



United Nations Trust Fund
for Human Security



Regional Report on Achieving SDGs in Conflict Affected Countries in the Arab Region

BACKGROUND

Countries in the Arab region have been heavily impacted by conflict. These conflicts have resulted in tragic loss of life, forced displacement, physical destruction, strained and failing institutions that together result in complex and interconnected insecurities, often spilling over to neighboring countries within and beyond the region.

Today, the region is the source of more than half of the world's refugees, and host to one third of them.¹ In 2018, around 37 percent of all globally internally displaced people were living in the Arab region, affecting over 15 million people in Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.² Conflicts are further compounded by challenges of climate change, youth bulge and high rates of unemployment, with over 30 percent of youth unemployed in the region.³

Responding to the urgent challenges faced by countries affected by conflict in the region, the Arab Committee for Sustainable Development, at its third meeting in December 2017, requested the League of Arab States (LAS) through its Department of Sustainable Development and International Cooperation to prepare a regional report on the importance of SDGs and their implementation in conflict affected countries.

OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of the programme is to establish a regional yet context-specific Report and Reference Guide that incorporates tools and approaches for achieving SDGs in the participating countries. The Report and Reference Guide will help address the multifaceted challenges faced by countries affected by conflict in the Arab region and their impact for these and the region in general.

Participating countries: The Republic of Iraq, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, the State of Libya, the Republic of the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Republic of Yemen, and the Federal Republic of Somalia.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIP

The programme is led by the Department of Sustainable Development and International Cooperation at LAS and is supported by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), as the Core Group. A Regional Task Force (RTF) including UN and non-UN partners will also contribute to the work of the Core Group under the auspices of the LAS. To ensure maximum participation of and consultations with national stakeholders, National Multi-Stakeholder Networks will be established in pilot countries through coordination with relevant partners, including UN Resident Coordinator (RCs). These Networks will consist of, but not limited to, respective government departments, civil-society organizations, youth, women, the private sector, and those most vulnerable.

INTEGRATED APPROACHES

Echoing the spirit of the 2030 Agenda, the programme calls for a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want ... free of fear and violence ... with equitable and universal access to quality education, health care and social protection ... to safe drinking water and sanitation ... where food is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious ... where habitats are safe, resilient and sustainable ... and where there is universal access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy. It does so by:

¹ UNSG, SDG Progress Report, 2019 (p. 24-25).

² IDMC, Global Report on Internal Displacement 2019 (p.48-49).

³ UNSG, SDG Progress Report, 2019 (p. 24-25).





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- *Understanding the inter-connected and multi-faceted challenges:* recognizing the indivisible nature of the 17 SDGs, the programme aims at providing an integrated and transformative Reference Guide for attaining sustainable peace and development in conflict affected countries by tackling the inter-related challenges of poverty, vulnerability, inequality, exclusion and displacement.
- *No one size fits all, looking for context-specific solutions:* countries, societies and people affected by conflict have different needs and capacities. Through multi-stakeholder cross-pillar partnerships and collaboration, the programme aims to assess gaps and challenges hindering efforts in attaining the SDGs, and establish a reference guide to help countries prioritize SDGs and move towards peace and sustainable development.
- *Linking sustainable development to peacebuilding:* development efforts without addressing structural and root causes of conflict will not be fruitful, often failing to prevent a relapse into conflicts and crises. Emphasizing the implementation of the SDGs as the gateway for sustaining peace, the programme seeks to identify ways in which negative impacts and risks are minimized, while positive potentials and synergies are maximized.

KEY ACTIVITIES

The programme will include the following key activities:

- Conduct desk review of existing studies and tools on achieving SDGs in the region and the respective countries.
- Take stock of existing partnerships and coordination mechanisms at regional and national levels.
- In coordination with respective governments and RCs, identify and establish National Multi-Stakeholder Networks.
- Through e-consultations and surveys with regional and national stakeholders, identify a set of shared

challenges and opportunities with respect to attaining the SDGs.

- Identify “SDGs Champions” in countries affected by conflict to highlight good practices and lessons learned in the region.
- Hold workshops in three pilot countries engaging National Multi-stakeholder Networks to validate findings of the Report and Reference Guide, and to further ensure a locally-led SDG implementation.

KEY OUTCOMES

- Provide an evidence-based, inclusive and operational Report and Reference Guide on the impact of conflicts in the region, including the implementation of the SDGs in conflict affected countries and their transition to sustainable development; offer an exhaustive repository of existing frameworks to develop and strengthen potential gaps, combining existing tools to accelerate delivery and make better use of limited resources; propose prioritization of critical SDG targets and indicators that can result in the most impactful and sustainable gains for people and communities; and make a strong case for the need to meet the SDGs if the region is to end hostilities and achieve progress towards the transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda.
- Present key findings of the Report at the High-Level Event at EXPO 2020 to be held in Dubai, UAE, in October 2020.
- Formally launch the Report in January 2021 at the Headquarters of LAS in Cairo.

For any inquiries on the programme, please contact

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Achieving SDGs in Conflict Affected Countries in the Arab Region