



Special Initiative

Displaced Persons and Host Countries

By the end of 2024, more than 123 million people worldwide had been displaced due to war, crises, oppression, and persecution.¹ Over the past ten years, the number of displaced people has more than doubled.

The overwhelming majority of them remain within their own countries as internally displaced persons or find refuge in a neighboring state. 73% of the forcibly displaced are living in low- or middle-income countries. These countries are making enormous efforts to host the large number of displaced people – despite facing major challenges themselves. However, the host communities often reach their capacity limits due to limited resources and conditions such as: lack of accommodation and work opportunities, schools being unable to accommodate all the children, lack of healthcare infrastructure, water and food being scarce. These conditions can result in social tensions.

WHAT IS THE SPECIAL INITIATIVE DISPLACED PERSONS AND HOST COUNTRIES?

With the launch of the Special Initiative "Displaced Persons and Host Countries" in 2014, we can respond flexibly to the challenges of displacement situations and support the host countries simultaneously. In both acute and protracted displacement contexts, we work in coordination with humanitarian aid and peacebuilding efforts to improve living conditions for people on the ground. In this way, we create prospects for living, staying, and returning in host regions.

In addition to regular development cooperation, dedicated funding is provided to strengthen countries in their capacity and willingness to host displaced persons and to support them in mitigating the associated challenges. Key areas of our work include infrastructure development, employment, education, health, psychosocial support, climate and resource protection, gender equality, peacebuilding, social protection, and the inclusion of displaced persons in national public service systems.

Particular attention is given to the political and economic participation of displaced women and girls.

All projects are guided by the principle of 'Do no harm': they support displaced persons and the local population in the host regions to prevent subsequent conflicts.

Our regional focus areas are the major and protracted displacement contexts in the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, and Ukraine.

Since 2016, the **Partnership for Prospects (P4P)** initiative has been a key part of the Special Initiative. It creates employment opportunities within the local labor market that enable both displaced persons and the population of the host communities to earn their own income. This also reduces pressure on local infrastructure, natural resources, and communal services, for example through the (re)construction of schools and housing, reforestation, agricultural cultivation, waste disposal and recycling, maintenance of drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, or the financing of salaries for teachers and healthcare staff. Through training and skill development, P4P also lays the foundations for longer-term employment prospects.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Since 2014, around 375 projects have been funded through the Special Initiative, with a total of 5.1 billion Euros. To date, 48.1 million people have been reached in 84 countries.



Education:

By improving access to education and creating a better learning environment, we help provide prospects for displaced children and those from host communities. In Jordan and Turkey, funding for teachers' salaries has enabled an average of 380,000 Syrian children per year to attend school. The projects under the Special Initiative have supported approximately 5.7 million children in exercising their right to education.

¹[Global Trends Report 2024](#), UNHCR, June 2025



Employment/Economic Participation:

Income ensures independence and self-reliance. Through the P4P initiative, we have created over 700,000 short-term employment opportunities for refugees, internally displaced persons, and people in host communities in the Middle East since 2016. We also promote prospects through vocational training and strengthen national vocational education systems in host countries. In Lebanon, for example, both Lebanese and displaced youth participate in non-formal training and qualification programs. Overall, our training and further education programs have enabled around 630,000 people to improve their employment prospects in the labor market – primarily in the Middle East, but also in East Africa.



Psychosocial support:

In displacement and crisis contexts, many people suffer traumatic experiences. We contribute to the expansion and improvement of psychosocial support in such settings. In Syria, the BMZ provides further training for psychosocial professionals to better support and care for people experiencing psychological distress. More than 3 million people have benefited so far from our psychosocial support measures.



Health:

Our projects reduce health risks for displaced persons and people in host communities. In Pakistan, for example, healthcare services are planned in collaboration with people in vulnerable situations. This approach improves and makes access to healthcare more inclusive at the local level. So far, we have improved healthcare services for around 9 million people.



Gender:

The “**Action Network on Forced Displacement – Women as Agents of Change**”, founded in 2020, brings together around 30 women and queer individuals with lived experience of displacement who advocate for the political, economic, and social participation of displaced women. The network is equipped with a fund that supports local civil society projects by women for women. The projects under SI GA also make a significant contribution to gender equality, for example through access to education, vocational training, and income. In 2024, this was the primary objective of one in four projects.



Water supply and sanitation:

By constructing water and sanitation facilities, we strengthen a vital part of basic services for people in host countries and reduce health risks. For example, in East Africa, we work on expanding water supply systems in refugee camps and neighboring host communities to create a more sustainable and cost-effective alternative to water delivery by tankers. Overall, we have improved water and sanitation services for nearly 17.9 million people.



Energy:

Access to energy enhances economic development, healthcare, educational opportunities, communication, and daily life for displaced persons and people in host communities. The construction of solar-powered electricity networks – for example in Kenya, Ethiopia, Pakistan, and Jordan – has enabled greater safety through street lighting, clean cooking solutions, vital diagnostics, refrigeration of medicines, and learning after dark. Through our projects, 1.2 million people gained access to energy.

Partnerships with UN organisations amplify the impact of the Special Initiative:

In partnership with **UNHCR**, we are strengthening the connection between humanitarian assistance, development cooperation, and peacebuilding efforts. This increases impact and reduces costs in the long term. For employment in displacement contexts, we have a key strategic partnership with the International Labour Organization (**ILO**). Together with the United Nations Children's Fund (**UNICEF**), projects are being implemented in areas such as education and water supply for both refugees and host communities. In cooperation with the **Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund** (WPHF), we also support local, refugee-led organisations working with displaced women and girls.

Published by Federal Ministry for Economic
Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Division G 21

Last updated 07/2025

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