

WIN-WIN: A new refugee response will benefit refugees and host communities alike

What?

The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) is a more inclusive approach to refugee responses, further reinforced globally by UN Member States' adoption of the **New Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)** in December 2018. The approach seeks to **include refugees into host community and national systems**, rather than parallel arrangements for assistance; one for refugees placed in camps and one for host communities. A first Global Refugee Forum, instituted by the GCR to occur every 4 years, will take place in December 2019 which will look at achievements so far.

In November 2017, Ethiopia became a pilot country for the implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The CRRF engages a broad group of stakeholders including **ARRA** - the Government's Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs - federal line ministries and regional bureaus, and **UNHCR**, the UN Refugee Agency – alongside humanitarian and development actors, donor agencies, the private sector, as well as host communities and refugees themselves.

Why?

The CRRF has several advantages, benefitting both refugees and host countries.

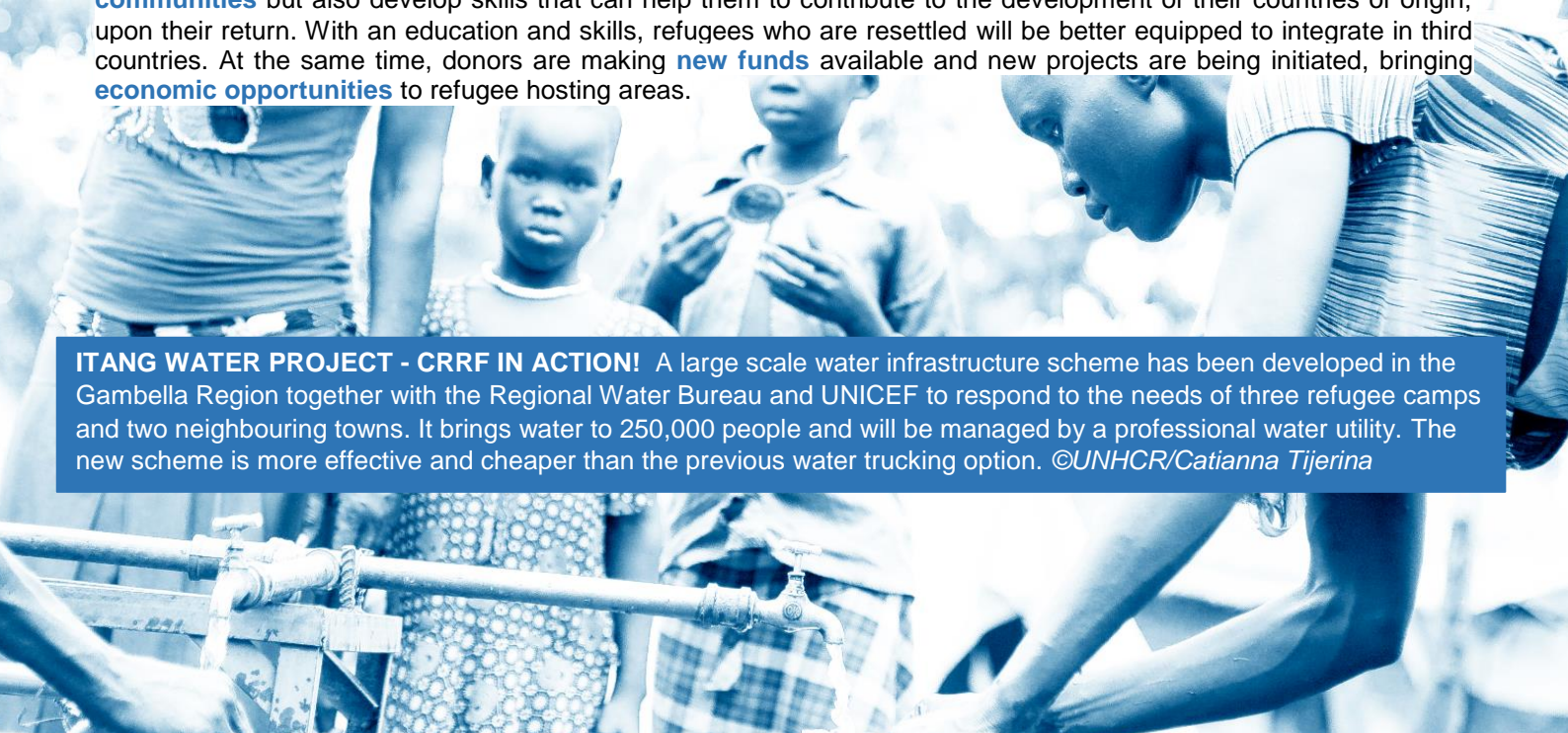
First, by **linking humanitarian and development efforts** early on in a crisis, we seek to ensure a more sustainable refugee response. Working together **enhances aid effectiveness**, so that a wider range of needs can be addressed, and no one is left behind. Business and private sector leaders can also contribute to sustainable solutions for refugees, and their host communities, through employment or other livelihoods models.

Second, the inclusion of refugees' means that **refugees can thrive, not just survive**. Instead of relying on humanitarian aid, refugees will gain access to education and labour markets and thereby build their skills and become self-reliant. This contributes to building a dignified life for refugees.

Third, giving refugees access to education and labour markets will also benefit the host communities as refugees will start to contribute to local economies and fuel development. In this way, **refugees become assets to their host communities** but also develop skills that can help them to contribute to the development of their countries of origin, upon their return. With an education and skills, refugees who are resettled will be better equipped to integrate in third countries. At the same time, donors are making **new funds** available and new projects are being initiated, bringing **economic opportunities** to refugee hosting areas.

Core benefits of refugee inclusion:

- Co-ordination and coherence makes aid more efficient
- Refugees can build their skills and become self-reliant
- New funding and economic opportunities in refugee-hosting areas



ITANG WATER PROJECT - CRRF IN ACTION! A large scale water infrastructure scheme has been developed in the Gambella Region together with the Regional Water Bureau and UNICEF to respond to the needs of three refugee camps and two neighbouring towns. It brings water to 250,000 people and will be managed by a professional water utility. The new scheme is more effective and cheaper than the previous water trucking option. ©UNHCR/Catianna Tijerina

Legal framework governing the inclusion of refugees

The inclusion of refugees into host communities and national systems is key to the **Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)**. The CRRF is a result of the **New York Declaration for Refugees**, which was adopted by all 193 Members States of the United Nations during the Leaders' Summit on Refugees and Migrants in September 2016. In the New York Declaration, Member States recognize that refugee camps "should be the exception," and a temporary measure in cases of emergency. At the same time, Member States have agreed to increase support to countries that host refugees. In December 2018, a new **Global Compact on Refugees** was adopted by UN Member States, which will further guide the CRRF process.

Ethiopia has taken a lead role in the CRRF making **nine significant pledges** that embody a vision where refugees would gradually be allowed to live out of camps, work, cultivate land, access national education and health services, as well as national birth and vital events registration. For those who have spent more than 20 years in Ethiopia, access to opportunities for local integration is also foreseen.

9 Pledges made by the Ethiopian Government

1. To expand the "out-of-camp" policy to benefit 10% of the current total refugee population.
2. To provide work permits to refugees and those with permanent residence ID.
3. To provide work permits to refugees in the areas permitted for foreign workers.
4. To increase enrolment of refugee children in preschool, primary, secondary and tertiary education, without discrimination and within available resources.
5. To make 10,000 hectares of irrigable land available, to enable 20,000 refugees and host community households (100,000 people) to grow crops.
6. To allow local integration for refugees who have lived in Ethiopia for over 20 years.
7. To work with industrial partners to build industrial parks to employ up to 100,000 individuals, with 30% of the jobs reserved for refugees.
8. To expand and enhance basic and essential social services for refugees.
9. To provide other benefits, such as issuance of birth certificates to refugee children born in Ethiopia, and the possibility of opening bank accounts and obtaining driving licenses.

The Government is currently drafting a **National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy**, guiding the implementation of the pledges, CRRF and the Global Compact in Ethiopia.

In January 2019, the Ethiopia's parliament adopted revisions in its existing refugee law. The new law, the **Refugee Proclamation**, will allow refugees to obtain work permits, access primary education, obtain drivers' licenses, legally register life events such as births and marriages and open up access to national financial services, such as banking. UNHCR welcomes Ethiopia's historic new refugee law, one of the most progressive refugee policies in Africa

Other legislative reforms have also taken place. Proclamation 760/2012 permitting civil documentation for refugees was passed in July 2017. Consequently, the first birth certificates for refugees were issued in October 2017.

Implementation timeline

The Government has published a **Roadmap** to guide the implementation of the nine pledges and established a CRRF governance structure, which includes a **Steering Committee (SC)** comprised of line ministries, federal agencies, development actors, UN, NGOs and donors in Ethiopia.

The structure also includes six Technical Committees as well as a CRRF **National Co-ordination Office (NCO)**. The NCO serves as the Secretariat of the SC, and as the overall coordination hub for the development, roll out and monitoring of the NCRRS, and its accompanying implementation guidelines and action plans.

Investing in refugee resilience

Donors are making new funds available and new projects are being initiated, bringing economic opportunities to refugee hosting areas. It is important to note that this is not funding for UNHCR per se, but largely to the partnerships that support the CRRF and the new Global Compact. The donors include countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark and Australia as well as organizations such as the European Union, the World Bank and IKEA Foundation.

Included in the World Bank's support to the CRRF and the new Global Compact is the **Economic Opportunities Project (EEOP - the former Jobs Compact)**, as a collaboration between the Bank, the EU, the European Investment Bank, DFID and the Ethiopian Investment Commission for the creation of new job opportunities including in industrial parks to benefit both nationals and refugees. More than **USD 400 million** in concessional finance from donors would be linked to the granting of employment opportunities for up to a 100,000 individuals including 30,000 refugees in industrial parks, self-employment and enterprise development (including cooperatives/ investment groups).