on jobs and income due to the closure of the Syrian border for agricultural exports. But the strategy could not be implemented as part of LCRP because of donor preference to fund immediate economic revitalization opportunities for the Syrians. There were other efforts by UNDP to promote a development perspective in humanitarian livelihood response through regular meetings with donors and other development partners. While UNDP was successful in including livelihoods under other LCRP sectors, a coordinated approach to inclusive and sustainable employment for the host communities and the refugees could not be developed. There is also competition among agencies working on livelihoods and a strategic and streamlined response was lacking between key actors (e.g., ILO, UNICEF, UNHCR, World Bank).

Private sector collaboration is an important dimension of business development. In Turkey, UNDP has well-established relationships at the subnational level with the private sector and chambers of commerce and has been successful in establishing links with the emerging Syrian business sector. This is important because Syrians have registered new businesses, providing access for trading with the Arabic-speaking traders. After

German businesses, Syrians are the second largest investors in Turkey.⁷⁰ The field presence of UNDP facilitated the development and maintenance of these networks. UNDP explored avenues for employment on a larger scale, but such initiatives needed further emphasis and consolidation with other well-established UNDP development programmes. The manufacturing sector in Turkey has the potential to absorb the labour force. In Adana, UNDP supported the creation of a task force for the automotive sector comprising relevant private sector, government and NGO stakeholders to secure apprenticeships for Syrian and host community members by referring them to vacancies in the automotive sector. This is a pilot initiative with the potential for scaling-up.

Generation of employment opportunities was used as a modality to promote peace and develop conflict-dialogue mechanisms in the most vulnerable communities. LHSP, Palestinian gatherings and peacebuilding projects are implemented at the local level in parallel to promote holistic and inclusive approaches to livelihoods. There were micro-level successes given the small scale of such intervention. Social cohesion in Lebanon and Jordan is an area that did not receive the attention it deserves from 3RP actors. There was a need for institutionalized social safety measures rather than one-off, community-level livelihood efforts focused on social cohesion.

Partnerships with United Nations agencies show the potential of joint initiatives with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), ILO, UNHCR and UN-Women. In Iraq, UNDP and UNHCR jointly implement a livelihood-creation project in three Syrian refugee camps (Arbat, Gavilan and Darashakran). Based on a market and agro-value chain assessment, 15 greenhouses with irrigation systems were installed and renovations for 15 more are ongoing. To run the greenhouses and improve sustainable livelihood opportunities, vocational and business development training courses are

⁷⁰ 3RP, 'Outcome Monitoring Report, 3RP Turkey Chapter 2018; 2019; Facility for Refugees in Turkey Office of the Presidency of Turkey and Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services.

being held for 120 refugees to increase their skills in agricultural production, small-scale agro-processing, good nutrition and hygiene practices. UNDP collaborated with ILO in the implementation of the Jordan Compact through capacity development support to the Government at the macro, meso and micro levels. Programmatic partnerships for the consolidation of livelihood initiatives are still not at the level that is required. United Nations agencies preferred their own organizations' approaches to resilience and longer-term development with comparable objectives. As a result, United Nations initiatives remain fragmented. The 3RP was not successful in streamlining various approaches for enhancing livelihood outcomes. UNDP as the livelihood lead had limitations in enabling a coherent United Nations approach.

UNDP programmes paid specific attention to employment and vocational training for women. Across programme initiatives, women were proportionately represented as beneficiaries. For similar reasons discussed above, vocational training did not always result in the employability of refugee and host community women. Although not typical to UNDP, training in general is oriented towards micro-enterprises that are unviable in the absence of market orientation and linkages. With exceptions, micro-enterprise development and other livelihood interventions failed to address structural issues of barriers to women's employment and income generation. Women who had success in their micro-enterprises were already skilled and had their businesses in Syria. A common issue was that the programming was based on the assumptions that Syrian women are more reluctant to work outside the home and therefore was not tailored to meet the needs and wishes of women seeking work. While cultural factors persist, there is a change in the women's attitude towards work outside the home, with women willing to go for paid employment rather than developing their enterprises. Weak or lack of gender-disaggregated data on livelihoods and gender-sensitive analysis in livelihoods programming contributed to suboptimal responses.

Finding 9. UNDP programme support contributed to the development of inclusive and sustainable value chain models. Micro examples of success need to be scaled up to address the employment challenges of host communities and Syrian refugees.

As the outcomes of the LHSP show, a short-term programme modality is unsuitable to promote sustainable livelihoods for the host communities and Syrian refugees. The LHSP responded to demands for support to Lebanese populations. Despite their short-term nature, some of the interventions have the potential to link to national-level policies or ongoing initiatives at the municipal level. In Akkar, UNDP is supporting the Union of Cooperatives to expand existing value chains (honey, jam, zaatar, milk, honey, olives and vegetables). UNDP support allowed a honey cooperative to reach a higher level of production and to transform the cooperative into a centre of expertise and capacity-building for other beekeepers. In the case of the honey value chain, for example, the LHSP was effective in the support provided to cooperatives as most of them achieved positive results in terms of job creation and income generation, particularly for women, and improved production efficiency, quality and marketing. The ability of these micro initiatives (e.g., honey value chain development) to link to larger value chain processes, however, requires multi-year financial and market support. Coordination mechanisms have been established between the Ministry of Economy and Trade and the LHSP livelihood component to ensure that the identified value chains do not meet any administrative setbacks. Support to about 100 cooperatives through vocational training, provision of equipment, grants and in-kind support contributed to strengthening their capacities. Service centres, such as the Jezzine apple service centre and the Rachaya pickling and dry fruit centre, supported specific value chains in the agro-food sector, one of the main economic growth sectors identified by the McKinsey study.⁷¹

The impact of LHSP would have been greater if multi-year programming for the livelihood, SME and sustainable job-creation projects had been

⁷¹ McKinsey & Company, 'Lebanon Economic Vision', 2018. See <https://www.economy.gov.lb/media/11893/20181022-1228full-report-en.pdf>

pursued. There is scope to leverage the short-term funding for generating additional resources, which were not adequately explored. As a result, a short-term approach to value chains, SMEs and vocational training did not enable viable solutions of scale. The overreliance of UNDP on traditional funding channels and the usual programming approaches undermined the organization's value addition. UNDP has yet to leverage its long-term local presence and strong partnership with the Government at the national level to inform policy processes. With the economy in decline in Lebanon, there is high unemployment and competition for work, requiring more concerted employment-generation strategies. However, the sustainable livelihoods sector is not well funded as it is not a high priority for donors in middle-income countries. Micro examples of success demonstrated by LHSP are not sufficient to address the employment and livelihood challenges of host communities and Syrian refugees.

The 2016 London Conference pledged the creation of 1.1 million jobs by 2018, of which a large number were to be in Lebanon and Turkey, which host a substantial proportion of the refugee population. While the countries hosting Syrian refugees made commitments to open their labour markets and improve the domestic regulatory environment, this has yet to happen. Despite successes, there remain considerable gaps in fulfilling such a commitment. The number of work permits provided by the host countries continues to be low although there are ongoing efforts to accelerate the process. While there have been proactive efforts as part of 3RP to include Syrian refugees in the labour market, such efforts took place without reform of existing national regulations. In 2018, the 3RP prioritized increasing the number of work permits, employability, provision of short and long-term employment and fostering a business environment for job creation. However, implementation lacked a well-coordinated programme with the Government

to address the various bottlenecks and give more visible support to employment generation for the host communities.

Finding 10. In Turkey, UNDP contributed to the promotion of modern practices enhancing productivity and competitiveness in strategic sectors through a mix of national policy support for total factor productivity (TFP) and the establishment of model industrial modernization centres. Such efforts are important in generating employment at scale that would provide work for Turkish nationals as well as Syrian refugees.

The TFP initiative emanated from a strong rationale to address Turkey's labour and TFP challenges, which is far behind OECD and United States averages estimated at 40 and 50 percent respectively.⁷² A major structural feature of Turkey's lower productivity is the huge gap between the productivity of large enterprises and SMEs. Located in the office of the Directorate General of Economic Modelling in the Office of the Presidency, the project's key output – a white paper drawing on firm-level assessments of over 3,000 enterprises – analysed productivity trends and constraints to market and value chain integration in several sectors. Firm-level assessment surveys and analysis of enabling environment factors for productivity outlined three elements as essential for a viable productivity framework. Such efforts are important in generating employment at scale that would provide work for Turkish nationals as well as Syrian refugees.

The TFP policy analysis had spin-off initiatives, such as model factories, SME Applied Capability Centres for lean manufacturing and transformation of the organized industrial zones for provision of services to improve management quality in enterprises (Box 2). UNDP supported the establishment of the first model factory in Ankara. The model factories contain modern equipment and facilities and provide customized training programmes for industry technicians and managers to achieve

⁷² UNDP, 'Support to Development of a Policy on Total Factor Productivity', White Paper, 2018. It was based on extensive consultations with industry, academia and policy research institutions, and prepared with the assistance of McKinsey & Co. [https://www.undp.org/content/dam/turkey/white-book/White%20Paper%20Final%20Rev1%20\(1\)%20\(2\).pdf](https://www.undp.org/content/dam/turkey/white-book/White%20Paper%20Final%20Rev1%20(1)%20(2).pdf)

improvements in cycle time, waste material costs and other efficiency factors. As public goods, these centres are accessible to SMEs that may not have in-house capital equipment but can still benefit from the practices of “lean” principles. The centres are expected to be operationally self-sustaining with a revenue model based on certification and hands-on training of enterprises (especially members of the Chambers of Industries) in the Ankara organized industrial zone. Based on the Ankara model factory, similar centres were planned in Izmir, Mersin and Bursa. In the next phase, the centres will add modules for digital transformation and focus on technological upgrading of strategic industrial clusters to build a future global competitive advantage (e.g., piping equipment for nuclear energy).

There is scope for UNDP to contribute to the overall competitiveness strategy in partnership with other United Nations agencies, which will enable durable employment options for the refugees. The UNDP competitiveness agenda, implemented as part of Turkey’s ambitious \$20 billion Southeastern Anatolia Project, known by its Turkish acronym GAP, aimed to improve regional productive capacities and competitiveness.⁷³ UNDP piloted scalable organic agriculture and growth models based on clean technology, and measures were taken to institutionalize the UNDP competitiveness agenda in the GAP regional development authority to undertake further initiatives in competitiveness improvement. The GAP regional authority and regional development agencies established 10-year plans for competitiveness improvements and implemented initiatives in organic agriculture, organic textiles, energy efficiency, renewable energy-based agricultural applications and community-based tourism. With the Syrian crisis, which affected the Southeastern Anatolia region more than others, the competitiveness agenda was amended to include resilience aspects for affected host communities as well as Syrian refugees.

BOX 2. Approaches to competitive and inclusive industrial transformation for long-term solutions to income generation and employment

- A strong area of the UNDP programme in addressing employment issues of vulnerable groups, including the Syrian population, and inclusive growth is the support to mechanisms that have the potential of creating large-scale jobs. Turkey’s competitiveness agenda is one such example which spans a mix of upstream sector-agnostic work and sector-based interventions, collectively representing a holistic approach to competitiveness and inclusiveness for long-term income and employment creation.
- Total factor productivity (TFP) challenges for Turkey are primarily rooted in the lack of incentives at the firm level of productivity, especially of smaller enterprises; weak policies to build competitive edges in specific sectors, technologies and regions to create globally competitive enterprises; and deficiencies in the corporate interfaces for effective implementation of TFP policies. Several downstream interventions by UNDP complemented ongoing efforts. UNDP in partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development aimed to provide viable programme models that would demonstrate ways to address some of these challenges at the subnational level to improve the productivity of SMEs as well as generate large-scale employment. The scale of job creation would not only address the employment challenges but also absorb the Syrian population in areas they are permitted to work. A few examples are featured below.
- Establishment and operationalization of eight ateliers in Gaziantep Industrial Vocational Training Centre provide specialized services for the development of occupational capabilities to Turkish host communities as well as Syrians under temporary protection registered in Gaziantep. Because Gaziantep is a globally competitive urban centre with a large export-oriented employment hub for several industries, there has been a sizeable level of training and absorption. More than 4,800 persons were trained, of whom close to 40 percent were Syrians and over 35 percent got employment within the industrial zone. To increase opportunities for women, a women’s entrepreneurship centre, the first one in Turkey, is also being established at the premises. Based on the Gaziantep model, a similar centre is being developed in Adana for the Adana Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Other projects with similar support are under implementation by different agencies, which reflects the increasing level of support for resilience livelihoods.⁷⁴

⁷³ The future of GAP is unclear. The change in the cooperation with district authorities replacing the current strong cooperation UNDP had with the regional development authority may have implications for the project. Also, the Government taking a stand that GAP should be self-reliant has implications for some of the interventions and UNDP engagement.

⁷⁴ For instance, the Strengthening Social Stability in Southeast Anatolia Region (2016-2018, Japan); the Development of Employment and Livelihoods in GAP Region (2016-2017, \$8 million KfW).

BOX 2. Approaches to competitive and inclusive industrial transformation for long-term solutions to income generation and employment (cont.)

- Expanding labour absorption in local value chains is estimated at approximately 32,000 additional job opportunities in key value chains (agriculture, textiles, carpets) in the target provinces. Proposed initiatives will prioritize competencies for Syrians in production and processing of labour-intensive agro-based products such as pomegranate, cotton, etc., and build on ongoing work with the Southeast Anatolia Agricultural Research and Training Institute in Sanliurfa. The establishment of a second industrial zone in Gaziantep in 2020 is projected to create demand for 50,000 workers, which justifies the vocational centres linked to the industrial zones. The industry's approach to the Syrian crisis is to enable refugees with skills and provide decent working conditions without displacing Turkish labour in the zones.

Source: ICPE Turkey

4.4 Strengthening services and local development

Finding 11. UNDP support at the local level is highly relevant and efforts to strengthen municipalities assume importance given the capacity and resource challenges. Support for infrastructure development and service delivery has been critical for both host communities and the Syrian population.

The refugee influx has put considerable pressure on the already overstretched municipal services across the countries hosting Syrian refugees. The municipalities which received refugees were already facing huge gaps in the provision of services and it is was challenging both in terms of resources and capacities. Disrupted local services increased vulnerabilities and have been drivers of tensions between the refugees and host communities. In all the countries hosting Syrian refugees, it was also an opportunity to improve service infrastructures, strengthen service delivery processes and adopt more efficient models. Municipalities needed to increase their capacities in proportion to the increase in population created by the presence of Syrians. UNDP supported the strengthening of local services and municipal capacity development. Support for solid waste and wastewater management,

firefighting services and municipal capacity enhancement are high priorities identified by the Government and the international community as an essential part of the Syrian crisis response.

A strength of the UNDP response is its strong programmatic engagement at the local level. Building on its previous development partnerships, UNDP has made significant contributions at the local level to respond quickly to the crisis. UNDP contributed to addressing immediate basic services which were under pressure due to the influx of Syrian refugees. In Lebanon for over a decade, the UNDP ART GOLD project enabled local-level support to the most deprived regions of the country which are also affected by the Syrian refugee crisis. UNDP was the only United Nations agency with a presence in the poorest areas such as Akkar and was among the first to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis. UNDP supported local economic development planning, provided the basis for the LHSP to respond efficiently to the impact of the Syrian crisis at the local level. LHSP is a continuation of ART GOLD, which closed in 2018. UNDP was able to respond quickly to the crisis, building on its continuous presence, previous interventions and strong partnerships with local authorities. Similarly in Turkey, UNDP had long-standing programme engagement in the Southeastern Anatolia region which received the highest number of refugees.

UNDP support to strengthening municipal services has been well structured, enabling municipalities to address institutional challenges. The municipalities considered the development approach used by UNDP to address the service delivery challenges as appropriate both to address immediate requirements as well as institutional bottlenecks. UNDP is one of the few 3RP agencies providing support to strengthen municipal infrastructure and the only one in Turkey. Partnerships built on long-term relationships enabled speedy strategizing and implementation. Technical support for capacity enhancement was critical in moving forward with the implementation of the plans, particularly in the area of solid waste management. Municipalities also consider UNDP administrative and procurement procedures as efficient, enabling a speedy response.

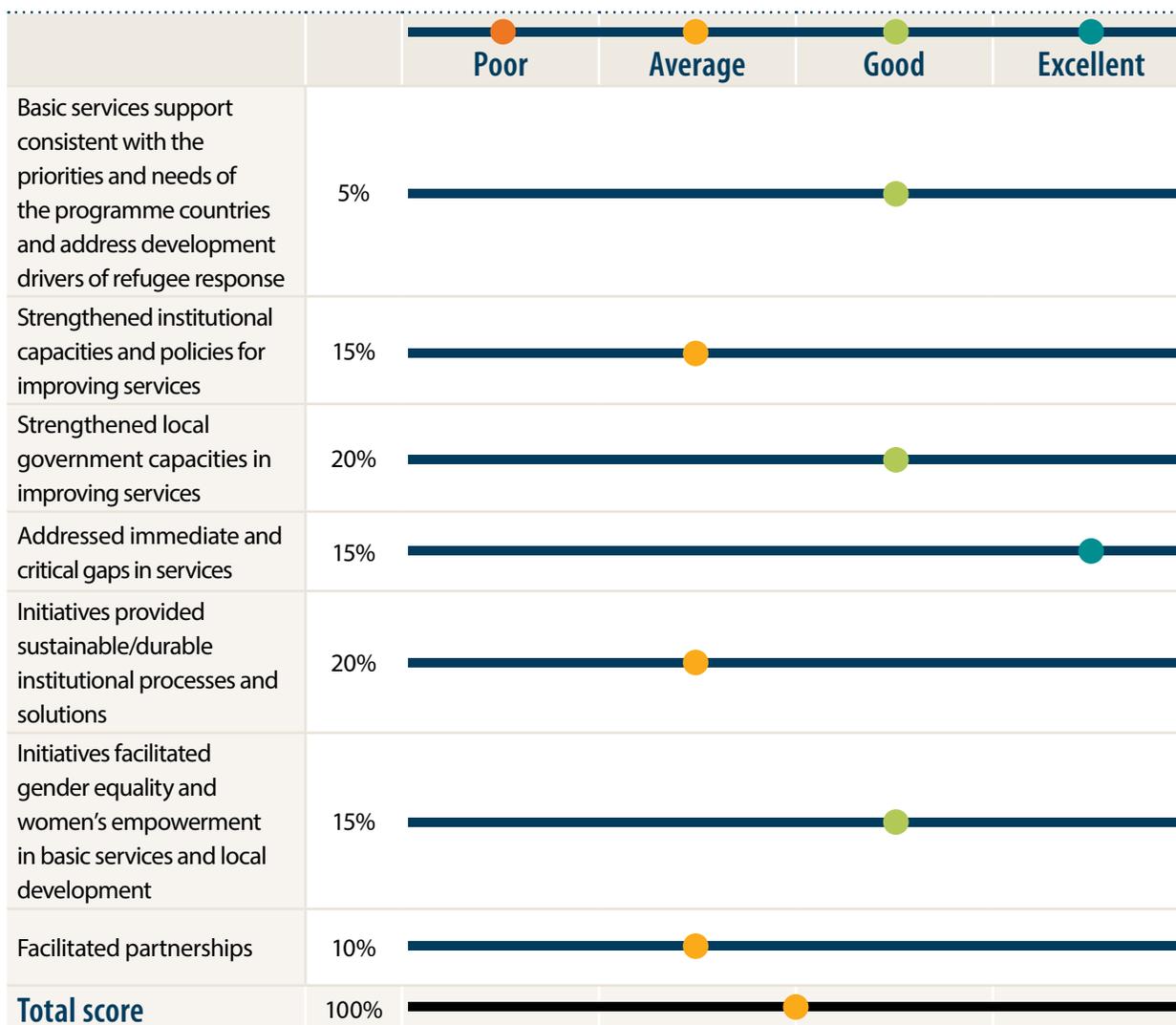
Efforts such as Gaziantep Municipal Forum 2019 in Turkey has the potential to link with local development actors around the world providing a platform to showcase and exchange good practices, facilitate city-level partnerships and contribute to the existing networks of relevant actors in the migration and displacement contexts. Another example is the International Forum for Local Solutions to Migration and Displacement, held in Gaziantep and which UNDP co-hosted with UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration, the Metropolitan Municipality of Gaziantep, United Cities and Local Governments the Middle East and West Asia Division, the Turkish Union of Municipalities and the World Academy for Local Government and Democracy. A significant outcome of this event is the signature of the Gaziantep Declaration by over 40 mayors and national and international organizations committing to sustain and scale up support to refugees, migrants and host communities, emphasizing the leading role of local authorities.

There were contributions to strengthening the capacities of local institutions to develop and implement integrated local development plans that respond to priority community needs. For example, a participatory and conflict-sensitive approach was promoted to improve livelihoods and service provision. Considering sparse funding from central government and limited resource generation of the municipalities, UNDP support filled some critical gaps in service-related capacities. Over 175 communities have benefited from LHSP support covering more than 1.4 million Lebanese and

500,000 Syrian refugees through interventions related to health, education, water, wastewater and waste management, in addition to livelihood interventions. LHSP enabled key municipal support to build agricultural roads, landfill sites, irrigation canals and vegetable markets. LHSP supported basic services for host communities where the municipalities were overwhelmed by the influx of refugees and faced limited budgets and capital investment by the Government. Overall, UNDP provided short-term job opportunities for 264,275 Lebanese and 126,545 Syrians through various infrastructure development projects. The Palestinian gathering interventions address direct needs concerning water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), shelter and socioeconomic conditions of Palestinian refugees.

In Jordan and Lebanon, there was a strong perception that the refugee response has largely supported the Syrians and not focused enough on vulnerable host communities and the long-term development of the country. The municipal-level initiatives that addressed host community issues, while important, did not compensate for the poor attention paid to the development of the host countries in the refugee response. A concrete development focus would be essential to allay such perceptions, particularly solutions that would address both the long-term development challenges of the host communities and refugee issues. UNDP has consistently lobbied with donors for the refugee response to include longer-term development components, with limited success.

FIGURE 15. Performance score for the UNDP contribution to basic services and local development in the Syrian refugee response



Score: 1= Poor; 2= Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent

Source: IEO Evaluation Assessment

UNDP developed various instruments in Lebanon to assess basic service needs, identifying municipalities for support and to assess conflict-sensitivity in municipal responses. These tools could potentially be used for prioritization and targeting of the entire response at local level. There however remain constraints in their institutionalization and potential to enable streamlined municipal-level responses. Lack of consolidation of several municipal needs assessment instruments by various agencies, including the United Nations agencies, remains

an issue. The Maps of Risks and Resources and of Mechanism for Social Stability were developed as a rapid targeting mechanism for undertaking conflict-sensitivity assessments. UNDP subsequently streamlined these two tools into a single tool called the Mechanism for Stability and Resilience, which was piloted in 110 municipalities. The Mechanism is seen as a more integrated and refined approach than earlier iterations of the tool for mainstreaming conflict-sensitivity into all interventions and it also improved targeting processes.

Perception-based assessments serve a limited purpose, and the Lebanese context needs strategic and evidence-based assessments and tools that would enable better government and donor targeting of vulnerable host communities. The institutionalization of the municipal assessments was necessary to inform the development and humanitarian response. In the absence of a coordinated approach to development needs and conflict-sensitivity assessments in Lebanon, there are several tools for assessments at the municipal level in addition to the ones UNDP developed. There were limited efforts to ensure there are no duplicate municipal assessments. Opportunities were lost to enable the tool at the municipal level which had the buy-in of all actors.

In terms of the overall contribution to basic services and local development, the performance score of UNDP was found to be between average and good (see Figure 15). While UNDP support was stronger at the municipal level, efforts were not adequate to strengthen institutional processes in some of the host countries. The level of support and the choice of the modality of support reduced the possibility of durable solutions. Given the middle-income-country context of the Syrian refugee crisis response, UNDP has yet to play the role of an enabler of solutions instead of investing efforts in projects that would fulfil immediate needs.

Although not a significant area of 3RP, energy efficiency was an area which UNDP supported in Turkey and Lebanon. This area assumes importance not only for enabling clean energy but to address electricity shortages, particularly in Lebanon. While efforts were made in Lebanon to engage the private sector in renewable energy, there is considerable scope for demonstrating renewable energy models, informing policies and sustaining the interest of the private sector. Despite the current low level of private sector activity, poor enabling environment and the economy in recession, there remains potential for

the private sector to be a catalytic force for growth and jobs creation. UNDP projects have introduced new technologies, raised awareness and encouraged uptake by the private sector. The renewable energy sector is growing despite the current economic climate. In 2018, the Government agreed its first purchase power agreement with three Lebanese wind power companies. Lebanon had targets of 12 percent renewables installed by 2020⁷⁵ and 20 percent power and heat demand met by renewable energy by 2030.⁷⁶ It is expected to be one of the few countries in the region to reach this target.

Finding 12. UNDP support to solid waste management assumes importance given the significant challenges it posed across the refugee-hosting countries. UNDP demonstrated that a development approach to strengthening services, rather than a humanitarian approach of substituting services, has the potential for positive long-term outcomes, contributing to strengthening the capacities of the municipalities. The subnational programme models which UNDP promoted have yet to inform national strategies, reducing the level of contribution to development outcomes.

Across the refugee-hosting countries, in addition to the infrastructure-related investments, there has been technical support to ensure a coherent approach to waste management and municipal services. In Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and to some extent Egypt, support to solid waste management eased pressure on the municipalities. Municipalities have achieved efficiencies through the provision of larger vehicles to transfer waste, transfer stations to assemble large amounts of waste for further transportation and a compactor to extend the life of a landfill site. Assets UNDP supported were expanded by the municipalities in a majority of cases. In terms of enabling medium- to long-term solutions, the outcomes were mixed, with efficient practices introduced in Turkey but in the absence of policy linkages, the scale of programmes remains

⁷⁵ Lebanese Republic Ministry of Energy and Water and Lebanese Centre for Energy Conservation, The National Renewable Energy Action Plan for the Republic of Lebanon 2016-2020, November 2016, http://lcec.org.lb/Content/uploads/LCECOther/161214021429307~NREAP_DEC14.pdf

⁷⁶ MoE/UNDP/GEF, Lebanon's Third Biennial Update Report to the UNFCCC, 2019. https://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/library/environment_energy/BUR3.html

small; critical gaps were filled but there was lack of consolidation of efforts of different agencies on the ground in the case of Jordan, and in Lebanon, there were ad hoc responses for an issue that can escalate into a national emergency. The three cases are briefly analysed below.

In Turkey, municipalities in Southeastern Anatolia have experienced a population increase of 15 to 20 percent, and up to 100 percent in some cases, with already overstretched service capacities. For example, in Gaziantep, the population reached its projected size for 2025 by 2016. Support for solid waste and wastewater management, firefighting services and municipal capacity enhancement were high priorities identified by the Government and the international community as an essential part of the Syrian crisis response. Municipalities needed to increase their service delivery capacity in proportion to the increase in population created by the presence of Syrians. UNDP processes enabled long-term solutions and strengthened municipal capacities. Municipalities expedited long-term planning to accommodate the natural population increase. Strengthening municipal service capacities also underpins social cohesion and resilience.

UNDP made important contributions to significant improvements in solid waste management. UNDP conducted an impact assessment of its support to municipalities in Sanliurfa, Gaziantep, Hatay and Kilis. The assessment refers to the Turkish Resilience Project, which is funded through the European Union Regional Task Force but has covered investments in these municipalities since 2015, and therefore includes work of other actors. The impact assessment concludes that there has been a significant improvement in solid waste management, a reduction in pollution, improved environment and a reduced threat to public health. The waste management systems are now more efficient, saving municipalities time and resources in addition to savings in electricity generation.⁷⁷ UNDP also introduced simple multipurpose solutions in the use of equipment for firefighting and water

distribution, which are to be applied in other municipalities. A waste value chain assessment study by UNDP Turkey and geospatial mapping enabled remote identification of abandoned dumpsites to be rehabilitated.

In Lebanon, support to solid waste facilities provided temporary but critical and timely solutions. UNDP has financed three major waste infrastructure projects in Sidon, Baalbeck and Tripoli. The projects faced operational issues, as political, policy and institutional arrangements were not addressed. Notably, some LHSP interventions encompass community clusters, in recognition of the fact that many problems have spread to neighbouring communities (e.g., garbage from settlements taken to landfills has affected other communities). Scaling-up through this locally-based area or cluster has improved the implementation of social service initiatives that are not feasible at the community level and enabled the inclusion of some communities which had a minimal Syrian presence but high compounded negative effects from neighbouring communities. While UNDP support provided temporary fixes, what Lebanon needed was a comprehensive solution. Solid waste management is a national development issue in Lebanon with the risk of escalating tensions. Therefore, an ad hoc approach in the absence of a medium- to long-term integrated waste management strategy limited the contribution of UNDP. UNDP initiatives have yet to systematically address linkages between sustainable environmental management, social stability, local livelihoods and economic development.

Although the Syrian refugee crisis worsened solid waste management, this has been a long-pending issue in most of the host countries. Despite a high per capita amount of humanitarian aid, there were challenges in finding a sustainable solution and the reasons for this are beyond funding and required political will, clarity on institutional roles and an enabling policy environment. Harmonization of the various perspectives on solid waste management, between the civil society, municipalities and national government has yet to be resolved. In Lebanon,

⁷⁷ Turkish Resilience Project, impact assessment.

UNDP over the years had limited success in enabling institutionalized solutions despite solid waste management being a high-priority, national-level challenge. There is a considerable expectation that the new national solid waste management strategy would provide the opportunity for strategic engagement. In Jordan, solid waste management is an area where several donors have programmes in addition to government initiatives. Despite such a focus, there remain gaps in legislation, infrastructure and financing at the local government level and in the capacities of municipal staff. Solid waste management continues to be a priority in the Jordan Response Plan for the Syrian Crisis 2020-2022.⁷⁸ Even in Turkey, where UNDP support ushered in more efficient management of solid waste, the scale of the initiatives was insufficient compared to the number of municipalities which need such support.

UNDP supported efforts to expand landfill capacity in Jordan, to take on the increased volume of municipal solid waste caused by the influx of Syrian refugees. The rehabilitation of the Al Ekaider landfill was significant as it receives municipal solid waste from Irbid, Ajloun, Jerash and a part of Mafraq governorates. UNDP supported the Joint Services Council in the Northern Governorate of Irbid and in Mafraq and North Shouneh to improve solid waste management at the Al Ekaider and Hussainiyat landfills. The Government considered the delivery of machinery and infrastructure such as equipment and building transfer stations and staff capacity-building to be essential support. The areas of UNDP support had significant improvements in services and were widely considered to have addressed critical gaps.

Despite UNDP national technical support and municipal service delivery support in Lebanon, the core issues related to solid waste management have yet to be addressed. UNDP had limited success in enabling comprehensive and sustainable solid

waste management solutions. Lebanon is a party to international conventions on hazardous waste management and recognizes it is a policy challenge. The influx of Syrian refugees intensified existing multifaceted solid waste management challenges. The number of unsanitary dumpsites increased from an estimated 650 to 750, and the volume of solid waste generated a similar increase.⁷⁹ The country experienced a solid waste crisis in 2015 and is perceived to be heading for a second crisis as tensions over solid waste are currently rising. While the Ministry of Environment prepared with UNDP support a solid waste management strategy in addition to several ministerial decisions and guidelines about solid waste and more specialized industrial waste, implementation continues to be an issue. Although the Cabinet endorsed decentralized waste treatment plants to be managed by the municipalities, implementation has yet to take place. Lessons from the previous efforts will be important in the operationalization of the strategy.

Solid waste management is an area where corporate models reinforcing durable solutions should be promoted as a regular programming practice. UNDP produced a guidance note on municipal solid waste management for mid-crisis and post-crisis settings. The guidance note provided a practical manual for municipal solid waste management, intended to contribute to post-crisis livelihood stabilization and the strengthening of the service delivery of local governments.⁸⁰ Often, short-term measures are adopted where durable solutions are needed. As shown by the experience of Lebanon and Jordan, solid waste management is a top and contentious issue for several municipalities affected by refugees and needed institutionalized solutions. The 3RP demonstrated serious limitations in enabling a coordinated response in addressing solid waste management challenges.

Finding 13. Support to the Palestinian gatherings in Lebanon is a unique initiative which demonstrates

⁷⁸ Jordan Response Plan for the Syrian Crisis 2020-2022, <http://www.jrp.gov.jo/Files/JRP%202020-2022%20web.pdf>

⁷⁹ Government of Lebanon, Lebanon Voluntary National Review of Sustainable Development Goals, 2018. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/19484Lebanon_VNR_2018.pdf

⁸⁰ UNDP, 'Guidance Note on Municipal Solid Waste Management in Crisis and Post-Crisis Setting', 2016.

the inclusive programme support of UNDP and its ability to engage in sensitive areas. Of the estimated 154 gatherings, the project supports the 54 most vulnerable gatherings. Given the Palestinian communities' significant challenges, UNDP iterative support to improving the capacity of national and local institutions to respond to Palestinian refugee needs in an integrated and coordinated way assumes importance.

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, including the 24,000 Palestinian refugees who fled Syria, are among the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in Lebanon. The 140,000 established and new Palestinian refugees live in the most difficult conditions, marked by poverty and inequality, lack of social services and limited access to jobs and income-generation opportunities. Around 50 percent of Palestinians live in gatherings outside of the camps run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which are neglected due to their status as being outside the UNRWA mandate (restricted to camps) and lack of municipal support. This situation has increased tensions and conflicts affecting stability and increasing violence and risky community behaviours. Given this background, UNDP support to strengthening the resilience of the Palestinian gatherings hosting refugees through enhancing living conditions, providing adequate WASH services and facilities, and promoting healthier, safer and more inclusive physical environments, assumes significance. UNDP addressed the risky behaviour of youth through community and livelihood initiatives. UNDP was successful in bringing municipalities together to share and address common development challenges. For example, the Alkharayeb municipal waste management programme used community-level basic service interventions to promote social cohesion among communities.

B. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

This section examines key cross-cutting themes, viz., private sector engagement and gender-inclusive refugee response.

4.5 Private sector development

Finding 14. Across refugee contexts, there is an urgent need to derisk the policy space and address institutional bottlenecks for private sector development and engagement. UNDP programmes did not reflect this urgency. With exceptions, fostering transformative partnerships with the private sector in refugee and host community support was lacking.

Attention to private sector engagement was mixed in the countries hosting refugees, including in middle-income countries where there is a comparatively better enabling environment. There are some good examples in Lebanon and Turkey, and important lessons to draw from positive examples of support to competitive and inclusive industrial transformation for long-term income generation and employment solutions in Turkey. However, in most initiatives, there is often a disconnect between UNDP business development support and value chain engagement. Linking its interventions to a well-coordinated strategy spanning the full range of value chain opportunities has been a challenge for UNDP programmes. Across the refugee-hosting countries, UNDP supported development of SMEs. Such efforts, however, have yet to operate at the meso (value chain linkages) and macro (policy, infrastructure and incentives) levels. Interventions at different levels cannot be pursued in isolation or parallel and need to be sequenced properly to have results. These are best addressed under well-formulated and resourced sector-level strategies and action plans. UNDP value chain interventions that are scattered and small in scale face challenges in balancing micro, meso and macro aspects and achieve limited results. Often the missing link is a lack of private sector engagement which undermines the UNDP contribution to livelihoods and employment. While private sector engagement is essential for host countries to address their development challenges, with the increase in demand for employment and livelihoods due to the influx of refugees, a lack of efforts to accelerate private sector engagement remains a major gap. UNDP has yet to use its comparative advantage

of development support and credibility to enable private sector engagement. An area where UNDP has a comparative advantage that has yet to be explored is enabling private sector engagement at the municipal level in developing local-level strategies for investment and financing modalities to attract the right profile of partners and capital.

While UNDP recognizes that private sector development is central to sustainable development and nexus efforts, the organization did not position this as one of its key offerings in conflict and refugee contexts. UNDP had success with private sector engagement in crisis contexts, for example, in Sudan (private sector investment in solar energy for irrigation), Liberia and Democratic Republic of the Congo (SME venture capital fund). However, the harnessing of private sector engagement in crisis-affected countries, for example, in the Lake Chad Basin, which also faces a refugee influx, has yet to be prioritized. There are significant resource gaps for both the host community and refugee-related support, and for addressing common drivers of multiple crises confronting the Lake Chad Basin region. UNDP, as well as other agencies, has been cautious about the opportunities and challenges that engagement of the private sector can pose in post-conflict reconstruction, employment generation and local economic development. While there is a rationale for such caution, particularly for safeguarding local markets, the private sector is extensively present in conflict and post-conflict contexts, and agencies such as UNDP need well-thought-out programme models for engaging in economic revitalization for long-term development linkages.⁸¹

At the corporate level, besides the private sector policy, UNDP is developing specific instruments and modalities with the private sector in crisis contexts. Despite such corporate efforts, the extent of private sector engagement does not correspond to the extensive UNDP presence and engagement in post-conflict and refugee contexts. The UNDP commitment to an inclusive business and market approach is evident in its investment of a large

share of regular resources in efforts to catalyse an inclusive private sector ecosystem for transformative effects on livelihood improvement and poverty reduction. UNDP has a dedicated strategy for private sector engagement that recognizes the role and transformative potential of the private sector as a partner for development impact and post-crisis transition. Application of the corporate strategy has been uneven at the country level. At the corporate level, while UNDP impact investment instruments and modalities with the private sector are important, a faster pace is required for expansion of this area. There is excessive focus on corporate social responsibility related to engagement.

The host countries for refugees, both middle-income and least developed countries, present varied opportunities for private sector engagement. While it is beyond the scope of this evaluation to take stock of the engagement of individual United Nations agencies, the 3RP collectively lacked an approach to harness partnerships or enable private sector partnerships. Opportunities were lost in leveraging 3RP activities and resources for private sector engagement.

4.6 Gender-inclusive refugee response

Finding 15. UNDP had more success in its women-specific initiatives at the micro level in promoting income generation and enterprise skills and access to services. Opportunities for gender-informed programme design and implementation remain underutilized. Lack of a coordinated response at the 3RP level undermined tackling multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against women and girls in the refugee and host communities. With women comprising about half of the refugee and more than half of the host populations, the efforts on the ground are not commensurate with the response needed.

UNDP has contributed to advancing women's empowerment at the micro level. In all livelihood interventions, there has been due effort to include

⁸¹ UNDP IEO, 'Evaluation of UNDP support to poverty reduction in the least developed countries', 2019.

women among beneficiaries. In Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, UNDP supported Syrian women's economic integration, such as entrepreneurship, vocational training and agri-value chains, where 40 to 60 percent of the participants are women. In Jordan, for example, with the Government allowing Syrian refugees to establish their home-based businesses in food processing, tailoring and handicrafts, there were some successes in micro-enterprises for women. The number of successful micro initiatives is however small when compared to the demand for livelihood support and lacked an enabling environment for sustaining businesses.

The importance of gender equality, as well as the protection of the human rights of all women and girls displaced by crisis or persecution or on the move in search of new economic opportunities and horizons, was clearly articulated in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. However, efforts in refugee-hosting countries do not match this commitment. Gender mainstreaming in resilience programming lacked a policy focus. An assessment by UN-Women pointed out that women in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon reported a change in their roles within and outside the house. In Lebanon, a majority of women (83 percent) reported that they currently have a larger role within their households and society, and younger women perceived this change positively. However, the opportunities are not commensurate with the number of women seeking work. The proportion of women holding a work permit and levels of employment differed across the countries. Efforts by UNDP and the United Nations in general have had limited success in enabling work permits. According to United Nations data, women received 4 percent of the 7,742 work permits issued to refugees in Jordan as of 2019, and the situation is not any different in other refugee-hosting countries.

UNDP programmes show that traditional responses to refugee and crisis contexts have proven inadequate with increasing numbers of women not having access to sustainable development options.

In a protracted crisis, which can be as long as 25 years, short-term fixes did not work. The challenges were more intense when protracted refugee crises interfaced with conflict as in the case of the Lake Chad Basin, or natural disasters in the response to the Rohingya refugee crisis or the COVID-19 pandemic. Lack of concerted efforts among all actors from the humanitarian phase fragmented efforts in enabling women's economic participation or addressing issues of women's safety.

The lack of attention at the policy level to gender concerns for the refugees is also a reflection of similar challenges in development programmes. While challenges for refugees are even more intense, lack of gender-informed responses were common in development programming. For example in Lebanon, there have been specific efforts by the Government to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, with legislation and institutional measures. While a National Strategy for Gender Equality 2018-2022 and action plans are under implementation, gaps remain in civil laws to address gender-based violence, early marriage, marital rights and property rights for women.⁸² Displacement, instability and poverty have been linked to increased rates of domestic violence and negative coping strategies such as child labour and early, forced and child marriage. UNDP has yet to outline its role at the sectoral and policy levels.

At the country level, UNDP has barely adopted an intersectional perspective, which further discounts the multiple intersecting forms of discrimination and violence experienced by women, girls and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people in conflict-affected situations, and subsequently continues to reinforce deeply rooted inequalities and undermines efforts toward sustainable peace. In the Lake Chad Basin, due to multiple crises, women from both refugee and host communities are severely impacted in all areas of life—economic, social and safety. Gender-based violence is highly prevalent, aggravated by multiple crises, but there is

⁸² UNDP, UN-Women and UNFPA, 'Gender Justice & the Law: Lebanon', 2018. See <http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/Gender%20Justice/English/Lebanon%20Country%20Summary%20-%20English.pdf>

limited prioritization of this issue by the international community including UNDP. The trickle-down impact of humanitarian and development support on women's empowerment and well-being has not even touched upon basic concerns of women, let alone drivers of gender inequality. The UNDP approach to addressing significant gender concerns in the Lake Chad Basin was not evident, although addressing this will be fundamental to achieving peacebuilding and State-building goals.

Addressing gender equality and women's empowerment in refugee and other crisis contexts needs resources, which UNDP did not sufficiently address given the competing resource mobilization priorities. Despite organizational and United Nations system-wide commitments, UNDP found it challenging to fulfil spending 15 percent of programme resources on women-specific programmes. Expenditure for gender equality and women's empowerment has been consistently the lowest relative to all other outcomes in 2014-2017 and 2018-2019. Overall, organization-wide, \$85 million was spent on gender equality and women's empowerment between 2018, which is about 3.5 percent of overall spending. Such limited resources were not complemented with programmatic partnerships. While UNDP consistently worked with United Nations agencies such as UN-Women, UNICEF and UNFPA to some extent, this mostly involved joint projects with narrow objectives. There were limited efforts to develop common outcomes to engage with government.

C. GLOBAL, REGIONAL AND COUNTRY-LEVEL POSITIONING

The following sections discuss UNDP positioning in refugee response globally, focused on the Syria crisis, while also considering insights from UNDP efforts in other refugee situations.

Finding 16. Globally, UNDP contributed to bringing a development approach to humanitarian refugee response and to efforts towards consolidating the humanitarian-development nexus. While championing the concept of resilience at the global level, UNDP has not asserted its comparative advantage in furthering the centrality of development in protracted crises at the global and country levels.

The renewed emphasis on reducing the dependency of displaced people on aid and the idea that "forced displacement is neither a short-term challenge nor primarily a humanitarian one: it is a persistent and complex political and development challenge", as emphasized by the United Nations Secretary-General,⁸³ have reinforced the development dimension of the refugee and displacement response. UNDP has made an important contribution to transforming the international discourse in protracted refugee crises by bringing in a development and resilience approach. Jointly with UNHCR, UNDP set a precedent through the 3RP for a joint humanitarian and development programme. Although the 3RP was not used to its full potential, it was successful in bringing resilience to the refugee response, addressing the challenges of refugees and host communities.

UNDP demonstrated collaboration and willingness to engage with humanitarian agencies, particularly UNHCR, which assumes importance given the decades of humanitarian and development divide. The Humanitarian Development Action Group, an informal platform, was a significant step forward among United Nations agencies for collaboration on the humanitarian-development nexus in preparation for the World Humanitarian Summit.⁸⁴ The collective publications such as "Better Humanitarian-Development Cooperation

⁸³ United Nations Secretary-General, *One Humanity: Shared Responsibility - The Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit*, 2016, paragraph 86. See <https://consultations.worldhumanitarian summit.org/bitcache/e49881ca33e3740b5f37162857cedc92c7c1e354?vid=569103&disposition=inline&op=view>. This builds on the Secretary-General's 2011 decision on Durable Solutions.

⁸⁴ Established in 2015, the Humanitarian Development Action Group is an informal platform for coordination among large operational United Nations agencies outside of formal channels. It included UNDP, UNHCR, the World Bank, UNICEF, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and WFP, and was hosted and supported by the New York University International Center on International Cooperation.

for Sustainable Results on the Ground⁸⁵ and “Addressing Protracted Displacement: A Framework for Development-Humanitarian Cooperation”⁸⁶

articulated alternative approaches for responding to refugee and displacement crises informing the Summit’s debates.

FIGURE 16. Performance score for contribution to global policy and advocacy



Score: 1= Poor; 2= Average; 3=Good; 4=Excellent
Source: IEO Evaluation Assessment

In 2016, UNDP and UNHCR endorsed the Commitment to Action and the new way of working at the World Humanitarian Summit,⁸⁷ which was a turning point towards operationalizing the humanitarian-development nexus,⁸⁸ along with the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the CRRF. Fundamental to the New York Declaration and CRRF is the affirmation that protecting refugees and supporting host countries that shelter refugees are both international

responsibilities.⁸⁹ It is noteworthy that the CRRF was informed by the 3RP resilience approach. Also, UNHCR went beyond humanitarian response, adopting a resilience and self-reliance approach for its work.⁹⁰ These milestones established international norms for sustainable solutions simultaneously during the humanitarian response, where the UNDP contribution was important. Although the implementation of the CRRF is gathering momentum, it is nevertheless significant given the intergovernmental endorsement.

⁸⁵ https://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/final_whs_hdag_thinkpiece_june_14_2016.pdf

⁸⁶ http://cic.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/addressing_protracted_displacement_a_think_piece_dec_2015.pdf

⁸⁷ The new way of working based on, in summary: (1) working to collective outcomes; (2) working over multi-year timeframes; and (3) working collaboratively based on comparative advantage of diverse actors.

⁸⁸ World Humanitarian Summit, ‘Transcending humanitarian-development divides. Changing People’s Lives: From Delivering Aid to Ending Need’, Commitment to Action, 2016.

⁸⁹ United Nations General Assembly, New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, A/RES/71/1, 2016. See https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/71/1

⁹⁰ Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme, ‘Resilience and self-reliance from a protection and solutions perspective’, EC/68/SC/CRP.4, 1 March 2017.

The Joint Steering Committee to implement the United Nations Secretary-General's report on repositioning the United Nations development system, chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General, provided another platform for UNDP to contribute to the humanitarian-development nexus and advance the new way of working.⁹¹ With the UNDP Administrator as one of the Vice-Chairs of the Committee, UNDP had an opportunity to bring its country experience into the global decision-making to bridge the humanitarian-development divide.

At the regional level, besides 3RP there were efforts such as the Regional Stabilization Facility for Lake Chad Basin to facilitate the implementation of the regional strategy. The Facility, launched in 2019, is modelled on the successful experience of the UNDP Stabilization Facility in Iraq. It is intended to serve as a coordination tool for harmonizing complementary projects and programmes for stabilization, security, governance and early recovery and to facilitate regional knowledge management.⁹² This is a promising initiative with the support of key donors (Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the European Union). While such initiatives are critical, success depends on how partnerships are leveraged and ensuring that the Facility does not end up as disconnected projects.

The performance score was good for the positioning and contribution to global policy and advocacy (see Figure 16). UNDP scored well on overall contributions to global debates on refugees, particularly bringing a development perspective; there is, however, scope for improvement in the measures to promote the humanitarian-development nexus and resilience approach. UNDP has yet to take concrete measures to consolidate its engagement, to leverage the global policy space to provide thought leadership for furthering the nexus agenda. As is evident from the global commitments and intergovernmental

agreements, the new way of working makes the development agenda central to the protracted refugee and displacement support. The lack of specific commitments as to what new way of working UNDP will offer is undermining its role in global partnerships with implications for country-level engagement. In the global policy space with several actors, there is a need for predictability of what can consistently be expected from UNDP, which has yet to demonstrate the consistency of its offering.

UNDP programme positioning in a rapid-onset refugee crisis such as the Syrian and Rohingya crises has been comparatively stronger compared to the slow-onset crises such as in the Lake Chad Basin. Part of the reason for comparatively better response in a rapid-onset crisis is early positioning by UNDP to address the development challenges of the refugee influx. Funding for the development dimensions of slow-onset refugee crises remains challenging in coordinated partnerships. This is also a reason for duplication of initiatives and efforts to accelerate the transition from humanitarian response to medium-term strategies to reduce the vulnerability of displaced populations and host communities and strengthen their resilience to future crises. UNDP used multiple conceptual frameworks such as stabilization, a resilience-based development approach, area-based recovery and early recovery in other refugee crises, reflecting programming realities. UNDP has emphasized stabilization over a resilience-based approach in the case of the Lake Chad Basin to address refugee issues alongside conflict response. In the Rohingya crisis, UNDP used early recovery and resilience to develop its programme response. Lessons from the Syrian refugee crisis response have informed more recent crisis response.

There were even greater challenges in refugee response in the context of multiple crises such as the

⁹¹ <https://undocs.org/A/72/684>

⁹² In Chad, the Regional Stabilization Facility will establish linkages to the early recovery, human security and border management projects (funded by UNDP and Japan). In Cameroon, linkages will be created with the ongoing Stabilization and Prevention of Violent Extremism project, funded by Japan) and the prevention of violent extremism and peacebuilding project (funded by the Peacebuilding Support Office). In Niger, effective linkages will be created with existing projects supporting the resilience of communities and households, a peacebuilding fund focusing on the socioeconomic reintegration of former victims and associates of armed opposition groups in the Diffa region, and three mechanisms for strengthening regional and community peace, security and early warning.

impact of conflict, refugee influx and climate change. COVID-19 only added an additional dimension to the refugee crises. In multiple crisis contexts, international support was further fragmented for each crisis, instead of enabling comprehensive responses that would address fundamental drivers of the crisis. UNDP had limited success in advocating for an integrated resilience approach that would address drivers of multiple crises.

Finding 17. Its support to development and crisis response over several decades, complemented by its record of subnational engagement and the trust of national counterparts, placed UNDP in an advantageous position at the country level. UNDP has supported to varying degrees refugee response and host country policy, programme and institutional strengthening in about 40 countries. Building on its development mandate, UNDP formulated the resilience approach as its offering for anchoring development support during humanitarian response.

UNDP has supported varying degrees of refugee response and host country policy, programme and institutional strengthening in about 40 countries. Building on its development mandate, UNDP formulated the resilience approach as its offering for anchoring development support during humanitarian response. In a majority of countries, UNDP refugee-related support is predominantly integrated into its development or conflict-response support. While the UNDP assertion that its development engagement includes support for host communities is a valid one, a more structured approach in refugee contexts, barring the Syrian refugee context, is evolving. Corporate strategies have yet to position the de facto engagement of UNDP at the country level. There are ongoing measures to address this. Particularly noteworthy is outlining a corporate strategy to position its support in refugee contexts and similar strategies at the regional level.

In response to the Syrian refugee crisis, the resilience approach enabled the positioning and systematic engagement of UNDP to address the development challenges that were intensified

by the refugee influx. Although imprecise, the resilience approach reinforced the international position that the humanitarian-development nexus is critical to providing effective solutions for host communities and refugees. The ambiguity of the resilience concept to some extent also provided country offices with the flexibility to adapt the concept and apply it according to their particular contexts. More importantly, it provided a neutral concept when development investments were not acceptable, particularly providing more flexibility for donor funding.

UNDP was proactive in responding to the Rohingya situation in Bangladesh and displacement of Venezuelans in Peru and Ecuador. Its early positioning enabled UNDP to address development challenges that would mitigate the impact of the refugee crisis, for example strengthening capacities of local government to address demands for services in Bangladesh, Peru and Ecuador or climate impacts and environmental degradation in Bangladesh. In Myanmar, while political sensitivities supersede an overt response, UNDP programmes in the affected areas and the tripartite agreement between the Government, UNHCR and UNDP are noteworthy. In the case of the Lake Chad Basin countries, UNDP has yet to position itself in responding to multiple complex crises. The refugee crisis response has yet to be prioritized as part of a multi-crisis response.

The UNDP comparative advantage is its continuous engagement through interventions to progressively build capacities and policies/regulatory frameworks in key development areas. However, the extent to which UNDP leveraged its comparative advantage and opportunities to build on its development support varied across countries and programme areas. UNDP has yet to play a catalytic role in enabling sustainable long-term development and peace solutions through institutional development and policy processes. While the Syrian refugee crisis response provided opportunities for promoting the resilience approach, UNDP has yet to harness this to provide medium- to long-term sectoral solutions at the country level.

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

This evaluation assessed the UNDP contribution to the Syrian refugee crisis response and promoting integrated resilience approaches for the period 2015 to 2019. Building on the key findings set out in the previous chapter, the conclusions presented here focus on strategic issues for the development and resilience dimensions of the UNDP role and contribution in refugee response.

The conceptualization and programmatic support of UNDP to refugees and IDPs have evolved due to the protracted nature of these crises. This evaluation was conducted at a time when UNDP is defining its corporate refugee response strategy, fragility and conflict strategy and commencing the preparation of its new strategic plan for 2022-2026. Also, it coincides with the consolidation of the Crisis Bureau and its strategies. The recommendations take into consideration corporate policy formulation and the change processes now under way.

The protracted nature of the refugee crises warrants a response that is distinct from the one during the initial stages of the crisis. With the Syrian refugee crisis entering its tenth year, the demand from the host countries for development support and enhancing resilience has only increased. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted more than half of the world's population with significant development consequences which will only further increase the demand for balancing refugee and development support. An additional challenge of the pandemic is a possible decrease in development and humanitarian funding. The evaluation's recommendations, therefore, underscore the importance of resilience-based approaches through institutional strengthening and durable solutions.

5.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. The UNDP contribution to global debates and formulation of intergovernmental agreements to further the humanitarian-development nexus in refugee response has been significant. UNDP is well regarded for its multi-stakeholder engagement in a range of development and crisis areas. UNDP has a niche in the global humanitarian-development nexus policy space. UNDP has yet to assert its role in accelerating the humanitarian-development nexus at the global and country levels.

Since the adoption of the SDGs, the international community has continued its efforts to advance the humanitarian-development nexus through global summits and intergovernmental agreements. The global consensus expressed in the endorsement of the Commitment to Action and the new way of working at the World Humanitarian Summit, followed by the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the CRRF, are significant steps in giving renewed thrust to bridging the humanitarian-development divide. The global engagement and contribution of UNDP in the intergovernmental events and discussions have been important in reinforcing the importance of development linkages in humanitarian response. The UNDP collaboration with the humanitarian agencies enabled efforts to reinforce the importance of development linkages in refugee response and enabling durable solutions. Through its resilience approach, UNDP continued to advocate for concerted global action to advance the humanitarian-development nexus in refugee response.

A lack of an explicit commitment to address the development dimensions of displacement as a corporate priority is undermining UNDP positioning. Prioritization of engagement to strengthen the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in conflict-related refugee crises—particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States region in the context of multiple crises—is not commensurate with the challenges in these regions. Although not exclusively focused on refugee and displacement issues, the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (2013) and the more recent Regional Stabilization Strategy of the Lake Chad Basin Commission are important initiatives. Such initiatives have yet to develop wider partnerships and funding mechanisms to address significant challenges of complex and multiple crises. In the Arab States region, UNDP has yet to outline its plan for engaging in refugee-related and other displacements and to harmonize its programmes in Africa and the Arab States region for more strategic engagement.

There is a lack of practical models to address the complexity of the protracted crisis-response contexts in which Governments and international actors intend to implement the humanitarian-development nexus, the triple nexus or the new way of working. With the urgency and intensity of growing refugee and other displacement crises, UNDP at the corporate level did not rise to expectations to provide thought leadership in spearheading the United Nations nexus agenda.

The UNDP refugee response has evolved in the past decade with programmes at different levels in over 40 countries. Building on its long development presence, UNDP strategically consolidated its refugee programming and contributions at the country level in responding to the Syrian refugee crisis. Because UNDP works with national as well as subnational government actors, its programmes have the potential to inform policy and planning in the areas of employment and social services.

Conclusion 2. UNDP was successful in bringing a resilience approach to the Syrian crisis-response discourse, which is a significant contribution by itself, notwithstanding the implementation challenges.

Its long programme presence in the areas that received Syrian refugees enabled UNDP to respond to the crisis and facilitate response by other United Nations agencies. UNDP was better prepared than several other agencies in analysing and responding to local challenges, contributing to strengthening institutional processes and public service delivery. While there were missed opportunities, efforts to address service delivery challenges contributed to reducing the pressure of a large refugee presence on local systems.

At the country level, UNDP brought a resilience approach to the centre of the Syrian refugee crisis response. Further concerted efforts were lacking to integrate resilience-based approaches in protracted humanitarian response. The lack of shared understanding among United Nations agencies on linking humanitarian and development initiatives led to lost opportunity in improving the conditions for both refugees and host communities.

Humanitarian assistance continues to focus predominantly on refugee populations while resilience activities entail support to host communities and refugees. The lack of more holistic models that would generate employment of scale and enable service delivery solutions by addressing institutional bottlenecks continues to be an issue.

An extended humanitarian phase in a protracted crisis, when the response that is needed is medium- to long-term development support, has negative implications for both the host communities and refugees. The high per capita financial response to the Syrian refugee crisis response predominantly achieved humanitarian aims and addressed immediate development concerns. The 3RP could not keep pace with mounting development needs that also underpin the Syrian refugee response. A skewed funding architecture predisposed towards humanitarian support undermined more sustainable development solutions that would benefit host communities and refugees. While UNDP has been consistent in its support to host communities, without an overall framework for addressing the interlinking dimensions of refugee and host community development challenges, the scope of programme outcomes reduced.

Conclusion 3. The partnership between UNDP and UNHCR has been significant in bringing a resilience perspective to the Syrian refugee crisis response. UNDP jointly with UNHCR played a key role in the coordination of 3RP, a formidable task given the large scale of response.

The UNDP-UNHCR partnership contributed to effective coordination of the Syrian refugee crisis response in the host countries and enabled resource mobilization. The commitment by the senior management of UNHCR and UNDP to strengthen programme collaborations has been important in maintaining the momentum to bridge the humanitarian-development divide. The extent to which such collaborations are taken forward in other crises varied, with promising collaborations in the Lake Chad Basin. While there are ongoing efforts to strengthen the partnership between the two agencies at the corporate level, these have yet to be institutionalized for engagement to further the humanitarian-development nexus.

The partnership has yet to consolidate programmes based on the comparative advantage of the two agencies for enhanced development and humanitarian outcomes. The Syria partnership shows that lack of common outcomes and multi-year programme frameworks reduced the contribution of the 3RP. An issue that can blur the mandates and increase humanitarian programme windows is the interest of humanitarian agencies to venture into the development space instead of collaborating with agencies with a development mandate. Although a sensitive issue, reducing the humanitarian programme window has the potential to accelerate development processes and improved outcomes and improved outcomes for host communities and refugees. While the humanitarian-development nexus is seen as a way forward, agencies have yet to deliberate on this for meaningful solutions.

Conclusion 4. UNDP was successful in providing employment models when there was a longer programme time frame and interventions were anchored in its development support.

The UNDP Syrian crisis response was aligned with the priorities identified by the host countries. It aimed to address income-generation and service delivery challenges of both the Syrian population and the host communities. The support for competitiveness in Turkey and agri-value chain support in Lebanon and Turkey addressed institutional bottlenecks for refugee and host community employment. Notwithstanding such important successes, UNDP livelihood interventions tend to be scattered, small-scale and uncoordinated, which reduced the contribution to sustainable employment

Balancing short-term interventions with long-term livelihood and employment support is critical for income generation for the Syrian population. UNDP programmes are evolving to achieve this balance. Livelihood support focused more on issues such as vocational training, with mixed outcomes in terms of sustainability and scale. 3RP interventions remain individually small-scale and fragmented, with a focus on short-term income generation.

The 2016 London Conference pledged the creation of 1.1 million jobs by 2018, mostly in Lebanon and Turkey, which host a substantial proportion of the refugee population. While there are commitments to open their labour markets and improve the domestic regulatory environment, this has yet to manifest. The international support to employment-creation programmes and access to external markets notwithstanding, there remain significant gaps in durable solutions in employment and livelihoods. The enabling environment for Syrian labour integration has not been favourable, especially when coupled with the economic downturn in host countries which added to existing employment challenges with further limitations for labour-market absorption. The number of work permits provided by the host countries continues to be low although there are ongoing efforts to accelerate it. The varying levels of economic recession require more concerted strategies to create more employment opportunities for refugee and host populations. Barring examples such as the support to improve competitiveness, UNDP engagement has been limited in responding to some of these challenges.

Conclusion 5. The development approach to strengthening services in refugee contexts contributed to strengthening municipal capacities and providing replicable models.

As a key actor in strengthening local services in the areas where refugees are concentrated, UNDP support to municipal services is well conceptualized, contributing to stronger municipal capacities in solid waste management and social services. However, the scale of the deterioration of solid waste management services is not matched by the scope of effort at the policy and institutional levels. In Jordan and Lebanon, efforts are still aimed at coping with the situation rather than enabling transformative solutions in improving services. Another area where UNDP has the potential to engage and there are ongoing efforts is in the renewable energy sector. There is considerable scope for demonstrating renewable energy models, informing policies for systemic changes and sustaining the interest of the private sector.

UNDP has invested in municipal development needs and conflict analysis and other assessments, which are highly relevant for strengthening local planning and financing. Strengthening and institutionalizing municipal-level development needs assessments and linking them to SDG data collection has the potential to inform refugee and host community development responses. Efforts are slowly evolving in making linkages between refugee response and SDG planning, an area where joint United Nations efforts will be important.

Conclusion 6. The 3RP approach is relevant with a much needed emphasis to bring a resilience dimension to humanitarian response. The compartmentalization of the humanitarian and resilience support has significantly undermined the contribution of the overall Syrian refugee crisis response.

While there is a realization among the 3RP agencies that addressing the development challenges of host communities is essential for an effective refugee response, such a realization did not result in pursuing a coordinated resilience approach. The continued humanitarian mode of response was not appropriate

in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey when more advanced development solutions are needed. The United Nations system had limitations in enabling a long-term approach to the protracted crisis, and in addressing underlying development constraints in host countries which are critical for a comprehensive and conflict-sensitive refugee response. The argument that middle-income host countries will fund their development activities does not hold in the context of an enormous refugee influx which must be included in development efforts.

The narrative of a resilience approach underpinning national 3RP responses is evolving. While UNDP prioritized engagement in coordination, it has yet to position itself with a strong value proposition to promote medium- to long-term resilience approaches. The 3RP at the country level continues to operate in a mode that is most suitable during immediate crisis response, undermining a holistic approach to sustainably address the development consequences of the Syrian refugee crisis response. A related issue that needs wider discussion among humanitarian agencies is the longer humanitarian programme windows that are now sidling into development programme windows with implications for resilience and durable solutions for refugees and host communities alike.

The 3RP did not address the issue of safe return, an important but at the same time politically sensitive and contentious issue. The Brussels conferences on support to Syrian crisis response have been consistent in emphasizing that there will not be any support for a safe return unless outstanding political issues in Syria are resolved. In all host countries, there was tension between the refugees and host communities accompanied by intermittent political posturings. There were minimal advocacy efforts by the 3RP in bringing into the Brussels deliberations the issues of a safe and voluntary return. As the global experiences of refugee crises have shown, the longer the delay in addressing the issue of safe return, the lesser the possibility of returning to the home country.

Conclusion 7. With exceptions across the 3RP countries, private sector engagement received limited attention and is a critical gap in host

community and refugee support. The low scale and slow pace of UNDP private sector engagement impacted efforts towards more sustainable solutions.

Private sector development and engagement that are well adapted to address resilience and humanitarian challenges, create employment of scale and catalyse municipal development are critical to crisis response. While there are examples of private sector partnerships across UNDP programmes, a more structured approach to private sector development is in the early stages and has yet to be strategically pursued. This impacted the scope of UNDP responses and the nature of outcomes for the host communities and refugees. As the UNDP support for improving competitiveness in Turkey shows, the private sector can play an important role in creating jobs of scale. Such examples have yet to be scaled up by UNDP.

The UNDP comparative advantage in policy development and programme implementation provides it avenues to play an interface role for the private sector with government. While UNDP corporately has shown a commitment to private sector development, it is not addressed in refugee and host community programming even in the Syrian refugee crisis response which is predominantly in middle-income countries, reducing the UNDP contribution. The host countries present varied policy and development contexts which necessitate innovative private sector finance tools. UNDP lacked country-level strategies for sector-specific engagement to derisk the policy space. The scale of UNDP private sector engagement continues to be low when compared

to the possibilities the country contexts present.

Conclusion 8. The UNDP contribution to furthering gender equality and women's empowerment in refugee response reflects the lack of priority to this area. Specific measures to address institutional gaps and other capacity challenges in gender-inclusive policies and programmes that would benefit both host communities and refugees were not prioritized.

UNDP paid attention to including women as recipients of its support across interventions, at times exceeding the expectations set out in the results frameworks. However, efforts to systematically address constraints in enabling gender-inclusive policy frameworks and resource investments for mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment are lacking. Limitations were especially apparent in contexts where there were enormous gender-related challenges that needed comprehensive solutions for achieving peacebuilding and development outcomes.

UNDP has yet to clarify its role and contribution to gender-inclusive programming and practice in crisis contexts and how this will be pursued. There is considerable scope for strengthening strategic partnerships in advocacy efforts and addressing institutional constraints. While there are joint projects, partnerships between UNDP and UN-Women lack a strategic work programme that identifies their respective roles and division of labour to enhance the overall contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment.

5.2. Recommendations and management response

Recommendation 1.



Addressing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in conflict contexts, including refugee contexts, is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. UNDP should now invest resources to provide thought leadership in promoting practical nexus approaches at the country level.

UNDP should outline its corporate strategy for engagement in protracted crises that affect refugees, and the areas and approaches it will prioritize. UNDP should clarify the concepts it offers, invest resources in their operationalization and take specific measures to promote them for wider use. Steps should be taken to ensure that the UNDP resilience offering promotes linkages with humanitarian response rather than as a parallel activity. Measures should also be taken to strengthen regional strategies to comprehensively address protracted refugee crises and their interface with conflict.

Management Response:



UNDP accepts this recommendation, acknowledging the need for a corporate strategy for engagement in protracted crises, including strategic investments to combine thought leadership and country programming on the triple nexus. UNDP adheres to the “Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus” of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The Crisis Bureau is developing a “UNDP Framework for Development Solutions for Fragility and Crisis” (working title) that will guide strategies, operations and programmes for UNDP support to fragile and crisis-affected countries. This framework will provide guidance on: where to focus – major risks and opportunities for transformative change in fragile contexts; what to do – linking to important UNDP technical offers in areas such as prevention, peacebuilding, governance, rule of law, human rights, disaster risk reduction, human mobility and recovery; and how to work – to ensure that UNDP is fit for purpose for these difficult operating environments. The framework will enhance UNDP engagement in relevant global policy and advocacy, highlight areas of focus to deliver specialized support in fragile contexts, and support more joined-up and demand-driven support from UNDP in fragile and crisis contexts.

Following the adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, UNDP has identified migration as a priority theme and set up a cross-practice, cross-bureau task team on migration and displacement. In 2020, every regional bureau developed a regional workplan on migration and displacement, aligned with regional strategies and priorities. These will inform the UNDP global strategy/plan on human mobility and sustainable development within the framework of the current and next strategic plans. Specifically, in the Africa region, UNDP will continue to build on the partnership with UNHCR in the Nigeria regional refugee-response plans, 2019-2020, using this as an entry point for broader collaboration in the Sahel region.

Management Response:



Furthermore, the resilience-based development approach that UNDP has been promoting since 2013 under the 3RP, is fully aligned with the new way of working and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus through its emphasis on local/national ownership and capacity strengthening, the promotion of sustainable livelihoods and social cohesion. As part of its support to the joint UNDP-UNHCR 3RP secretariat, UNDP has continuously invested in building evidence on the operationalization of the nexus under the 3RP (including more recently a paper on Localised Resilience in Action: Responding the Regional Syria Crisis, launched in March 2019) to highlight achievements in support of commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit. UNDP also produced two compendiums highlighting innovative practices, including partnerships, that can inform current and future nexus-based policy and programme design, making clear that working at this nexus is no longer “business as usual”. UNDP acknowledges the importance of fully mainstreaming the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in the monitoring and reporting processes of the 3RP at regional and country levels, and of continuous evidence building and learning in this critical area.

Outside the 3RP framework, UNDP has supported strategic thinking and dialogue on the implementation of the nexus in the Arab States region; since May 2020, UNDP and IOM have been co-leading the newly established regional issue-based coalition on the humanitarian-development nexus, which brings together more than 10 United Nations agencies to provide strategic guidance, identify and share good practices to advance nexus-based programmatic approaches in countries in the region affected by conflict or crisis.

Key Actions	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
1.1. Finalize the “UNDP Framework for Development Solutions for Fragility and Crisis” (working title) that will guide strategies, operations and programmes for UNDP support to fragile and crisis-affected countries	June 2021	Crisis Bureau	Initiated	
1.2. Support the development of scaled-up integrated development solutions programming, with other United Nations agencies, in at least five protracted displacement settings (including in the Sahel region).	December 2022	Crisis Bureau, regional bureaux, country offices		
1.3. Finalize practical guidance on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and what this means for UNDP headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices	December 2021	Crisis Bureau	Initiated	

Evaluation Recommendation 1. (cont'd)

<p>1.4. In collaboration with UNHCR, produce a report on advances and challenges in the operationalization of the humanitarian-development (and peace) nexus under the 3RP (including through joint assessments, joint programming efforts and interventions to strengthen social cohesion)</p>	<p>June 2021</p>	<p>Regional Bureau for Arab States, Sub-Regional Response Facility, country offices</p>	<p>Initiated</p>	
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Recommendation 2.



UNDP should build on its experience on municipal assessments to prioritize data and subnational assessments that would inform humanitarian, development and nexus initiatives as well as the consolidation of data for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Learning from the 3RP experience, in conflict and refugee contexts, UNDP should prioritize support to data for the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the capacities to collect, manage, analyse and feed the data into policy processes. UNDP has supported the development and conflict-sensitivity analysis at the municipal level in countries hosting refugees but needs a streamlined approach to institutionalize data-collection processes and ensure uniformity and quality to be able to link them to the Goals and policy processes. UNDP should forge corporate-level collaborations with United Nations agencies to avoid duplication of efforts at the country and local levels.

Management Response:



UNDP accepts this recommendation, acknowledging the efficacy of linking data from municipal assessments with data related to the Sustainable Development Goals to inform policy and programming, while recognizing the need to invest in ensuring coherence and comparability in the data sets. As part of the UNDP-UNHCR Global Joint Action Plan, a joint tool for forced displacement situations is being developed and will be piloted in selected countries. Building on the UNDP role as integrator of the Goals, the tool is expected to help countries and United Nations country teams conduct analyses and collect data focusing on protractedly displaced populations and host communities to identify those most marginalized and left behind. The data will be used to inform joint humanitarian and development assessments and refugee-response programming at the local and national levels, with the Goals as the overall framework.

Municipalities are at the forefront of the response to the Syria regional crisis by ensuring the delivery of basic services to all (including Syrian refugees), and therefore assistance to municipalities is critical in promoting social cohesion and strengthening the resilience of local systems. Municipal assessments and interventions implemented by 3RP partners in Lebanon and Turkey have been collected and analysed. In Lebanon, UNDP has been key in developing the vulnerability map to identify priority municipalities for interventions, making a direct link with the wider work of UNDP on poverty data

Evaluation Recommendation 2. (cont'd)

in the country. In Turkey, UNDP, UNHCR, IOM and local authorities organized the Gaziantep Municipal Forum⁹³ in 2019, with the aim of sharing good practices on municipal strategies for addressing migration and displacement; showcasing the role of municipalities in linking refugee and resilience responses. In 2018, UNDP also published a report highlighting its support to municipal resilience in Turkey to increase the capacities of municipalities to respond to additional demands for services for Syrian refugees and host communities.⁹⁴

Building upon the interest generated among 3RP partners by the pilot workshop on vulnerability and resilience held in December 2020, UNDP will continue supporting improvements and harmonization of approaches to monitoring resilience under the 3RP, including strengthening linkages with monitoring and localization efforts for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Key Actions	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
2.1. Support the development, piloting and roll-out of the joint UNDP-UNHCR tool for Sustainable Development Goals appraisal in forced displacement situations	December 2021	Crisis Bureau		
2.2. Collect and analyse municipal interventions led by UNDP in the region, which help advance the Sustainable Development Goals, and map their impact on the resilience of individuals and systems	December 2021	Crisis Bureau, in coordination with the Sub-Regional Response Facility for countries affected by the Syria crisis		
2.3. Identify options to strengthen linkages between measurement/ monitoring of resilience, localization of the Sustainable Development Goals	December 2021	Sub-Regional Response Facility with relevant country offices		

⁹³ <https://www.municipalforum2019.org>

⁹⁴ [UNDP Support to Municipal Resilience in Turkey, 2018](#)

Recommendation 3.



UNDP should play a catalytic role in enabling private sector solutions to promote the resilience of both host communities and Syrian refugees. UNDP should develop private sector country strategies as its 3RP offering, to address context-specific issues and institutional bottlenecks; and develop mechanisms to derisk the policy environment to facilitate investments for sustainable livelihoods and employment.

The UNDP corporate private sector strategy was approved recently and assessments were carried out to inform its engagement with the private sector in crisis contexts. Moving forward, UNDP should be consistent in the implementation of private sector development initiatives in 3RP countries, prioritizing this as a key offering. UNDP should strengthen its capacities to increase the pace of its engagement with appropriate tools, particularly in contexts of conflict in the least developed countries. UNDP should adapt tools for engaging the private sector in value-chain development and investment in the service sector and, where possible, leverage impact investment, capacities and policy frameworks. UNDP should partner with financial intermediaries that are expanding their businesses in areas of UNDP support.

One of the areas of UNDP strength in 3RP countries is substantive engagement at the local level, which should be used to leverage private sector engagement in addressing development challenges. To be successful, there should be considerable flexibility in the use of tools, combining long-term goals with short-term milestones.

Management Response:



UNDP accepts this recommendation, noting that its private sector strategy seeks, in partnership with Governments, civil society and business associations and networks, to make markets work for the Sustainable Development Goals, with a strong emphasis on the inclusion of the poor and marginalized communities. This strategy builds upon the long-standing adoption by UNDP of a market system approach,⁹⁵

⁹⁵ The features of a market system approach “focus on interventions that modify the incentives and behaviour of businesses and other market players – public, private, formal and informal – to ensure lasting and large-scale beneficial change to poor people. It also requires that each market is a complex ‘system’ involving many stakeholders, each with a particular set of unique characteristics, any intervention must take this complexity into account” <https://beamexchange.org/market-systems/key-features-market-systems-approach/> and characterize the market system “in terms of three distinct elements: core market transactions, institutions (including the business environment) and services and infrastructure.” BEAM Exchange. (2014). *Market systems approaches: A literature review.*

which is also the main basis for the work on private sector development and partnerships championed by a number of other international agencies.^{96,97} It is deploying a suite of service offers, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies in areas such as sustainable value chains and inclusive business, gender equality in markets, digital finance and closing the energy gap.

UNDP recognizes the opportunity to expand the offer on private sector engagement in forced displacement situations. At the 2019 Global Refugee Forum, one of the UNDP commitments was to promote decent work to drive forward the self-reliance of refugees and host communities as part of the UNDP digital transformation. UNDP, UNHCR and Microsoft are currently collaborating to bring together innovative digital initiatives that foster the economic inclusion of refugees. Furthermore, both organizations are developing, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), a project proposal within this framework to develop a suite of solutions and services that can be used by Governments, UNDP country offices and partners to catalyse digitally-enabled livelihood opportunities for crisis-affected people.

The aim of these solutions and services is to achieve the four elements required to facilitate digitally-enabled livelihoods: ensuring an enabling policy and regulatory environment for digital transformation; promoting investment and innovation to make transformative technologies available; enabling access to and usage of transformative technologies for livelihood outcomes; and research, prototyping and dialogue on solutions to promote digitally-enabled livelihoods. As part of the UNDP-IOM joint programme on making migration work for sustainable development, UNDP is also leading on strengthening private sector engagement in delivering on national migration strategies.

UNDP is committed to risk-informed decision-making for private sector partnerships and has a dedicated, rigorous policy for due diligence with regard to such partnerships in its programme operations policies and procedures. All private sector partnerships are informed by a risk assessment of the proposed partner and expected outcomes, which guides senior management in its decision-making, and are also supported as relevant by risk management and communication plans. UNDP will continue to explore ways of making it easier to maximize private sector solutions and partnerships.

⁹⁶ It builds on the UNDP “inclusive markets development” approach adopted in 2007 and a number of other approaches championed by various international agencies including value chains (particularly by GIZ and the United States Agency for International Development), and “Making Markets Work for the Poor” (known as M4P) supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the United Kingdom Department for International Development, the Donor Committee on Enterprise Development, and the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor. It also provides the conceptual underpinnings for the current United Nations Capital Development Fund policy on “inclusive finance” and for various UNDP programme initiatives. The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development is the forum consisting of 22 funding and inter-governmental agencies that support the growth of the private sector in developing countries and the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor is a global partnership of 34 development organizations that seek to advance financial inclusion.

⁹⁷ See <http://www.uncdf.org/financial-inclusion>

In the context of the 3RP, Iraq, Turkey and Jordan have implemented livelihood programmes in partnership with the private sector to increase the employability of vulnerable populations. Several assessments have been conducted across the region to inform the engagement of 3RP with the private sector. In Lebanon, UNDP produced the “Mind the Gap” report,⁹⁸ which examines the skill gaps that exist in the key sectors of the Lebanese economy and provides concrete recommendations on how to improve the situation.

In the context of COVID-19, UNDP has a digital socioeconomic impact assessment tool tailored for assessing the impact of COVID-19 (and disasters) on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). The tool provides information for evidence-based policymaking and digital solutions in this case focusing on MSMEs.

In Jordan and Turkey, UNDP conducted studies to examine the impact of COVID-19 on the private sector and local enterprises to inform the UNDP response. In Turkey, this assessment was conducted in collaboration with the “Business for Goals” platform”, which aims to develop policies with the private sector and coordinate the contributions of the private sector to the Sustainable Development Goals. The Turkey chapter of the 3RP is for the first time including formal consultation with the private sector (both Syrian-owned businesses and Turkish ones) in the 2021-2022 planning process. Meanwhile, in this new context, the UNDP Sub-Regional Response Facility is exploring the possibility of integrating support to “business resilience” as a key dimension of the resilience response under the 3RP.

Key Actions	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
3.1. Support the development of scaled-up digital livelihood initiatives for refugees and host communities in partnership with UNHCR, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and relevant partners	December 2021	Crisis Bureau/ Chief Digital Officer		
3.2. Design a corporate offer on private sector engagement and development in fragile and conflict-affected countries, complemented with tools and guidance on inclusive market development and engagement adapted to fragile and conflict-affected settings	December 2021	Crisis Bureau, Recovery Solutions and Human Mobility Team / Bureau for Policy and Programme Support / Finance Sector Hub/ Istanbul International Center for Private Sector in Development)		

⁹⁸ https://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/library/democratic_governance/Mind-The-Gap.html

Evaluation Recommendation 3. (cont'd)

<p>3.3. Map out and analyse UNDP private sector engagement initiatives in the response to the Syria regional crisis and compounding crises, including innovative practices and lessons learned, and reactivate dialogue on opportunities and challenges for scaling-up</p>	<p>December 2021</p>	<p>Sub-Regional Response Facility</p>		
<p>3.4. Develop a private sector engagement strategy for the 3RP. This will be led by UNDP as the co-lead of the 3RP in close coordination with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, IOM and UNHCR, among others, including, business networks such as Business for Goals</p>	<p>Second quarter, 2021</p>	<p>Sub-Regional Response Facility / UNDP Turkey</p>		

Recommendation 4.



UNDP should consolidate partnerships with UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies to promote approaches based on the humanitarian-development nexus and resilience in the Syrian refugee crisis response. UNDP and UNHCR have embarked upon a significant partnership to bridge the humanitarian-development divide and there is need for continued commitment to further strengthen this alliance.

UNDP should further consolidate partnerships with UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies to promote programming based on the humanitarian-development nexus in 3RP countries and reduce compartmentalization of refugee-related development support and other development programming in the country.

The joint UNHCR-UNDP action plan is an important step forward in outlining areas of global and country-level collaboration. The action plan should clarify the way forward in enabling development linkages with humanitarian initiatives at the country level, rather than programmes in two areas implemented in parallel. Lessons from 3RP will be important, particularly in developing common outcomes for future collaborations at the country level. UNDP should clarify expectations regarding its resource investments and explore cost-sharing mechanisms.

Management Response:



UNDP accepts this recommendation and is committed to further consolidating its partnership with UNHCR. UNDP and UNHCR have concluded two global cooperation agreements, the first in 1987 and the second and current one in 1997. In 2011, UNDP and UNHCR were designated by the Secretary-General in his decision no. 2011/20 to provide technical expertise and support to the development of the strategy for durable solutions. Most recently, in 2017, UNDP and UNHCR renewed commitments to work together in the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees and identified five common priority areas of work, implemented through a joint global action plan.

This has led to collaboration between UNDP-UNHCR teams at all levels, including in other contexts involving refugees and mixed migration currently spanning over 30 countries. UNDP is a member of the core group in the Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development Support Platform for Somali Refugees and Returnees, and has a partnership framework in the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework for the Americas.

At the 2019 Global Refugee Forum, UNDP committed to working with UNHCR and with national and local governments, justice, security and human rights actors, the private sector, civil society and most importantly, with host communities and displaced populations, on prevention, peacebuilding, rule of law, local governance and digital livelihoods. Building on these efforts, UNDP and UNHCR have agreed to consolidate the partnership to develop a global joint initiative on inclusion and solutions to support the implementation of the commitments made by UNDP at the Global Refugee Forum in 40 priority countries by 2022.

The regional memorandum of understanding (MoU) between UNHCR and UNDP on the response to the Syria crisis was renewed in October 2019 for two years by the High Commissioner for Refugees and the UNDP Administrator. The MoU reiterates the commitment between UNDP and UNHCR to ensure, through the joint UNHCR/UNDP 3RP secretariat, an informed and coordinated response to the Syria crisis at regional and country levels. Jointly with UNHCR, UNDP is providing regular updates on the implementation of this partnership and related collaborative activities and outputs, as part of the monitoring process for the global UNHCR-UNDP action plan. As a follow-up action to the latest UNHCR-UNDP global update meeting (24 July 2020), the two agencies produced a joint note that provides an overview of their regional and country-level collaborations and achievements within the framework of the 3RP, along with more detailed information on some joint UNHCR-UNDP programmes in 3RP countries (specifically Turkey and Lebanon).

Key Actions	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
4.1. Finalize and launch the global joint initiative on inclusion and solutions with UNHCR	December 2021	Crisis Bureau, regional bureaux, country offices		
4.2. Deepen collaboration with UNHCR and partners in joint assessment, planning and programming in at least three new and protracted refugee-response situations	December 2021	Crisis Bureau, regional bureaux, country offices		
4.3. Adopt a renewed UNDP-UNHCR MoU to ensure sustaining the joint secretariat as a backbone of the UNDP-UNHCR partnership under the 3RP	December 2021	Regional Bureau for Arab States		

Recommendation 5. UNDP jointly with UNHCR should consider scaling down the 3RP architecture so it is fit for purpose.



An almost decade-long crisis response needs catalytic initiatives and advocacy that demonstrate a holistic approach to humanitarian challenges rather than investments primarily in a heavy 3RP coordination mechanism. Refocusing the 3RP and anchoring it in medium- to longer-term development outcomes would enable durable solutions for refugees and sustainable outcomes for the host countries. Such refocusing may necessitate alternate structures, strategic selection of intervention areas and a renewed resource mobilization agenda. Leveraging 3RP resources for additional private sector financing should be prioritized.

Management Response:



UNDP takes note of recommendation 5, that it should consider reformulating and scaling down the 3RP architecture. However, UNDP does not accept this recommendation. Given the protracted nature of the Syria regional crisis and the ramifications of COVID-19 for the region, a strong 3RP coordination mechanism remains more critical than ever. Addressing the increasing vulnerabilities across 3RP countries will require enhanced collaboration and coordination across different pillars and sectors. Scaling down the 3RP architecture would undermine the ability of UNDP, and other 3RP partners, to respond effectively to the crisis and its profound implications for the region. Given the growing vulnerabilities in the region and the need to update the 3RP, as outlined above, to secure its relevance, this may actually mean further scaling-up the of the 3RP and its architecture with regard to scope of activities and partnerships. Furthermore, as the 3RP is co-led by UNDP and UNHCR, and includes more than 270 humanitarian and development partners, reformulating the architecture of the 3RP lies outside the scope of UNDP alone and would require joint efforts with other stakeholders.

UNDP and UNHCR organize annual intercountry/sectoral coordination meetings that bring together intersectoral coordinators from all five 3RP countries, as well as members of the 3RP Regional Technical Committee. While taking into account the diversity of country contexts, this process has proven critical in ensuring a common vision of emerging issues and programmatic priorities and adapting strategic directions in a highly changing environment. The ongoing 3RP cycle is guided by a set of four priority strategic directions (protection, durable solutions, supporting dignified lives and strengthening national and local capacities) and advocates for a greater anchorage of related 3RP interventions within longer-term national/sectoral development plans, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Compact on Refugees. The latest edition of the Jordan response plan, for example, fully embraces the resilience approach and integrates the Goals.

Evaluation Recommendation 5. (cont'd)

At the regional level, the UNDP Sub-Regional Response Facility is proactively engaged in the UNHCR-led Regional Durable Solutions Working Group and spearheaded the launch of a new workstream, "Livelihoods and Return Preparedness". UNDP however acknowledges the need to further stimulate strategic dialogue between UNDP and UNHCR representatives at the regional and country levels on the implementation of the MoU and other critical issues such as durable solutions. A key strength of the 3RP has been its network of 270 partners across the countries concerned including United Nations actors, Governments and both local and international NGOs.

UNDP and UNHCR, as well as other 3RP partners, acknowledge the need to strengthen coordination and collaboration with other actors (e.g., IFIs and other development partners) that operate outside 3RP structures but still provide significant support to host countries and institutions. UNDP has notably supported mappings of IFI support to national and local institutions in Turkey, Lebanon and now Jordan with a view to having a more comprehensive picture of the international community's response to the Syria refugee crisis while assessing potential gaps and areas where greater coordination and synergies are needed.

Key Actions	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
5.1. Organize strategic-level discussions between UNDP representatives and UNHCR representatives and other 3RP partners at regional and country level to identify strategic and actionable options to improve existing 3RP coordination mechanisms and allow for a greater focus on longer-term resilience and common position on the durable solutions agenda	December 2021	UNDP Sub-Regional Response Facility and the joint 3RP secretariat		
5.2. (Continued) analysis of IFIs support to national and local institutions in host countries in the response to the Syria crisis to inform 3RP coordination and planning processes and pursue synergies with national development frameworks	December 2021	UNDP Sub-Regional Response Facility, country offices	Ongoing	

Recommendation 6.



UNDP should build partnerships to boost the scale and scope of support for gender-related initiatives. Resource constraints in addressing gender equality in refugee response are no different than challenges in development programming.

UNDP should outline sectoral areas where it will be consistently engaged. A sectoral focus will enable UNDP to provide well-tested transformative solutions, engage the private sector and build partnerships for enhanced gender outcomes.

Support for gender equality and women's empowerment needs resources. UNDP has been a pioneer in institutionalizing measures such as the minimum budget of 15 per cent of programme resources for gender programming in crisis contexts, which is now a United Nations system-wide policy. UNDP should follow the standards it set and take measures to strengthen organizational capacities to respond appropriately to gender challenges.

Management Response:



UNDP accepts this recommendation and is committed to ensuring that gender equality and women's empowerment are addressed in UNDP projects and programmes in forced displacement settings. Under outcome 3 of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, UNDP work on gender equality has focused on improving livelihoods in crisis and post-crisis settings and on increasing women's participation and leadership in prevention and recovery processes and in social dialogue and reconciliation mechanisms. In 2020, UNDP enhanced efforts to increase technical and programmatic capacities on the ground while ensuring that the 15 per cent allocation target for gender-dedicated activities is met. This includes the allocation of 15 per cent of TRAC 3 funds to support GEN3⁹⁹ programming and co-fund gender-related capacities in crisis countries, and a commitment to a dedicated call for country offices in crisis settings to be certified by the Gender Seal.

In 2021, the Global Policy Network will launch the Gender and Crisis Engagement Facility which will be jointly managed by the Crisis Bureau and the challenges Bureau for Policy and Programme Support Gender Team. The facility represents an institutional commitment to harness the considerable strengths of UNDP, dedicate resources and attract donor funding with the aim of strengthening the organization's capacity to support gender equality and women's empowerment in crisis and fragile contexts. Acting as a one-stop-shop, the facility will consolidate, coordinate, communicate and bring coherence to UNDP support for gender equality and women's empowerment in fragile and crisis countries, focusing on four outcome areas: women's economic empowerment; women's leadership and participation; rule of law and human rights; and a gender-responsive fragility strategy.

⁹⁹ The gender marker aims to sensitize programme managers on gender mainstreaming through the assignment of a rating in the UNDP programme and financial reporting system. The ratings are: GEN3 = outputs that have gender equality as the main objectives; GEN2 = outputs that have gender equality as a significant objective; GEN1 = outputs that will contribute in some way to gender equality, but not significantly; GEN 0 = outputs that are not expected to contribute noticeably to gender equality.

Evaluation Recommendation 6. (cont'd)

In line with its commitments at the Global Refugee Forum in the areas of prevention, peacebuilding, rule of law, local governance and digital livelihoods, UNDP will develop practical guidance on gender mainstreaming and programming in refugee-response situations. This will be done in consultation with UNHCR and partners such as the United Nations Children’s Fund, United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). This will build on the UNDP “Gender and Recovery” toolkit and its practical application in forced displacement situations. The gender marker will be used as a guide to establish the baseline and targets for investments in gender programming for refugees and host communities.

Advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment is an important focus of UNDP programmatic and advocacy activities under the 3RP. As a follow-up to the flagship report by UNDP, ILO and WFP, “Jobs Make the Difference”,¹⁰⁰ the UNDP Sub-Regional Response Facility commissioned additional research (forthcoming) to identify specific challenges and opportunities related to women’s economic inclusion and options to increase women’s participation. Furthermore, the Turkey chapter of the 3RP 2021/2022 plan was extensively reviewed by UN-Women to reinforce the gender terminology, and training on the gender with age marker (GAM) was delivered to 3RP sector partners. UNDP acknowledges that the unfolding of COVID-19 poses additional risks of reversals in gender equality and women’s empowerment in affected 3RP countries, and the need to further mainstream gender equality and women’s empowerment in livelihoods and other key areas of the 3RP response.

Key Actions	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
6.1. Creation of a gender and crisis engagement facility	March 2021	Crisis Bureau/ Gender Team (Bureau for Policy and Programme Support)	Initiated	
6.2. Develop specific tools and guidance on gender programming in refugee-response situations according to UNDP sectoral priorities	December 2021	Crisis Bureau/ Gender Team (Bureau for Policy and Programme Support)		

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/SyriaResponse/Exec-Summary-Jobs%20Make%20the%20Difference.pdf>

<p>6.3. In coordination with UNDP regional bureaux, launch a Gender Seal track for country offices affected by crisis</p>	<p>December 2023</p>	<p>Gender Team (Bureau for Policy and Programme Support) Crisis and Fragility Policy and Engagement Team (Crisis Bureau)</p>	<p>Initiated</p>	
<p>6.4. Strengthen advocacy efforts around and support to evidence-based gender-responsive programming and monitoring in UNDP livelihood and other relevant response areas in the context of the Syria refugee crisis and COVID-19</p>	<p>December 2021</p>	<p>Sub-Regional Response Facility</p>		

ANNEXES

Annexes to the report (listed below) are available on the website of the IEO at: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/9898>

Annex 1. Terms of reference

Annex 2. Timeline of key events of the Syria refugee crisis and international response, 2011-2018

Annex 3. UNDP Programme portfolio

Annex 4. Weighted scoring

Annex 5. Documents consulted

Annex 6. People consulted



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EVALUATION

OF UNDP SUPPORT TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS RESPONSE AND PROMOTING AN INTEGRATED RESILIENCE APPROACH

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