



A three year old Togolese boy plays with his newly issued residency card in Benin UNHCR / G. Menezes

## SOLUTIONS FOR PROTRACTED SITUATIONS

These are years of change for UNHCR. With over 60 million people displaced worldwide, we are changing the way we think, plan and work to achieve solutions for protracted situations.

The search for durable solutions is at the forefront of UNHCR's responsibility towards refugees and other persons of concern. UNHCR understands a durable solution as any means by which the situation of refugees can be satisfactorily and permanently resolved to enable them to live normal lives. A durable solution ultimately allows the refugee to acquire, or to re-acquire, the full protection of a state. This can be achieved through resettlement, voluntary repatriation, and local integration.

There is a stronger understanding that resolving long-standing displacement situations requires reaching out beyond the humanitarian community. Engaging closely with national and local government and development agencies is essential in order to link refugees and other displaced communities with development and peacebuilding processes, to provide them with legal status, and to help them become socially integrated and economically self-reliant.

In the search for solutions UNHCR is testing new approaches that include the development of multi-year and multi-partner solutions strategies *"that pursue self-reliance and solutions for displaced populations, supported by development initiatives"* moving away from a care and maintenance model.

### Multi-year programming pilots

At field level, six UNHCR operations were identified as multi-year pilots (Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Costa Rica and Ecuador). As part of the pilot, operations are required to develop multi-year strategies jointly with key partners that will direct yearly plans and that will support common planning with partners.

The multi-year pilot should facilitate:

- The establishment of a longer term vision for an operation;
- The ability to set and realize multi-year (solutions) targets and benchmarks for achievements, alongside political, socio-economic and legal dimensions. This should enable UNHCR, partner governments and organizations to track progress towards attaining solutions;
- More evidence based programming (appropriate assessments to set baselines and monitoring tools);
- A focus on building alliances with partners, thereby considering what it does not need to do because others are better placed to do it;
- Better alignment with development planning processes;
- An approach of sustainability through a focus on inclusion and access to national services.

## THE SOLUTIONS ALLIANCE

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At the global level UNHCR, together with partners, launched the Solutions Alliance in 2014. It was formed based on the recognition that stronger partnerships and new approaches are needed to prevent new displacement situations from becoming protracted, and to help resolve existing protracted situations.

The Solutions Alliance is a diverse network of actors representing affected and host states, local level authorities, development and humanitarian agencies, international financial institutions, donors, civil society, private sector, academia and others. It is currently chaired by UNHCR, UNDP, IRC and the governments of Denmark and Turkey.

The Solutions Alliance seeks to **promote and enable the transition for displaced people away from dependency towards increased self-reliance, resilience, and development**. This will be pursued by:

- Supporting innovative solutions through concrete projects and programs in selected displacement situations.
- Helping shape the global policy agenda to recognize displacement as a development challenge, as well as a humanitarian and protection issue.
- Ensuring that a diverse and growing group of partners form a vibrant network and seek to maximize the impact of their individual efforts.

### THEMATIC AND NATIONAL GROUPS

Thematic and national groups have been established to pursue the mission of the Alliance. The thematic groups are “Research, Data and Performance Management” and “Engaging the Private Sector”. Two national groups are formed to support local integration of Angolan refugees in Zambia and finding new approaches to Somali refugees and IDPs in the Horn of Africa respectively.



Learn more about the Solutions Alliance at [www.solutionsalliance.org](http://www.solutionsalliance.org) and get involved.

## GHANA & SOLUTIONS

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The government of Ghana has generously hosted refugees over the years. The largest group of refugees hosted by Ghana are Ivorian refugees (around 12,000), followed by about 3,400 refugees of Togolese origin, most of whom arrived in 1993-1994 (and a sizeable group arriving around 2005). Besides the Togolese, other small groups in protracted situations include Liberian, Sierra Leonean and Rwandan refugees.

While about 64% of Ivorian refugees reside in camps, most of the refugees from other groups reside in urban areas in or around Accra, or in various communities of the Volta Region. In addition to ECOWAS citizenship, amongst the aforementioned refugee groups there is cultural and social integration into host communities. Moreover, the Ghana government allows refugees freedom of movement and residence, the right to work upon issuance of a work permit, and access to State basic services, such as the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and public basic education.

In order to find a solution for the long-staying refugees, UNHCR Ghana and the Government launched the Seeds for Solutions Project on local integration for Togolese refugees in July 2014. Subsequently, in 2015 this project has been widened and evolved into a joint multi-year solutions and protection strategy. Togolese, exempted Liberian, Sierra Leonean and Rwandan refugees who will be offered the possibility to locally integrate in Ghana either with an indefinite residence status or where possible to apply for facilitated naturalization. For Ivorian refugees, UNHCR in cooperation with partners, encourages voluntary return following the peaceful conduct of elections in Côte d’Ivoire in October 2015. For those who do not wish to return home, local integration pathways are explored, coupled with development support to main refugee hosting areas, which should benefit both refugee and host communities.

The main focus of the multi-year protection and solutions strategy is to support refugees with acquiring a sustainable, alternative legal status that will allow them to locally integrate into Ghana, with nationality documents to prevent statelessness. Additionally, the objective is to strengthen socio-economic opportunities. Through working with Government and development partners, UNHCR redoubles efforts to ensure that (locally integrating) refugees can have effective access to economic opportunities and social protection programs on equal footing with nationals. This will foster empowerment and self-reliance, and will better allow locally integrating refugees to make a positive contribution to Ghana’s development.