



# LEARNING FROM THE EVIDENCE ON FORCED DISPLACEMENT



Linked Event – Global Refugee Forum – December 12, 2023

## Event Agenda

- ***Welcome remarks***
- ***Soukeyna Kane, World Bank; Greg Houston, FCDO***
  
- ***Presentations***
- ***Paolo Verme, World Bank; Theresa Beltramo, UNHCR; Stephen Winkler, World Bank; Jan von der Goltz, World Bank***
  
- ***Panel Discussion and Q & A***
- ***Ricardo Morel, IPA; Commissioner Dr Prosper Ng'andu, Republic of Zambia; Paul Kithima, Bondeko Livelihoods Center; Commissioner Mohlolo Lerotholi, Kingdom of Lesotho; Agnes Hurwitz, UNHCR***
  
- ***Closing***
- ***Aissatou Dicko, JDC***

# ***Building the Evidence on Forced Displacement***

*Insights from a Global Research Partnership Program*

Paolo Verme  
World Bank



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**Building the Evidence on Forced Displacement**

# Background

- The 2011 Syrian crisis
- The 2015 EU migration “crisis”
- A new resolve: Increased political commitment and financial means
- An old problem: Lack of microdata and quality research on FDPs

No. Economics Journal Articles	< Dec.2015
Refugees	618
Internally Displaced	28

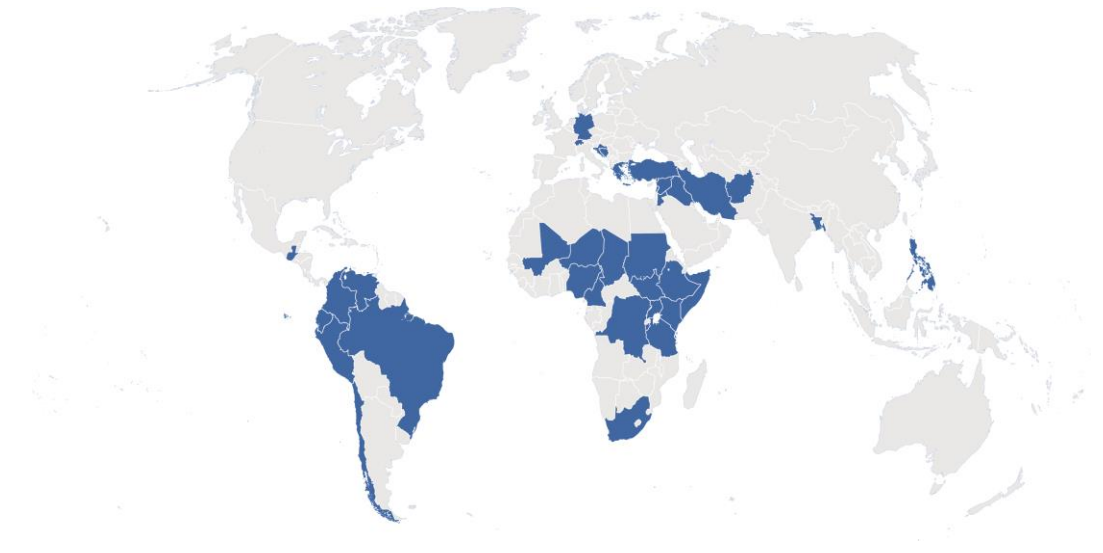
- An experiment: “[The Welfare of Syrian Refugees](#)”. WB-UNHCR partnership using UNHCR administrative and survey data (34,000 downloads)
- Establishment of a formal multi-year research partnership program: UK-WB-UNHCR *Building the Evidence on Forced Displacement* (BEoFD)

# The Research Program - Inputs

- 16.5 m USD (UK)
- 7 years (2016-2023)
- 7 pillars:
  1. Global studies for global questions
  2. Impact evaluations of specific programs
  3. Focus studies on compelling questions
  4. Young Fellows Program
  5. Microdata initiative
  6. Data portal
  7. Uptake/Dissemination/Training

# The Research Program - Outputs

- 6 global studies
- 15 impact evaluations
- 12 focus studies
- 24 young fellows
- 1 data portal
- 200+ researchers
- 30+ partner organizations
- 36 countries
- A microdata program => JDC
- Seminar series, newsletters, policy notes, website, social media, training program



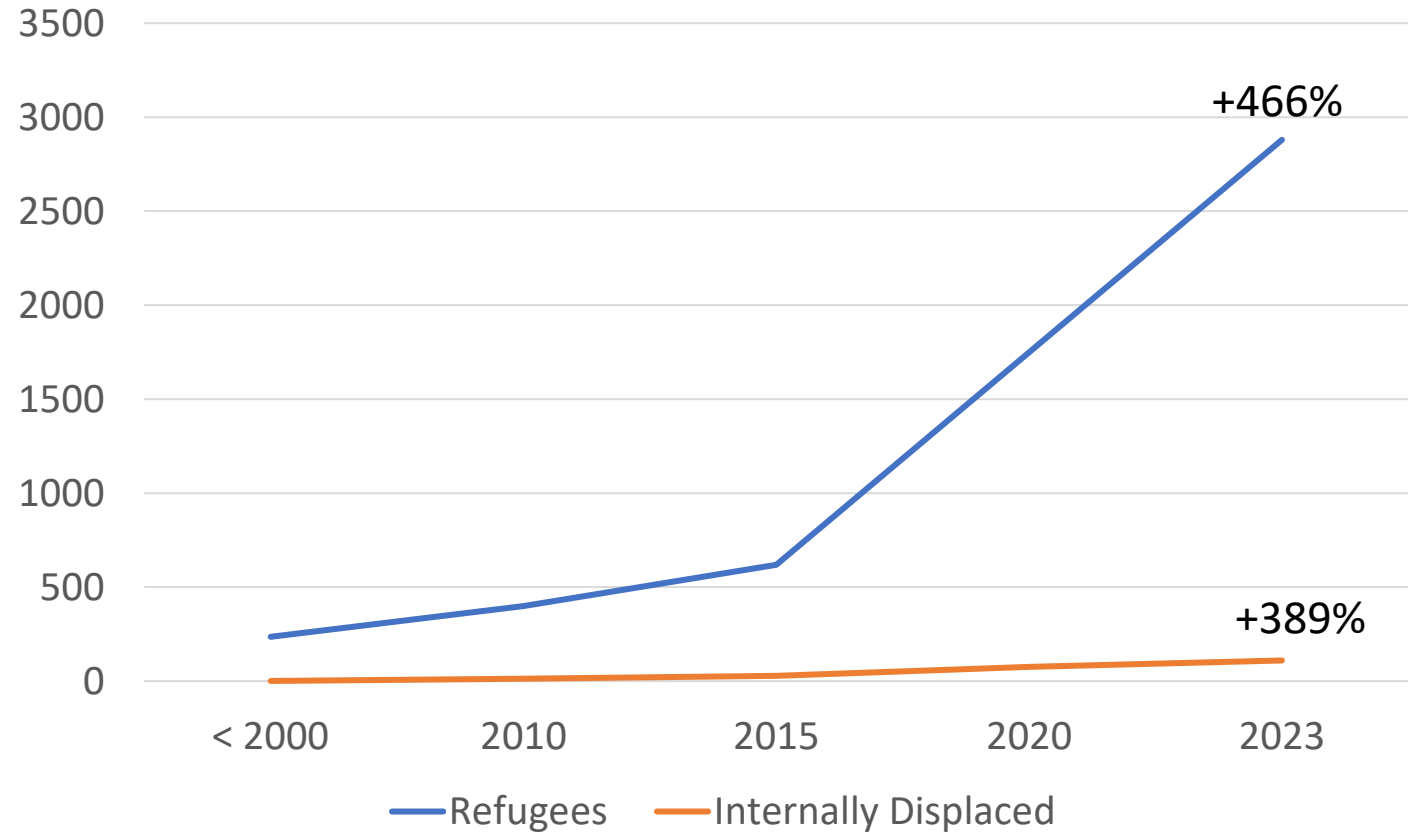
- 144 studies
- 36 publications in journals (as of November 2023) including top economics journals

# Distribution of Studies by area

Theme	Global	Europe & Central Asia	Latin America & Caribbean	Middle East & North Africa	South Asia & East Asia	Sub-Saharan Africa	Total
Education	2		1	3	1	4	11
Health	5		2	1	3	3	14
Lab.Mkt.\Livelihoods	3	1	3		4	9	20
Social Protection	7	1	1	4	1	1	15
Social Cohesion	7	9	7	4	1	12	40
Gender	4		1	4		14	23
Data/Methods	7			5	1	5	18
Other	1				1	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>144</b>

# An exceptional growth in research (2015-2023)

Number of papers published in economic journals





# Some general key findings

- Displacement crises have, on average and in the long-run, positive economic outcomes for host communities;
- These average and long-term effects hide a more complex picture with adverse effects being short-term, localized and concentrated among vulnerable groups;
- There is nothing inevitable among the negative externalities of FD crises. It is how governments and international actors respond to these challenges that matters;
- Policies that foster freedom of movement and freedom of work reduce the range and duration of the negative effects for the displaced population and their hosts.
- Graduation programs targeting ultra-poor households are effective in displacement contexts too.

# Three areas of recommendation

**1**

**Continue collecting and using data to inform programs and policy**

**2**

**Promote inclusive approaches while addressing host populations' needs**

**3**

**Close the gap between policy and practice**

# 1. Continue collecting and using data to inform programs and policy

**Continue collecting microdata to design targeted programming and policy**

- Progress made on refugees and host populations
- Internally displaced? Stateless? Returnees?

**Systematically collect data on program costs**

- Cost-efficiency analysis
- Cost-effectiveness analysis

**Invest more in measuring impacts**

- Some progress made, but ...
- Still lack of evidence on what works for jobs, education inclusion, mental health programs, ...

## 2. Promote inclusion while addressing host populations' needs

### Bestow legal status

- Freedom of movement, right to work, legal documents

### Mitigate negative impacts on hosts

- There are winners and losers among hosts
- Mitigate negative effects on losers

### Encourage interaction

- More interaction, better levels of social cohesion

### 3. Close the gap between policy and practice

Address barriers to policies and programs

- Policies are not enough ... barriers to their implementation were found in studies across countries

Improve communication about policies

- Perceived rather than actual levels of assistance to the displaced drive negative sentiments

Focus on key access constraints

- Costs, for example, are a major barrier to accessing health and education services, even where these services exist and are provided to the displaced and their hosts

# Some important areas for future research

- **Macroeconomics** of forced displacement
- The impact of forced displacement on **infrastructure and utilities**
- Environmental assessments, **climate** change
- **Poverty** and well-being measurement for both the forcibly displaced and their hosts
- **Long-term** and secondary impacts
- **Costs** of programs
- **Early childhood development** in forced displacement contexts
- **Psychosocial and mental health** needs and effective programs
- **Gender-based violence** and how to mitigate it
- **Returnees**



# *Policies to Create Jobs and Community: Learning from the Evidence on Forced Displacement*

Theresa Beltramo,  
Senior Economist/  
Head of Research and Analytics, UNHCR



- 1. Global Compact on Refugees**  
Socioeconomic conditions, impacts on host communities, solutions (section 3.3)
- 2. UNHCR Strategy on Engaging with Development Actors**  
Joint advocacy, joint evidence generation
- 3. UNHCR Data Transformation Strategy**  
Trusted leader on data and information
- 4. WB-UNHCR Joint Data Center on FD**  
Strengthening systems, producing data/analysis, safe/responsible sharing, building evidence/sharing
- 5. UNHCR Microdata Library**  
710 datasets as of last count

UNHCR is committed to improving comparable evidence and data for forcibly displaced and stateless to help inform more inclusive policy, programming and advocacy





**Data and evidence alone are not an end in themselves. These investments must lead to better conditions for forcibly displaced persons and the communities that host them.**

**Data and evidence should inform:**

- **Communications & advocacy**
- **Policy**
- **Programming**



# Building the Evidence – Forced Displacement and Social Cohesion

December 2023

*Stephen Winkler, Social Development Specialist, World Bank*

*Audrey Sacks, Senior Social Development Specialist, World Bank*

*Susan Wong, Lead Social Development Specialist, World Bank*



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Building the Evidence on Forced Displacement

# Building evidence on how to promote social cohesion in displacement contexts



How can development investments and policies reduce inequalities, alleviate social tensions, and promote social cohesion between and within displaced populations and host communities?



26 background papers using existing data – published as *PRWPs* and in academic journals



Covering countries across Africa, Asia, Central and South America, and Europe

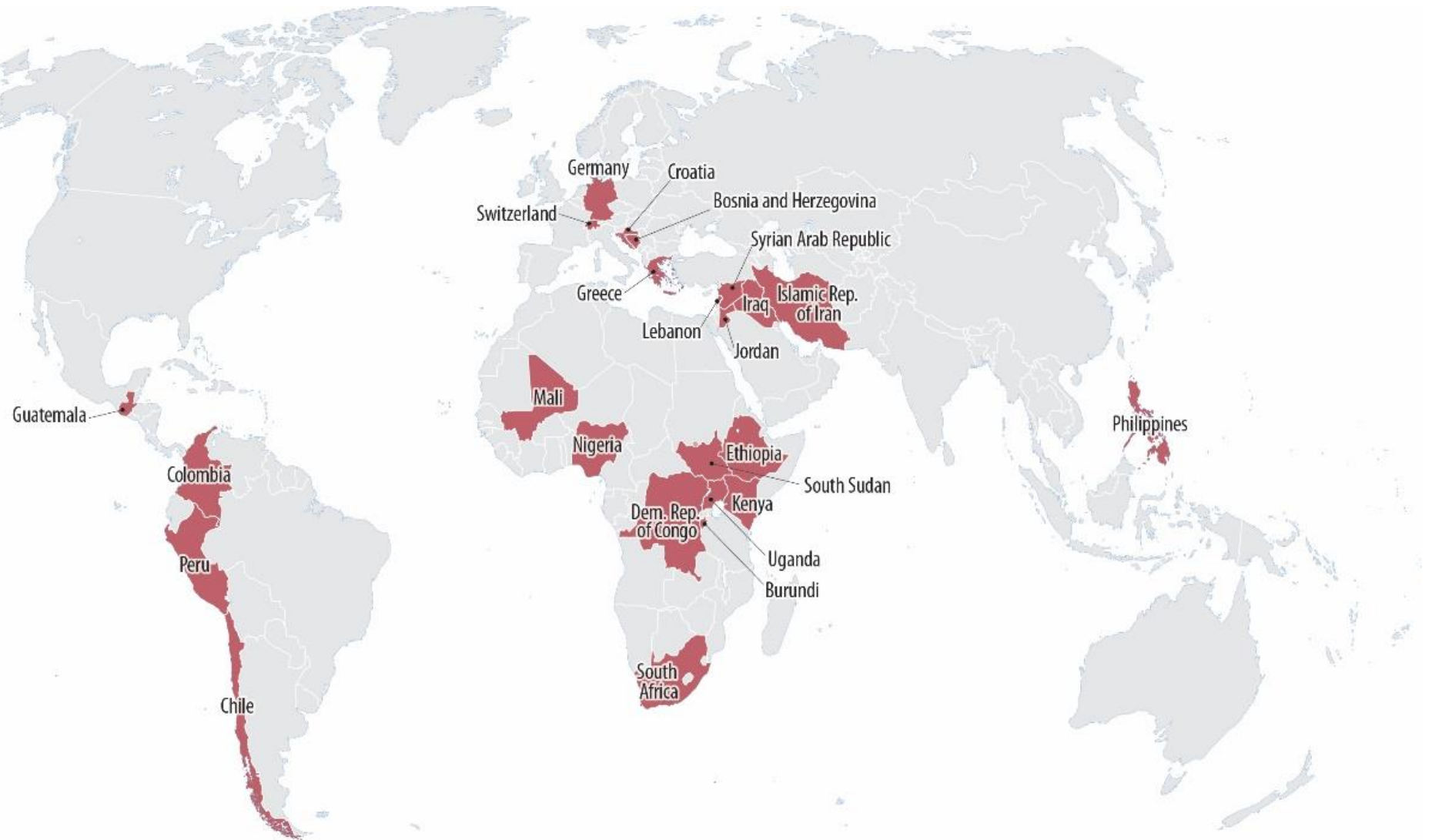


Variety of research designs: natural and survey experiments; sub-national and cross-national regression analysis; qualitative case studies



1 global report to synthesize the findings; special issue in *World Development*

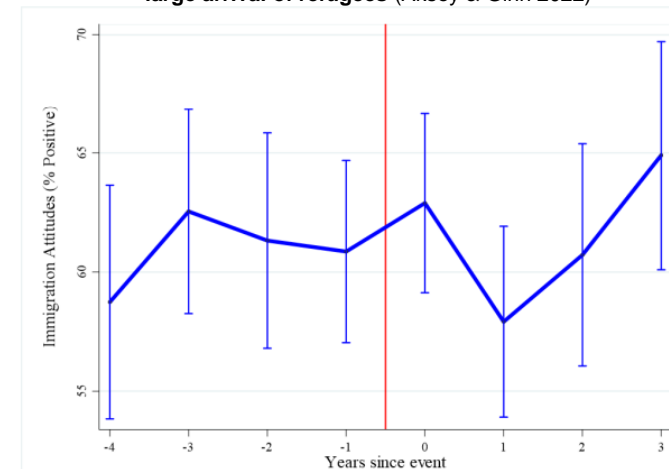
# *Countries covered by the background papers*



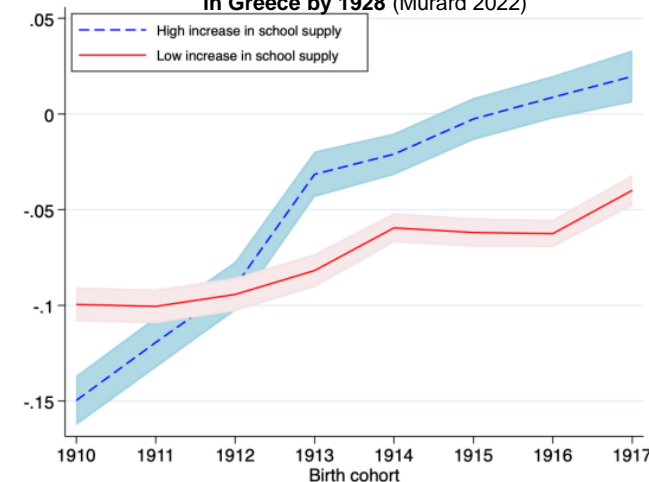
## Selected findings from the 26 background papers

- Aksoy & Ginn (Global): **Large refugee arrivals do not negatively affect host community attitudes towards refugees in low- and middle-income countries.** More inclusive policies (e.g. refugee access to the labor market) do not, on average, result in more negative attitudes toward refugees.
- Zhou, Grossman, Ge (Uganda): **Host communities with more exposure to refugee settlements experience substantial improvements in the provision of public goods and services.** Proximity to refugee settlements does not affect attitudes towards migrants or migration policy.
- Murard (Greece): **Policies that promoted the integration of refugees into the community contributed to long term social cohesion in Greece.** These policies included: granting farmland, building new houses and schools, and providing citizenship
- Allen, Ruiz, Vargas-Silva (Colombia): **Colombians who report higher levels of meaningful social interaction with Venezuelan migrants tend to favor more open migratory policies,** especially on labor market access and family reunification.

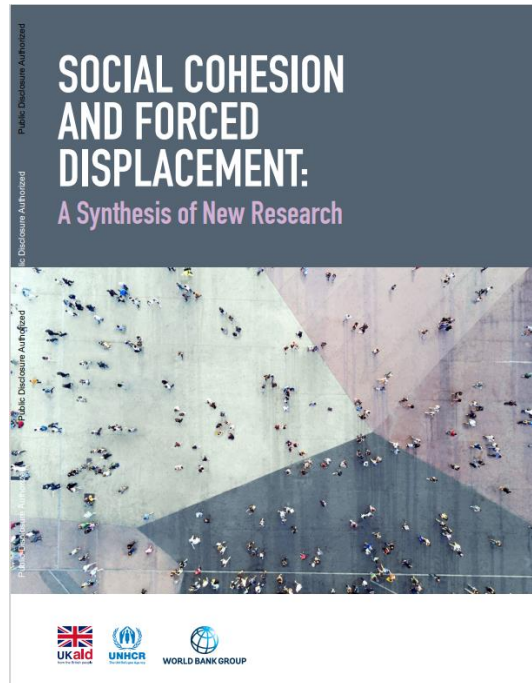
There is no change in attitudes towards migrants after a large arrival of refugees (Aksoy & Ginn 2022)



Building schools in areas where refugees settle helped eliminate the literacy gap between refugee and native men in Greece by 1928 (Murard 2022)



# Global takeaways and policy recommendations



- Displacement can exacerbate inequalities and create new inequalities and the potential for conflict, especially in areas with strained services and limited economic opportunities.
- Inclusive policies and development investments can mitigate the negative effects of displacement and promote social cohesion.

## Summary of Key Recommendations

1. Provide refugees the **right to work, freedom of movement, access to social services, civil and birth registration, and right to accommodation.**
2. **Invest in infrastructure and services** to meet the increased demand due to population shocks and to address existing vulnerabilities in host communities.
3. Ensure that humanitarian assistance and development investments **target both displaced persons and host communities** in near and long term.
  - Tailor investments to the **unique needs of urban and rural areas** (e.g. housing support in urban and land access in rural).
  - Pair multisectoral investments with **participatory approaches** to ensure investments address the needs of displaced persons and host communities.
4. Provide relevant support such as **mental health services** for the trauma endured during displacement, ongoing **social assistance** to address hardships, and **legal assistance** to recover property and obtain documents to address displaced persons' longer-term well-being and self-reliance.
5. **Promote positive interactions** and empathy between host residents and displaced persons (e.g. participatory approaches, public messaging, labor market integration).

## *Additional resources*

- [Synthesis report](#)
- Links to [26 background papers](#)
- Recording of [launch event](#)
- Special issue in [World Development](#)

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Building the Evidence on Forced Displacement

 PDRI | Penn Development Research Initiative

 DevLab@Penn

## Annex: overview of all background papers (1 of 2)

Paper	Country/region	Population(s) studied	Methods and data	Issue/policy studied (main independent variable)
Agüero & Fasola	South Africa	Refugees & immigrants	Regression discontinuity design (RDD) using survey data	Cash transfers
Aksoy & Ginn	Low- and middle-income countries with large refugee populations	Refugees	DiD using data from numerous sources (Gallup World Poll, UNHCR data, etc.)	Exclusionary & inclusionary refugee policies
Albarosa & Eslner	Germany	Refugees & immigrants	DiD using survey data and violent event data based on newspaper articles, police reports, etc	Refugee inflow
Allen et al.	Burundi	Refugees	Instrumental variables (IV) estimation using survey data	Refugee return
Bertinilli et al.	23 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa	Refugees	Ordinary least squares (OLS) and IV using multiple observational sources (ACLED, Afrobarometer, UNHCR data, etc.)	Refugee-driven ethnic polarization and ethnic fractionalization
Betts et al.	Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda	Refugees	OLS, IV, and qualitative methods using survey data	Host–refugee interactions; ethno-linguistic proximity between hosts and refugees
Bove et al.	South Sudan	IDPs	IV using survey data	Presence of UN peacekeepers
Coniglio et al.	Africa	Refugees	Matching using geo-coded event data from GDELT and geo-located data from UNHCR	Presence of refugee camps
Denny et al.	Guatemala	Deportees	Natural experiment using survey data	Extortion during migration
Ferguson et al.	Jordan and Lebanon	Refugees	Quasi-experimental data	Co-educational vocational training interventions
Foltz & Shibuya	Mali	IDPs	DiD, IV, propensity score matching using survey, census, and geo-located event data	IDP presence
Groeger et al.	Peru	Refugees & immigrants	IV using multiple sources of data (surveys, census, Google trends, etc.)	Employment in the informal sector
Hoseini & Dideh	Iran, Islamic Rep.	Refugees	Natural experiment using survey data	Economic shocks



## Annex: overview of all background papers (2 of 2)

Paper	Country/region	Population(s) studied	Methods and data	Issue/policy studied (main independent variable)
Kaplan	Colombia	IDPs & conflict-affected individuals	Regression, matching, interviews & focus groups using surveys and interviews	Conflict exposure
Kovac et al.	Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia	IDPs, refugees, migrants	OLS using survey data	Conflict exposure
Meneses & Villamizar-Chaparro	Chile	Immigrants	OLS and RDD using administrative data	Financial aid for education
Müller et al.	Switzerland	Refugees	Natural experiment using administrative data	Employment
Murard	Greece	Refugees	OLS using survey and census data	Concerted policy efforts to integrate refugees
Parry & Aymerich	Iraq	IDPs	Case study using semi-structured interview data	Local peace agreements
Pham et al.	Congo, Dem. Rep.	IDPs & refugees	OLS using surveys and focus groups	Presence of refugees and IDPs
Ruiz, & Vargas-Silva	Colombia	Refugees & immigrants	Conjoint experiment using survey data	Host–refugee interactions, host attitudes toward refugees
Šedová et al.	Nigeria	IDPs	Two-way fixed effects and IV using numerous observational data sources (ACLED event data, World Bank data, etc.)	Presence of IDPs
Tellez & Balcells	Colombia	IDPs	Matching on observables using survey data	Displacement
Vinck et al.	Colombia, Iraq, Philippines, Uganda	IDPs	Logistic regression using survey data	Displacement
Walk et al.	Syrian Arab Republic	IDPs & refugees	Seeded models and predictive model with machine learning using geo-located social media data and survey data	IDP and refugee return
Zhou et al.	Uganda	Refugees	OLS using numerous sources of geo-located data (UNHCR refugee settlements, data on road quality, location of schools, health clinics, and health-related aid projects)	Exposure to refugee settlements

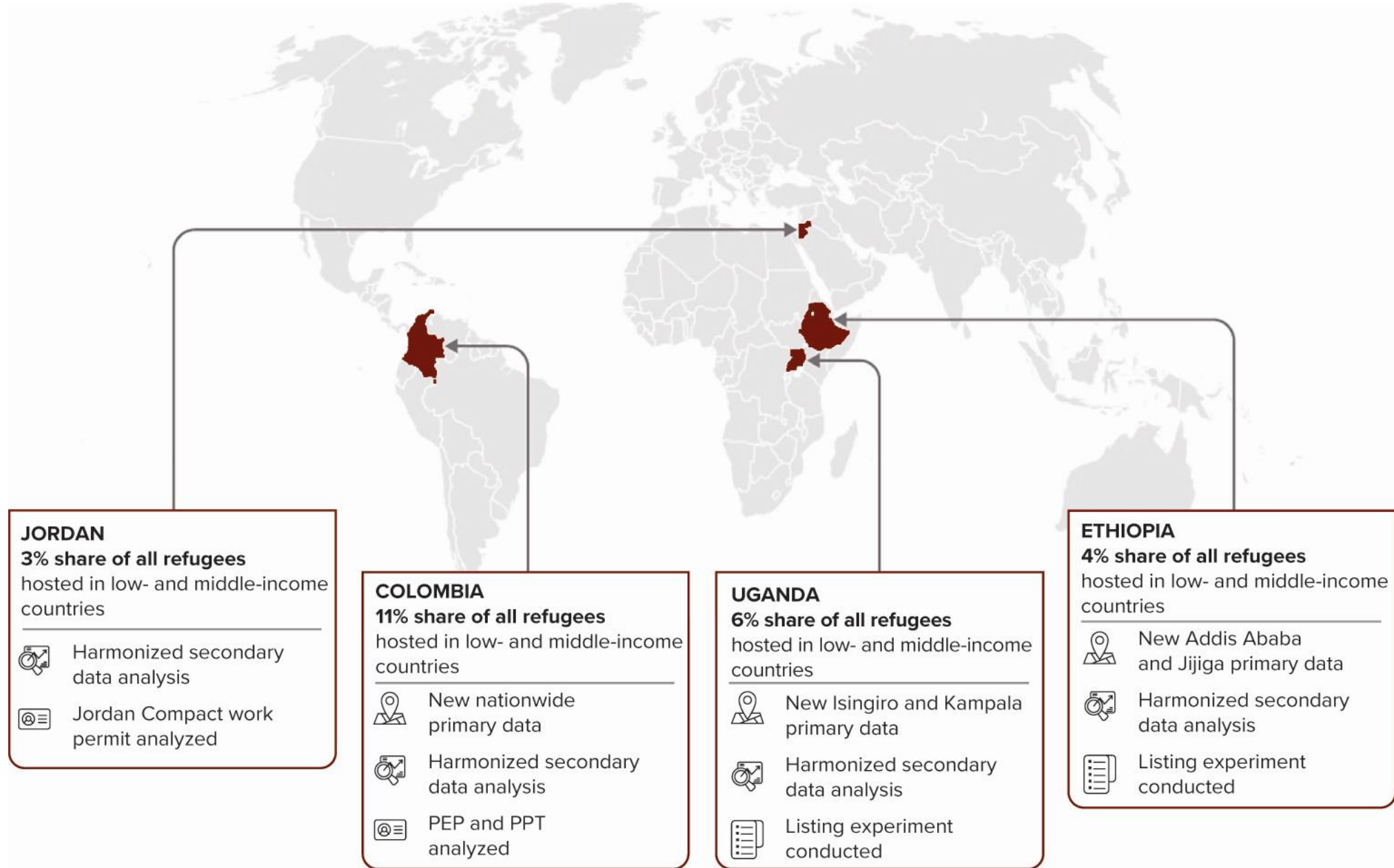


# The Labor Market Impact of Forced Displacement

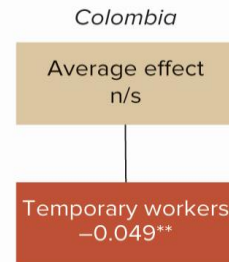
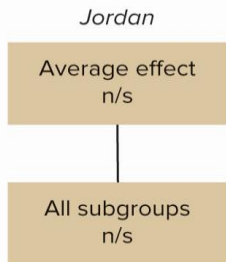
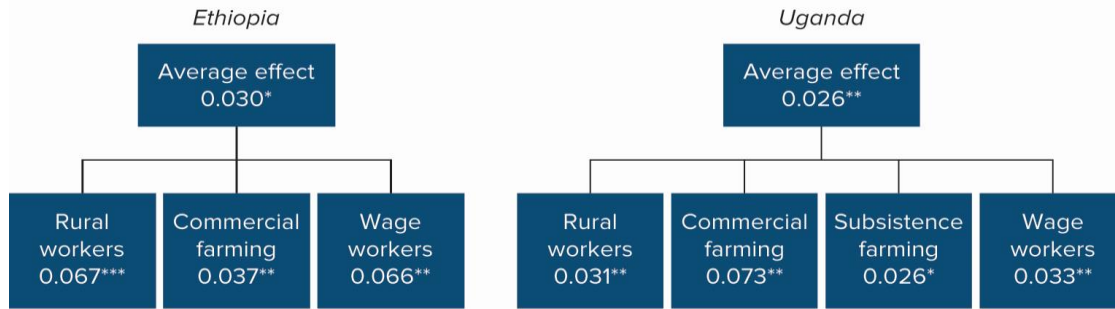
*Jobs in Host Communities in Colombia,  
Ethiopia, Jordan, and Uganda*

*December 12, 2023*

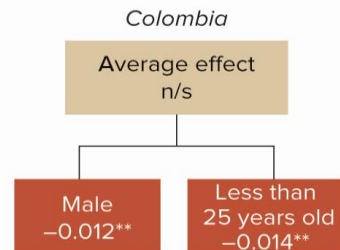
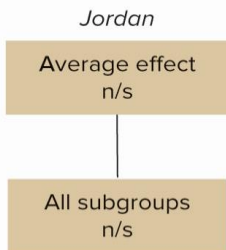
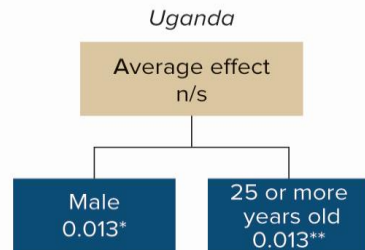
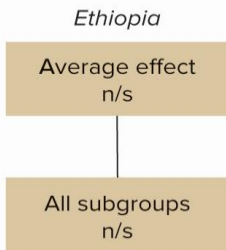
# Study scope



a. Effects on hosts' consumption or earnings



b. Effects on the employment rate among hosts



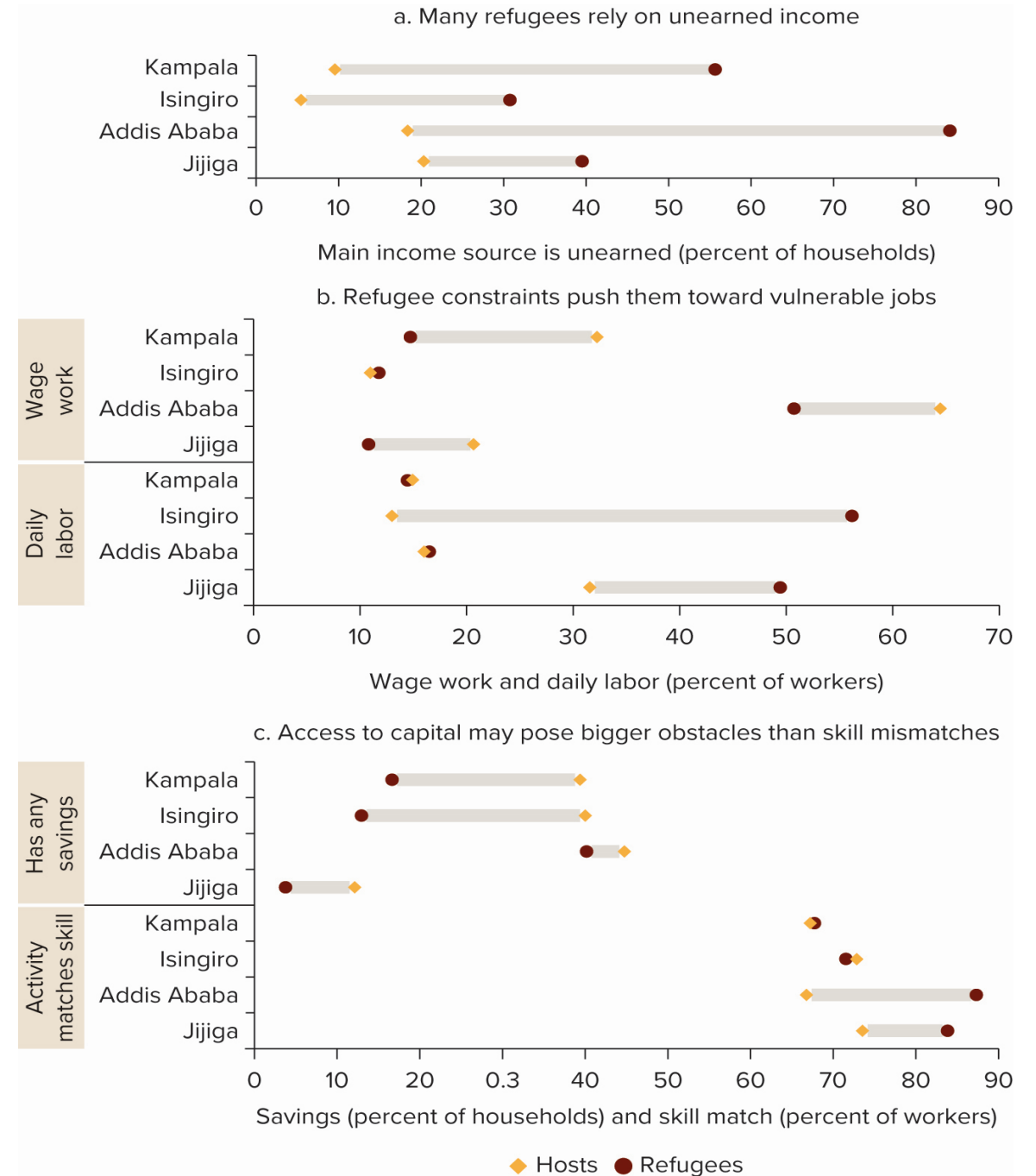
● Increase ● No significant effect ● Decrease

## How does forced displacement affect jobs outcomes for hosts?

- The overall labor market effects of hosting refugees are modest, or even positive, in the countries studied.
- However, some host country workers can be adversely affected even as others enjoy new opportunities.
- Work permit policies in Colombia and Jordan show little overall effect on host workers' earnings, but they change which workers face competition.

# In what ways does refugee participation in the economy shape job outcomes for hosts?

- Refugees find ways to work even in host countries that restrict labor market access.
- However, policies have important repercussions on how refugees participate in the labor market.
- In host communities in which economic activities are less diversified, it is difficult for refugees to bring skills that complement those of hosts.
- Job competition—and even worries about potential competition—may shape hosts’ attitudes.



# Policy implications

- Globally, most refugees live in low- and middle-income economies. Policies designed for high-income countries may not be appropriate for these labor markets.
- Some host workers face greater competition, but hosting refugees also brings important opportunities, and policies can compensate those adversely affected.
- Greater economic integration can make a profound difference for refugees and allow them to rebuild their lives.
- Policies to integrate refugees into the economy affect which groups of host workers face competition and which gain opportunities, but competition may not start with these policy choices.
- In host countries in which self-employment is a major source of jobs, two policy goals are key: helping refugees access capital and helping hosts seize new market opportunities.
- Skill matches may help refugees improve their livelihoods but perhaps not in obvious ways, so policies need to be based on careful assessment.
- To promote welcoming attitudes, policy needs to provide effective support to host workers, communicate well about the labor market participation of refugees, and encourage opportunities for personal interaction and perspective-taking.

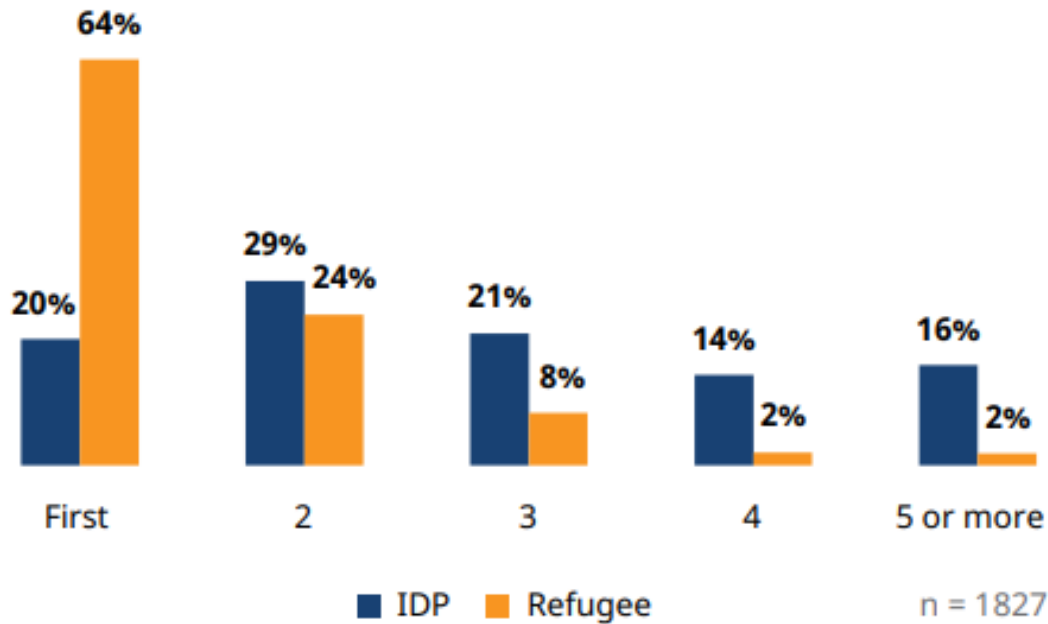
# *Policies to Create Jobs and Community: Learning from the Evidence on Forced Displacement*

Agnès Hurwitz  
Global Lead  
Peacebuilding Governance & Rule of Law

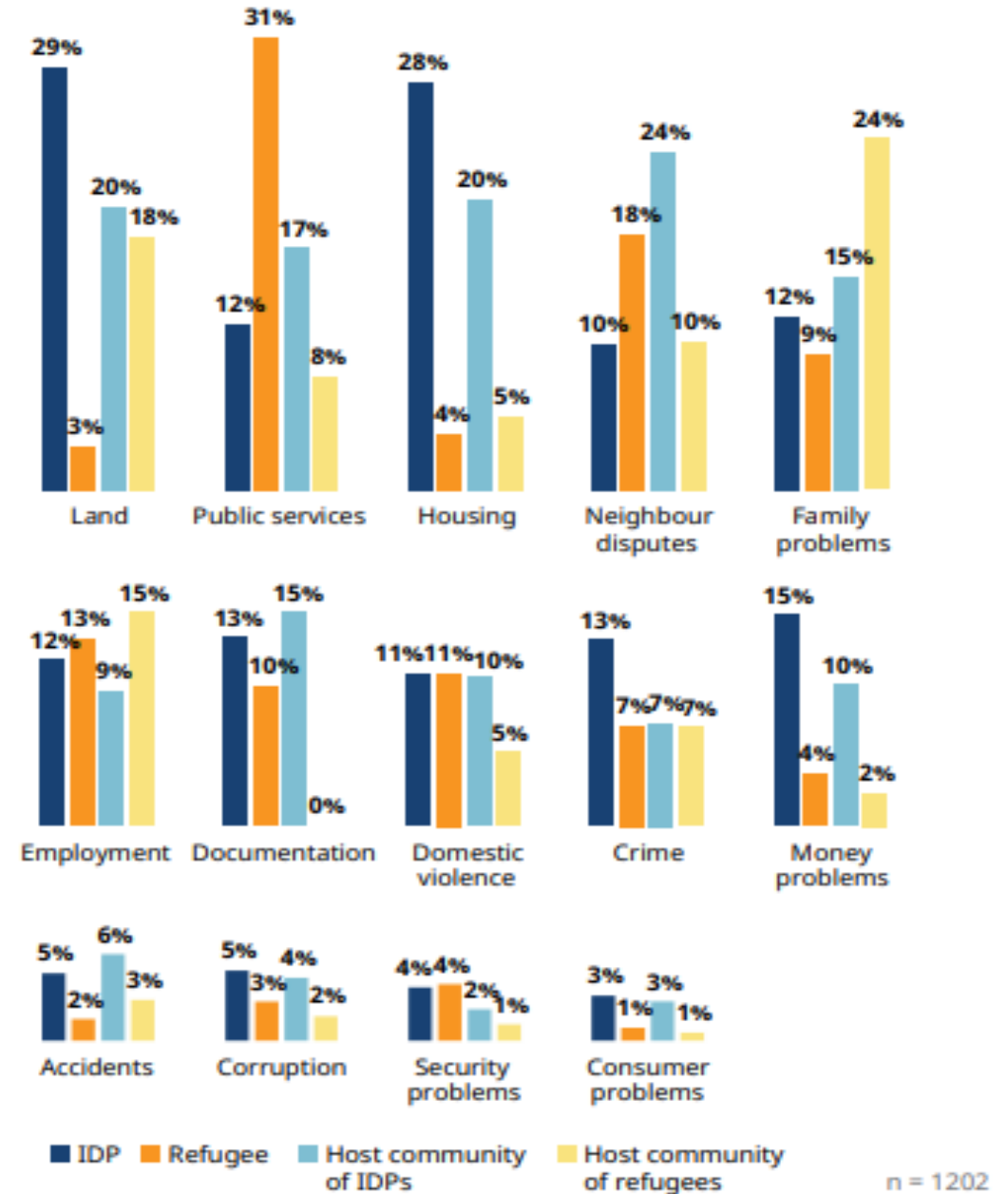


# LEGAL NEEDS – HiIL Iraq Justice Needs Survey

NUMBER OF FORCED DISPLACEMENTS BY DISPLACED SAMPLE



MOST COMMON LEGAL PROBLEM CATEGORIES BY SAMPLE

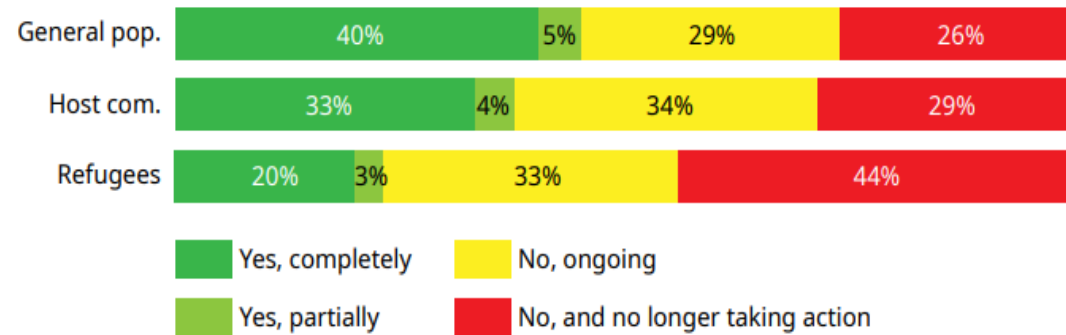




# Hiil JNS - THE JUSTICE GAP

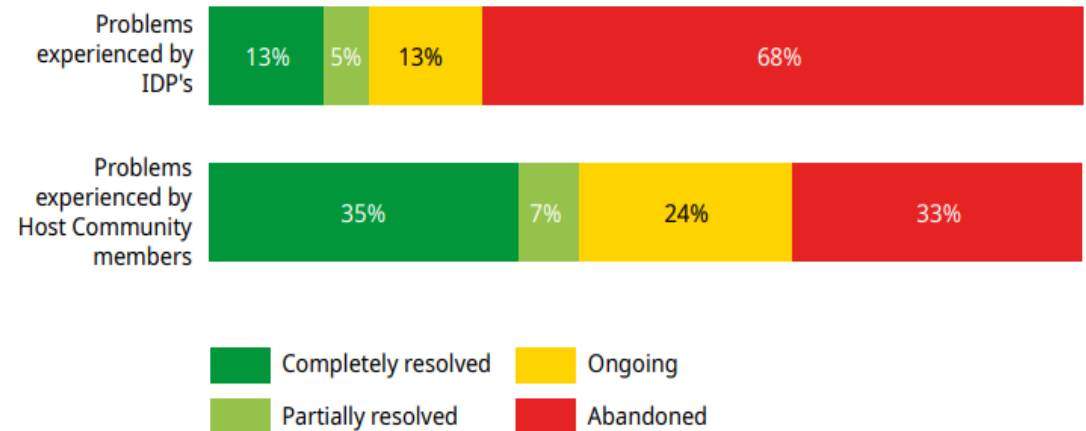
## Ethiopia

Has your problem been resolved? (All problems by group)



## Burkina Faso

Resolution status



N=749 (196 problems experienced by host community members, 553 problems experienced by IDPs)

Refugee research assistant team



Representative of community-led group in Rhino Camp



Coordination meeting with refugee user board and programme manager



Community-led group in Rhino Camp



# DRC | ASPIRE

Aspiring for Peace and Inclusion Research



ASPIRE is a longitudinal, ethnographic research project that follows a **generation of young South Sudanese refugees** over a period of **15 years**, exploring how they perceive and pursue opportunities for peace in their communities. **With this participatory community-led research project, we are able to capture the community initiatives that are rarely captured as peacebuilding (by themselves or others), although they play a critical role in de-escalating conflicts.**

- Partnership with UNHCR and implemented alongside UNHCR's Regional Youth Peacebuilding Project (RYPP) in Uganda
- Planned extension to Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan, as well as inside South Sudan
- Participatory at its root – relies on trained refugee youth as researchers (photo top left)
- Preliminary findings show youth supporting community leaders to step in, making use of livelihoods sources to lead peacebuilding initiatives



# LEARNING FROM THE EVIDENCE ON FORCED DISPLACEMENT

**UKaid**  
from the British people

**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

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Building the Evidence on Forced Displacement

Linked Event – Global Refugee Forum – December 12, 2023