

Global Program: Refugee Inclusion Accelerator (RISE)

Context

As of 2025, more than 120 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide, with the number of protracted crises steadily increasing. These trends reveal the limitations of traditional humanitarian approaches and the establishment of parallel systems, which are unsustainable in the long-term. The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) emphasises a shift towards early inclusion of refugees into national systems as well as support to hosting communities. Central to this approach is the transition from parallel structures towards long-term solutions embedded in national development strategies.



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In order to operationalise the GCR through Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus approaches, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), in partnership with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), initiated the Global Program with UNHCR (GP SUN, 2019-2024). Implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and UNHCR with national governments, this initiative has piloted humanitarian-development cooperation modalities to support the inclusion and self-reliance of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and support to host communities in 11 countries. The follow-up programme, the Refugee Inclusion Accelerator (RISE), builds on the

foundations of the GP SUN to support refugee inclusion at the global, national and local levels.

Refugee Inclusion Accelerator

The Refugee Inclusion Accelerator, commissioned by the BMZ and implemented by GIZ in cooperation with national governments and UNHCR aims to strategically support the early and sustained inclusion of refugees into national systems in education, social protection and economic sectors.

RISE will be implemented through advisory services to national governments as well as innovation spaces and learnings that co-create tailor-made approaches for refugee inclusion and host community resilience in displacement contexts. This approach does not only benefit refugees but also host communities and governments.

Program Snapshot

Programme name	Refugee Inclusion Accelerator (RISE)
Commissioned by	BMZ
Strategic partner	UNHCR
Countries	Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Mauritania
Political Partners	Refugees and Returnees Affairs Service Ethiopia, Ministry of Interior and National Administration Kenya, Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros e Cooperação Mozambique, and Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la Promotion de la Décentralisation et du Développement Local Mauritania
Sectors of engagement	education, social protection, economic inclusion
Duration	2025-2027

Key Pillars of Engagement



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1. GCR Advisor Deployment: RISE deploys a network of GCR and HDP Nexus Advisors, local, national and international, embedded in government institutions at national or local levels. Their aim is to support the transition from humanitarian aid to sustainable refugee inclusion, aligned with national plans. Their areas of work include policy integration, institutional capacity-building, coordination support, and technical advice.

In Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritania, and Mozambique, the GCR Advisors support the implementation of refugee inclusion strategies (such as Ethiopia's *Makatet* Roadmap or supporting local integration under Kenya's *Shirika* Plan). By fostering collaboration within national and local institutions, the advisors contribute to whole-of-government approaches in refugee responses. The GCR Advisors play a key role supporting the country-level innovation labs.

2. Innovation Labs & Learning: Innovation Labs are implemented to design, test and co-create practical solutions for refugee inclusion and host community resilience. These Labs bring together local authorities, national governments, humanitarian and development actors, and refugee and host communities to foster collaboration and problem-solving across sectors.

- **First-generation labs** are launched in the refugee-

hosting countries Ethiopia, Kenya, and Mauritania, with a focus on priority sectors such as social protection, education, and economic inclusion. They aim to generate locally tailored interventions that can inform broader national strategies. The first lab will be piloted in Ethiopia.

- **Second-generation labs** build on the experiences from the first generation to support national-level refugee inclusion strategies and strengthen host communities through cross-sector partnerships.

The labs are designed for scalability, collaboration, and practical impact. They follow a hybrid model, combining in-person activities with digital tools for collaboration and follow-up to later inform refugee responses at national and international levels.

3. Promoting the Refugee Inclusion Agenda: RISE promotes the global refugee inclusion agenda by bringing lessons from country-level implementation to international dialogue and policy processes. The programme synthesises insights from its GCR Advisors and Innovation Labs to inform global debates on responses to forced displacement. It gathers lessons from UNHCR's Sustainable Response Approach in contexts like Ethiopia's Melkadida region, where models for transitioning from parallel humanitarian structures towards inclusion into national systems are being developed and tested. These locally grounded experiences are translated into strategic knowledge products and exchanges.

A key to this process is the **Global Innovation Lab**. This digital learning and exchange platform will enable cross-country learning, foster global collaboration, and scale tested solutions from country Labs to a wider audience of policymakers, practitioners, and development partners. Through this approach, RISE bridges implementation and global dialogue and contributes to agenda-setting within the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus, helping to shape more coordinated, inclusive, and sustainable refugee responses globally.

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