Module 9: Access to decent work for refugees and other forcibly displaced people

Learning objectives
1. Introduction and context
2. Legal and governance frameworks
3. Protection and decent work
4. Employment policies, strategies and instruments

Key messages
Knowledge assessment test
Suggested reading
Learning objectives:

By the end of this course, participants will have:

1. Analysed the purpose of inclusive labour markets for refugees, forcibly displaced persons and host communities as an essential component of refugee response and beneficial contribution to economic development

2. Identified specific challenges and opportunities, including the gender dimension, in access to decent work and self-reliance

3. Reviewed international and regional human rights and refugee legal frameworks, including the fundamental principles and rights at work, and other relevant international labour standards, as well as the ILO’s 2016 Guiding Principles to effectively ensure the protection of rights at work and improve working conditions and social protection

4. Explored relevant legal and policy options that govern labour market access at local and national levels

5. Considered short- and long-term strategies and programmes for employment creation, including the inclusion of host communities in the formal labour market
6. Reflected on the roles that a range of stakeholders including workers’ and employers’ organizations, governments, international organizations, civil society and private sector employers can and should play in access to decent work.

7. Accessed tools and methodologies to address the labour market impacts and promote employment-based responses to refugee situations.

1. Introduction and context

1.1: Refugees and forced displacement – concepts, trends, processes

Globally, almost 80 million people – one per cent of the world’s population - are forcibly displaced by conflict, violence and human rights violations;¹ this is the highest total ever recorded. Of this total, falling under the UNHCR mandate², some 20.7 million are refugees and a further 4.2 million are asylum seekers awaiting refugee determination. Palestinian refugees under the UNRWA mandate constitute a further 5.7 million, whilst there are now 3.6 million Venezuelans displaced abroad. The majority however, some 45.7 million, are forcibly displaced within their own countries, termed IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons). IDPs do not fall under the mandate of a single agency, but an inter-agency response with the state retaining the main responsibility. The 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, adopted by the UNGA, provide states with non-binding guidelines on protection standards. There is no international legally binding global instrument on IDPs but the 2009 Kampala Convention is an innovative binding regional instrument within the AU for protecting IDPs.³ Yet millions more forcibly displaced people fleeing conflict and violence are not documented. They may not be recognised by the host state or they may not declare themselves refugees for fear of being forcibly repatriated; and in many parts of the world, porous international borders make enumeration of who is crossing to seek refuge difficult. These populations, like the majority of IDPs, are particularly vulnerable with few rights and little international protection.⁴ These other forcibly displaced populations are also considered in this module.

Behind these headline figures a number of distinctive features define the contemporary characteristics of forced displacement: in terms of both countries of origin and countries of refuge this is overwhelmingly a ‘global south’ phenomenon, impacting countries that are usually

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² UNHCR is primarily mandated to provide international protection and humanitarian assistance, and to seek permanent solutions for persons within its core mandate responsibilities. UNHCR’s original core mandate covered only refugees, that is, all persons outside their country of origin for reasons of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order and who, as a result, require international protection. However, over time UNHCR’s mandate has been expanded to cover returnees and stateless persons. Although UNHCR does not have a general mandate for internally displaced people, UNHCR may be involved in certain circumstances to enhance protection and provide humanitarian assistance. See UN General Assembly, Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 14 December 1950, A/RES/428(V), available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3628.html. See also: UNHCR, Note on the Mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees and his Office, October 2013, available at: https://www.unhcr.org/5fc504d44/mid-year-trends-2020.html
⁴ Not included in these data are those displaced by natural disasters, on average some 25.4 million people a year, and millions subject to development-induced displacement mainly in urban settings. These populations are not part of our concern in this course.
struggling with their own challenges of development, scarce public resources and often fragile economies, without the added impact of refugees. Of the world’s refugees, 85% are hosted in low- and middle-income countries outside Europe and North America, 73% in neighbouring countries, whilst half of all refugees (10.4 million) are hosted in just six countries (Turkey, Colombia, Germany, Pakistan, Uganda, Sudan), with Turkey the largest hosting country for the last 5 years with 3.9 million refugees and asylum seekers in 2019. The source of refugees is similarly concentrated with more than two thirds of refugees, including Venezuelans, (68% per cent or 16.3 million) originating from just five countries (Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Myanmar), whilst the top 10 countries account for 96% of all refugees (including Venezuelans).

Recent years have witnessed the increasing multiplicity and complexity of the drivers of forced displacement and equally complex patterns and processes by which the forcibly displaced seek refuge. The nexus of armed conflict, other situations of violence and severe human rights violations constitute a familiar catalogue of drivers. But impoverishment, lack of livelihood opportunities, food insecurity, depletion of natural resources (sometimes attributable to climate change), as well as governance fragility (which is often accompanied by rights deficits such as systematic discrimination and repression), generalised violence and failure of the rule of law, render people vulnerable and precipitate involuntary migration. Often working in combination, these factors may be the precursors of the more recognisable drivers. Over many decades, the experience of Somali and Rohingya refugees, illustrate many of these dynamics.

Refugee camps still exist; for example, with nearly 900,000 refugees the ‘Kutupalong mega camp’ and nearby refugee settlements’ for Rohingya in Bangladesh is now the largest concentration of refugees in the world. But another significant contemporary characteristic is that the majority of the forcibly displaced now spontaneously settle in urban areas: in Jordan, for example, more than 75% of the Syrian refugees live in urban areas.

The irregular onward movement of refugees and other forcibly displaced people, within and beyond their region of origin raises important questions concerning responsibility sharing among States for providing protection to refugees. All States need to provide access to fair and efficient asylum systems and standards of treatment which reflect international refugee and human rights law standards. Countries hosting large numbers of refugees need international support in this regard, with more equitable and predictable burden and responsibility sharing, as set out in the New York Declaration, and emphasized in the Global Compact on Refugees.

In this context, these trends have given rise to the terms ‘mixed flows’ or ‘mixed migration’ or ‘irregular’ onward movement (discussed below), highlighting the lack of legal pathways for asylum or for regular migration. A particular challenge is that all forms of migration including forced displacement are increasingly assisted by smuggling and trafficking across borders – usually without regularised entry.

Another current characteristic of the refugee experience is its protracted nature: indeed, protracted displacement is now the norm: on average a refugee is displaced for just over 10 years, expanding to several decades in some contexts like for Afghan refugees who are now into a third generation in Iran and Pakistan. Based on the somewhat prescriptive UNHCR definition, some 15.7 million refugees (77%) are in protracted displacement.7

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6 25,000 or more refugees from the same nationality in exile for at least five consecutive years in a given host country.
Long duration intractable crises – Afghanistan, DRC, Somalia, Syria and potentially Venezuela – mean that refugees do not now ‘go home’, the ‘preferred’ durable solution whilst achieving the other two durable solutions remains a major challenge. Countries are reluctant to encourage ‘local integration’ because of the impacts that large-scale spontaneous increases in population have on already hard-pressed public services, labour markets and so on, although there are some positive examples such as Zambia and, in the past, Tanzania. ‘Third country resettlement’, usually to developed countries, is also diminishing. The western world seems ever more hostile to refugees, forcibly displaced people and migrants, whilst at the same time seemingly unable or unwilling to deal with the ‘root causes’ rather than the symptoms of a world on the move. New initiatives which promote strategies for refugee self-reliance and jobs, such as the Global Refugee Compact, the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, and the involvement of new funding actors such as the World Bank and EU trust funds, are a sign that many Western States see the solution (for them) as being found in the other southern hosting states.

COVID-19 has had severe impacts on refugee and forced displacement. Whilst there has been a dramatic diminution in asylum applications and refugee registration globally, this does not mean that the factors propelling forced displacement and the need for international protection have themselves declined. Rather, these trends reflect the fact that virtually every country has either closed its borders or implemented very strict entry controls for all migrants (including refugees) in response to COVID-19, and hide the true magnitude of the number of people seeking international protection. Indeed, a consequence of COVID-19 and border closure is the likely increase in irregular migration as those seeking protection are denied entry and registration through formal channels and official procedures.

1.2: Key policy issues, challenges and terminologies in refugee policy and practice

Who is a refugee and how are they different from forcibly displaced people? What does protection mean and how is vulnerability defined and tackled? Unsurprisingly, the policy and operational world engaged with refugees is replete with its own labels, terminology and technical language. Please make sure to read the Glossary to familiarise with the correct language.

1.3: Global actors and developments in the refugee regime

Although now subject to rapid change, for many decades the international architecture of the refugee regime remained relatively stable. The UNHCR, established in 1950 was mandated under the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol (abbreviated in this handbook to 1951 GCR) to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees and to resolve refugee problems. Under this mandate, in practice, the UNHCR has usually taken the operational lead to coordinate international humanitarian assistance programmes for refugee crises in partnership with host countries. It was supported by other UN agencies such as UNICEF, WFP, OCHA and an ever-larger portfolio of specialised implementing partners, the humanitarian INGOs and NGOs who deliver life-saving emergency assistance – for example food, WASH, medical aid.

Although this humanitarian paradigm expanded over the decades to meet the growing number and scale of refugee and other forced displacement ‘crises’, the overall structure, precepts and operational landscape changed rather little.

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8 OCHA’s role is more prevalent on IDP responses; both UNHCR and OCHA would cooperate closely in contexts where there is both a refugee and IDP population

https://www.unhcr.org/54f6cb129.pdf
Whilst the needs of refugees remain much as they always have – humanitarian assistance, protection, and a durable solution to their displacement – in the last decade, and notably in the last five years, three somewhat interacting factors have precipitated a remarkable transformation in the international architecture and response, now termed the ‘new way of working’. First, the scale of forced displacement is at a historic high. Second, the majority are in protracted displacement: humanitarian emergency assistance is neither sustainable in the longer term, nor desirable – ‘aid-dependency’ deprives refugees of agency and dignified lives. Third, although ‘responsibility sharing’ has long been the mantra of the international community whereby advanced economy countries fund humanitarian aid to poorer refugee-impacted countries, manifestly the changing scale and dynamics of forced displacement have highlighted the inadequacy of the humanitarian paradigm as a stand-alone response. And, in practical terms, there has always been a shortfall in funding and lack of interest to support countries and communities experiencing the socio-economic impacts of large numbers of refugees.

Of course, the ‘new way of working’ and the shift to longer term development-led responses is still work in progress. From an institutional perspective the process has been demarcated by: the 2015 ‘Grand Bargain’ by the world’s leading humanitarian donors; the World Humanitarian Summit 2016 where the stakeholders (donors, NGOs, crisis-affected states) promoted a key priority of strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus; and the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Operationally, these processes stimulated the UNHCR-led 2018 Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). The former provides a basis for predictable and equitable burden- and responsibility-sharing among member states and a broad range of stakeholders (including private sector and development actors), and emphasizes the need to reinforce national systems – including economies – in order to foster the inclusion of refugees in these systems Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The latter provides the operational modalities to better align humanitarian and development policies and actors, and ensure inclusive international assistance programmes that benefit both hosts as well as refugees. Under the auspices of the UNHCR there are now 13 countries piloting the CRRF model including Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Mexico; and two regional CRRFs – IGAD in the Horn of Africa and the MIRPS CCRF comprising six Central American States.

In addition, two country-level ‘Compacts’ have been concluded for Jordan and Ethiopia, which sit alongside the CRRF. In these Compacts, international donors (e.g. World Bank, EIB, and DFID), support employment generating investment, infrastructure development, and concessionary trade (for example access to European markets) whilst the country implements policy changes providing labour market opportunities for refugees: normally, many host countries restrict the right to work for refugees.

Development actors play an increasingly important role in the transformation of the international refugee paradigm. The World Bank, through the IDA-18 and IDA-19 refugee sub-windows has substantially scaled-up its involvement in refugee impacted countries such as Jordan,

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9 Discussed in more detail in Module 1 Theme 4 below.
10 https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/declaration
11 MIRPS is the Spanish acronym for Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework.
for example, to stabilise national and regional economies, and protect development investment and gains.\textsuperscript{12} Similarly the European Investment Bank (EIB) has scaled-up its involvement with concessionary funding to Ethiopia. There are new opportunities for private and corporate sector actors beyond their traditional subcontracting role to humanitarian NGOs, as development actors in their own right. Other multilateral actors are also scaling up their involvement in development responses – the UNDP and notably the ILO.

The private sector, of course, plays a huge role in labour market inclusion, not just for refugees. Globally, nine out of ten jobs in the formal sector are provided by private employers. Since an objective of this course is to support advocacy for policy change and greater participation from multi-stakeholders, the needs and objectives of the private sector and employers’ organisations must be fully included.

Greater engagement of refugees and their voices is indeed still needed in the ‘new way of working’, particularly given the increasing recognition given to the ‘agency’ of the refugees as autonomous ‘development’ actors. Far beyond participation, ‘agency’ is a much wider ranging and proactive approach to recognising the capacity of individuals, such as refugees, to act independently and to make their own decisions and choices about their livelihoods, the deployment of their skills and qualifications and their socio-economic well-being within ‘structures’ such as gender, age, and the policies of governments, humanitarian actors and donors that mediate this agency.

1.4: Socio-economic impacts and labour markets – challenges and opportunities

The contemporary dynamics of forced displacement have triggered intense debates globally on how to develop appropriate and sustainable policy responses to these challenges. Not for the first time, multilateral actors and donors have tried to design such longer-term responses - linking relief with rehabilitation and development (LRRD) in the 1990s, the Humanitarian Response Review (HRR) in 2005 with the creation of the UNDP-led Early Recovery Cluster, and the World Bank-UNHCR-UNDP Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI) in 2010. These initiatives failed to get the intended traction through a combination of: poor interagency co-ordination; lack of long-term development funding and donor buy in; the difficulty of reconciling humanitarian and development, precepts, timescales and budgeting architecture. Host countries also needed convincing that they should support strategies that might lead to the long-term de facto settlement of refugees in their countries.

Now, as displacement becomes increasingly protracted and the majority of refugees settle in urban areas rather than camps and rural areas, the wider socio-economic consequences of forced displacement have become much more apparent especially impacting the socio-economic development prospects of middle-income counties such as Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon. These dynamics have accelerated another surge in redesigning the global response to forced displacement. In this reconfiguration of the international architecture of assistance, the humanitarian ‘paradigm’ now sits alongside development-led responses to support refugees and their host counties and communities. Popularly termed the ‘humanitarian-development nexus’, this has, to some

\textsuperscript{12} The International Development Association (IDA) is part of the World Bank that helps the world’s poorest countries by lending development assistance on concessional terms with very low or no interest charge, stretched repayments and including 5- to 10-year grace periods. The funded is replenished annually and in 2018 the IDA18 (ie the eighteenth replenishment) included a regional sub-window (i.e. specially earmarked funds within the overall IDA budget) for refugees and host communities providing $2 billion of dedicated funding to help low-income countries hosting large numbers of refugees. This recognized the significant challenge that these countries face in pursuing their own development goals while accommodating refugees, often in areas where local communities themselves lack basic services and resources. Amongst the five themes of IDA19 was Fragility, Conflict and Violence with a similar overall budget of $2 billion.
extent, overcome the constraints of earlier initiatives. Advocating the development potential that refugees offer to host countries as producers, consumers and entrepreneurs, now widely promoted by the international community, helps to reconceive the discourse on the ‘refugee burden’.

Development cooperation in which employment promotion for refugees, other forcibly displaced persons and host communities, alongside humanitarian assistance, is now a central pillar of the international response to refugee situations. For example, the Jordan Compact embodies a commitment to create up to 200,000 jobs for refugees and hosts and by 2020 Jordan had granted about 190,000 work permits to refugees. Similarly, the Ethiopia Jobs Compact proposed, with the support of international donors for investment in job creation, to relax limitations on access to the formal labour market for 30,000 refugees (alongside increasing employment opportunities for up to 70,000 Ethiopians). The Compact also includes measures to improve conditions for decent work - training, relocation, rehousing and work place rights and protection.

Sitting alongside these strategies which are strongly led by international actors, other countries, such as Uganda, have followed a more ‘autonomous’ approach - adopted progressive policies for refugees in terms of rights to work and access to cultivable land.

Enhancing economic inclusion through access to employment is core to promoting sustainable livelihoods and dignity for refugees as well as working towards the 2030 SDGs. Yet there are many constraints to be overcome. Over 85% of refugees globally are hosted in developing countries in contexts where employment levels in hosting communities are low and labour markets tend to be inflexible and narrowly based and thus unable to absorb a rapidly increasing labour supply. These factors may drive down wage levels for both the hosts and the refugees. Moreover, employment in hosting countries tends to be concentrated in largely informal sectors, increasing the risk for exploitation and abuse especially for women. Competition between host communities and refugees for resources such as land or employment opportunities can result in tension. In addition, access to labour markets is usually constrained by refugees’ legal status – many countries derogate the right to work enshrined in the 1951 Convention - and the degree to which they can enjoy related economic and social rights is usually limited. Qualifications and skills may not be recognised and training opportunities limited.

These, and other factors constitute the core mandate and policy agenda for the ILO. Adopted by a Tripartite Technical Meeting in 2016, the ILO’s Guiding Principles on the Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market established the ILO as a major actor in the humanitarian-development nexus focus on labour market access as the primary response to situations of forced displacement.

Good progress has been made in improving labour market conditions for refugees and in promoting inclusive policies, as well as in consolidating their rights and opportunities in the work place, as a recent review of good practice by the ILO14, and the remarkable number of ‘jobs and livelihood’ pledges (127 by January 2021) made in the context of the UNHCR’s Global Refugee Forum in December 201915.

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15 see UNHCR Global Compact on Refugees, Tracking progress on pledges made at the Global Refugee Forum, https://globalcompactrefugees.org/index.php/channel/pledges-contributions
However, since March 2020 these policy challenges and opportunities have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is the labour markets of low- and middle-income countries, where the vast majority of refugees are hosted, that have been hardest hit by the pandemic leaving governments grappling with the devastating economic impacts. Refugees and other forcibly displaced persons have faced many of the same challenges as national co-workers such as loss of employment and income with reduced working time or layoff with lockdowns. But, recent studies have found that refugees are 60% more likely to work in COVID-impacted sectors than the host population\textsuperscript{16}, findings borne out by an NRC eight country survey which showed that 77% of 1400 respondents reported losing job/income since start of pandemic, 62% reported less income from remittances, and 30% reported having to borrow more money now.\textsuperscript{17} Refugee entrepreneurs employed in micro, small- and medium-enterprises (MSMEs) and for own-account refugees, important sources of livelihoods for refugees, have been particularly badly hit.

As a recent ILO-FAFO assessment in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey and has shown\textsuperscript{18}, refugees also experience additional constraints linked to their often-precarious legal status, more limited access to labour markets and decent work, precarious low-wage and increased informalisation of their employment, and associated restrictions on their mobility. Erosion of social protection, working conditions and social inclusion is occurring, which together with the lack of social safety nets noted in the NRC study, further accentuates the negative consequences arising from the lack of resolution to their displacement. Governments are overwhelmed with stabilising, if at all possible, the economic wellbeing of their own nationals, limiting the destructive labour market impacts, and bolstering, where possible, national welfare systems for the most vulnerable of their populations. This is a crisis scenario in which refugees and forcibly displaced people are not seen as a priority. Indeed, the pandemic may ignite or accentuate grievances, discrimination, and sense of injustice over access to health services and competition for decent jobs. These factors exacerbate the effects of the pandemic on refugees, while reducing their access to the coping strategies that may be available to nationals.

In conclusion, it is clear that national political-economy interests related to labour market protection and migration control heavily shape responses to the socio-economic and labour markets impacts of refugees and forcibly displaced persons. However, it is also important to keep in mind that when refugees are able to work, their self-reliance is enhanced, and they are able to provide for themselves and their families, increase resilience, regain dignity, and build independent and meaningful futures. A growing body of evidence suggests that including refugees in local economies contributes to development, and can thus be mutually beneficial for refugees and host communities. Overall, access to work reduces pressure on refugees and hosts locally, contributes to economic growth, and therefore eases pressure on the host country as a whole.

2 – Legal and governance frameworks

2.1: International legal and normative frameworks, refugee protection and ILO Fundamental Principles

International legal frameworks play a vital role in the overall protection of refugees, including in general the right to work. Moreover, as for all persons, a refugee's fundamental human right to access safe and legal work is also de facto protected in other human rights and international law including, more specifically, the 1966 International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights and ILO Conventions, Principles and Recommendations.

The 1951 Convention enshrines the right, with some modest limiting conditions, to wage earning work and self-employment for refugees in Articles 17-19. However, many countries, including non-signatory states, derogate these rights to protect their own, often narrowly-based and fragile labour markets, from unwanted competition and in the belief that this avoids social discord between host and refugee populations.

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Most ILO tools and instruments such as the labour conventions, standards, and Fundamental Principles do not specifically mention refugees, the forcibly displaced or crisis situations. Nevertheless, this legal and normative apparatus, together with tripartism, social dialogue and the principles of decent work, provide indispensable guidance for the ILO's approach to these situations and, indeed, how Member states and other relevant actors should govern their labour markets with respect to refugees and the forcibly displaced.

Indicative of the ILO's increasing engagement with these contexts and the need to provide a closer focus of its legal and policy apparatus on these issues, two significant initiatives have been adopted after 2015. The first and most relevant is the ILO Guiding Principles on the Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market adopted by the ILO Tripartite Technical Meeting in 2016. Although the principles are voluntary and non-binding on member States impacted by these situations, they aim to support and assist them in considering the access of these populations to their labour markets whilst balancing the needs and expectations of their own citizens. The Guiding Principles outline: governance frameworks on access to labour markets; economic and employment policies for inclusive labour market; labour rights and equality of opportunity and treatment; partnership, coordination and coherence; voluntary repatriation and reintegration of returnees.

The Guiding Principles are significant in two respects. First, they provide essential policy guidance, and encouragement, for states to tackle the issue in a systematic and comprehensive way. The Principles significantly add value to the emerging international response. Second, the Principles recognise and position the ILO, with its labour market expertise, as a major actor in the reconfiguration of the international architecture. With its mandate to promote social justice, social protection and the Decent Work Agenda, international labour standards, and social dialogue, this will help to ensure that these principles are effectively embedded in the emerging strategies and policies of Member states.

The second initiative has a more general application to these situations; it is the revision of the standard setting Employment and decent work for peace and resilience (Revision of the Employment (Transition from war to peace) Recommendation 1944 (No 71), adopted as Recommendation No. 205 by the ILO Conference in June 2017.

19 NB voluntary repatriation and reintegration of returnees are not covered in this course.

20 Note that although Recommendations, like Guiding Principles, are also non-binding, they have a different status in that they are considered to be legal instruments and part of international labour standards.
IX of this Recommendation is specifically dedicated to the situation of refugees and returnees and is, in effect, a more directive synthesis of the 2016 Guidelines. More generally, this Recommendation advocates measures to generate employment and decent work opportunities in crisis situations, recognising the importance of employment and livelihoods in promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling economic recovery and building resilience and socio-economic reintegration. The Recommendation also provides guidance on international cooperation, coordination and coherence.

Although not developed with refugees in mind, the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work provide a relevant and important backdrop to these specific instruments. Challenging as it is to apply the Fundamental Principles, extension to refugees and other forcibly displaced persons accentuates these challenges.

Despite these positive initiatives and the space provided by the international legal and normative apparatus, access to labour markets and decent work by refugees and the forcibly displaced often remains restricted by technical, legal and political barriers which this module explores and for which it seeks to provide solutions.

2.2: Legislative, policy and administrative factors

Extensive evidence shows that even where refugees are legally in a country and their refugee status is recognised, few countries actually allow refugees to work by derogating the provisions of the 1951 Convention; and countries that do permit refugees to access labour markets usually require them to satisfy many additional requirements which present practical and procedural barriers.

Legal frameworks, standards and instruments that govern labour markets also apply in general to refugees. In practice, however, the legal apparatus in most countries is not adapted to large scale entry of refugees into the labour market. Moreover, specific regulations and conditions often apply to foreign nationals (such as visas and work permits and the transfer and recognition of qualifications), and these apply to refugees, usually with greater force. Changes in the law, for example work permit regulations, take time. And, even before labour law changes to allow refugees to work, many countries do not allow asylum seekers to work and Refugee Status Determination (RSD) may be very slow, creating enormous backlogs and pushing refugees into the informal labour market.

Refugees are required to obtain work permits in most countries. But these may be limited by quotas (such as in the Jordan Compact), proscribed sectors of the labour market (such as in Iran for example), and have prohibitive costs (as in Zambia). Certain countries require refugees to apply for and obtain a job offer from an employer before they can obtain a work permit (again as in Zambia for example).

All these constraints slow down access to labour markets, usually condemning refugees to work in the informal sector with the familiar risks this presents. Ensuring that procedures to obtain or renew work permits continue to be accessible, or introducing greater flexibility or special measures to avoid refugee workers slipping into irregular status, is a key aspect of ensuring protections of refugees’ rights at work.

In addition to overcoming these obvious hurdles, there are often other constraints too – sometimes, but not always, the inadvertent outcome of a country’s labour laws and policies, or those of other ministries which indirectly mitigate against refugees entering the labour market; these hurdles are often a major constraint on self-employment, entrepreneurship and SME development. In Pakistan, for example, refugees cannot hold immovable property or own a business without a Pakistani partner. Investment premiums for self-employment and starting a business, such as in Zambia, may limit access to self-employed work even if refugees are legally entitled to employment. Turkey and Ecuador exemplify countries where refugees have limited access to financial institutions to secure loans and grants, while in Bangladesh refugees are denied access to credit and are prohibited from engaging
in trade and owning property. Laws in Turkey, Sudan and India prohibit refugees from purchasing land, presenting an additional legal barrier to refugees' economic independence.

In many countries there is uncertainty as to whether refugees need a work permit and refugee status or if just the latter is sufficient, or whether they also require a residence permit. Overcoming this uncertainty is important because it dissuades employers from hiring refugees especially where, in some countries (such as the UK or Iran), employers may be subject to heavy fines, imprisonment and business shut down if they employ 'undocumented' refugees. Yet even when refugee documents clearly state that they are allowed to work (for example in South Africa), employers very often will not recognize their status and consider them to be irregular migrants. Conversely, authorities in some countries, like Bangladesh, formally prevent but actually appear to tolerate refugees working but this consigns them to working in the informal sector risking the lack of decent work, exploitation, and potential deportation. These and other mitigating factor are discussed in more detail in Module 3.

Transfer and validation of pre-existing qualifications and certificates, together with skills profiling, training and TVET for refugees are widely recognised as crucial components supporting refugees' access to labour markets. Amongst many legal and administrative challenges here, often it is simply the lack of sufficient resources (staff, finance, and 'localising' accessibility for refugees), or expertise to undertake these activities that act as the main constraint. Again, it is most often women who are disadvantaged by these deficits.

The best way to overcome these kinds of regulatory hurdles, and accelerate refugees' labour market access, is for governments and their social partners to draw up and disseminate simplified and clearly described requirements and procedures for work permits and other necessary certificates, based on clear administrative rules.

The recent experience of ILO, elaborated in the Compendium\(^{21}\), highlights the importance of an integrated approach for effective policy and administrative responses to enhance employment and access to labour markets for refugees. The ILO has been actively promoting this

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Example:

Recent ILO experience in Jordan for example, highlights the importance of delinking the distribution of work permits from employers, instead linking them to individual refugees and involving social partners. This can greatly speed up and simplify work-permit processing, enhance the worker's ability to access formal employment, to change employers and jobs, and to move across economic sectors. From a protection standpoint, it also removes the risk of exploitation when permits are tied to employers.

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principle in the last two to three years. As far as possible, the objective is to integrate into a co-ordinated strategy the different components of the labour market development – for example infrastructure, skills development, entrepreneurship, developing local value chains. This is essential to create conditions for increased jobs opportunities. Similarly, partnership between all the stakeholders – governments, social partners, the private sector, synergies between the UNHCR and the ILO – maximises the range of resources and expertise brought to the table to enhance job creation. Aligned with these principles, the ILO’s PROSPECTS programme\(^\text{22}\), developed in 2018, is a four year fully integrated approach to employment creation and labour market development being rolled out in eight countries across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and the Horn of Africa.

The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on policy and administrative factors have been severe. What is clear, in the context of governance, is that it is essential to integrate refugees into all the relevant recovery and development strategies, including those for labour markets, as full and equal participants. Only in this way can cohesive, sustainable recovery be ensured, and the, so far, rather fragile gains made in securing livelihoods among refugees and host communities be preserved. Exemplifying such an approach, in the IGAD region, Health Ministers of IGAD Member States endorsed the outlines of a Regional Response Plan to combat the COVID-19 pandemic on 8 April 2020, which calls for strengthening regional response system by including vulnerable populations, such as refugees, IDPs.\(^\text{23}\)

2.3: The role of national and local actors

National governments, and the Ministry of Labour (or similar entity) in particular are the core actors in governing labour market access and employment conditions for refugees with their key functions in developing and implementing policies, promoting legislation, and supervising regulatory apparatus.

In this context, a core principle of national governments’ approach is the need to develop employment and labour market strategies that embrace the needs of both the host population and refugees and forcibly displaced persons. Such an approach is essential to foster an enabling environment for socio-economic inclusion of refugees, strengthening the resilience of host communities and improving self-reliance and durable livelihoods strategies for both communities.

As well as their regular responsibility for labour market governance, upholding standards for decent work and so on, Ministries of Labour will take the lead in specific refugee-related functions which will govern their labour force participation. Most obviously this will pertain to the adaptation of national legislation to refugee labour market needs (taking account of national interests of course), crucially the issuance of work permits, as well as other matters such as, for example, ensuring that other actors like employers are fully aware of relevant law and policy – often a significant lacuna which mitigates against refugee labour market access. Partnership with the ILO, drawing on its expertise, is also an important feature given the novelty of this policy area.

Although their role may be less direct, other government entities also have a significant influence and role to play in determining in which sectors, where, and to what extent refugees, will be able to access the


\(^{23}\) IGAD (2020), IGAD Ministers call for Action on COVID-19 response; IGAD Executive Secretary Hands Over PPE Kits to Refugee and Cross Border Populations
labour market, inter alia: Ministry of Economic Development setting the parameters of development which determine the structure, and the size and capacity of labour markets in which refugees will be working and competing; Ministry of Finance determining the financial and fiscal climate which influences investment and entrepreneurial opportunities which refugees or refugee employers might pursue; and the Ministry of Education in governing TVET and skills development programmes for refugees.

Employers’ and workers’ organizations also have an important role to play. On the one hand, these organizations are at the front line of implementing the measures taken by their governments to support the inclusion of refugees in the labour market. Social dialogue between these partners, and working with other stakeholders, to mobilise a coherent and coordinated approach to the implementation of government policies is crucial. And as an example of their significant functional level role, evidence shows that TVET, and the assessment, validation, testing and screening of skills and competences and skills matching are vital modalities for refugees’ labour market access and livelihood opportunities.

On the other hand, these organizations have crucial advocacy work to do encouraging their members to promote and support the inclusion of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons in the workplace and society more generally. Extensive evidence shows that the workplace can often be the setting for employer exploitation and discrimination against refugees, especially women. Conversely there is also extensive evidence that the workplace is a crucial milieu for overcoming negative stereotypes of refugees and promoting social inclusion.

Clearly, the intricate landscape of national and local actors involved in governing labour markets for refugees, as well as the tasks of developing a new policy area, makes the effective coordination, coherence and cooperation between all the different stakeholders a paramount objective. Moreover, coordination has to align with legal frameworks which govern labour markets and administrative structures. Ideally a holistic and integrated programme of short- and medium-term measures should be put in place; but countries impacted by large numbers of refugees on their labour markets struggle with sufficient resources and expertise to do this.

3 – Protection and decent work

3.1: The Fundamental Principles of Rights at Work (FPRW) for refugees and decent work deficits

Refugees face many decent work deficits. In this context, the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work provide an essential baseline for decent work and rights protection in order to prevent the exploitation and discrimination of refugees. But rights protection for and in work are also conditioned by social context and practices of the host population which are often less easily regulated or depend on other frameworks, for example human rights law and policy24, or more informal ‘soft’ mechanisms. As more and more refugees enter the workforce, the workplace becomes an increasingly important arena for tackling these structural issues by promoting respect for diversity.

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24 For example, a number of ILO Conventions are relevant here including the 1990 UN Convention on Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families and more generally, International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and on Civil and Political Rights.
In theory, the four areas of concern of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW) - child labour; forced labour; non-discrimination in employment; freedom of association and collective bargaining\(^{25}\) - apply with equal force to refugees as they do to all workers. However, compliance with these Principles is often already difficult enough to achieve in many countries without refugees, especially those with large informal sectors. Extending the Principles to refugees is even more problematic, compounding the extreme vulnerability and severe decent work deficits to which they are exposed.

Refugee children and women are especially vulnerable to decent work deficits; therefore, FPRW have special relevance for tackling these issues.

Global attention to the 'no lost generation' of Syrian children in Lebanon and Jordan highlighted, amongst other factors, the widespread incidence of child labour in the informal economy as a coping mechanism for impoverished households living on the margins of precarity whose adult members could not find work or whose access to the formal labour market was barred. In these situations, any income is welcome: these are the conditions that impel households to put their children into the labour market, usually in sectors of the economy that are unregulated and unmonitored where exploitative forms of work can proliferate.

The lack of access to quality education and school provision was also problematic. The consequences of children working, especially in the kinds of work that refugee children undertake, are well known, widespread and long-lasting. Promoting compliance with ILO's core Principles on child labour is vital. But this requires multi-stakeholder action that inter alia: directly improves refugee children's access to quality education; strengthens the protective environment for all children especially those at risk, including targeting those children involved in or at risk of the worst forms of child labour and their households; and working with community leaders. In terms of practical action, better and targeted inspection can act as a preventative tool as well as raising awareness on the effects of child labour on children's well-being.

As well as child labour there may be forms of forced labour that impoverished refugees have no alternative but to accept, including in exchange for living/staying on land owned by others. The case studies provide evidence of how the authorities crack down on labour trafficking and exploitation. For example, in Colombia the government has expanded the number of governments trained inspectors to respond specifically to the needs of Venezuelan migrants who are at high risk of being victimized by forced labour and human trafficking.

Mainstreaming gender aspects of labour market access and protection for refugees (in the context of FPRW), is also paramount. Evidence from many refugee settings shows that women refugees not only face many of the same deficits as men - although with added force - in both the formal and informal sectors such as long working hours, low pay and poor working conditions. They also face particular forms of discrimination and other obstacles to their participation in the workforce: these include household and child care duties, lack of safe or convenient transport to place of work, fear or actual experience of sexual harassment in the work place. These issues need to be addressed by carefully tailored and culturally sensitive policies and practices. The fact that many of these discriminatory practices are also shared with women nationals, provides the basis for collective action that will also help to promote social cohesion.

\(^{25}\) Respectively: Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No 182); Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29); Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105); Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87); Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).
Many of the discriminatory and exploitative experiences that refugees have to confront at a general level in their host country are mirrored in specific institutional settings such as the workplace. At the same time the workplace can be a setting for promoting social cohesion between nationals and refugees and for overcoming some of the prejudice, xenophobia and the negative rhetoric that refugees face.

In this context, a common and enduring perception in most refugee hosting countries is that refugees (and, indeed, other migrants) ‘steal’ the jobs of locals. The inclusion of host communities in programmes for refugee assistance is, as we have seen, a fundamental shift in the international architecture of refugee policies to overcome this perception. The central pillar of the HDN is the provision of jobs for locals as well as refugees. This is a core policy which provides the platform for more specific actions aimed at social cohesion in the labour market. For example, affected host working communities should always be included in refugee targeted interventions such as promoting decent work and workplace rights, as well as more instrumental interventions, such as skills and enterprise development.

Social partners have an important advocacy role to play with their members in highlighting common forms of discrimination and prejudice that refugees may experience in the work place and in ‘standard setting’, disseminating and promoting good practice. Social partners’ usually have common experiences of different cultural and ethical norms on work and workplace practices that refugees may display. Sharing experience, good practice and developing shared solutions is another role that social partners can play in promoting social inclusion. Training is also essential to embed good practice in promoting social cohesion and integration in the workplace.

Another approach to promoting decent work is by working with social partners to provide training courses for employers at the production unit level on meeting international core labour standards, national labour laws and good practice in worker management. In partnership with the enterprises, these trainings can provide instruction, advice and support to their representatives on how to promote decent work for refugees – for example health and safety compliance - and on the particular challenges they face - improving workplace relations and workplace representation, language issues, and tackling sexual harassment of women.

Example:

One approach to empower women and give them an opportunity to participate in the working life has been pursued in Turkey: the ILO supported the establishment of the SADA women cooperative in Gaziantep in April 2019, composed of 50 women from Turkey, Afghanistan and Syria. The economically and socially inclusive women’s cooperative focuses on shoe-making, home textile and catering services and gives women an opportunity to design, disseminate and sell products they produce. This project was chosen as one of the top ten successful scale-up projects out of 114 showcased at the Paris Peace Forum 2019 – a Global Platform for Governance projects.

3.2: Extending social protection to refugees

Behind the global push for large scale employment generation for refugees lie the issues, not only of decent work deficits, but also questions of social protection and rights at work.

Refugees legally in work should enjoy access to social protection at the same standards as nationals. Protecting refugees through social security is important, not least for safeguarding equality of treatment with nationals. Normally the onus is on employers to register their (refugee) employees in the national security system. But there are sometimes excepted sectors or professions (which might be covered by other compulsory insurance schemes), or other registration processes or actors. Or refugees are simply not given access to national social protection schemes - this is probably the main barrier. These differences mean that there are potentially many gaps in coverage – employers saving on on-costs by not registering refugees, or not even being aware that refugees should be registered, refugees equally not being aware of the need to register or to make contributions in self-subscription systems, or withholding contributions to maximise current income against uncertain future benefits, or being uncertain if the benefits will be transferable when they repatriate.

Overcoming these deficits by providing decent work is therefore a major challenge, since this aspect of labour market management has rather limited traction with donors, focused as they are on employment creation per se.

Example:

The ILO experience from Turkey is salient. A pilot scheme that paid the first three months’ social security contributions for employers and refugees was a significant incentive for recruiting refugees but difficult to sustain and move to scale. Despite the limitations, evidence indicates that refugees are generally supportive of joining social security systems.

Transitioning from informal working – the predominant sector for refugees in most countries – to formality is one, important means by which many workplace deficits can be overcome. However, many host countries already have large informal labour markets which are swollen by the arrival of refugees. Extending regulation and promoting formality is thus a significant challenge.

Promoting decent work also rests on the scope of protection instruments and mechanisms for safeguarding workplace rights and, of course, their compliance.

The primary importance of social protection for has been highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst many groups of workers are made vulnerable by the pandemic, the often-precarious situation of

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migrant workers and refugees in the labour market accentuates their vulnerability. An ILO briefing in 2020 outlines strategies for safeguarding rights of access to health and social protection systems through short and long-term strategies, which are gender sensitive.27

3. 3: The scope and role of protection instruments and mechanisms for workplace rights

Upholding labour law is important in this context. However, legal frameworks alone do not ensure decent work and rights: regulatory enforcement and compliance incentives are also needed. To this end, labour inspection can play a significant role in promoting decent work; but this requires more resources for already hard-pressed government inspectorates. Moreover, inspectors need relevant training to ensure that they are better equipped to assess the indicators of workplace rights and conditions for decent work that refugees are entitled to enjoy – and that there is consistency in the application and enforcement of standards. This means not just the verification of work permits, but also working conditions and occupational safety and health, appropriate conditions of employment for women, whether the refugees have contracts, and ensuring that they are receiving the same wages and overtime payments as nationals. An inspectorate and inspection procedures that encourage employers’ compliance with regulations and standards, and is not just an enforcement process, could also encourage employers to be more proactive in employing refugees with the added potential of enhancing social cohesion and inclusion. Finally, labour inspectors are uniquely situated to provide feedback on needed legal and policy reforms that can lead to more efficient protection of the rights of refugees and other vulnerable workers.

Workers’ and employers’ organizations have an essential role to play in protecting refugee workers and in ensuring refugee rights, decent work and social inclusion in the work place. But social partners need adequate information to build expertise and capacity. Employers’ commitment will likely be enhanced if they are closely involved in the wider policy making processes and strategy development. In this way they can more fully appreciate their role and potential. Social dialogue mechanisms also prove useful at the local level, involving municipalities and chambers in building ownership of policies and initiatives to integrate refugees in the labour market, developing awareness of rights, employment conditions, and decent work for refugees.

Another aspect that needs to be tackled is the very limited remedies open to refugees where workplace rights and decent work are not upheld. Experience indicates four issues that need to be tackled:

1. Refugees have very inadequate access to justice including courts and tribunals, even if they are inclined, to pursue these options.
2. They often lack the resources, language, or the willingness to pursue their legal entitlements to work or protection in the workplace.
3. Conditions governing the right to work and rights at work are usually complex, and refugees may lack information about their legal entitlements. Government information policies on refugee employment rights tend not to be effective. Provision for better information on refugees’ rights and on access to due legal process is needed.

4. Vulnerability to lack of justice and unfair treatment is compounded when the judiciary and police, as well as the labour inspectorate, lack knowledge of refugee law and rights, a situation which applies in many areas of refugees’ rights not just the labour market.

In sum, promoting social dialogue and providing a voice to refugees by guaranteeing their rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining is essential to negotiating fairer working conditions. Especially if social tensions are increasing as a result of lockdowns and contracting labour markets in the current pandemic, national authorities should seek to ensure that refugees and other forcibly displaced persons are not subject to xenophobia and workplace discrimination. For women workers, particular attention is always needed to protect their workplace rights and conditions, even more so as evidence shows that their economic situation is disproportionately negatively affected by COVID-19.

4 – Employment policies, strategies and instruments

4.1: Promoting employability and building capacity

The many difficulties of accessing a host country labour market usually consign refugees either to working in the informal sector or to underemployment in the formal sector: in both cases creating an underuse of their productive capacity. For these reasons a variety of demand and supply side instruments are available to promote the employability, capacity and thus the employment of refugees.

Although a good case can be made for promoting refugee employment by considering labour market demand and investment in host countries, humanitarian and development policies for refugees have long been driven by assessing their needs in the first instance: in other words, refugees and supply side consideration of labour markets.

Compared with the national population, refugee households generally have different demographic profiles and, depending on the countries and even the regions of origin they will have different skills and labour market experience. Inclusive skills strategies and policies are therefore needed to capture these characteristics. These should be demand-led and should be informed by the skills levels of refugees (supply side). UNHCR surveys usually capture the educational level of refugees which may implicitly give some indications of skills but more proactive strategies are needed. For example, Section 18 of the 2016 ILO Guiding Principles highlight a range of skills development activities for refugees that governments and their social partners should engage in. In this context, skills profiling of refugees is an effective mechanism for informing about qualification levels, prior experience and the skills of and for promoting their access particularly to middle- or higher-skilled occupations.

Nevertheless, the practical reality is that refugees usually face significant hurdles in gaining recognition of foreign qualifications, and of prior learning, skills and competencies in their host country. The recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a process by which regulatory bodies and training institutions assess skills, which were acquired through non-formal or informal learning, against a given set of standards, competencies or learning outcomes and ILO has been active in promoting this policy. RPL systems allow for non-traditional pathways to formal employment, which is especially relevant if certificates were lost. Moreover, RPL can offer a pathway into further training.

Despite the practical limitations, understanding labour market demand, and developing systems that help assess and recognise prior training and qualifications, are amongst the pre-conditions to developing employment, skills and lifelong learning strategies.

Strengthening access to vocational training and skills development programmes is required to improve employability for refugees lacking the requisite skills to enter the labour market in their host country. Language training might also be an important prerequisite for access. Capacity building of trainers and teachers might also be required to ensure that learning environments are inclusive.

Scaling up to meet demand is a major challenge especially, but not exclusively, in refugee ‘Compact’ countries committed to rapid expansion of their labour markets for refugees. Experience also shows that although generally successful in themselves, the training courses may not always provide refugees with the right types of skills to access the labour market and support employability.

Mismatch between training and skills development for refugees and the skills demanded in the market place is symptomatic of the limitations of supply side solutions to the developing the employability landscape for refugees. Skills training is not an end itself; it must be linked to demand side investigation including comprehensive labour market analysis, skill needs analysis and value chain analysis (VCA), to ensure that the needs of the labour market and links to actual job opportunities are fully taken into account. The ILO possesses different tools and approaches to assess labour market demand and skills needs (e.g. Training for Rural Economic Empowerment, Guides on skills needs anticipation, enterprise surveys, Guide on Local Economic Recovery etc.). On the one hand, validating training programmes in partnership with chambers and employers’ organizations can help to ensure training programmes are actually providing refugees with the appropriate skills needed in the labour market. On the other hand, labour market analysis (e.g. MSA, VCA), can also help to assess why there might be low take up by refugees for certain kinds of employment even where there is labour demand: this appears to be an emerging feature of the Ethiopian Jobs Compact. As with skills training, the challenge is to find the resources to scale up these kinds of analyses. An additional challenge concerns outreach and selection of beneficiaries. As such, in Turkey, it could be observed that beneficiaries took part in vocational training courses to receive daily stipends and not necessarily to scale-up their skills and access the labour market.

Public and private employment services can play an active role in adapting services and labour market programmes to meet the needs of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons. The tourist industry in Sweden, for example, has helped fast-track access by validating or upgrading skills of qualified asylum seekers and refugees.

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29 See Module 1, Theme 3: Two international ‘Compacts’ have been concluded for Jordan and Ethiopia, in which international donors (e.g. World Bank, EIB, DFID), support employment generating investment, infrastructure development, and concessionary trade (for example access to European markets) whilst the country (partially) opens up its labour markets to refugees.
The needs of women require special attention. In general, and despite the significant number of agencies dedicated to enhancing women refugee employability, the activities discussed here remain largely ad hoc for refugee (and host community) women; are clustered around a narrow range of employment sectors and skills; are often focused only on co-operatives; do not address women’s specific barriers to employment (such as child care); and, most critically, are mismatched with labour market demand.

As well as promoting demand and supply side interventions, based on its recent experience, the ILO also advocates a strategy involving what it terms a downstream-upstream approach. This comprises sustainable capacity-building with quick impact projects (QIPs) for socio-economic improvements in host communities. Upstream measures are aimed at policy change and longer-term sustainable infrastructure development. Downstream measures aim to provide quick, visible benefits enhancing employability and creating jobs for the displaced and the local populations, respecting at the same time decent working conditions and workplace rights. They can help to build support amongst both populations as well as international development partners and social partners. Successful QIPs that demonstrate the inclusion of refugees and displaced help to advance upstream measures such as more substantial reforms to the country's legal and regulatory frameworks to enable access by refugees and forcibly displaced people.

In conclusion:

1. In promoting refugee employability, it is important to ensure that these initiatives do not duplicate or undermine similar processes for the host population. Importantly, in addition, joint programming can buttress social cohesion.

2. The emphasis on supply side components – refugees’ skills, training, employment services etc. – should not detract from promoting demand side initiatives.

3. A systematic and comprehensive model for promoting employability, capacity building, skills development/recognition is essential. As this review has stressed, profiling, skills development and training, employment services, as well as labour market and value chain analyses are all part of an interdependent series of activities.

4. If taken to scale in refugee impacted countries, these initiatives provide practical support for the transition to formality. Profiling a refugee's skills, enhancing her employability through skills training, ensuring through VCA and market systems analysis (MSA) that her training is relevant to labour market demand, undertaking these initiatives in partnership with chambers and formal sector employers are all actions that, hopefully, encourage the refugee to look to the formal sector.

4.2: Strengthening and promoting enterprise development

Employment-led strategies for refugees, as we have seen, are strongly driven by international donors working with governments to provide the conditions for job creation – ranging from infrastructure development and public works to skills development measures and improving labour market governance. In the end though it is the private sector that provides the jobs: globally nine out of ten jobs are in the private sector.

A number of enterprise services and interventions can play a part in stimulating enterprise development. Conducting local economic development assessments (LED) enables the identification of sectors where the potential for job creation may be most promising. This should be complemented by value chain analysis (VCA) which can identify and map constraints and opportunities for unlocking this potential and targeting interventions to expand or support the start-up of new enterprises. Undertaking LEDs and VCAs in partnership with a range of stakeholders – social partners, businesses, the refugees and NGOs – is key.
Many countries experiencing the large-scale impact of refugees have labour markets dominated by SMEs. Supporting and building their capacity should therefore be a priority. Lessons learned from ILO interventions so far, demonstrate that facilitating access to finance, supporting transition to formality, encouraging innovation, promoting decent work and the productivity gains, are amongst the most valuable ways in which enterprise can be promoted.

Since enterprise expansion often means reaching out to international markets and, indeed, is one of the main objectives of the Job Compacts in Jordan and Ethiopia, interventions that support the raising the production standards and quality becomes critical.

Many NGO-promoted livelihood development projects target women refugees with the aim of facilitating their entry to the labour market. To the extent that these projects are successful in increasing the participation rate of women in the labour market, most often this is as employees, usually of domestically owned enterprises or cooperatives. Developing female refugee entrepreneurship and female refugee-owned SMEs has proved difficult in some contexts. Of course, many cultural and societal precepts determine low labour force participation rates by women, as does that fact that up to a third of refugee households worldwide are female- (i.e. in effect single-) headed. With these constraints in mind, experience indicates that a promising route to entrepreneurship seems to be in facilitating the establishment of women's co-operatives. There is a critical need for innovative thinking and experimentation in promoting routes to female refugee entrepreneurship.

Experience also indicates that whilst many of these strategies can reach domestic enterprises that might employ refugees, they are less successful in engaging refugee-aspiring entrepreneurs in creating new start-ups or in expanding refugee-owned SMEs; these tend to be much smaller, largely located in the informal sector and thus less accessible. Yet refugees often bring new technologies, different skills or skills that may fill labour market gaps, and of course provide a huge consumer market for domestic- as well as refugee- owned businesses. The main challenges in promoting refugee SME development lie as much in the administrative, legal and institutional domains than in entrepreneurial aptitude per se: after all, Syrians for example had years of entrepreneurial experience before they became refugees. Access to finance, business registration requirements, meeting decent work standards and employment protocols are the issues here. A perhaps unanticipated but widespread side-effect of the switch to cash-based transfers (CBT) of humanitarian assistance to refugees has been expansion of informal sector refugee micro-enterprise. There are many potential lessons here (e.g. access to finance, market segmentation, adaptation of skills, value chain analysis) of how refugees start-up businesses with no external facilitation: and how, with support, this enterprise could be channelled and expanded into more productive, decent work. While in some cases entrepreneurship support programmes, as well as grants to formalise enterprises, have proven successful to support the formalisation and establishment of refugee enterprises, it is clear that these enterprises still face numerous challenges, such as lack of information on administrative procedures, or limited access to financial services, employment services and chambers.

In accelerating the expansion of labour markets for refugees, the Job Compact model reveals three limitations in relation to enterprise promotion. Predicated on large scale development it is not clear that this model has adapted to the challenges of engaging SME-dominated labour markets. Similarly predicated, although to a lesser extent, on business access to international markets, this requires more concerted efforts to raise standards. Third, enterprise expansion has overwhelmingly been for the benefit of host country businesses. Labour markets have expanded but refugees are mostly employees of nationally owned enterprises, not the beneficiaries of interventions to support their self-employment and the development of their own enterprises.
4. 3: Promoting inclusive employment strategies and policies

Existing national labour market strategies and policies, unsurprisingly, do not readily cope with the shock of large numbers of refugees seeking employment. Adaptation is generally slow and much depends on the dynamics of the refugee situation and the political economy of the country as we have seen in Module 1. When the refugee population stabilises, the case of Syrian refugees for example, this provides conditions that are more conducive to medium-term and long-term strategy and policy making – e.g. in the Jordan Compact for example - aimed at accommodating refugees in the labour market. Even so, the pressure now exerted by international donors and actors to mobilise high target-driven programmes of employment creation for refugees tend to run ahead of national governments’ capacities and resources to review and adapt their existing employment strategies and policies in a systematic way and in ways that deliver an integrated and holistic approach.

At the national level, the ILO’s ‘Pillars model’ in partnership with Jordan and Turkey helps to pinpoint where adaptation is needed on several fronts. First is the strengthening of governance mechanisms and institutions for regulation, compliance and social protection: this is important given exploitative conditions to which refugees are often susceptible. Second is the scaling up of skills development and TVET programmes and employment services in order to enhance refugee employability and labour market access. Third is the promotion and prioritisation of employment creation for refugees by encouraging employment-intensive investment strategies and programmes, and entrepreneurship development. Fourth is working closely with social partners to ensure coherence and wide ‘ownership’ of the policy framework. In addition, cross-cutting issues include: ensuring that the adaptation of strategies and policies promote inclusivity and social cohesion – in other words fully embracing the host country working population; the promotion of gender equality and women’s participation in the labour market; protecting refugee youth and children who are especially susceptible to exploitation in the labour market.

In close collaboration with UNHCR, the ILO has developed the Approach to Inclusive Market Systems (AIMS), outlined in the ILO’s 2020 Compendium. The AIMS approach links demand and supply functions in the labour market framed by supporting functions such as training and finance, on the one hand and by rules and regulations on the other. The value of AIMS is that it provides a systemic or comprehensive way of framing inclusive policies.

With the strong donor drive to ‘create refugee employment’ many projects tend to be scattered, often small scale, or large scale but disconnected with the local reality, market conditions, profile of workers and uncoordinated. It is not always clear how the actions of various actors are integrated into a coherent, coordinated whole. Complementary actions by various actors are not always well coordinated. Accordingly, to avoid what may become a piecemeal series of initiatives, sometimes the result of competing donor interests, it is imperative for all the partners – donors and international actors as well as governments, in partnership with employers’ and workers’ organizations - to undertake some form of a strategic assessment of the impact of refugee access on their national and local labour markets and economies. Such an assessment will better indicate the precise challenges faced in their labour markets for absorbing refugees; provide a platform for the government to better understand the actual and potential economic contributions these populations might make; identify blockages in law and legal practice; provide a platform for social dialogue and working with social partners; identify skills training and capacity building for refugee populations; and, most importantly to provide the basis for a coherent strategy for expanding the labour market.

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Underpinning these ‘Pillars’ which seek to tackle the immediate challenges introduced by arrival of refugees, there is the opportunity to address some of the longer-term structural issues in the country’s labour market governance and management. There is the potential to better align with line up national development strategies, such as the UNDAF processes and any strategies related to the SDGs.

Predisposed as they are to large informal labour markets, many refugee-impacted countries find that their informal sectors enlarge, at least in the short-term. Already comprising over 33% of Turkey’s labour market, one estimate suggests that as many as 900,000 Syrian refugees now work in this sector. Attractive to refugees because of the relative ease of entry (no work permits being a major factor here), and to employers because the increased informal labour supply tends to drive down wages and reduce other transaction costs, nevertheless there are many drawbacks – severe deficits in decent work and social protection, exploitation, income insecurity, lack of sustainable jobs, low productivity, competition with nationals.

Transformative interventions and change are therefore needed to transition to formality and bring refugees into the formal sector. Curiously the 2016 ILO Guiding Principles are silent on informal labour markets and refugees but Recommendation 205 advocates, in general terms, promoting the transition from the informal to the formal economy. The challenge is to find the right balance of incentives for formality and disincentives for remaining informal. But this is not easy in practice even in ‘normal’ conditions without refugees; and there is little evidence of practical initiatives to address the issue in the context of refugees.

Since 2019, the ILO has been cooperating with the Social Security Institution (SSI) building its capacity to adapt existing incentive schemes for vulnerable groups to the needs of refugees. This cooperation coincides with a policy shift of the government aiming at increasing the formalisation of refugees.

Example:

ILO experience in Turkey under its Transition to Formality Programme (KIGEP), pinpoints the importance of incentive schemes for employers covering work permit fees and social security premiums for up to six months for each newly hired Syrian worker, as well as for the same number of Turkish workers by the same employer. This has been successfully promoted since 2017. Results so far have been positive, however, sustainability of the incentive scheme at scale, and the potentially regressive effects on beneficiaries noted by the ILO, will have to be assessed on the longer-term. In addition, the ILO has found it effective to raise awareness among employers and workers, as well as NGOs, government ministries, chambers of industry and social security institutions on the importance of formal work, and technical details of the work permit application procedure. A recent ILO evaluation found that 460 enterprises and over 3,500 workers benefited from the Programme, whilst enterprises that received KIGEP support had a 16% greater employment increase than those that did not.31

Wider experience from the ILO’s 2014 Transitioning Report indicates that social dialogue, and tailoring taxation, financing and social security systems to the specific conditions faced by informal economy actors, can make formalisation a much more attractive option and have a more sustained impact. These elements could help to inform the means of reducing informality in the refugee labour market. However, transitioning refugees to the formal labour market a not yet a high priority for governments or international donors.

4.4: International, national and local co-ordination and partnerships relevant to labour markets

The transformation of the international refugee regime, with its engagement of development actors in the HDN and ‘new ways of working’ institutionalised in the CRRF, has introduced new ‘players’ to the field such as the ILO. This in turn has generated the need for new modalities of, and instruments for partnership, co-ordination and coherence amongst the stakeholders.

There is an increasing number of initiatives for ‘donor and stakeholder co-ordination’, ‘government coordination’, ‘integrated programme of support’, ‘regional integrative response to forced displacement’. Yet, it is fair to say that international actors and national governments working in the multi-donor and multi-agency setting of refugee response are struggling with the concepts and the practice, especially in the labour market sector.

This is not a totally new situation – the humanitarian paradigm constantly confronted similar challenges. However, two factors define a different arena. First development actors (e.g. EU-DEVCO, GIZ, DFID) and development donors (e.g. the World Bank, EIB), now play a central role in the HDN and in funding employment generating programmes for sustainable refugee livelihoods. But aligning the very different precepts, time scales, funding cycles and operating processes of development actors with their humanitarian counterparts remains very problematic. For example, livelihood programmes serve both, humanitarian, short-term ‘needs-based’ priorities but also longer-term development strategies. Second, because labour market access and employment generation for refugees are a core element of the HDN model in the ‘Compact’ countries of Ethiopia and Jordan and in countries as diverse as Turkey and Rwanda, the challenge here is how to co-ordinate between humanitarian and development actors to improve the delivery of labour market strategies and policies. Employment creation and livelihood projects for refugees often tend to be scattered and small scale or large scale but over-concentrated for example in industrial parks in ‘Compact’ countries, with limited evidence of complementarity.

These factors, however, privilege the ILO because its tripartite structure provides the unique framework for linking government and social partners whose coordinated action is crucial to the delivery of labour market policies for refugees – a central pillar of the HDN. As the Turkish and Jordanian experience indicates, the added value and complementarity of social partners, together with the ILO, is not just in developing employment creation strategies, which other donors and actors are also providing. The gains of the tripartite approach are in promoting social dialogue and a comprehensive approach to decent work and upholding international labour rights and standards which other actors tend not to emphasise.

The recent experience of ILO, elaborated in the Compendium, highlights the importance of a coordinated strategy for government policy making. In this regard the ILO has been active in promoting a substantial development cooperation portfolio which establish policy frameworks to enhance access to decent work for host communities and refugees in many countries. These programmes – rolled out in the MENA region, the Sahel, Latin America - take an integrated approach, inter alia combining infrastructure building and skills development for refugees and host communities’ entrepreneurship, business management and soft skills that contribute to developing local value chains, thereby creating conditions for increased jobs opportunities. Inclusion of other stakeholders, including social partners and the private sector and enhancing synergies between the UNHCR and the ILO have
been essential for improving self-reliance opportunities to developing durable livelihoods strategies. The partnership for improving prospects for forcibly displaced persons and host communities (PROSPECTS), developed in 2018 is a four year fully integrated approach to respond to forced displacement, aims to shift the paradigm from a humanitarian to a development approach in responding to forced displacement crises, over a four-year-period, focusing on eight countries across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and the Horn of Africa: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. A similar co-ordinated strategy for socio-economic integration is being rolled out in Latin America in the context of the Venezuelan displacement, although this is far less institutionalised at this stage. Three areas are promoted - education and learning, jobs and social protection, and protection and legal status - forming part of a regional co-ordinated approach within the Platform for Inter-institutional Regional Coordination (R4V) of the United Nations System established in 2018, under the coordination of the UNHCR and IOM.

Two further examples – Jordan and the CRRF - illustrate emerging more specific practice in promoting labour markets and the many dimensions that coordination and partnerships needs to embrace at international, national and local levels.

Promoting a comprehensive employment policy framework and an integrated system of interrelated projects is not easy. For example, in Jordan, ILO has been supported by at least six donors; but a host of other donors are also supporting, directly or indirectly, other actors also seeking to stimulate the labour market and implement income generating projects for refugees. Moreover, ensuring that this raft of donor-funded ‘downstream’ (micro-level) project interventions complements upstream (macro-level) institutional and policy measures, for example in relation to the ILO’s decent work or social cohesion agenda, requires complex inter-organisational coordination. Moreover, short-term expectations do not easily align with the ILO’s long-term approach to livelihoods and employment creation and scaling up local ownership where a multiplicity of national and international actors are present. Effective responsibility sharing – a pillar of the ‘new way of working’ - requires policy engagement with a country’s labour market in its entirety – national, migrant and refugee workforces – in which many humanitarian donors have no interest beyond refugees. Labour market strategies and policies then have to cohere with the overall multi-sectoral national refugee strategy, for example the JRP (Jordan Response Plan), and which involve a range of co-ordination platforms, for example, in Turkey, the Syria Response Group (heads of agencies), the Syria Task Force (technical staff), and sectoral working groups to ensure regular coordination: the ILO, for example, is a member of the Livelihoods Working Group. And finally, there are the regional instruments of which national strategies are a part – for example, the 3RP (Syrian Refugee Resilience and Response Plan) comprising the regional plan and five ‘standalone’ country chapters for Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq, with overall coordination by UNHCR, or the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela.

The CRRF, as the words ‘comprehensive’ and ‘framework’ in the title suggests, is an innovative policy apparatus designed by the UNHCR to co-ordinate all the stakeholders and multi-sector actions in a country’s refugee response programme and, at the same time, align humanitarian and development strategies (the HDN). Clearly employment promotion and labour market access for refugees are a major pillar of the CRRF and the Programmes of Action – the operationalisation of the CRRF at a country level. Evidence suggests however that there is a long way to go.
At the local implementation level, the evidence is not reassuring either. Local authorities and local communities have not been effectively embraced. Industrial parks (like the Special Economic Zones in Jordan), are the main delivery vehicle; but these are inaccessibly located, provide employment in sectors and with wages that are unattractive to refugee (and host) labour, and offer limited worker-employer matching. SMEs dominate the Ethiopian economy, as in many refugee-impacted countries. It is not clear how this strategy will promote their expansion. Two thirds of the 100,000 jobs are for Ethiopians; but the location of the parks risks upsetting the country’s delicate balance of ethnic interests.

The CRRF has not, yet at least, proved an effective instrument to coordinate powerful international donors and successfully integrate their different objectives and strategies even when they are strongly focused on one policy sector. More generally, this policy and actor dominance also risks diverting the CRRF away from its actual ‘Comprehensive’ purpose: that is to coordinate a multi-sectoral socio-economic programme of humanitarian assistance and development support. The underlying political-economy objectives of all the main actors cannot be overlooked.

Example:

With its Jobs Compact, Ethiopia, a CRRF pilot country, illustrates some of the challenges of scaling up employment in what is, in effect, an international multi-donor driven programme in a low-income country with a fragile economy and a labour market heavily dominated by the informal sector. Rapidly accelerating employment provision in the Compact has been underpinned by large international donors. Ethiopia was one of the first countries to access the World Bank Group’s IDA-18 refugee sub-window, a concessionary funding stream for loans and grants to low-income countries hosting large numbers of refugees. The IDA-18 demarcates the Bank’s role now as a major – some would say the major – actor in the development-led response to refugees given the volume of lending and thus the influence that an actor like the Bank can bring to bear on a recipient government. Yet in Ethiopia, deploying some IDA-18 finance for the Jobs Compact sits alongside EUETFA, DFID, German and EIB funding supporting other aspects of the Compact for expanding the labour market but all with different priorities and time scales.

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32 World Bank Programme For Results (P4R) is as similar funding instrument provided to support labour market expansion as part of the Jordan Compact.
Example:

Rwanda, although still with international donor support such as the World Bank IDA-18 sub window, has also rolled out a CRRF which seems to have a much more integrated and systematic approach. In its ‘Strategic Plan for refugee Inclusion 2019-2024’, the government has adopted a very proactive development-led private-sector driven policy to promote refugee livelihoods. Conspicuously without job targets compared to the Jordan and Ethiopian Compacts, nevertheless it provides a comprehensive approach to developing the labour market for refugees, even down to detailed actions such as for example ensuring refugee access to banking and financial services, and encompassing TVET. This policy aligns very closely with the Republic’s already established development strategy for its own nationals which also lays out an aggressively private sector led approach. Bridging the refugee and host communities is a World Bank locally targeted, socio-economic inclusion strategy (schools, health centres, water systems, connective roads and market places), which recognises how refugees can contribute to economic opportunities for host communities.
Key messages:

- 1. Globally, almost 80 million people – one per cent of the world’s population - are forcibly displaced by conflict, violence and human rights violations: this is the highest total ever recorded.

- 2. Article 1 of the 1951 Convention defines a refugee as a person who ‘owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country’.

- 3. An IDP is someone forced to flee their home, often by the same drivers as a refugee, but who has not crossed an international border, instead seeking sanctuary in his or her own country. Unlike refugees, IDPs are not protected by international law (with one regional exception) because they are technically under the protection of their own government.

- 4. Mixed migration refers to the international movement of people forcibly displaced by a multiplicity of factors – hence the term mixed migration - such as conflict and persecution, environmental disasters, the victims of trafficking, the ‘failure’ of development.
5. The term Humanitarian-development nexus (HDN) describes the complementarity and also, in some contexts, the transition from humanitarian to development responses, the defining feature in the reconfiguration of the refugee regime in recent years and firmly embedded in the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The concept of the HDN now drives the international response to many refugee crises, aiming to support longer term development livelihood needs of the refugees and impacted countries as well as the humanitarian needs of refugees.

6. The UNHCR is mandated to the search for solutions to refugee situations. Three ‘durable solutions’ have evolved over many decades and are now established praxis. Repatriation to country of origin is generally posed as the preferred ‘solution’ for all parties; but this should only take place voluntarily and in conditions of safety and dignity. Local integration in the country of asylum is the second solution. This may take various forms from confirmation of some rights already available under their status as a refugee up to full citizenship recognition. The third durable solution is planned permanent resettlement in a third country.

7. A growing body of evidence suggests that including refugees in local economies contributes to development, and can thus be mutually beneficial for refugees and host communities. Overall, access to work reduces pressure on refugees and hosts locally, contributes to economic growth, and therefore eases pressure on the host country as a whole.

8. The ILO Guiding Principles on the Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market aim to support and assist Member States in considering the access of these populations to their labour markets whilst balancing the needs and expectations of their own citizens. The Guiding Principles outline: governance frameworks on access to labour markets; economic and employment policies for inclusive labour market; labour rights and equality of opportunity and treatment; partnership, coordination and coherence; voluntary repatriation and reintegration of returnees.

9. Section IX of ILO Recommendation 205 on Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience is specifically dedicated to the situation of refugees and returnees. More generally, the Recommendation advocates measures to generate employment and decent work opportunities in crisis situations, recognising the importance of employment and livelihoods in promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling economic recovery and building resilience and socio-economic reintegration. The Recommendation also provides guidance on international cooperation, coordination and coherence.

10. Although not developed with refugees in mind, the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work provide a relevant and important backcloth to these specific instruments.

11. Extensive evidence shows that even where refugees are legally in a country and their refugee status is recognised, few countries actually allow refugees to work by derogating the provisions of the 1951 Convention; and countries that do permit refugees to access labour markets usually require them to satisfy many additional requirements which present practical and procedural barriers.
12. Transfer and validation of pre-existing qualifications and certificates, together with skills profiling, training and TVET for refugees are widely recognised as crucial components supporting refugees’ access to labour markets.

13. National governments, and the Ministry of Labour in particular are the core actors in governing labour market access and employment conditions for refugees. A core principle is the need to develop employment and labour market strategies that embrace the needs of both the host population and refugees and forcibly displaced persons. Employers’ and workers’ organizations also have an important role to play implementing the measures taken by their governments to support the inclusion of refugees in the labour market. Social dialogue between these partners, and working with other stakeholders, to mobilise a coherent and coordinated approach to the implementation of government policies is crucial. In addition, their advocacy work is crucial in encouraging members to promote and support the inclusion of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons in the workplace and society more generally.
1. What is the UNHCR current global estimate for people forcibly displaced by conflict, violence and human rights violations?
   (a) 26 million
   (b) 79.5 million
   (c) 45.7 million
   (d) 5.6 million

2. The main ___________ of forced displacement are threats to life, freedom or physical integrity arising from armed conflict, serious public disorder, different situations of violence, famine linked to situations of armed conflict
   (a) Concepts
   (b) Results
   (a) Consequences
   (a) Drivers

3. ______ of refugees are hosted in low- and middle-income countries outside Europe and North America while ______ are hosted in neighbouring countries.
   (a) 75% - 62%
   (b) 50% - 68%
   (c) 85% - 73%
   (d) 75% - 90%

4. Half of all refugees (10.4 million) are hosted in just six countries in the world nowadays. Which countries are they?
   (a) Turkey, Colombia, Germany, Pakistan, Uganda, Sudan
   (b) Syria, Brazil, Germany, Afghanistan, Uganda, Sudan
   (c) Germany, Colombia, Pakistan, The United States of America, Sudan
   (d) Italy, United States of America, Germany, Turkey, Uganda, Sudan

5. Which of the elements below can NOT be considered a driver of forced displacement?
   (a) Armed conflict
   (b) Failure of the rule of law
   (c) Wish to improve livelihoods opportunity
   (d) Natural or man-made disasters

6. __________________ is a person who ‘owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country’
   (a) Refugee
   (b) Asylum seeker
   (c) Internally displaced person
   (d) Migrant
7. Refugees can make positive contributions to their host communities by...
   (a) expanding demand for goods and services
   (b) introducing new skills and technologies
   (c) paying taxes
   (d) all of the above

8. UNHCR is mandated three durable solutions as follows:
   (a) Local integration, reallocation, voluntary repatriation
   (b) Deportation, local integration and resettlement
   (c) Voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement
   (d) Reallocation, reintegration and resettlement.

9. The ___________ aims to support longer term development livelihood needs of the refugees and impacted countries, as well as the humanitarian needs of refugees
   (a) Durable solution
   (b) Developmental approach
   (c) Humanitarian Development Nexus
   (d) The Humanitarian approach

10. The ILO Guiding Principles on the Access of Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Persons to the Labour Market adopted in 2016 is rooted in relevant international labour standards and universal human rights instruments and presents __________ to member States on the matter
    (a) A plan of action
    (b) Non-binding principles
    (c) Binding principles
    (d) A National Policy

Correct answers: 1b, 2d, 3c, 4a, 5c, 6a, 7d, 8c, 9c, 10b.
Suggested reading:


ILO (2019) Refugees and decent work: Lessons learned from recent refugee jobs compacts


Proposed exercises

Exercise 1 – Group discussion

- **Level:** easy
- **Timing:** 30 to 45 min
- **Materials:** flipchart paper, markers

Divide the participants into groups of 4 or 5 people and assign to each group a piece of flipchart paper and some markers. Write out or show on the projector the following guiding questions:

What are the principal socio-economic impacts of refugees on host country communities? More specifically, what are the impacts on labour markets?

What are the main deficits in decent work and labour rights protection faced by refugees?

Why is employment generation and access to labour markers for refugees and their hosts such an important objective in international responses to refugee situations?

Give participants 30 minutes for their discussion then ask each group to report back in plenary.

The same exercise can be run online in a forum format.
2 Exercise 2 – Stakeholder mapping

- **Level:** intermediate
- **Timing:** 30 to 45 min
- **Materials needed:** large pieces of paper, sticky notes, markers

Cover a large surface or a wall with large pieces of paper to create an empty “map” surface. Give participants 10 minutes to brainstorm individually on the following questions:

*What are the different stakeholders in the context contemporary refugee and forced displacement situations? What roles can they play?*

(Alternatively, participants can brainstorm individually, then in pairs, then in small groups using the 1-2-4-all methodology). Then ask them to jot down their ideas on several sticky notes – only one idea per sticky note, and they can use as many as they want. They can then place the stickies on the map surface; you should guide them in clustering the ones that are interconnected and make sure that any duplicates are put together. Once all stakeholders are placed on the map, guide the discussion forward by asking: *what is missing? Are there gaps in the range of actors involved in labour market access policies and strategies? then, how are the existing stakeholders connected to one another? What relationships can you see? What influences?* Make them evident by drawing arrows connecting them on the map. You can then ask: *Can these roles be enhanced? What do you think could be the main challenges in developing coordination, cooperation and partnership between all these stakeholders?*