

# Refugee SELF-RELIANCE Initiative

## Introduction

At the 2019 Global Refugee Forum (GRF), the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative (RSRI) presented a joint pledge, along with 15 partner agencies, to promote refugee self-reliance over the next two years. Despite the significant global disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, we have made progress towards our joint commitments to advance self-reliance for refugees, other displaced populations and host community members. This update highlights the progress made so far and serves as an exercise in self-accountability towards our GRF pledge commitments.



## Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative: Joint GRF Pledge

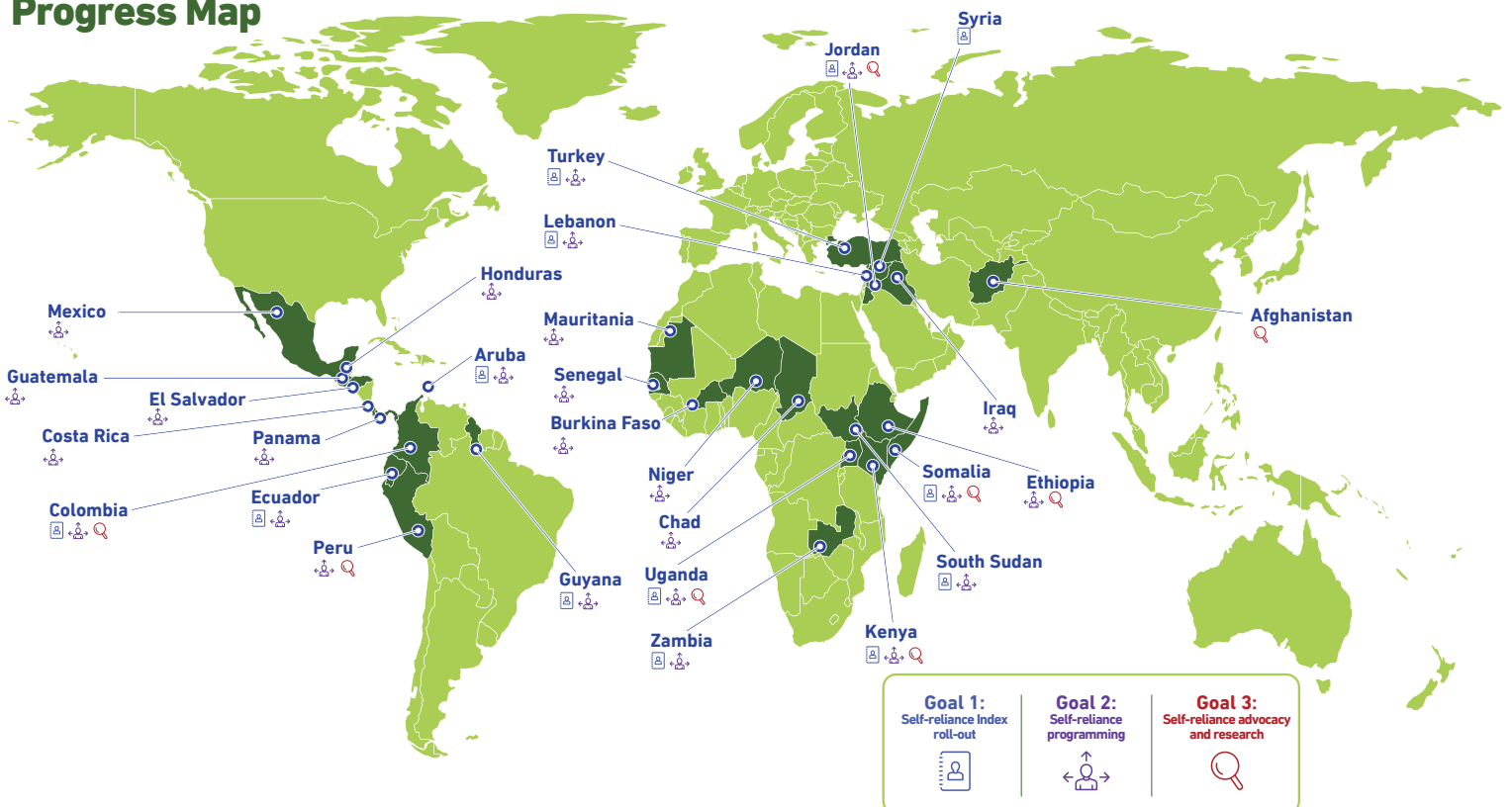
The RSRI joint pledge highlights an initial two-year commitment to:

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

## Pledging Agencies

ACT Alliance • Caritas Czech Republic in Zambia  
 Center for Global Development • Danish Refugee Council  
 HIAS • IKEA Foundation • International Rescue Committee  
 Mercy Corps • Norwegian Refugee Council  
 Refugees International • RefugePoint (RSRI Co-Chair)  
 Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat  
 Samuel Hall • Trickle Up  
 Women's Refugee Commission (RSRI Co-Chair)

## Progress Map



# Progress Update (January 2020 - June 2021)

## Goal 1

Expand the use and support for the Self-Reliance Index to measure self-reliance.



### Progress update:

In May 2020, the Refugee Self-Reliance Initiative launched the [Self-Reliance Index \(SRI\)](#), the first global tool to measure the progress of refugee families on their paths to self-reliance. In the first year of the global rollout, the tool has been adopted by 21 agencies in 14 countries and has been used to assess the self-reliance status of over 5,000 households.

Since the launch, the RSRI team has trained over 400 staff members from 27 international, national, and community-based NGOs, UN agencies, and refugee-led organizations. The RSRI team is also working closely with partners to review and analyze data collected through the SRI.

Emerging findings from the rollout indicate that use of the SRI is helping practitioners gain a more comprehensive understanding of the self-reliance status of their clients, which is helpful for designing and adapting programming in line with client needs and capacities.

## Goal 2

Increase access to self-reliance programming.



### Progress update:

The target for this goal is to reach 250,000 refugees with self-reliance programming through the work of 5 – 10 partner agencies in at least 5 countries.

Collectively, 6 operational agencies have reached **143,967** refugees, other displaced populations and host community members in **19** countries with self-reliance programming.<sup>[1]</sup>

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

Caritas Czech Republic in Zambia reached 8,660 refugees and other persons of concern with self-reliance programming that included implementation of the Graduation Approach and educational support programs.

The Danish Refugee Council reached 45,470 individuals (9,094 households) in 6 countries (Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, South Sudan, Turkey) with self-reliance programming that included the Graduation Approach, business grants, entrepreneurship training, job placements and shelter support.

HIAS reached 79,965 individuals (15,993 households) in 9 countries (Aruba, Chad, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guyana, Kenya, Peru and Panama) through programming that included the Graduation Approach, socio-economic support, wage and self-employment facilitation and financial inclusion.

Mercy Corps in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council and the Jordan River Foundation reached 345 refugees and host community members as part of the Resilient Youth Socially and Economically Empowered (RYSE) program using the Graduation Approach.

The Norwegian Refugee Council reached 7,480 individuals in 5 countries (El Salvador, Honduras, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda) through implementation of the Graduation Approach and other self-reliance programming.

RefugePoint reached 2047 refugees and host community members in Nairobi, Kenya with holistic self-reliance programming using its Self-Reliance Runway approach.

Trickle Up has supported 7 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, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya, Jordan, Mauritania, Mexico, Niger, Senegal, and Uganda).

<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.



## Progress update:

Several pledging partners are undertaking research that is contributing to a growing base of evidence on pathways to refugee self-reliance. Highlights include:

### 1) [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.

### 2) [#LetThemWork](#)

The #LetThemWork 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 in-depth case studies examining the state of labor market access for refugees in Colombia, Peru, and Ethiopia and how the expansion of access can turn into shared growth.

### 3) [Protracted Displacement in an Urban World \(PDUW\)](#)

Led by the International Institute for Environment and Development with co-investigators and advisors from Cardiff University, Dilla University, The 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), PDUW 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.

### 4) [Re:Build](#)

With support from the IKEA Foundation, the International Refugee Committee and the Center for Global Development have partnered to form Re:Build, a project to support livelihoods development for urban refugees in East Africa. As part of the project, 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. A first output from the project includes a literature review on existing evidence on livelihoods programming.

### 5) Self-Reliance Evidence Review

RefugePoint and the Danish Refugee Council are developing an evidence review on refugee self-reliance. The resulting research will provide 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.

*"We are standing behind this impressive work for refugees. We're working with partners to empower refugees and their host communities to find pathways towards economic self-reliance so they can support themselves and their families."*

- Annemieke de Jong, Portfolio Lead for the Refugees Livelihoods Portfolio, IKEA Foundation

