



**FINAL REPORT - GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM 2019**  
**PLEDGE TO PROMOTE**  
**REFUGEE SELF-RELIANCE**  
through Measurement, Programming, and Advocacy



# Introduction

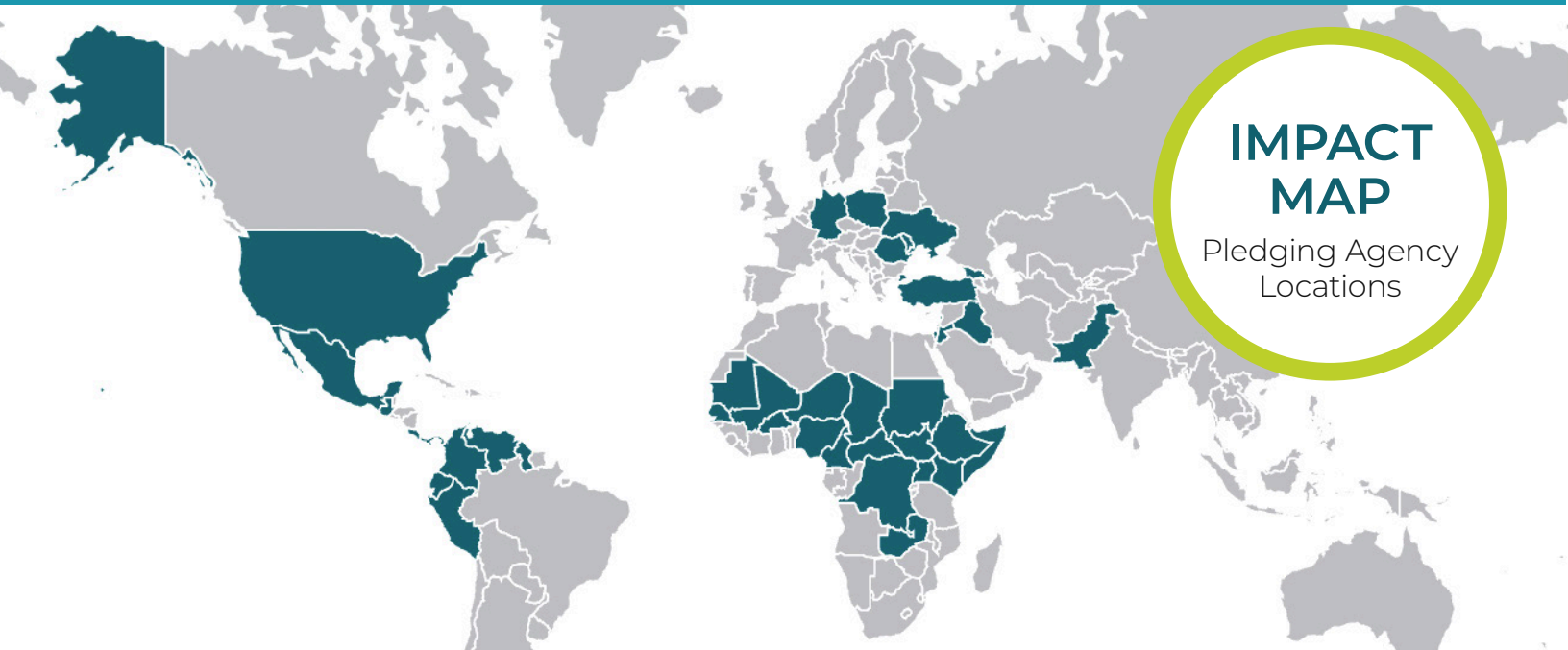
At the [2019 Global Refugee Forum \(GRF\)](#), the [Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative \(RSRI\)](#) presented the [Pledge to Promote Refugee Self-Reliance through Measurement, Programming and Advocacy](#), a joint pledge, along with 16 partner agencies, to promote refugee self-reliance through measurement, programming and advocacy.

This pledge aimed to improve standards of practice for refugee assistance to advance self-reliance for refugees, other displaced populations and host community members. Significant progress was made by the pledging agencies to advance refugee self-reliance, with the pledge commitments fully realized.

This pledge report builds on the [2021 Pledge Progress Update](#) and includes consolidated pledge results covering the entire 2020-2022 reporting period.

## The Joint GRF Pledge on Refugee-Self-Reliance highlights a commitment to:

1. Expand the use and support for the Self-Reliance Index (SRI) to measure self-reliance;
2. Increase access to self-reliance programming, and;
3. Advocate to ensure an enabling environment conducive to self-reliance.



## Pledging Agencies



# Pledge Impact Report

## GOAL 1

Expand the use and support for the RSRI-developed Self-Reliance Index to measure self-reliance and build an evidence base.

In May 2020, the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative **launched the Self-Reliance Index**, the first global tool to measure the progress of refugee families on their paths to self-reliance. By December 2022, the tool had been adopted by 40 agencies in 26 countries and has been used to assess the self-reliance status of over 20,000 households.

Since the launch, the RSRI team has trained over 1,000 staff members from over 65 international, national, and community-based NGOs; UN agencies; and refugee-led organizations. The RSRI team works closely with partners on an ongoing basis to review and analyze data collected through the SRI.

Findings from the rollout period between 2020-2022 indicated that use of the SRI is helping practitioners gain a more comprehensive understanding of the self-reliance status of their clients, and that the tool is informing the design and adaptation of programming in line with client needs and capacities.

A number of resources were developed over the two-year period to support expanded use and uptake of the SRI, including:

- Online training modules available in English, Arabic, Spanish and French.
- Tool and user guides available in English, Arabic, Spanish, French, and Kiswahili.
- SRI [Learning Report](#) (published December 2021) highlighting what was learned about the SRI as the tool was rolled out between May 2020 and December 2021, including findings related to tool validity, scoring, reliability, training, and integration of the tool.
- SRI [Conceptual Framework](#) (published in June 2022) highlighting the challenges of measuring refugee self-reliance along with the literature and framework of self-reliance



**Adopted by 40 agencies in 26 countries**



**20,000+ households assessed**



**1,000+ staff trained from 65+ agencies**

that underpinned the development of the Self-Reliance Index.

As use of the Self-Reliance Index tool expands, many organizations are utilizing it in research, program learning and training. Examples include:

- In Kenya, Somalia, and Ethiopia, ReDSS supported capacity development through durable solutions training, which includes a self-reliance module highlighting the SRI tool. As the learning partner of the Somalia Danwadaag Consortium, ReDSS also utilized the tool to measure achievement of self-reliance under the programme.
- Trickle Up began the application of the SRI in Graduation Approach programming in Uganda and Kenya to measure long-term impacts on client self-reliance. SRI rollout was done in Uganda with DRC (Imvepi) and AVSI (Southwest), and with NRC in Kakuma Refugee Camp.
- HIAS applied the SRI in a number of contexts in South America to explore self-reliance gains made amongst households in Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru where they are implementing their [Socio-Economic Support Program \(SESP\)](#).
- RefugeePoint in Nairobi, Kenya used the SRI to inform targeting, case management and graduation for clients in its [Urban Refugee Protection Program \(URPP\)](#), with assessments taking place every six months.



▲ The Self-Reliance Index was released in 2020, and a Version 2.0 was released in 2022.

## GOAL 2

### Increase access to self-reliance programming



**2,182,999 refugees reached**



**38 countries reached**



**8 operational agencies pledged**

The target for this goal was to reach 250,000 refugees with self-reliance programming through the work of 5-10 partner agencies in at least 5 countries. Collectively, eight operational agencies reached 2,182,999 refugees, other displaced populations, and host

community members in 38 countries with self-reliance programming over the reporting period.

Partners implemented a diversity of self-reliance programs, ranging from holistic case-management programs and the Graduation Approach to psychosocial assistance, asset transfers, employment and financial inclusion, and education support.

Caritas Czech Republic in Zambia reached 4,404 refugees and other persons of concern with self-reliance programming that included implementation of the Graduation Approach, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training programs, and start-up grants for businesses run by women clients.

The Danish Refugee Council reached 76,890 individuals in 13 countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Niger, South Sudan, Turkey, Uganda) with self-reliance programming that included the Graduation Approach, as well as application of the Self-Reliance Index.

The Danish Refugee Council is also supporting 201,910 clients globally currently with decent livelihoods programming.

HIAS reached 980,908 individuals (196,181 households) in 15 countries (Aruba, Chad, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guyana, Israel, Kenya, Mexico, Moldova, Panama, Peru, Poland, Romania and Venezuela) through holistic self-reliance programming that included the Graduation Approach, socio-economic support, wage and self-employment facilitation, financial inclusion, food security, mental health, psychosocial support, and cash assistance.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) reached 32,820 individuals (6,564 households) in Kenya, Uganda, Niger, and Germany with self-reliance programming, in addition to also reaching host community members in the same locations.

Mercy Corps and partners reached 544,920 individuals through self-reliance programs in 10 countries (Colombia, Ethiopia, Uganda, Iraq, Jordan, Niger, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, and the US) with programs focusing on economic empowerment, graduation approaches, education, psychosocial assistance and conflict management.

The Norwegian Refugee Council reached 342,343 individuals in 13 countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Colombia, Iraq, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Poland, Somalia, South Sudan, Ukraine) through the implementation of self-reliance and economic



▲ Danish Refugee Council participant Eedah putting make up on a client at her beauty salon in the Azraq refugee camp.

inclusion programming. NRC recently started an Economic Inclusion program in Kenya and South Sudan that will apply the Self-Reliance Index at baseline and endline to contribute to understanding the impact the implementation has on client household self-reliance.

RefugeePoint reached 2,942 refugees and host community members in Nairobi, Kenya with holistic programming using its Self-Reliance Runway approach, which provides a concrete, measurable pathway for enhancing self-reliance for refugees.

Trickle Up supported 15 partners to adapt, design, and/or implement Graduation Approach or other social and economic inclusion programs for refugees, other displaced persons, and host community members in 11 countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Colombia, Guatemala, Kenya, Jordan, Mauritania, Mexico, Niger, Senegal, and Uganda).

## GOAL 3

### Advocate to ensure an enabling environment conducive for self-reliance

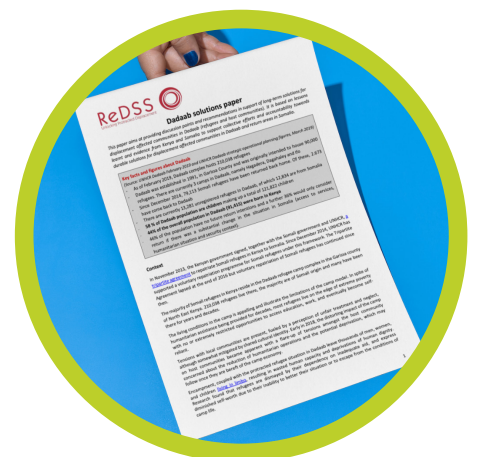
Several pledging partners supported advocacy efforts in support of a more enabling environment and policies to support self-reliance. In addition, a number of pledging partners are undertaking research that is contributing to a growing base of evidence on pathways to refugee self-reliance. Highlights include:

#### Displacement Financing

Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS) conducted a series of research studies to help rethink the displacement financing architecture and explore the role that aid financing can play in delivering solutions to displacement, including the type of financing that is required to support self-reliance strategies for refugees and host communities. The research includes country case studies on Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia and provides practical lessons and recommendations to stimulate dialogue and critical reflection on how to improve the displacement financing architecture in the Horn of Africa.

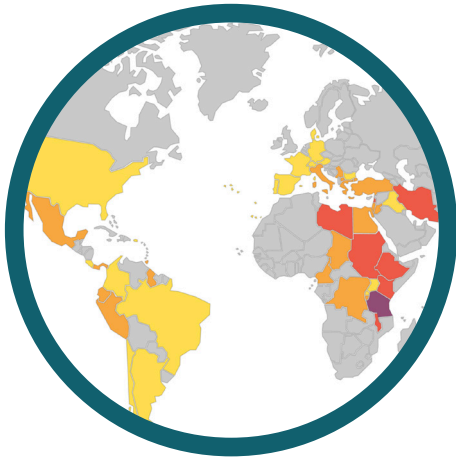
#### Self-Reliance Approaches in Dadaab Camp, Kenya

Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS) conducted a [solutions analysis](#) for the Dadaab camp in Kenya in 2021 to provide a snapshot of both challenges and opportunities for self-reliance and integration for residents. The analysis employed a political sociology and political economy lens in an attempt to shed new light on the societal terrain upon which refugee households



▲ ReDSS released a solutions analysis regarding their work with refugees and host communities in Dadaab.

manage risk, access protection and resources, seek livelihoods, cope with social barriers, and make decisions about their future. It also provided some practical recommendations for addressing the challenges identified, with the aim of supporting discussions with authorities and stakeholders on developing self-reliance strategies that take into account the socio-economic and political realities that refugees face in Dadaab, Garissa County. In 2022 ReDSS began a process to support its members to translate these recommendations into practice through an action learning process that is continuing into 2023.



▲ The 2022 Global Refugee Work Rights Report features scorecards on 51 countries.

### Let Them Work Initiative

The Let Them Work Initiative, a partnership between the Center for Global Development and Refugees International, combines research and advocacy to understand barriers for refugees and forced migrants to freely work, move, and thrive. To date, the initiative has released [a global report](#) examining the state of labor market access for refugees around the world and case studies on Colombia, Kenya, Peru and Ethiopia. The initiative also published several policy briefs on the impact of COVID-19 on refugee economic inclusion.

### Re:BUILD

With support from the IKEA Foundation, the International Rescue Committee and the Center for Global Development partnered to implement [Re:BUiLD](#), a program to support livelihoods development for urban refugees in Nairobi, Kenya, and Kampala, Uganda. As part of the program, a research agenda is being implemented to demonstrate the effectiveness of service offerings and aims to influence policies, practices, and investments in additional cities in East Africa and beyond.

Re:BUiLD also supports several advocacy initiatives, including a decent work campaign aimed at advocating for the economic engagement of urban refugees and vulnerable host communities and a Cost of Living Crisis campaign and associated policy brief aimed at advocating for the right to humanitarian assistance and social protection for urban refugees in Kenya and Uganda.

### Research: Designing the most effective bundle of services to help clients achieve economic well-being outcomes

In partnership with Georgetown University and with funding from Blackrock, the International Rescue Committee conducted a [Randomized Control Trial](#) to inform the design of the most effective bundle of services to help clients achieve economic well-being outcomes in Kenya.

## Livelihoods Impact Assessments

Caritas Czech Republic in Zambia conducted a number of impact assessments to measure and evaluate the impact of livelihoods interventions targeting the self-reliance of urban refugees and other populations of concern in Lusaka, Zambia, including a review of the impacts of the Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Sponsorship Program (VETSP) targeting youths in 2021.



▲ A Caritas Czech Republic in Zambia VETSP participant works on their sewing skills during a program.

## Self-Reliance Evidence Review

RefugeePoint and the Danish Refugee Council have undertaken an [evidence review](#) on refugee self-reliance.

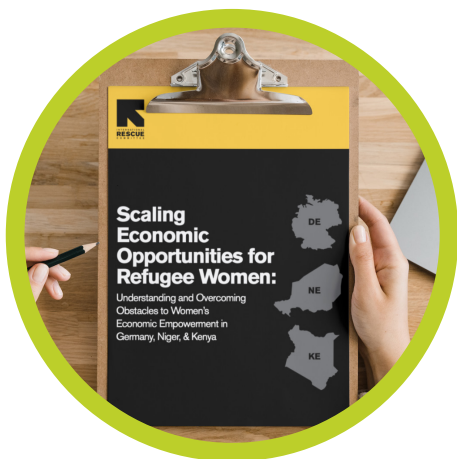
The resulting research provides a [consolidated mapping](#) of existing knowledge and evidence around refugee self-reliance and will identify outstanding gaps in evidence, which will enable the broader community to define future research priorities.

## Graduation Approach and Social Protection System in Jordan

Through the “Graduation Approach Coordination & Advocacy Taskforce,” Danish Refugee Council in Jordan completed a briefing covering the integration of the Graduation Approach in the Jordanian Social Protection System, which charts potential paths forward for strengthening links between implementing agencies employing the Graduation Approach and the Government of Jordan institutions poised to contribute to poverty alleviation and self-reliance of refugees and other people of concern in Jordan.

## Self-Reliance and Durable Solutions

The Danish Refugee Council commissioned a report, [“Which Refugee Self-Reliance? Whose Durable Solution?”](#) ahead of the first official stocktaking of the Global Refugee Forum on 14-15 December 2021 with the view to explore self-reliance within a durable solutions lens.



▲ IRC published Scaling Economic Opportunities for Refugee Women in 2020.

## Economic Empowerment for Refugee Women

The IRC published a [report on scaling economic opportunities for refugee women](#) in Kenya, Germany, and Niger, Women Economic Empowerment Research Report. The report explored how displaced women define economic empowerment and its benefits, and their perception of the challenges that they face in participating in the labor market, based on qualitative research in Niger, Germany, and Kenya.



## Research: Energy Access, Mobile Connectivity, Education in Emergencies and Refugee Decision-Making

During the reporting period, Mercy Corps and partners conducted at least 10 research studies related to refugee self-reliance. These were focused on energy access provisions for refugee camps, mobile connectivity, education in emergencies, and decision-making.

## Technology and Self-Reliance

Recognizing the role of technology in allowing refugees and migrants to access opportunities, Samuel Hall is examining the challenges and the potential of the digital economy through research conducted with the WUSC (World University Service of Canada) and the Mastercard Foundation. During the pledge reporting period, Samuel Hall completed [a study under this track of work](#) focused on digital employment opportunities for refugee youth in Kenya.



▲ RSRI and PRM presented their Innovation Labs findings at the 2022 UNHCR High Commissioners Dialogue.

## Innovation Labs on Self-Reliance

In the lead-up to the December 2022 UNHCR High Commissioner's Protection Dialogue, the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative and PRM co-convoked an [innovation lab focused on refugee self-reliance](#). The three-part lab included thematic discussions on: (i) Measuring the Impacts of Self-reliance: Data, Evidence, and Research; (ii) Supporting Programming and Practices to Advance Refugee Self-Reliance; and (iii) Fostering Policies to Promote an Enabling Environment in which Refugees and Host Communities Can Thrive.

Each discussion convened representatives from academia, foundations, NGOs, research organizations, refugee-led organizations, multilateral institutions, governments (host countries and donors), and the private sector to shape pledging, programming, and policymaking to enhance self-reliance in advance of the 2023 Global Refugee Forum. The full learning brief detailing outcomes and recommendations from the lab can be accessed [here](#).

## Integration of Self-Reliance into Guidelines for NGO Partners

PRM has increasingly reflected the importance of self-reliance in programming through its annual NGO guidelines. For example, PRM suggests considering the self-reliance of program participants in the sustainability and capacity strengthening section of proposals and prioritizes livelihoods proposals that are impact-driven and that seek to measurably improve the economic well-being and self-reliance of participants, such as through the [Self-Reliance Index](#) or through other indicators.

## Refugee Self-Reliance and the Global Compact on Refugees: Unpacking Barriers and Opportunities for Success

Building on the GCR framework, the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative (RSRI) in partnership with the Global Refugee Youth Network (GRYN) and the Refugee-Led Research Hub (RLRH) joined together to invite civil society actors to share input focused specifically on Objective II, enhancing refugee self-reliance. Through a [multi-layer study](#), the RSRI, GRYN, and RLRH engaged civil society actors to create recommendations that fed into the UNHCR High-Level Officials Meeting (HLOM) in Geneva in December 2021, and are now being utilized to guide future discussions on self-reliance.

## Protracted Displacement in an Urban World (PDUW)

PDUW led by the International Institute for Environment and Development with co-investigators and advisors from Cardiff University, Dilla University, Hashemite University, the International Rescue Committee, Maseno University, Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat, Samuel Hall, Slum Dwellers International Kenya, and the Women's Refugee Commission and funded through the Global Challenge Research Fund (GCRF), compares experiences of protracted displacement in cities and in camps.

The research aims to better understand the opportunities and challenges of hosting displaced people in urban areas compared to camps across Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Jordan and Kenya, focusing on how displaced people in these different settings fare in terms of their self-reliance, livelihoods and economies, and well-being. The project plans to publish a series of reports in 2023, building on data collected from the four target countries, and the PDUW team is also working on the production of a comparative report looking at self-reliance scores before and after the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan in August 2021.



▲ The PDUW Initiative was launched in 2020 and will continue into 2023.

## Durable Solutions and Self-Reliance in the Middle East

Durable solutions programming and self-reliance programming are not synonymous, though they are intrinsically linked. Throughout this study conducted in partnership with NRC, Samuel Hall has engaged participants and existing literature on both durable solutions and self-reliance and has progressed from country-level conversations on self-reliance to regional-level conversations on durable solutions.

While the research revealed a lack of durable solutions data to have a baseline in the traditional sense, this report assesses progress, achievements, and barriers encountered by the representatives of NRC country offices and presents recommendations that will set metrics and inform future regional programming on durable solutions.

## **Economic Inclusion Framework - A study for NRC/Ikea Foundation**

The lack of clear pathways to livelihoods in rural areas is one of the key barriers to refugee and host community self-reliance identified by the IKEA Foundation's Refugee Livelihood Portfolio guidance. The NRC EI Framework proposes EI as a pathway to self-reliance, arguing that if target groups are given holistic support that addresses their individual needs, they will be able to be more self-reliant. However, existing data and learning on this topic remains limited. NRC's EI Framework was tested in two locations selected for a pilot – i) Dadaab Camp in Garissa County, Kenya; and ii) Aweil in Northern Bahr el Ghazal state in South Sudan.

This consultancy aimed to demonstrate that NRC's Economic Inclusion (EI) framework can serve as a methodology that combines various initiatives to enable self-reliance among communities affected by displacement. The recommendations outlined in the final report produced will be used in the revision of the design of the "EI as a pathway to self-reliance" project funded by the IKEA Foundation and will directly influence what activities will be included in the project.

## **Durable Solutions Study – NRC Jordan**

Samuel Hall and NRC Jordan have partnered to develop a durable solutions operational framework (OF) based on the perceptions and aspirations of refugees in Jordan. To listen to the voices of affected communities, this study required an iterative approach to fieldwork, based on four rounds of data collection, each informing the next, over a period of six months during which the research team consulted refugees and host community members in Jordan. The operational framework has been further developed through an in-depth analysis of refugees' perceptions of barriers to and progress towards durable solutions. Thematic experts and other actors working on displacement and durable solutions in the country also contributed their knowledge and insights.

## **Technology and Self-Reliance**

Recognizing the role of technology in allowing refugees and migrants to access opportunities, Samuel Hall is examining the challenges and the potential of the digital economy through research conducted with the WUSC (World University Service of Canada) and the Mastercard Foundation. During the pledge reporting period, Samuel Hall completed [a study](#) under this track of work focused on digital employment opportunities for refugee youth in Kenya.

## **Funding Commitments**

The U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) and the Ikea Foundation served as pledging partners and contributed significant funding focused on self-reliance, with support contributing to outcomes under all three goals of the pledge.

## *PRM Commitments*

- Support to the JDC and RSRI: In line with the Global Compact on Refugees, promoting self-reliance and livelihoods opportunities is a key policy and programmatic priority for the United States Department of State - Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM). To support research and learning around this topic, PRM contributes funding to the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative (RSRI) and the World Bank-UNHCR Joint Data Center (JDC).
- Support to UNHCR and PAC: The Government of the United States contributed funding for livelihoods and self-reliance programs to international organizations and NGO partners, including through support to the UNHCR Livelihoods and Poverty Alleviation Coalition (PAC) budget, with contributions representing 38% of the PAC's overall budget. The Poverty Alleviation Coalition is a coalition of UNHCR, The World Bank Partnership for Economic Inclusion (PEI), and NGOs that work collectively to increase self-reliance, economic and social inclusion of extremely poor refugees & host community members using the well-proven graduation approach, with the aim of reaching 500,000 households by 2025.
- The USG made 13 pledges total ([10 pledges at the High Level Officials Meeting](#) (HLOM) in Dec 2021 and three pledges at the High-Level Segment on Statelessness) toward the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), to be fulfilled by the time of the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in December 2023. One of the 13 pledges was a pledge to “support ten existing pledges to support refugee inclusion and self-reliance: Over the next two years, the United States pledges to support at least 10 existing pledges that States, or organizations, have made since 2019 aimed at strengthening the inclusion of refugees by host communities and helping refugees become self-sufficient.” Progress toward implementation of the United States’ 13 pledges will be reported separately by PRM.

## *Ikea Foundation Commitments*

- The Ikea Foundation committed €100 million over a five-year period (2020-2025) to support self-reliance research, advocacy, and programming, of which €74 million was allocated between 2020 and 2022. The Ikea Foundation will spend an additional €30 million on refugee programming in 2023. On the programming side, the Foundation

provided financial support for the ReBuild and #LetThemWork initiatives, outlined above, in addition to support for a number of organizations implementing economic inclusion and self-reliance programming in Kenya, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Jordan.

- The IKEA Foundation invested ~\$33.5 million on projects that combine Graduation Approach with Market Systems Development, \$ 26 million through AVSI Foundation and \$7.5 million through Village Enterprise.

## FOOTNOTE

<sup>1</sup>Some partners reporting on this goal tracked households reached with self-reliance programming, rather than the number of individuals. To provide a single aggregate number for the update, 5 was selected as the average size of a household and this was used to calculate individuals reached.

## PHOTO CREDITS

Pg 4. Danish Refugee Council

Pg 5. ReDSS

Pg 6. Caritas Czech Republic in Zambia

Pg 6. IRC

Pg 7. Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative

Pg 8. Protracted Displacement in an Urban World (PDUW) Initiative

pg 9. RefugePoint



Learn more and get involved:  
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