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THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT REFUGEES AND DISPLACEMENT



HPG
Humanitarian
Policy Group

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A RECORD NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARE NOW DISPLACED FROM THEIR HOMES FOR YEARS ON END

The number of people forcibly displaced from their homes due to conflict and war continues to increase at a staggering rate, reaching a record high of 65.3 million at the end of 2015 – more than all those displaced during the Second World War. Nearly two-thirds of all refugees have been displaced for at least three years, otherwise known as ‘protracted displacement’. Almost half of all current refugees have been displaced for over ten years.

As of 2015 the number of refugees in protracted displacement is:



*10.8 million, Jan 2016 est.

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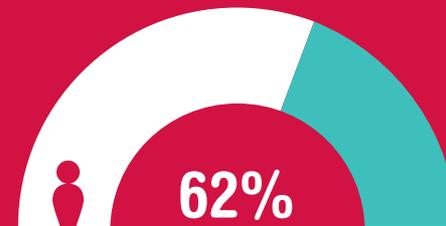
MOST DISPLACED PEOPLE STAY IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY OR NEARBY

The proportion of internally displaced people – among all displaced – is increasing. A lot of this is due to continued violence and civil wars in places such as Syria, where people have fled to other parts of the country seeking safe haven. Eight out of 10 refugees are living in neighbouring countries – one or two land borders from their home. For protracted refugees, 86% are within one land border of their country of origin.

Percentage of displaced people who are internally displaced



1989



2015

The majority of refugees and asylum-seekers tend to stay nearby their country of origin



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MOST DISPLACED PEOPLE ARE FROM A VERY SMALL NUMBER OF COUNTRIES

A small number of countries produce the majority of refugees and IDPs around the world. More than half of all displaced people come from six countries: Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, Palestine, Sudan and Syria. All six countries have experienced long-running conflicts, with regular insecurity and violence. Many are far from reaching peace and political solutions.



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A HANDFUL OF COUNTRIES HOST THE MAJORITY OF REFUGEES

Refugees are not spread evenly across the world. Seven countries – Palestine, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan, South Africa and Turkey – host more than 50% of all refugees. Many countries, including some of the richest and most developed like the US, UK and Australia, are not fully living up to their responsibilities under the 1951 Refugee Convention.

If all refugees were distributed evenly across all the countries in the world, each would host **100,000** refugees.



Instead, **57,000** refugees and asylum-seekers are in Australia, while Jordan hosts **2.8 million** refugees.

Percentage of the population that are refugees or asylum-seekers

Australia 0.2%

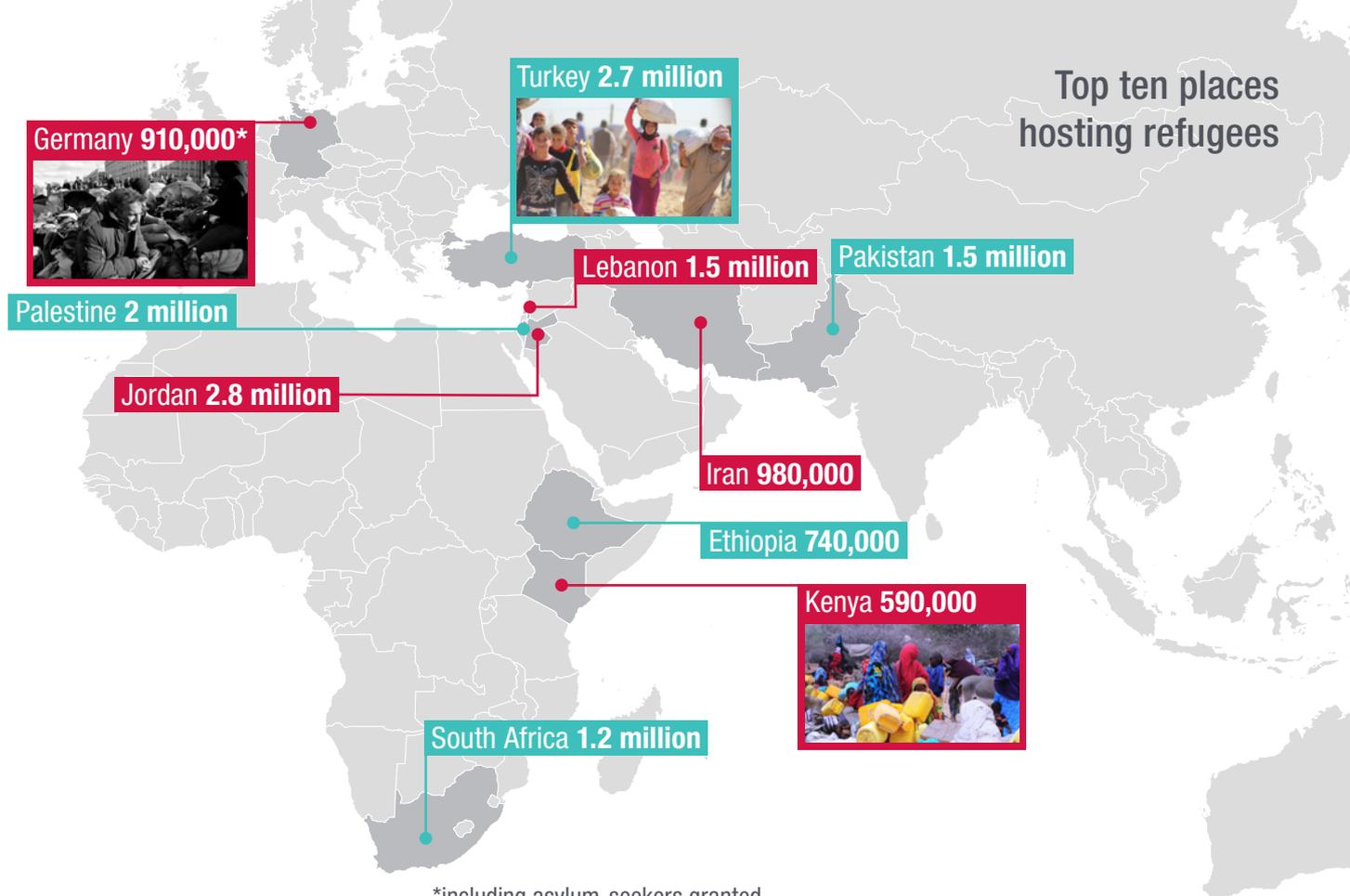
UK 0.3%

Jordan 43%

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REFUGEES SEEKING SAFETY OFTEN FACE INSECURITY

Refugees seek safety in exile but often end up for years in places marked by instability and fragility; substantial numbers of displaced people in 2015 risked longer and more dangerous trips to find stability, including across the Mediterranean. For the first time since the Syrian refugee crisis started, a high-income country, Germany, ranks in the top 10 of countries hosting refugees.



*including asylum-seekers granted refugee status in 2016

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THREE-QUARTERS OF ALL DISPLACED PEOPLE ARE IN CITIES, NOT CAMPS

Refugees are no longer confined to rural camps, despite ubiquitous images of sprawling refugee camps. In fact the majority live in cities or towns, in private accommodation. Aid providers now have to work differently, and better understand the different needs of refugees living in big urban centres.

More than 75% of all displaced people are now living in urban settings



Over **60% of refugees** and over **80% of IDPs** are in urban settings

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DISPLACEMENT IS A LONG-LASTING REALITY FOR MOST REFUGEES

Displacement is not a temporary experience for most refugees. More than 40% of refugees in 2015 had been displaced for more than 10 years, and 20% for more than 30 years. Once people have been displaced for six months, their exile is likely to be protracted over many years.

Only **2.5%** of refugee crises are resolved within 3 years



Nearly **9 million** refugees have been displaced for more than **10 years**

9 million displaced



No. of years

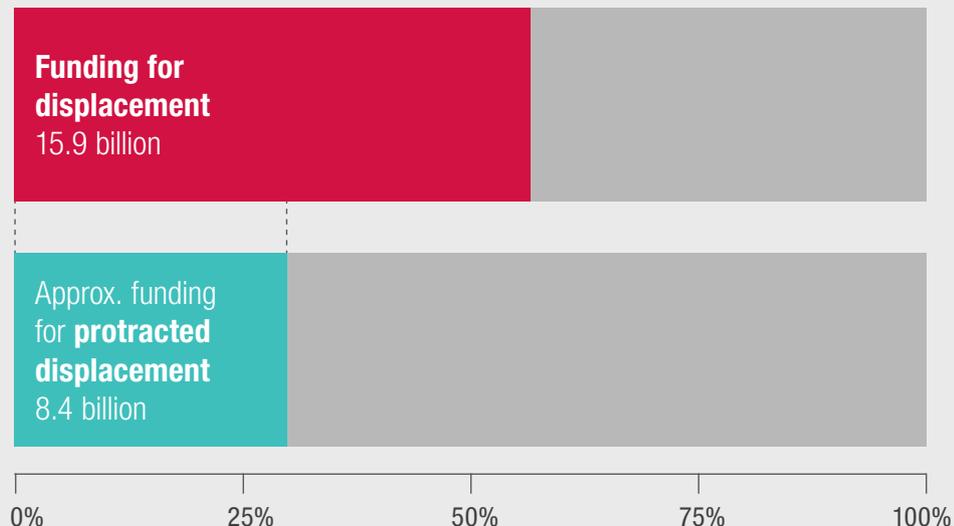
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CURRENT FUNDING FOR DISPLACEMENT IS NOT SUSTAINABLE, BUT NEW MODELS ARE BEING TESTED

A large part of humanitarian aid is dedicated to supporting refugees and IDPs, but half of it is spent on those newly displaced. Funding often decreases rapidly after the first few years, with little help for displaced people to survive or find livelihoods over the long term. New models may change the equation: longer-term national planning for hosting refugees, new concessional lending windows and multi-year development financing are being tested in countries affected by the Syria crisis, including Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.

Global humanitarian spending (US\$)

Total: 28 billion



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WE NEED TO GET BETTER AT SUPPORTING REFUGEES TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES

Displaced people – particularly those who have been displaced over for long periods of time – demonstrate incredible resilience and creativity and develop ways of supporting themselves. Traditionally, aid programming has been short-sighted, but aid agencies are slowly starting to look at supporting displaced people in more comprehensive ways, including supporting their own ambitions and ability to work, and ensuring access to services and legal protection.

Before

Food

Basic health

Tents

Needed now

Access to services

Freedom to work

Employment support

No camps

Support for urban living

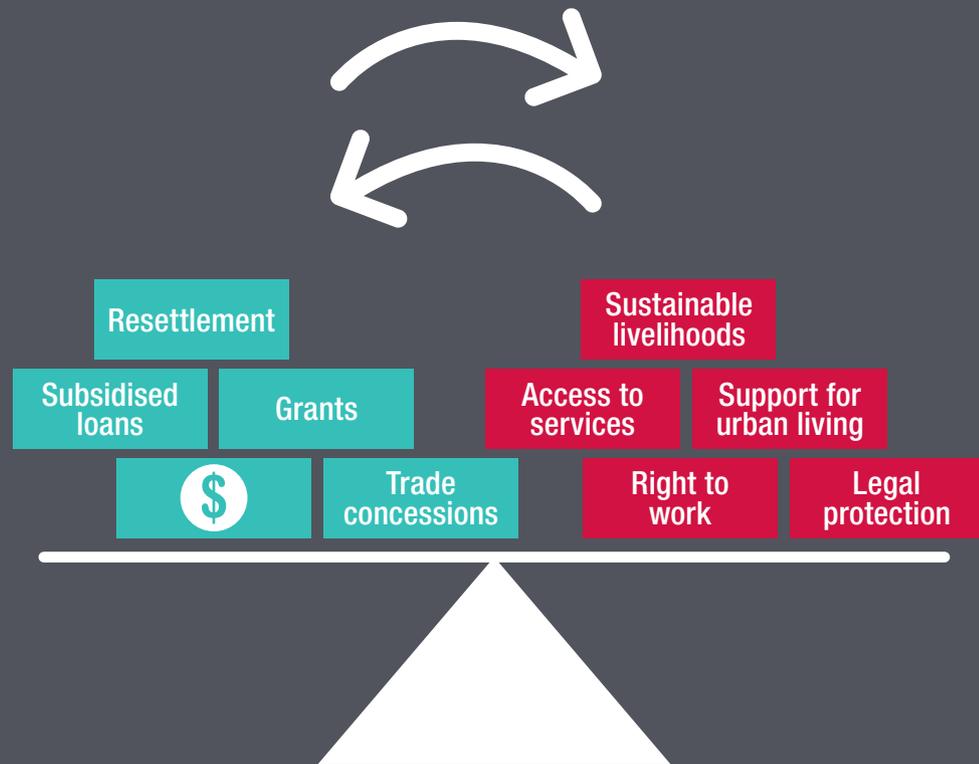
Improving laws or
legal protection

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WIN-WIN SITUATION FOR HOST COUNTRIES AND REFUGEES?

Recent experiences with Syrian refugees in Jordan, for example, suggests that a better deal for refugees can be negotiated with host governments. In return for grants, subsidised loans and trade concessions that protect a host countries' development path, greater self-reliance of refugees can be achieved – including through work permits. This can be a win-win for host countries and refugees.

However, financial support by richer countries should not substitute for more equitable responsibility-sharing worldwide, including resettlement. Work permits are equally not a panacea, but can be useful tools in addition to support for comprehensive refugee rights – including legal protection, access to services and freedom of movement.



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#5 Photos:

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