



CONCEPT NOTE – Brussels VII Side event

Strengthening Adaptive Solutions in the Regional Response to the Syria crisis

Co- organized by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

Date: Tuesday 13 June 2023

Time: 2 pm – 3:30 pm Brussels/ 3 pm – 4:30 pm Jeddah-Amman

Location: Hybrid - Residence Palace, Passage Room, Rue de la Loi 155

Language: English

Registration: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Background

The countries most affected by the Syria crisis such as Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq continue to face significant socio-economic and political challenges such as growing poverty, high unemployment, widespread forced displacement and new emerging crises, including the recent earthquake in Türkiye and Syria and most recently the crisis in Sudan. Communities hosting them, and refugees of other nationalities are also grappling with the impact of inflation, limited job opportunities, increasing hunger and overstretched services among other challenges. This was compounded by COVID-19, and the war in the Ukraine with its impact on fuel and grain supplies and has also resulted in further limiting the response capacity of host governments.

However, against this background these countries continue to host large numbers of forcibly displaced people. As of the end of 2022, the sub-region hosted over 14 million forcibly displaced people (refugees and internally displaced persons or IDPs) in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Türkiye and Egypt. Of those, 6.8 million are Syrian refugees.

Twelve years into the Syria crisis, solutions to ending displacement are still not in sight for most forcibly displaced people both within and outside of Syria. Finding appropriate development solutions to forced displacement remains a challenge for all stakeholders due to an uncondusive enabling environment and the inability of displaced individuals to rebuild their lives. As a result, the needs in the sub-region are the highest they have been since the start of the crisis in the 3RP countries, as most refugees from live in poverty and have challenges meeting their basic needs.¹

¹ For example, in Lebanon, 750,000 displaced Syrians or close to 90 per cent of the refugee population could not meet their basic survival needs in 2021, with all communities across the country impacted by the unprecedented economic crisis. In Jordan, around 430,000 refugees or 65 per cent of the refugee population were forced into debt in 2021 with debt equally rising among vulnerable host

Like other forced displacement contexts globally, the search for solutions in the region is challenged by the need for more predictable and equitable responsibility sharing for the world's refugees called for in the 2018 [Global Compact on Refugees](#) (GCR), and the need for fundamental changes in approaches to solutions for internal displacement highlighted in the [2021 Report of the UN Secretary-General High Level Panel on Internal Displacement](#), and the recently launched [Secretary-General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement](#)

Advancing on sustainable development requires long-term strategies on multiple fronts, including shifting to market-oriented economies, addressing climate change, strengthening institutions and social protection nets amongst others.

To respond to these challenges, UNDP's Sub-Regional Response Facility for the Syria Crisis (SRF) has finalized a Position Paper on '[Adaptive Solutions in the region affected by the Syria Crisis](#)'. The Paper presents an overall vision and highlights a role for UNDP to lead on and contribute to solutions in the region affected by the Syria crisis. It builds on UNDP's global approach to development solutions to forced displacement, and UNDP's work in the region over the past few years in support of national systems and actors (including government, civil society, and private sector) to find pathways for solutions for forcibly displaced populations. The paper is premised on UNDP's lead role as an integrator and supporting the United Nations system at large, including Resident Coordinators, in strengthening strategic activities and impact in this field. It also is anchored in the need to engage in strategic partnerships, across the HDP nexus, as solutions is a collective rather than agency-focused effort.

IsDB, or the Islamic Development Bank, has implemented various innovative and transformative initiatives to alleviate poverty and enhance the socio-economic well-being of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and host communities in IsDB Member Countries (MCs). These initiatives adopt a holistic approach to address the challenges faced by these groups.

One notable initiative is the "Syrian Refugees and IDPs Education Program," which has been running for four years since 2018. The program's primary objective is to improve access to education for IDPs and refugees who lack educational opportunities. It achieves this through the implementation of smart education enrollment, providing remedial education through complementary curricula and textbooks, and creating pathways for youth to transition from education to decent employment or entrepreneurship.

The success of this program, which was initially implemented in Syria, Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon, has served as a best practice example. It inspired the IsDB to develop a larger program called the Skills, Training, and Education Program (STEP). This expanded program aims to reach and support a wider range of beneficiaries in IsDB member countries with high populations of forcibly displaced individuals.

Additionally, IsDB conducted a report titled "[The Impact of Covid-19 on Forced Displacement and Economic Migration in Fragile Contexts](#)". This report provides a situational analysis of the challenges and opportunities faced by refugee, migrant, and displaced communities in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also maps out best practices and identifies constraints for the economic recovery of these communities.

communities, while in Türkiye more than 3.2 million Syrian refugees or 90 per cent have been unable to cover their monthly expenses and basic needs in 2022.

The event will involve (1) A review of three UNDP adaptive solutions case studies in the sub-region, and (2) Best practices and lessons learned from IsDB funded initiative implemented by SPARK "Syrian Refugees and IDPs Skills Training Education Program" (STEP).

Event objectives

- Disseminating UNDP’s development approach to displacement solutions including through a presentation of three pilot initiatives undertaken by UNDP Country Offices as part of the adaptive solutions approach as well as IsDB’s experience in supporting refugees and IDPs in its member countries;
- Providing an opportunity to collectively discuss, review and share experiences on improving development pathways to address the challenges of displacement in a sustainable manner.

Expected Outcomes

- Disseminating practical case studies on improving and operationalizing adaptive solutions
- Understanding the challenges and opportunities of implementing adaptive solutions against a backdrop of a protracted crisis and displacement context
- Emphasizing the required collective efforts to implement solutions and the roles of key strategic technical and financial partners for a more impactful response

Target audience

The targets are humanitarian, development and peace partners including civil society, non-governmental organizations, other UN agencies and donor governments.

Agenda

14:00 – 14:10	<p>Welcome and opening remarks</p> <p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome participants and anchor adaptive solutions within UNDP strategies and priorities - Highlight the importance of this approach <p><u>Facilitator:</u> Amy Rodgers, Coordinator, Durable Solutions Platform</p> <p><u>Opening remarks by co-chairs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sarah Poole, UNDP Deputy Director, RBAS - AbdiMajid Moalin Abdullahi, Fragility & Resilience Manager, IsDB - Donor TBC
14:10 – 14:45	<p>Panel discussion - Presentation of Adaptive Solutions approach and strategic direction</p> <p><u>Objectives:</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation on country-focused adaptive solutions pilot initiatives and their relevance. - Presentation of Donor and IsDB perspectives/ experiences and prospects for cooperation. <p><u>Speakers:</u></p> <p>UNDP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abdallah Al-Lahham, Coordinator, Sub-regional Response Facility for the Syria Crisis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Elina Silen, Senior Inter-Agency Coordinator, UNDP Lebanon o Philippe Clerc, Resilience Advisor, UNDP Turkiye o Nabeel Alfayoumi, Managing Director of the Digiskills Association, Jordan <p>SPARK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yannick Du Pont, Founder and CEO of SPARK
14:45 – 14:50	Reflections by UNDP Crisis Bureau
14:50 – 15:25	Moderated Q&A Amy Rodgers, Coordinator, Durable Solutions Platform
15:25 – 15:30	Closing Remarks

About the SRF

The UNDP Sub-Regional Response Facility (SRF) was established in 2014 to bring a robust development response to the Syrian refugee crisis. The SRF supports the vision, definition, and implementation of a resilience-based development response, to improve sub-regional coordination, enhance cost-effectiveness, and harmonize a comprehensive, multi-country response under the leadership of the governments neighboring Syria, which host the refugees. Through the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP), the SRF works in mainstreaming resilience programming in the plan and extract best practice and lessons learnt from the on-going practice. The SRF has been instrumental in supporting cross-learning across and between UNDP at country, Hub, and Headquarters levels and 3RP partners (UN, Donors, I/NGOs, Private sector).

About IsDB

The Islamic Development Bank is a multilateral development bank (MDB), working to improve the lives of those we serve by promoting social and economic development in Member countries and Muslim communities worldwide, delivering impact at scale. IsDB provides the infrastructure to enable people to lead better lives and achieve their full potential.

The IsDB Mission:

- We believe all people have the right to live in dignity and prosperity, and that nurturing economic growth is the best route out of poverty.
- We equip people to drive their own economic and social progress at scale, putting the infrastructure in place to enable them to fulfil their potential.
- We build collaborative partnerships between communities and nations, across the public and private sectors.
- We foster innovative and sustainable solutions to the world’s greatest development challenges, as we work towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

IsDB is one of the world’s most active MDBs and a global leader in Islamic Finance, with an AAA rating, operating assets of more than USD 16 billion, and subscribed capital of USD 70 billion. IsDB is a global institution, headquartered in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, with major hubs in Morocco, Malaysia, Kazakhstan, Senegal, Uganda, Suriname, Egypt, Turkey, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Nigeria.

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