

Topic #2: Improving response to protracted refugee crises beyond emergency relief

I. Introduction

Protracted refugee crises, where displaced people remain in host countries for years or even decades, represent one of the most significant humanitarian challenges of our time. As of 2024, there are over 117 million refugees worldwide, a substantial proportion of whom have lived in limbo for extended periods, unable to return to their home countries or fully integrate into new communities.¹

While emergency relief addresses immediate survival needs, such as food, shelter, and medical care, it often overlooks the broader, long-term requirements necessary to restore dignity, autonomy, and hope for refugees. This limited approach burdens host nations, exacerbates social tensions, and leaves millions without access to education, healthcare, or sustainable livelihoods.

II. UN Involvement and International Cooperation

The United Nations have made significant efforts to address refugee issues, primarily through the [Global Compact on Refugees \(GCR\)](#), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2018. The GCR provides a comprehensive framework to promote responsibility-sharing, support host countries, and strengthen international cooperation.

Another key initiative is the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), which emphasizes "leaving no one behind." Refugees are specifically mentioned as a vulnerable group requiring targeted support to achieve sustainable development goals (SDGs).³

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has also implemented approaches, engaging governments, NGOs, and the private sector to transition refugees from dependence on aid to self-reliance. Initiatives such as the [UNHCR's Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework \(CRRF\)](#) have facilitated policy development and resource mobilization to improve long-term outcomes.

Other programs, like the [World Bank's Global Concessional Financing Facility](#), provide financial support to middle-income countries hosting large refugee populations, alleviating the economic strain on host communities.⁴

However, international coordination and funding remain significant challenges, requiring innovative and collaborative efforts to enhance the effectiveness of refugee responses.

III. Questions to Consider

- How does your country contribute to addressing refugee crises (e.g., hosting refugees, funding, policy support)?
- What long-term solutions has your country implemented to support refugees beyond emergency aid?
- How does your country collaborate with the international community on refugee issues?
- What steps can be taken to promote refugee self-reliance in host communities?
- How can the global community address the root causes of protracted displacement?
- What challenges do host countries face in integrating refugees, and how can they be mitigated?

IV. Useful Links

- **Global Compact on Refugees:**
<https://www.unhcr.org/media/global-compact-refugees-booklet>
- **UNHCR Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework:**
<https://www.unhcr.org/crrf>
- **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:** <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>
- **World Bank: Forced Displacement and Development:**
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/forced-displacement>
- **Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative:** <https://www.refugeeselfreliance.org/>

¹ [UNHCR: Global Trends - Forced Displacement](#)

³ [UN: Sustainable Development Goals and Refugees](#)

⁴ [World Bank: Global Concessional Financing Facility](#)