



“They may flee their homes with just the clothes on their backs, but forcibly displaced people have the potential to become self-reliant in their places of refuge. UNHCR and its partners help refugees, returnees and internally displaced people tap this potential and build a platform for a better future. Investing in people’s livelihoods helps to cut the cost of aid and protection and enhances the chance for a sustainable durable solution.”

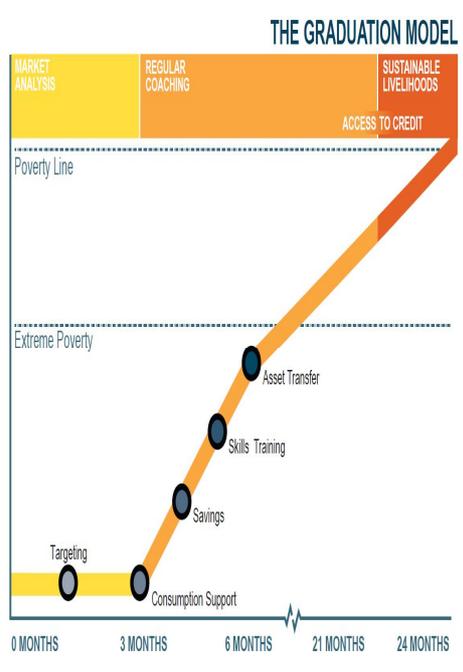
Helping refugees help themselves: LIVELIHOODS AND BUILDING SELF-RELIANCE IN URBAN REFUGEE SETTINGS

DIFFICULTES URBAN REFUGEES FACE IN FINDING LIVELIHOODS

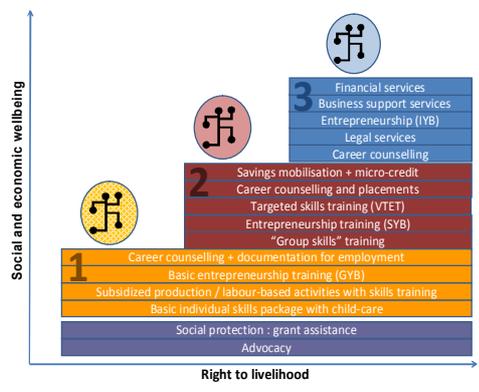
More than half the refugees UNHCR now serves live in urban areas. In the future, more refugees will live in cities and towns, and former refugees returning to their home countries will move to the city for work and a new life. However, even as refugees move to and live in urban areas, it does not mean their access to livelihoods is any easier. Refugees face language barriers, labor restrictions, confusing bureaucracies, and prejudices from neighbors and law enforcement.

Urbangoodpractices.org strives to compile information about good practices organizations around the world use to help refugees. This issue of our newsletter focuses on practices that assist urban refugees in finding and maintaining livelihoods in their host communities.

UNHCR and “The Graduation Model”



The term “graduation” refers to the goal of moving participants out of extreme poverty and into food security and sustainable livelihoods. This process is completed in a time-bound period through a sequenced combination of interventions. The graduation model was originally developed by BRAC, one of the largest non-governmental development organisations in Bangladesh, to help address the needs of those who were too poor for microfinance services.



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Since 2006, the model has been pilot-tested in 10 sites in eight countries worldwide by organizations supported by the World Bank's Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) and the Ford Foundation. Six pilots have been completed to date, reaching a total of 5,376 participants. Between 75 and 98 percent of the participants met graduation criteria after 18 to 36 months.

GRADUATION MODEL COMPONENTS

- Identify the most vulnerable households within a community;
- Provide a regular and time-bound cash transfer to enable them to meet basic needs;
- Help families plan their livelihoods and transfer their productive assets;
- Develop their ability to save money as a tool to build resilience;
- Enhance their technical and entrepreneurial skills through livelihood training;
- Ensure the close mentorship of participants throughout the process in a way that develops their self-confidence.

DPSM believes the CGAP-Ford Foundation's graduation model holds promise for the poorest refugees, thus



Myanmar / Women from different ethnic groups get sewing training funded by UNHCR in Maungdaw, northern Rakhine State. The programme is intended to create inter-ethnic harmony and promote livelihood opportunities for its participants. / UNHCR / Kyaw Soe Lynn / Sept 2010

enabling them to become self-reliant and lead active and productive lives while weaving strong social, economic and cultural ties within their host communities.

UNHCR has partnered with the NGO Trickle Up and BRAC University, which supported the design and implementation of all 10 CGAP-Ford Foundation pilots, to implement the graduation model in collaboration with local partner organisations. The initial multi-year graduation pilot began in June 2013 in Cairo, Egypt and was followed by a second pilot in Costa Rica in November 2013. These initiatives test the viability of the graduation model when applied

to refugee populations in both urban and camp settings as well as in protracted and crisis situations. They fall under the framework of the broader multi-year Livelihoods Strategy currently being developed by DPSM.

TARGETING OBJECTIVES

The graduation model targets families living in extreme poverty, families which live on less than \$1.25 a day. They are often marginalized within their communities, lacking access to services and programmes that could help them.

Targeting for UNHCR projects is very context-specific and draws on the socio-economic criteria established for existing cash-based interventions and other assistance programmes.

Updates from the field THE GRADUATION MODEL IN EGYPT

Egypt is among the top five countries with the largest number of urban refugees in the world. As of April 2013, it is home to over 90,000 registered refugees. Cairo offers an interesting opportunity to test the graduation model in an urban setting and with two different populations requiring UNHCR responses: an African refugee population in a protracted crisis situation and a Syrian refugee population in an emergency situation. Five hundred participants were originally chosen for the pilot study, from



Tanzania / Ramadhani Abdalah, a Tanzanian Zgua farmer hired by a Zgua Somali Bantu refugee to help with farming an acre of land. The two communities' common historical linkage has enabled an easy integration into the host community. / UNHCR / B. Bannon/ Nov 2008



Iran / UNHCR gave Afghan refugee Ali a molding machine last year, helping the seventy-five-year old continue to earn a living despite his ailing hands and heart condition. He works from home making prayer stones out of clay, supporting his wife, daughter, and sick son from his business. UNHCR hopes to expand its livelihood programmes in Iran to help more refugees earn a living. / UNHCR / A. Rummery / May 2010

among those already receiving direct cash assistance, giving priority to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), youth, and women to the greatest extent possible. More recently, 1,000 Syrian refugees will be included in the pilot. Along with receiving cash assistance to cover daily life needs, participants will be given fixed amount food vouchers monthly (EGP 300) as well as training and coaching that will enable them to choose one of two pathways to help them move off of cash assistance: self-employment or wage employment. All programme participants will continue to receive UNHCR protection.

SEQUENCED INTERVENTIONS OVER 24 MONTHS:

- **Targeting** to ensure the poorest households are selected

- **Consumption support** for food before their businesses earns income
- **Savings** to build assets and instil financial discipline
- **Skills training** to learn how to care for assets and run a business.
- **Asset transfer** of an in-kind good (such as livestock) to help jump-start a sustainable economic activity

GRADUATION CRITERIA

Graduation criteria, or benchmarks of success, will be determined for each UNHCR project according to the populations' vulnerabilities at the start of the project and on the local context. Although graduation criteria will be determined on a pilot-by-pilot basis, graduation measures for past pilots not involving refugees have included:

- Eating at least two cooked meals per day all year round
- No starvation due to unavailability of food
- Productive assets valued at a certain threshold
- At least two sources of income
- The maintenance of a minimum savings balance
- At least one loan repaid within a savings-and-credit group

WHAT COMES NEXT?

Building on the results of the two pilots, DPSM will:

- Develop a strategy for implementing the graduation model in UNHCR operations based on lessons learned from BRAC and CGAP-Ford Foundation pilots.
- Assess monitoring data and analyse results to establish good practices for the graduation of refugees.
- Develop tools and guidelines for UNHCR's own graduation model.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information, please contact the Livelihoods Unit within the Operational Solutions and Transition Section (OSTS) of DPSM: LIVEL@unhcr.org.



GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

1. HOLISTIC PROTECTION AND SUPPORT, KENYA

Heshima Kenya, a nonprofit organization operating in Nairobi, Kenya, is the first organization in Kenya devoted to protecting unaccompanied and separated refugee children and youth, with a special focus in supporting women and girls ages 13 to 23 years old. Heshima Kenya recognizes that in order to fully meet the challenges affecting refugees' welfare, a holistic and specialized model of protection and support must replace larger and more traditional models of aid.

One aspect of Heshima Kenya's programming which highlights the holistic nature of its services is the Safe House Program, the first registered shelter to serve refugee children in Kenya. All residents receive intensive case management support and Heshima Kenya is developing feasible exit strategies for girls and young women who reside at the Safe House long-term. All residents attend daily classes at the Girls' Empowerment Project program site. The ultimate goal of the programme is to link residents to alternative care arrangements within the community. An example of such an exit strategy is the Maisha Collective, a peer-driven initiative that fosters leadership and business management skills through the design and production of unique hand-dyed scarves and textiles. Programmes like this one provide residents with savings and income to establish independence.

2. URBAN PROFILING, INDIA

Check out the Good Practices database to find a Profiling Report created by JIPS, UNHCR, and the Feinstein International Centre. The study explores the differences in livelihood security between refugees from Myanmar, Afghanistan, and Somalia and their local Indian neighbors, in order to identify impeding and contributing factors to better livelihoods. The ultimate goal is to improve self-reliance of urban refugees in Delhi through more evidence based programming and advocacy.



3. LABOR MARKET ACCESS, BRAZIL

The PARR Project (Programa de Apoio para a Recolocação dos Refugiados) was created in 2011 to support refugees and asylum seekers in accessing the formal labor market, a main barrier to successful integration in Brazil. The project's implementing partner, Caritas Sao Paulo, works with refugees to create professional resumes, which it then uploads to a virtual database which can be accessed by PARR's partner companies in the private sector.

The PARR project is the result of a partnership established between UNHCR and EMDOC, a legal consultancy company that specializes in immigration. The project also has a partnership with the Social Service of Commerce, which offers free Portuguese courses for refugees and asylum seekers for 3 months. This provides them with the essential language skills needed to secure a job and to integrate successfully in the country. PARR staff provides guidance to its clients prior to job interviews and continues to provide support during the first month after an individual is hired, in order to help resolve any conflicts that may arise.



4. FINANCING DEVELOPMENT, MALAYSIA

UNHCR's Social Protection Fund (SPF) provides small, time-bound grants to projects presented by refugee communities and is intended to promote self-reliance and to foster positive relations between refugees and the Malaysian population. The SPF has funded an IT training center established by a Sri Lankan refugee; a baking cooperative run by eight young Somalis, and a Chin refugee school which organizes a monthly 'community cleanup.'

5. EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SPORT, BRAZIL

UNHCR Brazil has partnered with NGO Partners of the Americas to create 'Programa Vencer', a sport-for-development project that provides employability training to refugee youth. The final stage of the program includes an internship with a local business. Check out the database for more information!

SUBMITTING YOUR OWN GOOD PRACTICES

We want hear about your good practice. To submit your good practice:

1. Fill in the template at utbangoodpractices.org/contribute
2. You will see your practice online within a few weeks