



©UNHCR/ Duniya Aslam Khan

**UNHCR: East and Horn
of Africa and Great
Lakes**

2021-2025

**Stepped-up
Livelihoods Strategic
Directions**

OVERVIEW

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic UNHCR's **Persons of Concern (PoCs) have been disproportionately impacted by the socio-economic consequences of the containment measures** and have been among the first to lose their livelihoods. As income-generating opportunities disappear and savings dry up, PoCs in the East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes Region (EHAGL) increasingly struggle to meet their basic needs and are resorting to negative coping mechanisms. Despite positive gains at the policy level – in particular in countries that apply the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and under the country level Global Refugee Forum (GRF) commitments – self-reliance remains out of reach for many POC, with many resorting to humanitarian aid. To compound matters, an internal UNHCR assessment in 2019, showed that **over 68% of the refugees in the region live in countries with limited right to work. They also live predominantly in locations with few economic opportunities.**

Responding to the High Commissioner's request to step up livelihoods interventions this document outlines the strategic directions and recommends actions for the EHAGL Regional Bureau 2020-2025 to address the most pressing livelihoods and socio-economic challenges. **UNHCR's vision for refugees' economic inclusion is that all refugees can overcome poverty and dependence through participation in host country economies, and that both refugees and host communities enjoy shared prosperity, expanded access to employment and entrepreneurship services and decent work opportunities, and improved social cohesion.** To achieve this, we will focus on the following four outcome areas:

- **Data/Information Management:** Market and evidence-based livelihoods programming for POCs is enabled in the region through the creation of a solid evidence base.
- **Advocacy:** Legal and de facto economic inclusion of POCs is fostered through advocacy and burden-sharing with host governments.
- **Partnerships:** POCs are included in self-reliance projects across the humanitarian-development nexus.
- **UNHCR Implementation:** UNHCR's Livelihoods (LH) country programs are aligned with global and regional LH directions and are designed and managed effectively.

Background: The State of Economic Inclusion in the EHAGL

“The greatest challenge now will be to shield refugees from the economic impacts of the pandemic...We need to focus on livelihoods and access to work for refugees to avoid them being pushed further into poverty. Only this will allow refugee families to survive.” - Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (28 September 2020)

The livelihoods and income earning opportunities for the region's close to 15 million¹ Persons of Concern (PoCs), people have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and following slowdown in economic activity. Recent joint World Bank (WB)-UNHCR COVID-19 Impact Assessments have shown that in **Kenya**, camp-based refugee workers reported a steep drop in work opportunities from 25% pre-COVID, to 15% in November 2020. This situation was aggravated by a significant decline of remittances impacting household incomes, forcing numerous households to sell assets and take up consumption loans. In **Uganda**, we saw a drop from 43% of refugees reporting being employed in October to only 32% being able to retain employment in March 2021. This leaves many households food insecure and struggling to make ends meet. In addition to the COVID-19 impact, there are numerous pre-existing determinants which must be understood to successfully address the challenges PoCs face.

A UNHCR internal survey from 2019 highlights the following **key obstacles in the region that hinder refugee's economic inclusion**:

- **Firstly**, country legal frameworks are often not conducive to foster formalised access to employment: 68% of refugees live in countries with restrictions regarding the right to work and challenges obtaining work permits. 70% of refugees live in countries with limited freedom of movement and 65% of refugees have limited access to bank accounts. Lack of legal work opportunities significantly impacts the resilience of the region's refugees, with only four countries (Burundi, Djibouti, Uganda, Rwanda) permitting refugees full economic participation.
- **Secondly**, pre-existing poverty, low saving rates, and lack of economic assets diminish the resilience to respond to additional economic shocks. This is partially determined by legal/institutional barriers and regional insecurity, but also the slow pace of inclusion in economic development plans or initiatives by development partners.
- **Thirdly**, entrepreneurship opportunities have been limited by lack of access to financial services. Refugee businesses face challenges in accessing loans, formalizing businesses and face obstacles accessing existing value chains.
- **Fourthly**, limited access to training and skills development and recognition renders many income generating opportunities unattainable for refugees.
- **Fifthly**, it is worth highlighting that access to sufficient, good quality land for agriculture-based livelihoods remains challenging, despite farming being one of the key sectors of employment in the region.

¹ PoCs include refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people, stateless people. Up to date information can be found on the interagency dashboard: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/rbehagl>

Theory of Change

Long-term Vision

UNHCR's vision for refugees' economic inclusion is that **all refugees can overcome poverty and dependency through participation in host country economies, and that both refugees and host communities enjoy shared prosperity, expanded access to employment and entrepreneurship services and decent work opportunities, and improved social cohesion.**

What conditions must be in place for us to reach the vision?

For this vision to be achieved, UNHCR will encourage hosting governments in the EHAGL region to make further commitments for formal inclusion of refugees in their economies, permitting freedom of movement, strengthening their existing initiatives, and creating new initiatives to expand economic opportunities for refugees on par with nationals. This needs to be embedded in a whole of society approach which truly brings to life key objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) including the easing of pressure on hosting communities and supporting refugees towards self-reliance.

Planned interventions

In accordance with the [UNHCR Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Concept Note 2019-2023](#), UNHCR is mobilizing multi-stakeholder engagement to ensure the highest degree of economic inclusion of refugees into existing market systems. This requires shifting from traditional project approaches which focus on strengthening refugee vocational skills, to an approach that is putting the market² and its needs at the centre as outlined in the joint [UNHCR-ILO Guide to Market Based Interventions](#).

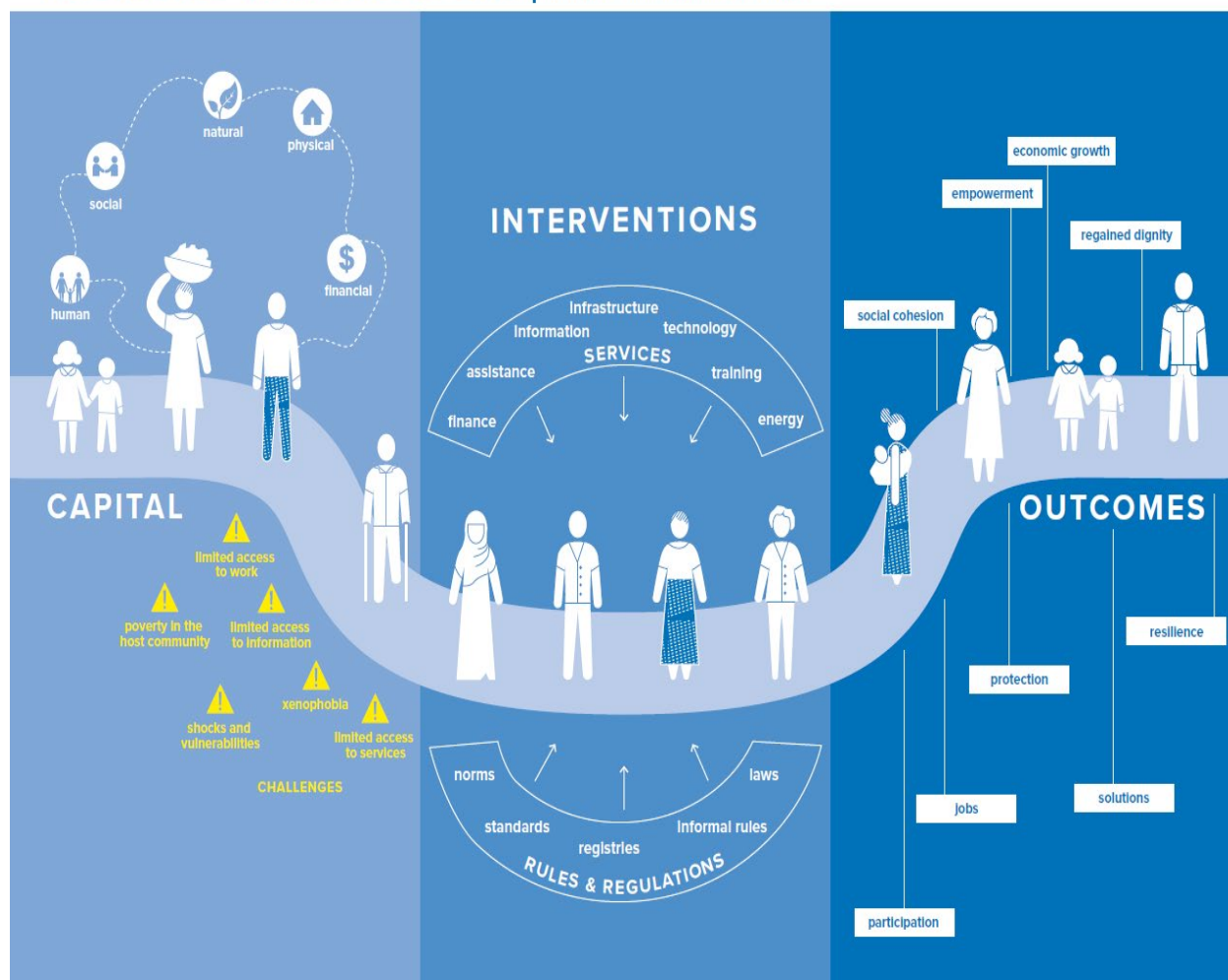
Refugees often face numerous challenges to access the existing market systems in hosting countries. Due to the displacement, refugees often lack capital (be it assets, financial social, natural etc) to participate meaningfully in gainful employment or initiate self-employment. In addition, they face numerous additional obstacles such as limited access to marketplaces, as many reside in remote camp locations, limited access to support services, high levels of pre-existing poverty in hosting communities with limited work opportunities and lack of access to fertile land and seeds.

To enable refugee participation in an inclusive market system, UNHCR will continue working closely with hosting countries, donors, partner NGOs, UN agencies, IFI's, national technical and vocational training (TVET) institutions, the private sector. The aim is to achieve inclusion of refugees in key interventions (training, financial inclusion, social assistance, etc). UNHCR will also advocate for improved rules and regulations (right to work, right to self-employment) to ensure access to formal work opportunities, as illustrated in the graphic below.

² Information about market trends and sub-sectors with potential will ensure that push interventions are targeted, and skills taught match those needed on the market. Market systems analysis uncovers existing bottlenecks in sub-sectors that can be tackled through targeted pull interventions to create employment opportunities

INCLUSIVE MARKET SYSTEM

Improving livelihoods of forcibly displaced persons and host communities through economic & financial inclusion



UNHCR Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Concept Note 2019-2023

This partner centric approach was accentuated by the 2020 UNHCR COVID-19 Stepped up Livelihood's recommendations and actions. UNHCR's facilitation role will require a solid information base and up to date data, to inform partners across the humanitarian-development nexus and enable evidence-based programming both for partners and UNHCR country operations. Furthermore, UNHCR will continue advocating for legal and de-facto economic inclusion at state and regional level. This can only be achieved through strong partnerships with host governments, the private sector, NGOs, development actors, international agencies, and financial institutions. To this end, the RB will ensure to support partners, so that they can leverage fully the [Global Refugee Forum \(GRF\) pledges](#) from December 2019, and it will strengthen pre-existing partnerships and focus on establishing new partnerships. In addition, the RB will provide tailored support to regional operations which are implementing livelihoods projects.

The RB EHAGL has formulated the following four outcome areas required to achieve the improved economic inclusion of PoCs:

Key Outcomes required to achieve POC self-reliance:

1. **Data/Information Management:** Market and evidence-based livelihoods programming for POCs is informed by a solid evidence base.
2. **Advocacy:** Legal and institutional barriers to economic inclusion of POCs are removed through advocacy and burden-sharing with host governments.
3. **Partnerships:** POCs are included in advocacy efforts, policy dialogue, analytical activities, projects and investments of humanitarian agencies, development actors and the private sector.
4. **UNHCR Implementation:** UNHCR LH country programs are aligned with global and regional LH directions and are designed and managed effectively.

Outcome 1: Data/Information Management: Market and evidence-based livelihoods programming for POCs is informed by a solid evidence base.

UNHCR promotes the use of data, research and assessments for evidence-based programming and implementation of livelihoods programmes for PoCs and hosting communities. In the EHAGL region, data and research on economic inclusion of PoCs, although available, often focusses on a project level, showcasing lessons learned and specific success stories. Detailed data that would lay the foundation for an inclusion of PoCs into projects across the humanitarian-development nexus and between countries is often lacking.

To ensure best access to data, UNHCR's Regional Bureau has set up the [Economic Inclusion Exchange East Africa](#) working group. The group has its own inter-agency website where data and reports will continue to be collected and made available to all partners. In addition, monthly key reports, project milestones and other relevant findings will be discussed amongst working group members, to ensure better informed and efficient programming of livelihoods projects.

Thanks to the creation of the UNHCR and World Bank [Joint Data Centre \(JDC\)](#) and the establishment of the Data, Identity Management and Analysis (DIMA) Units at the regional level, UNHCR's capacity to analyse and make publicly available aggregated refugee data to inform refugee programming is increasing. In the EHAGL region, UNHCR and the World Bank (WB) are working on a series of socio-economic analyses in Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. In addition, to measure the impact of the pandemic on PoC and host

populations, COVID impact surveys are being conducted in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Djibouti, Somalia³.

A top priority will remain the inclusion of refugees in national assessments, including those conducted in collaboration with the WB and national statistical institutes, as this has the double function of providing comparable data and symbolizes government recognition of the needs of POCs. In countries where this is not yet possible, UNHCR is going to advocate for inclusion in assessments by others (WB, UNCTs, ILO, DFID, WFP, NGOs) or commission assessments and reports.

List of proposed actions and outputs:

Actions	Outputs	Key partners
Promote inclusion of POCs in national socio-economic assessments and surveys and share results publicly via the joint UNHCR/WB UNHCR Micro library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ POCs are an integral part of national socio-economic assessments. ➤ PoCs are increasingly included in national responses to poverty, unemployment, etc through using data to inform evidence-based advocacy. ➤ LH planning across the humanitarian development nexus considers POCs and host communities alike. 	Governments, National Bureau of Statistics, World Bank, DFID, UN Agencies
Support interagency assessments and joint targeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Agencies, INGOs and partners use harmonized targeting methodologies to jointly assist POCs. ➤ POCs are integrated in ILO and host government labour market assessments. 	UNHCR/WFP Hub, PAC ILO, IFC, FAO
Facilitate the use of UNHCR Socio-economic Assessments toolkit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Country operations that are not able to include POCs in joint or partners assessments are capacitated to conduct their own socio-economic assessments using UNHCR's toolkit. ➤ Accurate and useful data is produced on POCs, allowing for better advocacy and project development. 	UNHCR in cooperation with national partners
Leverage the Economic Inclusion Exchange East Africa to disseminate data/analysis in livelihoods programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key reports are uploaded to the shared interagency website and are used by partners and operations to inform programming. ➤ Partner presentations are shared by partners and approaches are discussed and validated 	Partners across the humanitarian-development nexus
Encourage new research to identify sectors and approaches suited to integrate PoCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ New opportunities for POCs are identified in emerging fields: Green economy, Digital economy and Care economy, and Local Economic Development 	Private sector, academia, UN agencies and NGOs
Ensure information is up cycled into global reports and briefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key global, regional and country reports feature information, data and analysis from the region. ➤ Data, assessments, and information gathered are analysed and upcycled 	UNHCR country operations

³ Data is already collected in three of them (Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia). Somalia is at an early stage, and I am currently working with the country office to take into consideration their needs and the design that would be more relevant for their work. The Somalia COVID survey will focus on returnees, refugees, and IDPs.

Outcome 2: Advocacy: Legal and de facto economic inclusion of POCs is enabled through advocacy and burden-sharing with host governments.

In December 2018, the United Nations General Assembly affirmed the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) as a blueprint for governments, international organizations and other stakeholders to ensure that host communities get the support they need and that refugees can lead productive lives. The compact highlights the recognition of the development challenges posed by large-scale refugee situations and the need for inclusive development in refugee-hosting areas to build the resilience of local and refugee communities. It calls on all sectors of society to help enhance refugees' self-reliance. The compact positions itself as a means of mobilizing support to ensure refugees and their host communities share in a country's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

In a region where many refugees have limited right to work (UNHCR 2019 internal survey showed that 68% of refugees have limited right to work), ongoing support to hosting governments and advocacy for an enabling environment and the right to work remain key to enable refugees to become self-reliant. Building on the need for solid data, analysis, and information, UNHCR will continue to ensure that key partners, agencies, donors and IFI's have the information required to advocate for a removal of legal barriers for economic inclusion of refugees (freedom of movement, work permits, right to open up bank accounts, right to employment and self-employment, land tenure).

Based on the [ILO Guiding Principles on Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market and Decent Work for Refugees](#) and [UNHCR Guidelines on applicable international standards relating to decent work for refugees](#), the Regional Bureau will continue to support UNHCR's country operations to advocate for economic inclusion with the region's host governments. The Bureau will also continue working closely with key regional bodies including the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the East African Community (EAC) to advocate for economic inclusion of POCs at a regional level. Of particular importance will be IGAD's efforts in supporting member states in the implementation of the "[The Kampala Declaration on Jobs, Livelihoods, and Self-Reliance for Refugees, Returnees, and Host Communities](#)", signed in 2019 by member states. The declaration contains commitments for improved socio-economic inclusion of refugees which are an integral part to achieve the objectives of the GCR.

In addition to the advocacy for the right to decent work via employment or self-employment, it will be of key importance to continue advocating for access to land for farming purposes to meet basic food needs, and for POCs to be able to expand their farming activities beyond food security to enable them to make a living.

Rights based advocacy can be only achieved through joint advocacy vis-à-vis partners and donors to ensure adequate burden sharing as part of the GCR commitments and manifested in the pledges made by states, NGOs, donors, the private sector and other partners at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum (GRF). Working closely in support of the WB when implementing the [window for hosting communities and refugees under IDA19](#) and monitoring key policy changes and the impact on PoC self-reliance will be key to advocate for impactful policy changes. UNHCR will continue to provide technical support to key governmental bodies, ministries and institutions that are drivers of change. UNHCR's country operations will also be encouraged to ensure inclusion in the livelihood's responses coordinated by the UN Country Teams and the UN Capital Development Fund.

Right To Work for Refugees

The right to work includes the opportunity for people to earn a living through work that is freely chosen or accepted. The right to work encompasses all forms of work, from independent self-employment to jobs that pay wages or salaries. The corollary of the right to work is the right to just and favourable conditions of work¹. Articles 17, 18 and 19 of the 1951 Refugee Convention explicitly recognize refugees' right to access the labour market, prescribing a level of treatment for refugees that is relative and connected to their legal attachment to the country of asylum. Article 24 sets out the right of refugees to benefit from labour legislation and social security.

<https://www.unhcr.org/livelihoods.html>

List of proposed actions and outputs:

Actions	Outputs	Potential partners
Conduct rights-based advocacy for legal economic inclusion into labour markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Joint regional rights assessments on right to employment and self-employment, and right to land tenure to inform advocacy. ➤ Country and regional normative and policy frameworks enable POCs access to labour markets, right to own a business, freedom of movement, recognition of skills and decent work. 	UNHCR Protection and DIP, Host governments, WB IGAD, EAC, UN agencies, MFIs, NGOs, donors, academia
Facilitate GRF pledge matching in support to key government pledges, and the launch of the IGAD support platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ GRF livelihoods pledges in the region are progressing and enabling POC self-reliance. ➤ Pledge progress issued for advocacy for more win-win opportunities. ➤ Under IGAD's leadership provide support to members states in the implementation of the Kampala Declaration. 	All pledging partners, IGAD, private sector, donors
Provide Technical support to government led projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ POC economic inclusion is improved in specific thematic or geographical areas. Government officials are aware of the win-win opportunities that economic inclusion of PoCs brings. ➤ Local Economic Development strategies are supported, and external funding solicited. 	UNCTAD, ILO, national bodies, TVET institutions, municipalities
Advocacy for inclusion in national COVID-19 responses and economic stimulus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Refugees recover more self-reliance from the pandemic as fewer are forced to deplete or sell their income generating assets or businesses. ➤ Key partnerships are leveraged to advocate for an improved policy environment. 	Donor and recipient countries of ODA, IMF or WB IDA



Mohadin a refugee residing in Ethiopia in front of the field where he grows cotton together with members of the host community.
©UNHCR/Helle Degn

Sub-Objective 3: Partnerships: POCs are included in advocacy efforts, policy dialogue, analytical activities, projects and investments of humanitarian agencies, development actors and the private sector.

To better support refugees and the communities hosting them, the New York Declaration and the GCR call on UNHCR, to work with a wide range of partners. These include not just governments, NGOs, refugees and other UN agencies, but also the private sector, IFI's and civil society, including think tanks, academia and faith leaders. Together, we aim to:

- Ease pressure on countries that welcome and host refugees
- Build self-reliance of refugees
- Expand access to resettlement in third countries and other complementary pathways
- Foster conditions that enable refugees voluntarily to return to their home countries.

This spirit of partnership was exemplified at the first GRF in December 2019. States and numerous other stakeholders demonstrated leadership, vision and ambition to share the responsibility for refugees by announcing pledges to improve the lives of refugees and their host communities. In our region alone, we saw over 111 pledges with about a third focussing on livelihoods. Enormous progress has been made by pledging partners, despite the adverse effects of the pandemic. UNHCR's Bureau will continue with its commitment to support partners in finding matching partners, support implementation, achieve more visibility, advocate for improved funding and a favourable legal and policy environment.

As highlighted above, UNHCR used the facilitation and coordination approach to achieve market-based economic inclusion of POCs. The aim is to encourage development actors, private sector, IFIs, MFI's, NGOs and other partners to make POCs an integral part of their programming. UNHCR will therefore continue to facilitate coordination of livelihoods activities across the humanitarian-development nexus. UNHCR will focus on partnerships with a wide range of actors to improve 1) knowledge sharing; 2) implementation of GRF pledges; 3) employment via the private sector; 4) increase participation of local NGOs, Refugee Lead Organizations (RLOs), Civil Society Organizations, etc, 5) inclusion and fundraising for self-reliance programmes by NGOs; 6) synergies with other UN organizations; 7) financial inclusion advocacy, workshops, and close cooperation with financial service providers and regulators to facilitate resource mobilization and de-risking of investments in close partnership with donors and development actors.

List of proposed actions and outputs:

Actions	Outputs	Potential partners
Facilitate bridging of the humanitarian development nexus through regional working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Better coordination between humanitarian and development actors leads to meaningful interventions for affected POCs. ➤ Joint advocacy objectives are formulated. 	UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs, CSOs, Research institutes, government bodies
Support partners' pledge implementation and matching from the Global Refugee Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ POCs livelihoods are improved through the interventions and livelihoods programmes by actors such as IKEA Foundation, the African Entrepreneurship Collective, KIVA, etc. 	GRF pledging partners, donors,
Attract private sector engagement through multi-stakeholder forums, and cooperation in ongoing projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Private sector partners receive relevant information and see the advantages of employing POCs and working with POC owned enterprises. ➤ More refugees are employed in private sector companies and receiving relevant services, providing higher degrees of stable and formal employment for refugees. 	Private sector partners, AMAHORO coalitions, chambers of commerce, UNCTAD, IOM, IFC, MFIs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Large scale events are organized with committed private sector partners, such as the AMAHORO coalition, to attract further partners and showcase refugee employment options ➤ Advocate for improved conditions (roads, infrastructure, loans etc) in refugee hosting areas to attract private sector investment. 	
Facilitate the implementation of the Poverty Alleviation Coalition (PAC) at country level and in cooperation with ReDSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 150,000 extremely poor households are offered livelihoods programmes (graduation approach) by 2025, improving particularly for those in the informal economy. ➤ New partners such as WFP, UNCTAD, FAO are aware of the PAC and are included in complementary programming. ➤ PAC partners use joint key indicators of impact, and are increasingly adopting the Self-Reliance-Index. 	PAC partners, donors, SRI,
Strengthen the MADE51 artisanal regional network and increase access of refugees to global value chains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MADE 51 regional networks are expanding and have improved access to regional sales outlets. ➤ Artisan refugees have improved income and received capacity building to compete in the global artisan market. ➤ Global advocacy strengthened that refugees have a distinct culture, capacities and traditions that are worth preserving. 	MADE 51, Social enterprises, artisans, NGOs, national and international buyers
Enhance partnership with FAO to include of refugees into agricultural, energy and natural resource management programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FAO/UNHCR partnership is strengthened and POCs included into FAOs ongoing projects, advocacy and assessments. ➤ Joint projects are developed at country level befitting POC food security and income levels. ➤ Support IKEA Foundation value-chain project in Kenya and Uganda 	FAO, donors, NGO and other implementing partners
Based on the global MoU enhance the partnership with ILO to ensure a rights-based approach, joint project implementation and decent work for PoCs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ILO/UNHCR partnership is strengthened and POCs included into ILOs ongoing projects, advocacy and assessments, including job centres, trainings, and Employment Intensive Projects ➤ Projects under the PROSPECTS partnership are jointly developed and implemented benefiting POCs. ➤ Based on a joint TVET research, POCs inclusion in national TVET projects is market based and enhanced. ➤ Initiate cooperation opportunities in green jobs, care economy, labour mobility, digital economy, financial inclusion 	ILO, donors, host governments, NGO and other implementing partners
Enhance the partnership with WFP to improve alignment of LH approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ WFP/UNHCR partnership in the Hub is strengthened, joint targeting, advocacy for LH projects is developed. ➤ Joint projects are developed and fundraised for. 	WFP, donors, PAC partners, NGO and other implementing partners
Strengthen collaboration with IFIs to unlock barriers to refugee employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IFIs and UNHCR advocate jointly for a rights-based access to labour markets and improved policy frameworks. ➤ IFIs have sufficient support and information access to include POCs in existing and planned projects. 	WB, AfDB, IFC, EIB and others
Enhance engagement with DFIs and donors for market-conducive incentives and blended finance for FSPs and investors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ POCs access formal financial services through public and private funding or transferring risk to DFIs and donors (co-investing, technical assistance, market research and creating guarantees). ➤ POCs can access credit for their businesses and consumption needs, store their savings in a safe place, make financial transactions and receive foreign remittances. 	FSPs, government, donors

Sub-Objective 4: UNHCR-Implementation: UNHCR LH country programs are aligned with global and regional LH directions and are designed and managed effectively.

UNHCR's global livelihoods strategy is guided by a market systems development model with UNHCR's facilitating role across the humanitarian-development nexus at the centre stage. However, in many refugee hosting countries this remains unfeasible due to insufficient presence of key partners. This can result in UNHCR taking an implementing role. In the EHAGL region, UNHCR is implementing LH projects through key partners, amounting in **2020 alone to a total of 17.2 million USD**.

These projects are embedded in country specific livelihoods strategies that the Bureau is supporting with technical guidance. To ensure results-driven project planning and implementation, UNHCR has adopted the **Minimum Economic Recovery Standards (MERS)**. Developed by a consortium of organizations led by the **Small Enterprise, Education and Promotion Network (SEEP)**, MERS is a collection of best practices for economic recovery in crisis and post crisis settings. The Bureau will continue to support country operations in participating in the global **Integrated Refugee and Forcibly Displaced Livelihoods Information System (LIS)** that generates comparable monitoring data, feeding into UNHCR's revised Results Based Management system COMPASS and facilitate peer-to-peer exchange and learning based on the results of the LIS, evaluations, reports and other sources of information available to make programming more effective and efficient.

List of proposed actions and outputs:

Actions	Outputs	Potential partners
Provide technical support to country operations in line with the Stepped-up LH support package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Country level Livelihood's strategies and COMPASS inclusions are adapted to the pandemic situation and respond to the need for additional measures to assist refugees to regain their livelihoods. ➤ Support measures are offered across the steps and may include services such as capacity building, strategy development, resource mobilization, assessments, etc (Annex 1). ➤ Global LH training is aligned to regional needs and targeted webinars are offered to staff. 	Country operations in partnership with implementing partners
Ensure UNHCR funded livelihoods programmes are using the MERS standards where inclusion in responses by partners is not viable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Projects are developed and implemented in accordance with internationally recognised MERS standards and use funding effectively and efficiently. ➤ Refugees, who would otherwise not have a chance of livelihoods support, are in part supported by UNHCR. 	UNHCR and key implementing partners
Support country operations in accessing labour mobility pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understanding of labour mobility as part of the global Complementary Pathways Strategy is strengthened and pilots on labour mobility schemes established. ➤ Approaches are developed with partners that enable POCs to find jobs in third countries. 	UNHCR protection and education teams, private sector partners, receiving states, ILO
Promote learning to earning solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Foster strong cooperation between education and livelihoods teams, to jointly reach out to new partners and to ensuring training/higher education responds to market needs. ➤ Improved labour market integration of POCs 	UNHCR education teams, ILO, National TVET institutions, INGOs
Support country level and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluations are conducted on select programmes to assess impact and causality and used to improve project design and cooperation 	UNHCR Evaluation Service and

RB Evaluations	with partners and inform programming	academia
Promote use of global Livelihoods Information System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ UNHCR funded and implemented projects are monitored and monitoring results are used to improve project programming. ➤ Data collected by LIS is allowing a comparison across country operations and enhances cost effectiveness of programming 	UNHCR, World Bank, CartNog and partners



Somali refugee women at Dadaab's Women's Centre during visit of the High Commissioner of the UN Refugee Agency Mr. Filippo Grandi to Dadaab Refugee Camp in Kenya near the Somali border. © UNHCR/Georgina Goodwin

Contacts

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Annex 1: Tools, Resources and Support

Type	Details
Tools and guidance	Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR: Socioeconomic Assessment Planning Guide (including TOR template and employment module, and case-household methodology) • ILO: Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on enterprises and workers in the informal economy in developing and emerging countries • ILO/UNHCR: Value chain analysis • World Bank: High-frequency phone surveys
	UNHCR global initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial inclusion • MADE51 • Poverty Alleviation Coalition COVID-19 guidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR: Livelihoods Short guidance on COVID-19 Response • UNHCR: Financial Inclusion Short Guidance COVID-19 • UNHCR: Guidance note on refugee production of non-medical masks • UNHCR: Emerging practices from the field on COVID-19 livelihoods response Communities of practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR: Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Teams channel • SEEP Network: Markets in Crisis
Tailored support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HQ end-to-end support and virtual missions in coordination with RB including support to strategy development • Short-term consultancies offering support to develop country or regional responses (funded by CO, RB or HQ) • Thematic support on financial inclusion, employment, or agriculture • Resource mobilizations (in coordination with DER, PSP) • Technical assistance for COVID-19 socioeconomic impact surveys, including • leveraging network of research and data collection partners
Partnerships and blended support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilizing thematic experts and partners from existing networks within or outside UNHCR (IFC, ILO, WFP, UNCDF, FSDA, FAO, private sector, NGOs, MADE51, Poverty Alleviation Coalition) • Bilateral consultations (BMZ, EU, Sida, PRM)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of additional partners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting regional partnerships and pledge matching under GRF

COVID-19: EHAGL UNHCR RESPONSES

STEPPED UP LIVELIHOODS RESPONSE

July 2021