

Responding to displacement: 10 good practices



Foreword



FOREWORD by Secretary General Charlotte Slente

On the occasion of the first ever Global Refugee Forum on 16-18 December 2019 in Geneva, I am proud to present ten good practices on response to displacement, based on DRCs global work with refugees and displacement affected communities.

The Global Refugee Forum is a call for all to do more, but also to do better, to ensure that our collective efforts contribute to improving the lives of those affected by displacement. We have therefore taken this opportunity to collect ten short cases, documenting good practices that can inspire responses that match the objectives of the Global Compact on Refugees. These practices provide examples of how dignified solutions, refugee protection, and inclusion can be sought, working in strong and accountable partnerships, and meaningfully engaging with the affected people and refugee-led organisations in all their diversity.

The examples provided are based on DRC's more than 60 years of experience working with forced displacement

and our global reach as an operational partner for people affected by displacement in close to 40 countries. We commit to build on what works when setting out to implement the Global Compact on Refugees, and we recommit ourselves to ensuring that those affected by displacement will see accountable results of the compact.

I hope that these cases illustrate the added value we bring as a civil society partner, and that they can contribute to inspiring our joint efforts to improve the protection and dignity of the world's displaced, of whom far too many have no durable solution in sight. I also hope that these cases will inspire a more evidence-based discussion on solutions for refugees and serve as an encouragement to do what works - be it responding more efficiently to crisis-induced displacement, finding innovative ways of expanding and ensuring sustainable refugee service access, empowering asylum seekers through legal aid and analysis of legal frameworks, or promoting refugee social inclusion through peer-to-peer learning.

One: Global

Flexible start-up funding for emergency response

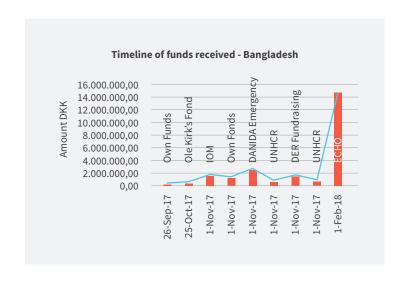
Ole Kirk's Foundation and the Danish Refugee Council have formed a partnership to enable fast emergency response to acute humanitarian situations. The foundation has provided DRC with a predictable, fast, and flexible mechanism to mobilize emergency responses. This enabled DRC to operate early in displacement situations, and to subsequently attract follow-up funding from other donors. Key to this success was a streamlined funding process that put significant trust in DRC's ability to assess and respond appropriately to emerging crises.

In January 2017, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and Ole Kirk's Foundation (OKF) entered into a threeyear strategic partnership to pilot a new way of supporting emergency responses to acute humanitarian crises around the world. The partnership between Denmark's largest non-governmental organization and the charitable Kirk family foundation aimed to develop a new way for donors and humanitarian actors to engage. It lowered bureaucratic and administrative requirements, and provided a fast, flexible, and predictable funding mechanism to

mobilize and kickstart humanitarian responses. Key to the success of the partnership was the trust between the fund and the organization, which allowed for significantly reduced procedures, thus speeding up the funding process.

DRC's emergency response in Bangladesh provides an example of how OKF funding was utilized to effectively mount an early and decisive response in a rapidly unfolding Once an operational presence was ensured, other partners contributed to the response, leveraging significantly more resources in subsequent weeks.

Utilizing just DKK 400,000 (appr. USD 60,000) as a start-up grant, along with the subsequent buy-in, DRC was able to set-up a project office employing 110 staff and delivering tangible services to six areas of the refugee "mega-camp" over the next

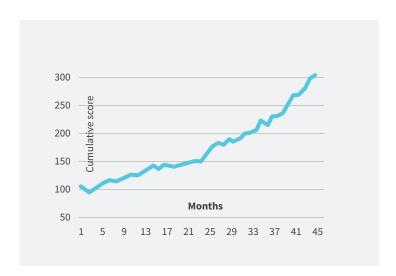


emergency. Facing the world's largest humanitarian crisis at the time, with well over 600,000 Rohingya refugees arriving at the Cox's Bazar "mega-camp" over a two-month period, DRC received approval to use OKF funds to establish a start-up operational platform supporting initial assessment and coordination activities.

six months. DRC services benefited an estimated 200,000 refugees with WASH, protection, and distribution of NFIs. In addition, the project set up "Help Desks" to provide refugees with information about the camp and referrals for specialized assistance from other humanitarian actors operating in the camp.

Two: Ukraine

Tracking responsiveness of the Legal Environment to the needs of IDPs



To gauge how well the legislative framework in Ukraine responds to the needs of IDPs and conflict-affected populations, DRC has developed a dedicated index tool. Over 200 laws, amendments, judicial decisions, policies and other legislative instruments enacted in Ukraine since February 2016 were analysed and scored. Provisions of each instrument were compared with the corresponding global standards, their relevance and implementation potentials, and scored accordingly. The results demonstrate steady progress.

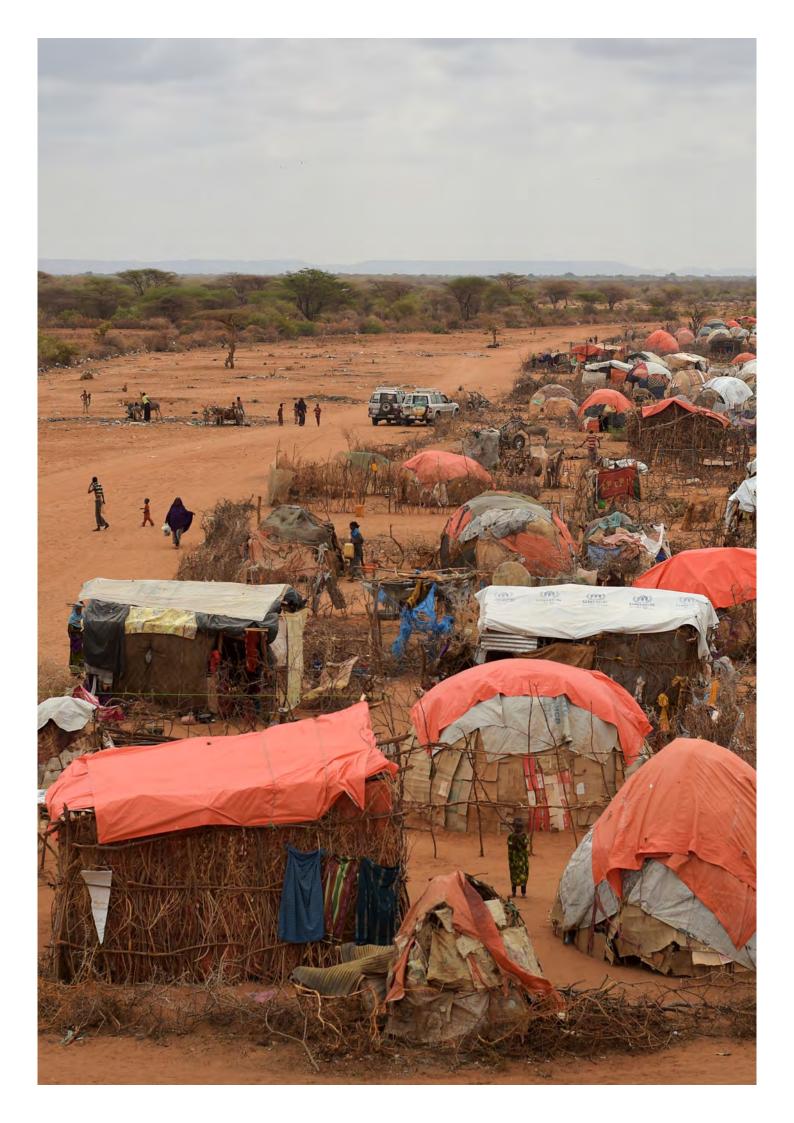
In the quest to support durable solutions for internally displaced people in Ukraine, DRC embarked on a project to analyse the legislative and policy environment in the country. Directed by the Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) guidance on IDP durable solutions, it analysed policy and laws in several areas. These included safety and security, adequate standard of living, access to livelihoods, housing land and property, access to documentation, family reunification, participation in public affairs, and access to effective remedies and justice. In the process, the analysis considered a total of 207 legal instruments and their content, drawing a summative index from them. Further review grouped the legal developments by eight criteria, allowing programme managers sector-specific interpretation of results.

The index enabled law and policy makers in the country to identify areas with inadequate frameworks, and equally to identify non-compliance with international standards. It was similarly important to advocates for the rights of the displaced, giving them a complete picture of legislative coverage and gaps, and allowing them to track advocacy progress. For humanitarian partners, the data was invaluable in designing country response strategies, planning resource allocation, and monitoring developments in the country.

The programme is not static, and additional features are under development. As each legal development is analysed and categorised, users have the opportunity to review each analysis independently, or a thematic sequencing of all developments under a single thread, enabling the user to see and engage with historical dimensions and implications as well. Based on its data analysis, DRC Ukraine has also been publishing



a monthly legal alert for the last 44 consecutive months. The legal alert contains critical analyses of the prior month's legislative developments and is published in English, Russian and Ukrainian, with an email audience of more than 2,000.



Three: Afghanistan and Somalia

Working with diaspora to deliver for the displaced

With support from DANIDA, DRC established a mechanism in 2010 supporting Afghan and Somali diaspora organizations to assist throughout the displacement cycle. Working with Denmark-based diaspora organisations, DRC, via its Diaspora Project Support (DiPS), provides co-funding to diaspora-led projects implemented in Somalia and Afghanistan. DiPS offers trainings to improve the capacities of the diaspora organizations and their local partners. It also regularly consults an elected diaspora advisory board on issues related to programming, strategy, and the assessment of diaspora project proposals.

The DRC Diaspora Project Support (DiPS) evolved from a five-year project supported by the Danish government, where DRC worked with Denmark-based Somali and Afghan diaspora organisations and their local partners to support projects in the two countries. Attracting wider interest, it was subsequently combined with the ECHO Diaspora Emergency Action & Coordination (DEMAC) project to create an overarching Diaspora Programme. The main aim of the Diaspora Programme is to facilitate, support,

and enhance the role of diasporas as effective agents of humanitarian assistance, recovery, and development. The programme's work in humanitarian and development activities in Somalia and Afghanistan is complemented by research, networking, and advocacy components that strengthens and mobilises the respective diasporas. The programme also helped establish the DiaGram Network, a collection of European donors supporting diaspora-led organizations.

A recent evaluation confirmed the underlying reasons for this success. It found that diaspora organisations constitute important alternative development actors that provide unique perspectives and added value to humanitarian and development efforts. They may utilize new knowledge, skills, and expertise learned in their host countries to develop new project ideas not previously supported by local partners. Diaspora organisations and their local partners can utilize their specific contextual knowledge to more efficiently procure needed inputs, mitigate potential delays, and monitor on-going progress. They transfer skills and knowledge gained from DRC-supported trainings to local partners during the design and implementation of DiPS projects. The evaluation also demonstrated that the current DiPS mechanism effectively captures the comparative advantages of diaspora organizations. Furthermore, it confirmed that Diaspora organisations can be

expected to have an implicit interest and sense of responsibility to remain engaged in their activities, an added benefit.

A good example of the productive outcomes of working with diasporas comes from Somalia. Here, a crowdsourcing platform, SOKAAB, was established to allow local organisations to apply for funding. A panel from partner organisations in the diaspora reviews whether the community proposal meets the criteria to qualify for fundraising through SOKAAB. With support from partner organizations,



community-based committees then have access to one-on-one support on creating awareness about their projects. Matching donations are then raised; communities pool their own resources and mobilize funds through SOKAAB. Partner organizations match the funds mobilized by those communities that are supported. The community-based committees and partner organizations regularly update the contributors through the platform, allowing supporters to see how their contribution is making a difference.

Four: Algeria

Enhancing the self-reliance of Saharawi refugees with knowledge, skills and assets

Since 2016, DRC works in the Saharawi Refugee Camps in Algeria, implementing a livelihoods programme for young people. The programme aims to enhance the self-reliance and resilience of Saharawi refugees by strengthening their economic opportunities and livelihoods capacities, equipping young people with appropriate knowledge, skills and assets to enable them to start their own businesses.

Saharawi refugees have remained displaced in southwestern Algeria for more than four decades. Five camps, Laavoune, Smara, Ausserd, Boujdour and Dakhla, have been created in 1975 and host an estimated 173,600 refugees. Pending a political resolution of the Western Sahara conflict, the refugee population remains entirely dependent on international assistance for its basic needs and continues to be extremely vulnerable and isolated in a hostile desert environment. Funding has steadily decreased due to the protracted situation of Saharawi refugees and emergence of other large-scale humanitarian crises elsewhere. Humanitarian needs are as pressing as ever.



Saharawi refugees have extremely limited access to livelihoods and economic activities in the camps. They are prohibited from exercising their right to work outside of the camps, which further limits their opportunities for economic inclusion in Algeria. This hampers their ability not only to engage in sustainable livelihoods, but also to meet their basic needs such as accessing food in sufficient quantity, quality and diversity. These limitations, combined with the lack of advancement of the political process, have led to increasing frustration among Saharawi youth.

DRC in Algeria is working to enhance the self-reliance and resilience of Saharawi refugees, with a special focus on youth. In the camps, DRC supports start-up and existing businesses through the provision

of business management and technical trainings, financial and productive assets, and monitoring and coaching. These activities are complemented by the development of a network of youth-led enterprises and the creation of a pilot Business Development Centre. DRC also works closely with Saharawi institutions and conducts advocacy and awareness-raising activities in the camps to ensure an environment conducive to youth entrepreneurship.

The first results are encouraging. Close to 3,000 Saharawi youth have received business management and technical trainings since the inception of the programme and financial and technical support was provided to 244 start-up and scale-up businesses, 208 of which are still up and running.

Five: Global

Legal Aid in Asylum Procedures

DRC has many years of experience with its rights-based, two-pronged approach to legal aid in asylum procedures. Direct legal aid services, such as disseminating legal information, legal counselling, and assistance to and representation of asylum seekers, are complemented by strengthening the overall legal aid environment through advocacy, law and policy engagement, and capacity building of authorities.

DRC pursues a rights-based approach to engaging in national asylum procedures. Following its global principles and standards, it engages with asylum seekers as independent actors, and involves them as much as possible in making informed decisions in their individual situations. Through this approach, DRC provides legal aid to asylum seekers navigating national asylum procedures, with the overall purpose of supporting them in their ability to access and enjoy their rights and pursue durable solutions.

In Denmark, DRC has a longstanding role in the Danish asylum procedure, with an excellent relationship with the Danish authorities including the Immigration Service, Refugee Appeals Board and the police. DRC provides legal aid services to asylum seekers in all phases of the asylum

procedure, and has developed innovative and child-friendly tools, including visual materials and a smartphone application. It has also refined multi-disciplinary approaches to legal information dissemination, and legal counselling methods to support relevant and easily accessible legal aid for adults and children in the asylum process. These tools and methods enable the asylum seeker to have a better understanding of, and ability to, navigate a very complex legal situation.

In Greece, DRC has been present since 2015 in Athens, at mainland sites, and in the hotspots. DRC Greece provides legal aid services to asylum seekers at all stages of the asylum procedure, including legal representation before the asylum appeals committee. As in DRC's engagement in the asylum procedure in Denmark, the programme in Greece applies a two-pronged approach: assisting asylum seekers with their asylum cases through impartial legal aid services and performing legal environment-building activities such as advocacy and engagement in law and policy, meant to raise awareness and reduce barriers to the enjoyment of the fundamental right to asylum.

High quality legal aid in asylum procedure supports several of the objectives in the Global Compact not for Refugees, by empowering the individual to claim their rights, seeking to regularize their status, easing the pressure on host authorities, and supporting the individual in returning in safety and dignity once the need for protection has ceased or the claim for asylum has been rejected.









Six: Denmark

Peer-to-peer psycho-social group programmes about tackling life in exile



MindSpring is a group programme for refugees about life in exile, facilitated by volunteers with refugee backgrounds. The programme gives group members new knowledge, raises awareness, provides new skills, and results in significant improvements in well-being.

Since 2010, The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) has been developing and implementing the MindSpring method in Denmark. MindSpring is a group programme with, for, and by refugees and immigrants. The MindSpring method empowers the participants via new knowledge, reflections, and competences about issues related to living in exile. Furthermore, MindSpring can create the basis for new interpersonal networks. The program features themes

such as stress, identity, trauma, and general challenges related to living in exile. The aim of the program is to prevent exile-related challenges from developing into serious impediments to well-being.

The MindSpring method is unique in the sense that the group program is facilitated by a volunteer who shares common background and language with the participants. Because of this shared cultural background

and experiences with living as a refugee, this volunteer trainer can recognize and understand most of the experiences, challenges, and life circumstances of the participants. This is the basis for feeling safe and included in the group. Furthermore, the identification and trust create a safe space for learning, thus enhancing the outcome for the participants.

The MindSpring trainer collaborates with a professional co-trainer, who provides information about the local context and services, such as welfare support or where to find professional help. The MindSpring groups are conducted in the mother tongue of the participants, so an interpreter translates for the co-trainer, who most often does not speak the language of the group.

More than 200 MindSpring group courses have been completed in Denmark, and DRC is continuously developing the method to meet the needs of various target groups amongst the refugee population. So far, group programmes have been developed specifically for parents, youth, and children, while a programme for rejected asylum applicants is currently being tested.

The programme has been evaluated several times with very positive results. Overall, the participants express very high satisfaction, and

"I feel that I have got a better life now."

(Girl who participated in a MindSpring group for children)

"I think that after MindSpring I have changed my way of interacting with my children, and I have become more supportive, understanding and listening. The programme has given me a lot of thoughts - it made me realize that to see a change in my children I had to change myself."

(Parent who participated in a MindSpring group for parents).

"If someone suffers from loneliness or depression then we have learned how tackle it, how we can help each other. How we can get out of that circle."

(Young refugee who participated in a MindSpring group for youth)

participants, trainers, and co-trainers alike state that the participants have acquired new knowledge and tools, applying these to improve their family lives, mental health and life

choices. A scientific study is currently underway, with initial results showing that participants experience significant improvements in well-being and quality of life.

Seven: Ethiopia

Cash assistance for mobile populations

In 2016, DRC faced a challenge when responding to acute displacement amidst on-going conflict in Ethiopia: internally displaced populations that remained on the move and were unable to settle. DRC developed a mobile response mechanism that included a team of emergency specialists who would travel around difficult-to-reach areas to conduct basic needs assessments of the internally displaced. This engagement allowed DRC to identify cash as the most relevant response modality. It was more adaptable to the fluidity of the situation and incurred fewer logistical costs.

The response was developed in reaction to an escalation in the conflict between two long-term rival ethnic groups, the Oromo and the Somali, who have been fighting over access to fertile grazing lands since the 1990s. The conflict escalated rapidly in the middle of 2017, and by early 2018 nearly 900,000 people were displaced, many of whom were forced to flee with almost no personal possessions. A key challenge to

mobilizing a response was that the IDPs remained mostly scattered, on the move between the two warring regions and in areas where the conflict was still active. In response,

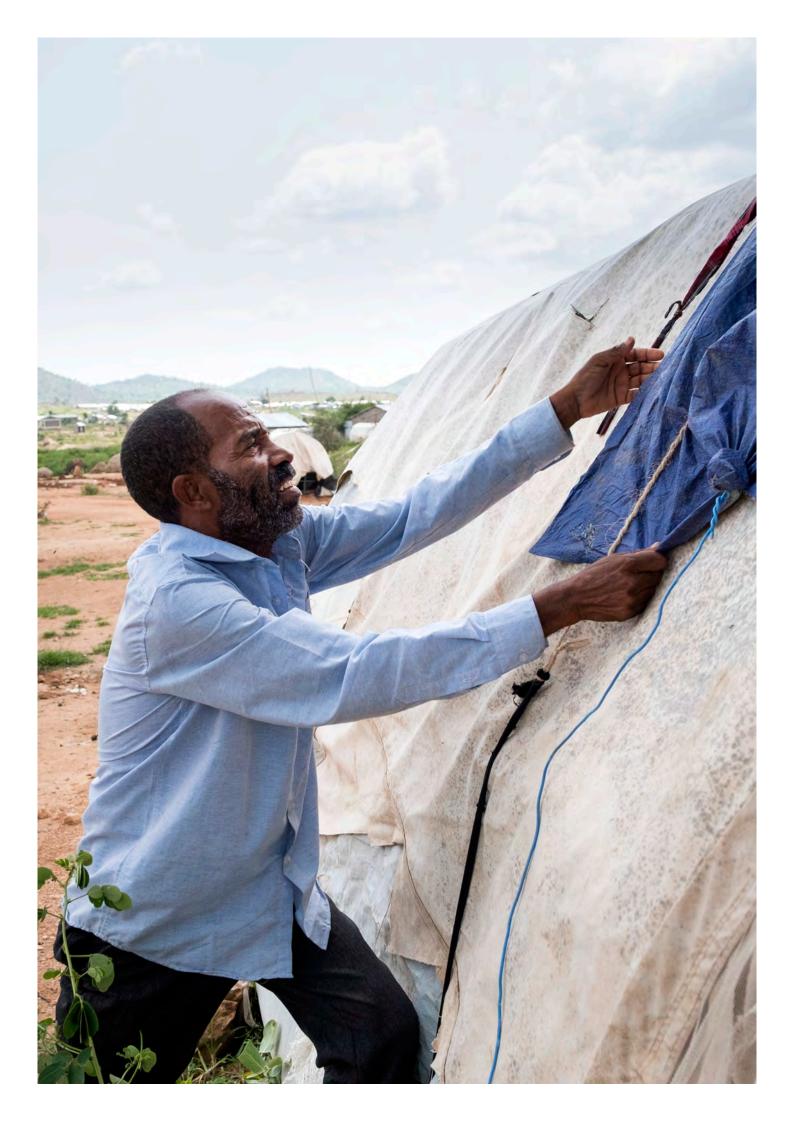


DRC developed a "mobile response mechanism" that included a team of emergency specialists who would travel around difficult-to-reach areas to conduct basic needs assessments of the IDPs.

As an initial step, DRC undertook a systematic assessment of basic needs, risks, capacities, and existing systems. The analysis showed that the provision of emergency cash assistance would be the most appropriate and cost-effective method for delivering assistance. Specifically, emergency cash assistance offered an important advantage in that it would involve lower logistical costs than the distribution of traditional emergency food and non-food assistance. It also offered another equally important advantage of being able to respond to a variety of needs. DRC's assessment showed that the emergency needs varied between IDPs and that the distribution of emergency cash assistance would empower them to prioritize their own needs. Market analysis furthermore showed that relevant goods were available, and cash would benefit the local economy in these crisis-hit areas, potentially easing growing tensions between the IDPs and host commu-

However, despite DRC's analysis outlining these advantages, regional authorities were initially sceptical about the merits of cash-based assistance and banned the modality. DRC needed to undertake an extensive advocacy effort to clearly explain how the distribution of emergency cash assistance would be the most appropriate solution given the conditions of the crisis, which ultimately succeeded: DRC became the first humanitarian actor distributing much-needed assistance in these difficult-to-reach areas.

To be able to prioritize those considered "most in need"-such as the elderly, pregnant women, young families, or those with a sick relative—in an area with no previous presence, DRC formed three mobile "Registration Committees" who were tasked with identifying and registering these groups. As a result, DRC was able to distribute assistance to 1,050 families comprising over 6,500 individuals.





Eight: Global

Meaningful participation of diaspora and refugee-led organisations

In preparation for the first Global Refugee Forum to be held this year in Geneva, but also to establish a new practice, DRC had meaningful conversations with members of diaspora and refugee-led organisations in Berlin, Copenhagen, Istanbul, and Nairobi. These discourses established significant pathways to participation in the global forum, but also established and strengthened communication channels into the global refugee community.

The Global Compact on Refugees makes a direct reference to the participation of refugees as part of a multi-stakeholder approach, and explicitly identifies diaspora as an important stakeholder group. To further strengthen and centre diaspora and refugee voices at the Global Refugee Forum, the DRC workshops supported by UNHCR sought to identify the diaspora organisations' views, perspectives, and priorities, map their good practices, and inspire collaboration between NGOs and grassroots organizations. The workshops brought together 80



individuals from a range of countries and organizations across Europe, the Middle East, and East Africa. The organizations all work in some capacity towards improving the well-being of and upholding the rights of refugees, asylum-seekers or the diaspora, whether in their countries of residence, on the move from their countries of origin, or living in displacement in host countries closer to home. Some of the organizations also work with communities in countries of origin.

Taking place in Berlin, Copenhagen, Istanbul, and Nairobi, the discussions sought to facilitate the diaspora and refugee-led organisations in presenting good practices from their activities and making relevant pledges towards the Compact's objectives. The workshops were successful in raising awareness among the organisations, thereby enabling them to better assert themselves and contribute to the implementation

of the Global Compact on Refugees on issues of concern to them. Their representatives will present the results and outcomes of the regional workshops at the Global Refugee Forum.

Several key concerns for refugees and diaspora members in each country were identified in the process. The concerns raised in each country were reflective of local circumstances and ranged from questions of mutual cultural education between host and diaspora communities in Germany, through the need for mentoring young refugees in navigating the educational system in Denmark, to difficulties in securing employment and stable livelihoods for refugees in Turkey. Participants in the workshops elected the diaspora members who will represent them at the Global Refugee Forum, showcasing their best programs and practices and following up with the organisations on their return.

Nine: Uganda

Build - Operate - Transfer partnership for safe water



DRC, Grundfos, and the Technical University of Denmark partnered on the provision of safe water for host communities and displaced people in Uganda. After conducting a study to ascertain the optimal alternative to costly water trucking, they established solar-powered communal water systems through a build-operate-transfer model. This has significantly improved the quality and the reliability of communal water supplies.

In 2016, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and Grundfos established the Business-Humanitarian Partnership Lab, a joint initiative to bring sustainable water solutions to refugees and internally displaced people. A 2017 study by DRC, Grundfos, and the Technical University of Denmark confirmed the long-term cost advantage of solar systems. These create cost savings within the first year of operation compared to water trucking, and over a 10-year period cost 7-10 times less. Their environmental footprint once installed is marginal.

Building on insights from a joint pilot project in the Uganda refugee response, DRC and Grundfos developed a concept based on risk sharing to open the door for a three-year investment horizon. The backbone of the concept is a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) approach, using an output-based contract. The focus is on delivering a cost efficient, environmentally friendly, robust solution with low operation and maintenance costs, along with high quality community sensitization and WASH training. DRC and Grundfos are committed to working in partnership with the local communities to deliver clean drinking water and WASH training as agreed for the concession period. Water will be delivered at either an agreed set cost annually or at a flexible cost based on performance, for now borne by those supporting the displaced. Under the BOT arrangement, Grundfos takes responsibility for all operation and maintenance, as well as preparing for the future operation and maintenance of the system at handover.

Through the development of compatible standard packages that include sensitization through WASH training and technology, DRC and Grundfos can quickly scale production up or down as necessary without compromising efficiency. The technical solution itself consists of a robust solar-driven water system, coupled with building blocks of optional elements as demanded by the specific context. The DRC/Grundfos partnership has now matured into a joint offering that combines the best of both worlds: a needs-based approach coupled with a robust and commercially efficient technical solution, effectively making technology work for people.



Ten: Denmark

Constructive Cooperation with Immigration Authorities

In Denmark, DRC works closely with the Danish immigration authorities at all levels in order to support the protection of asylum seekers. This long-standing cooperation is reflected in the Danish Aliens Law, where DRC's role is incorporated into several procedures. This contributes to upholding the rule of law and supports a fair and efficient asylum process.

DRC strongly believes that the protection of asylum-seekers and refugees is best achieved by working in close cooperation with the responsible authorities whenever possible. While contributing to the overall quality of the asylum procedure, this approach never loses sight of the individual person whose needs are at the centre of DRC's intervention.

An example is the Danish procedure for manifestly unfounded applications, where the independent role of DRC is crucial to enable the efficient processing of such claims without violating the rights of the applicants. DRC has also taken on the responsibility for providing legal aid to all asylum-seekers in the Dublin procedure, and works closely with the authorities at both first and second instance to ensure that the process

is fast, and that all relevant information is made available to the Refugee Appeals Board. Furthermore, DRC has free access to detained asylum seekers all over Denmark and is frequently called on by police and prison authorities to provide independent legal advice to the detainees.

Reliable country of origin information is essential in any asylum DRC assists in developing quality background information to the benefit of asylum-seekers in Denmark and elsewhere - the reports are used by immigration authorities globally.

Supporting a structured resettlement process is a third example of DRC's productive cooperation with authorities. Denmark has had a well-functioning resettlement system for



procedure, and DRC has for many years engaged with the Danish Immigration Service to collect relevant information through fact-finding missions. These missions are planned jointly, and the interviews and drafting of the reports take place in close cooperation. In this role,

decades, and DRC has always played an important role in the process from discussions with UNHCR at the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) to participating in the selection missions and to the reception in Denmark by DRC's many volunteers.

