

THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON  
DECENT JOBS FOR YOUTH



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.



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# CASE STUDIES ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN FRAGILE SITUATIONS

ILO UNDP UNHCR



We are the first-ever comprehensive U.N. system-wide effort to promote youth employment worldwide and a core means of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Partners include several agencies, funds and programmes of the U.N. system, and a growing number of stakeholders from the government, private sector, civil society and beyond.



#DecentJobsForYouth  
[www.decentjobsforyouth.org](http://www.decentjobsforyouth.org)

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# INTRODUCTION

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development places decent work at the heart of policies for sustainable and inclusive development, and recognizes youth as critical agents of change. Empowered young women and men play a vital role in preventing conflicts and ensuring sustainable peace. Young people are at the forefront as innovators, entrepreneurs, leaders, activists and positive agents of change, and they need the recognition and support of governments, UN agencies, civil society and private sector partners.

*The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes youth as “critical agents of change”*

The **Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth** recognizes the potential of young people, as well as the challenges that they face in relation to jobs and employment. Approximately 70.9 million youth are currently unemployed, and even having a job is no guarantee of an exit from poverty. Around 160.8 million youth in emerging and developing countries live in extreme or moderate poverty, despite being employed; this means that 39 per cent of employed youth in emerging and developing countries are living in extreme or moderate poverty<sup>1</sup>. Millions of people, including youth, are on the move either within their own country or across national borders due to situations of fragility, crisis and conflict.

**SOURCE:** *ILO Trends Econometric Models, 2017.*

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<sup>1</sup> Extreme poverty = less than US\$1.90 per capita per day; moderate poverty = between US\$1.90 and US\$3.10 per capita per day. ILO World Employment Social Outlook: Trends for Youth 2016.

Conflict disrupts every aspect of life and creates additional barriers for young people who are disproportionately affected by unemployment and low quality jobs. Limited opportunities for decent work prevent youth from properly transitioning into adulthood and exacerbates political, social and economic exclusion. Investing in youth employment in fragile and conflict situations is therefore a priority for boosting labour market outcomes, and decent living situations, for some of the world's most vulnerable young people. Young women continue to face barriers to securing decent employment and opportunities to thrive as entrepreneurs. Young women's access to resources, including land and loans, may be restricted, and young women continue to shoulder an unequal share of unpaid care work, due to the persistence of traditional gender roles. Investing in youth employment in fragile and conflict situations is therefore a priority for advancing societies towards peaceful and inclusive development.

*Young women continue to experience unequal access to secure decent work opportunities to thrive as entrepreneurs*

In recognition of this situation, this publication collects some examples of best practices from around the world, showcasing innovative approaches to youth employment that helps to build peace and resilience in fragile and conflict affected situations.



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# TRAINING OF DEMOBILIZED EX-COMBATANTS IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT IN DRC

This ILO project trained the first wave of demobilized ex-combatants from the eastern DRC in entrepreneurial and cooperative management. This complemented vocational training (11 trades chosen by the beneficiaries according to their interest) covered by three partner organizations: the National Institute for Professional Preparation (INPP), Caritas and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

*This project helped to change the behaviour of the ex-combatants to promote peaceful coexistence, social cohesion and socioeconomic development*

This project helped to change the behaviour of the ex-combatants to promote peaceful coexistence, social cohesion and socioeconomic development. They learnt to be involved in community work strengthening social cohesion; this is in stark contrast to their previous engagement with armed groups, which they often or nearly always joined due to poverty and lack of livelihoods. Strengthening cooperatives, enterprise development and community activities were conducted while the demobilized soldiers were still in the Centre for Preparation and Reintegration, which promoted social cohesion, peace and community values in the young ex-combatants.

The project results consisted in (a) adapting and reproducing training materials; (b) training and upgrading trainers; and (c) training demobilized ex-combatants and helping them to identify and develop viable business ideas.

About 70 percent of beneficiaries have a very low level of education; indeed, in many cases, they are almost illiterate because they never could attend school due to conflict. The project therefore must adapt to the minimal capacities of the

beneficiaries. Thus, the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) manuals are simple and show drawings, a pedagogical method that has greatly facilitated instruction. The SIYB training prepared the young ex-combatants to better receive the qualifying trainings in their chosen trades. Better understanding of concepts such as saving, cost and income – for example, in the course of cutting and sewing – can better engage the learner in vocational training because it affords a clearer idea of how to manage a profitable occupation.

The SIYB training increased participants' interest in starting small enterprises. Participants' plans for self-employment and employment are clearer and more diverse. The entrepreneurial capacity of the ex-combatants must be verified in the reintegration phase. The demobilized trainees will still need accompaniment and support to help them reintegrate into their places of origin and the capacity of local structures to follow up needs to be stronger.

Participants with their training manuals.  
© ILO DR Congo



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# CONNECTING RWANDAN YOUTH WITH RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Rwanda recognizes youth employment and inclusive growth as critical steps toward eradicating extreme poverty and improving livelihoods. Unemployment in Rwanda is most prevalent in urban areas and affects young people (16-35 years) more than adults. Rwanda's government has been working to shift from low-productivity, agriculture jobs to a more productive, service-based economy by 2020. Hence, there are efforts to reduce underemployment and unemployment, especially among youth and women in urban and rural areas. To this end, UNDP established a joint programme – the Youth and Women Employment Programme – to attain Rwanda's inclusive growth, economic transformation and accelerated poverty reduction goals.

The Programme aims to enhance national capacities in order to promote employment-intensive growth to mainstream youth employment into programmes and budgets. The direct beneficiaries are male and female rural and urban youth, including out-of-school youth, graduates and less educated persons between the ages of 16 and 35. The objectives are skills development, decent employment opportunities and quality livelihoods in urban and rural capacities.

*The YouthConnekt Hangout – an online platform helps connect Rwandan youth to resources and opportunities for employment and business development*





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YouthConnekt Hangout – an online platform that brings together various partners such as UNDP, ADMA, Tigo Rwanda, Zilencio Creativo and HeHe Ltd. – helps connect Rwandan youth to resources and opportunities for employment and business development. Over 100 young entrepreneurs received business development training through the YouthConnekt Bootcamp

and Miss Geek Competition. Of these, 35 youth received financial support and business mentorship to establish and scale up their own businesses. With support to the National Employment Programme (NEP) through MINICOM, 1,636 jobs (688 for women and 948 for men) and 63 SMEs were created.



*Awarding the winners of the pitching competition.*  
© UNDP Rwanda

# SUPPORTING AFGHANISTAN LIVELIHOODS AND MOBILITY (SALAM)

*The programme is aimed at returnees, refugees, displaced people and migrants, with a focus on women and girls*

Three decades of conflicts has generated the massive flow of involuntary movements. The prolonged conflicts have forced many Afghans to leave or migrate in search of safety, better economic opportunities and livelihoods, or to escape from unsafe or exploitative situations. In 2015, the unemployment rate peaked at 40%, affecting vulnerable populations and serving as a driving force for people to leave the country. In 2015, about 213,000 Afghans fled to Europe, propelling an unprecedented crisis due to its massive displacement. Returnees are faced with many challenges and insecurities such as poverty, lack of skills to acquire jobs, and support for entrepreneurs and businesses.

Support Afghanistan Livelihoods and Mobility (SALAM) is a joint UNDP, ILO and UNHCR programme in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD). The initiative supports the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA) and assists in developing comprehensive, coherent and integrated national policy and institutional frameworks for the labour market at a time of crisis and protracted conflict. SALAM engages the private sector and other partners to create durable solutions for external and internal migration in line with the government's National Priority Programmes. The programme is aimed at returnees, refugees, displaced people and migrants, with a focus on women and girls.

SALAM project offers sustainable job opportunities for young people.  
© UNDP Afghanistan

SALAM holds 14 years of experience in rural economic empowerment and service delivery. The programme has implemented rural projects on agricultural productivity, economic development, transportation, irrigation, market access, energy and food storage. In addition, it has established elected District Development Assemblies throughout the country. This implementation has assisted in planning, conflict resolution and monitoring projects. Moreover, it has created 1 million labour days, which has provided returnees with infrastructure and skills trainings, supported small and medium-sized enterprise access to finance through community savings and helped female-led households generate income. Thus, 1,160 new entrepreneurs have been supported, creating 4,640 new jobs. It has provided Afghans with business training courses and, as a result, 11,600 people graduated from these courses.

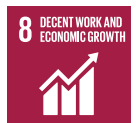


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# ENHANCING THE EMPLOYABILITY OF ENGINEERING STUDENTS AND GRADUATES IN GAZA THROUGH BETTER LINKAGES WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

*Young graduates, male and female, are linked with the private sector for employment opportunities.*  
© ILO Gaza



*The project aimed at linking young graduates, male and female, with the private sector*

Youth face very high unemployment rates in Gaza. The project aimed at linking young graduates, male and female, with the private sector. The project sought to improve the productivity of five local industries, increase their market share and generate more jobs for young graduates. The immediate objective of the project was to improve the competencies of young men and women (students and graduate engineers) to respond to the challenges of the labour market and the private sector.

The Islamic University of Gaza (IUG) connected the university engineering departments with the private sector through the IUG-Industry and Community Liaison Centre (IUGIC), which was established in 2014 as one of the outcomes of STEP (Strengthening University-Enterprise Linkages in Palestine). IUGIC connected the engineering faculty with the private sector by: (a) providing technical assistance to the private sector with experts from IUG; (b) ensuring the participation of the private sector for the upgrading and validation of curricula and their implementation with structured apprenticeships; and (c) facilitating the transition of graduates to the world of work through counselling and job matching.

The project strategy benefited university students and graduates as well as private sector companies in tackling the current challenges of reconstruction. It provided smart solutions for the rebuilding of Gaza for the timely restart of private sector companies that had fewer resources because of impeded reconstruction. In addition, it improved the relevance of university curricula for the needs of the private sector and allowed students to gain first-hand experience in their fields of expertise and to demonstrate their productive potential to employers.



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# AN INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT APPROACH TOWARD POVERTY AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN EGYPT

The Egypt Network for Integrated Development (ENID/El Nidaa), established in April 2012, develops feasible and sustainable employment opportunities in Upper Egypt through four programmes. The programmes are Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises (MSMEs) and Entrepreneurship; Agricultural and Off-Farm Development; Upgrading Basic Services; and Knowledge and Dissemination Hub. Its purpose is to develop and design effective strategies to address various economic development challenges.

*In the past 10 years,  
unemployment has  
been at the highest  
levels in Egypt*



The project is part of a collaboration between UNDP and the Egyptian Ministry of International Cooperation. It aims to develop a replicable approach to local economic development and to address rural-urban disparities in poverty and economic opportunity. Its primary goal is

to improve the welfare of the people of Upper Egypt by implementing an interconnected approach in income generation, food security, improved basic services, and activities in knowledge management and networking for local economic development.



*Empowering Women through Handicrafts:  
The role of ENID in Upper Egypt.*  
© UNDP Egypt

UNDP significantly improved the skills of youth and provided access to employment opportunities, particularly for women. The area-based methodology provided an innovative and integrated development approach in Upper Egypt. ENID operated in 42 villages in Upper Egypt, directly and indirectly empowering 20,000 people and creating partnerships with 11 ministries and various stakeholders. UNDP provided skills development to 2,250 people and created 533 new jobs in manufacturing (such as handicrafts), sustainable agriculture (crop residue recycling) and basic services (literacy and sewing classes). About 70 percent of beneficiaries were women and youth aged 18 to 29.



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# MADE51: A NEW INITIATIVE BRINGING MARKET ACCESS TO REFUGEE ARTISANS

Refugees' skills, knowledge and craftsmanship cross transnational borders. Refugees hold on to artistic traditions, providing them with opportunities to join the growing global artisan economy. The artisan sector is one of the largest employer in developing countries, after the agricultural sector. International trade in artisan crafts has acquired a value of over US\$32 billion per year, of which 62 percent of handicraft exports derive from developing countries. UNHCR works in 128 countries to protect and support 1.6 million refugees.

MADE51<sup>2</sup>, a UNHCR initiative, connects artisanal products made by refugees with the global market. MADE51 is aimed to be a collaborative effort, hence, inputs provided by key stakeholders and partners are valued and considered of upmost importance. In order to achieve its objective, traditional skills are updated to compliment modernization and, partnerships are formed with social enterprises, linking with retail brands and buyers who have the capacity to source and support the product lines. The MADE51 process provides a rapid, sustainable, and innovative pathway through which the refugee artisans can supply attractive, market-ready products to customers.

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<sup>2</sup> 'MADE51' – Market Access, Design and Empowerment of refugee artisans, is a tentative brand name and will be re-branded by 2018.

*MADE51<sup>2</sup>, a UNHCR initiative, connects artisanal products made by refugees with the global market*



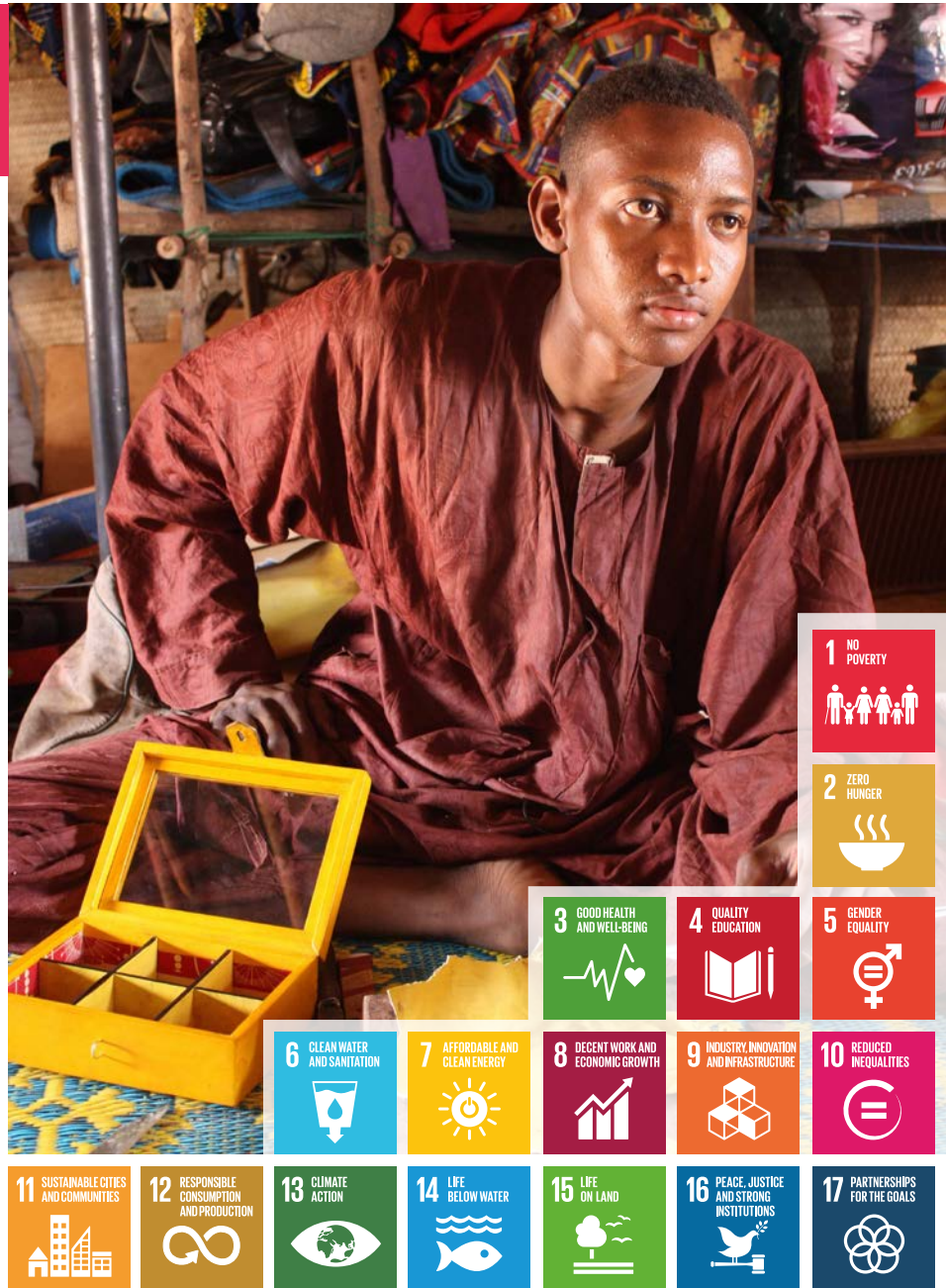
A young artisan showcasing his work.  
© UNHCR



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Refugees reap the benefits of participating in the global artisan value chain. Through this method, their artistic traditions are showcased, preserving their culture and heritage, which allows them to learn transferable business and vocation skills, restore their sense of dignity and improve their self-reliance. Essentially, this generates income opportunities, hence, reducing their dependency on aid. By measuring the impact that each purchase has on refugee artisan and their communities, the benefits and success of the MADE51 initiative is noted.



# EMPLOYMENT THROUGH LABOUR-INTENSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE IN JORDAN

*50 percent of  
Jordanians and  
99 percent of Syrians  
are working in the  
informal economy*



Syrian Refugee Response.  
Construction workers.  
© ILO Jordan

1 NO POVERTY 	2 ZERO HUNGER 	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	4 QUALITY EDUCATION 	5 GENDER EQUALITY 
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	13 CLIMATE ACTION 	14 LIFE BELOW WATER 	15 LIFE ON LAND 
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 			

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A 2015 ILO labour market study<sup>3</sup> showed that 50 percent of Jordanians and 99 percent of Syrians are working in the informal economy. This harmed the quality of the jobs, producing sub-standard wages, poor working conditions and exploitation, including of child labour. At the same time, the competition for jobs had led to social tensions. Unemployment rates were highest among youth and among the lowest educated and poorest segments of the population. This was of particular concern in the northern governorates, in Zarqa, Irbid and Mafraq, and in Amman, where the share of Syrian refugees was greater.

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3 The impact of Syrian refugee crisis on the labour market in Jordan, ILO and FAFO, 2015.

The project's objective is to improve rural infrastructure through employment-intensive methods that create jobs for Syrian refugees and Jordanians, including youth. The outcomes are: more and better jobs for inclusive growth and improved youth employment prospects; better employment promotion strategies for young women and men; and stronger employment policy coherence that addresses policy and institutions with respect to employment creation. The project aims to improve the living conditions of Syrian refugees and Jordanians through increased employment and improved infrastructure. It aims to create 120,000 worker-days of short-term jobs, distributed equally among Syrian refugees and Jordanians. Between May and July 2017, the project created 56,938 worker-days while employing 3,894 Syrian refugees and Jordanians.

These employment-intensive programmes differ from various initiatives of cash for work that have been implemented so far in Jordan. Specifically, they (a) focus on decent working conditions, including occupational safety and health, no child labour, and equal

pay for work of equal value; (b) offer safeguards for environmental protection; (c) allow participating workers to graduate out of the programme to sustainable livelihood; and (d) create or increase the value of public, agricultural and environmental infrastructure.

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# AN INNOVATIVE ACADEMY TO REBUILD LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS IN UKRAINE

UNDP Ukraine has selected 15 businesses run by internally displaced people for the first Crowdfunding Academy in Ukraine. Experts from UNDP Alternative Finance Lab and Terra Hub NGO, who co-created the concept of Crowdfunding Academy, as well as trainers from the leading Ukrainian online crowdfunding platform “Spilnokosht” taught entrepreneurs how to raise funding for their businesses using online tools and innovative methodologies.

The Crowdfunding Academy is a series of trainings for trainers and educational workshops for selected teams from small and medium-sized enterprises. Through lectures and work assignments, the selected teams receive support from mentors and crowdfunding experts in preparation of their crowdfunding campaigns. To be admitted to the Crowdfunding Academy, participants had to describe their business idea and specify the required investment. Crowdfunding experts then selected the 15 most interesting and socially relevant projects from over 85 applications.

Experts from UNDP Alternative Finance Lab and NGO Terra Hub (Croatia), as well as trainers from the leading Ukrainian online crowdfunding platform, Spilnokosht, taught entrepreneurs how to fundraise for their businesses using online tools and innovative methodologies. In total, 86 people were trained on access to alternative funding.

*UNDP Ukraine has selected 15 businesses run by internally displaced people for the first Crowdfunding Academy in Ukraine*

In March and April, the campaigns, launched by IDP-entrepreneurs, started to appear on the Spilnokosht and Indiegogo crowdfunding platforms, where ordinary people can support businesses/ideas in which they believe. In total, 12 entrepreneurs managed to develop their crowdfunding campaigns; these are available on a dedicated Crowdfunding Academy webpage.

The Crowdfunding Academy convinced people of the values of entrepreneurship in rebuilding lives and livelihoods in fragile situations. Besides resource mobilization, crowdfunding has

been a powerful tool for communication about local enterprise projects, self-reliance and community mobilization. Innovative, local and culturally driven enterprise ideas from Ukrainians for Ukrainians can now be supported by anyone through the platform. Their business ideas range from energy-efficient housing for the IDPs; green schools for young students; Poltava traditional tapestry; designing a unique, highly durable Ukraine-made electric bike; creating fashion patches for clothing; and developing individual quests for travellers to challenge each other.

*The Crowdfunding Academy Training in Kyiv.*  
© UNDP Ukraine



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# CONNECTING REFUGEES WITH ADEQUATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN MEXICO

Young man participates in employment programme.  
© UNHCR Mexico



Mexico City is a City of Solidarity where people from various backgrounds and international communities have been able to settle, meet their basic needs and those of their families and take the first steps towards integrating into the Mexican society. In 2016, Mexico received 8,796 asylum claims, a 156% increase from the previous year. The number of asylum seekers and applications continue to grow. While UNHCR continues to improve financial support, legal aid, and safe housing for asylum seekers, the long-term stability of refugees remains a concern.



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UNHCR is working with government institutions, local civil society partners such as *Programa Casa Refugiados* (PCR), and the private sector to integrate hundreds of asylum-seekers and refugees who are fleeing violence and seeking safety in Mexico each year. A recent study conducted by UNHCR and the International Labour Organization found that 47% of those interviewed said their job in Mexico represented a step down from their previous employment at home, raising concerns that refugee skills are being wasted. In addition, 90% of those interviewed said they did not have a contract with their employer. PCR, a UNHCR partner, helps connect refugees with adequate employment opportunities, including through collaboration with private sector companies such as Uber, who has facilitated refugee integration through its Uber Drive and Uber EATS platforms; in an integration model that combines donations of bicycles and smartphones, flexibilization of identification documents and support to process driver's licenses.

Collaboration with the Mexico City Government has proven to be especially valuable in terms of social and economic inclusion of persons of concern. Various government institutions providing social programmes, including the Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion, the Ministry of Social Development, and the Ministry of Rural Development and Community Equity of Mexico City, have modified their operating rules to ensure effective access of asylum-seekers and refugees to 10 programmes. These programmes allow persons of concern to access training for employment, job placement, unemployment insurance and education grants. By the first semester of 2017, more than 50 asylum-seekers and refugees were enrolled in Mexico City's job matching system; 36 received unemployment insurance and 30 received a temporary occupation allowance. In August 2017, UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, signed an agreement with Mexico City Mayor Miguel Ángel Mancera, to expand the inclusion of refugees in a range of social programmes and services run by the city.

UNHCR is working with governments in the region to develop a Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS is the Spanish acronym). Based on the 2016 New York Declaration, it is a step towards the Global Compact on Refugees to be agreed upon in 2018. It seeks to address the full scope of forced displacement, from its root causes, strengthening asylum systems and working on durable solutions. Countries such as Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador have joined the regional initiative.

*In 2016, Mexico received 8,796 asylum claims, a 156% increase from the previous year*

# YOUTHQUAKE! UNDP BANGLADESH PROMOTES YOUTH INNOVATION CHALLENGE FUNDS FOR EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

UNDP Bangladesh launched the Youth Campaign for Earthquake Preparedness in order to leverage the massive potential of the youth. Launched in collaboration with the Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief (MoDMR) and with BBC Media Action, BDYouth, and A2i project (Access to Information) the Youth Campaign for Earthquake Preparedness built a cohesive agenda that supported Sustainable Development Goals and youth projects. Given Bangladesh's position at the juncture of several active fault lines, earthquakes are among the most pressing environmental threats. In the past year alone, Bangladesh has felt the tremors of nearly 25 earthquakes originating within or close to its borders.

*UNDP Bangladesh's  
YouthQuake Campaign  
leveraged youth  
innovation in support  
of the SDG's*

*Innovators providing new ideas  
on earthquake preparedness.  
© UNDP Bangladesh*







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Yet despite significant risk, a great deal of misinformation has been in circulation regarding exactly what people could do during an earthquake, what level of preparedness is needed, and what must be done in the aftermath - clearly, there was a pressing need for a large-scale media awareness campaign.

The Youth Campaign for Earthquake Preparedness is the first innovation challenge fund in Bangladesh for young creative minds. In teams of 3-4, young innovators presented unique mitigation solutions for raising awareness of and generating behavioural change towards natural calamities. Thirty (30) youth ambassadors were identi-

fied during this process by BYouth to promote the campaign across Bangladesh universities, and the resulting campaign will be implemented by the winning teams in 2017 in a particular university, as a pilot initiative.

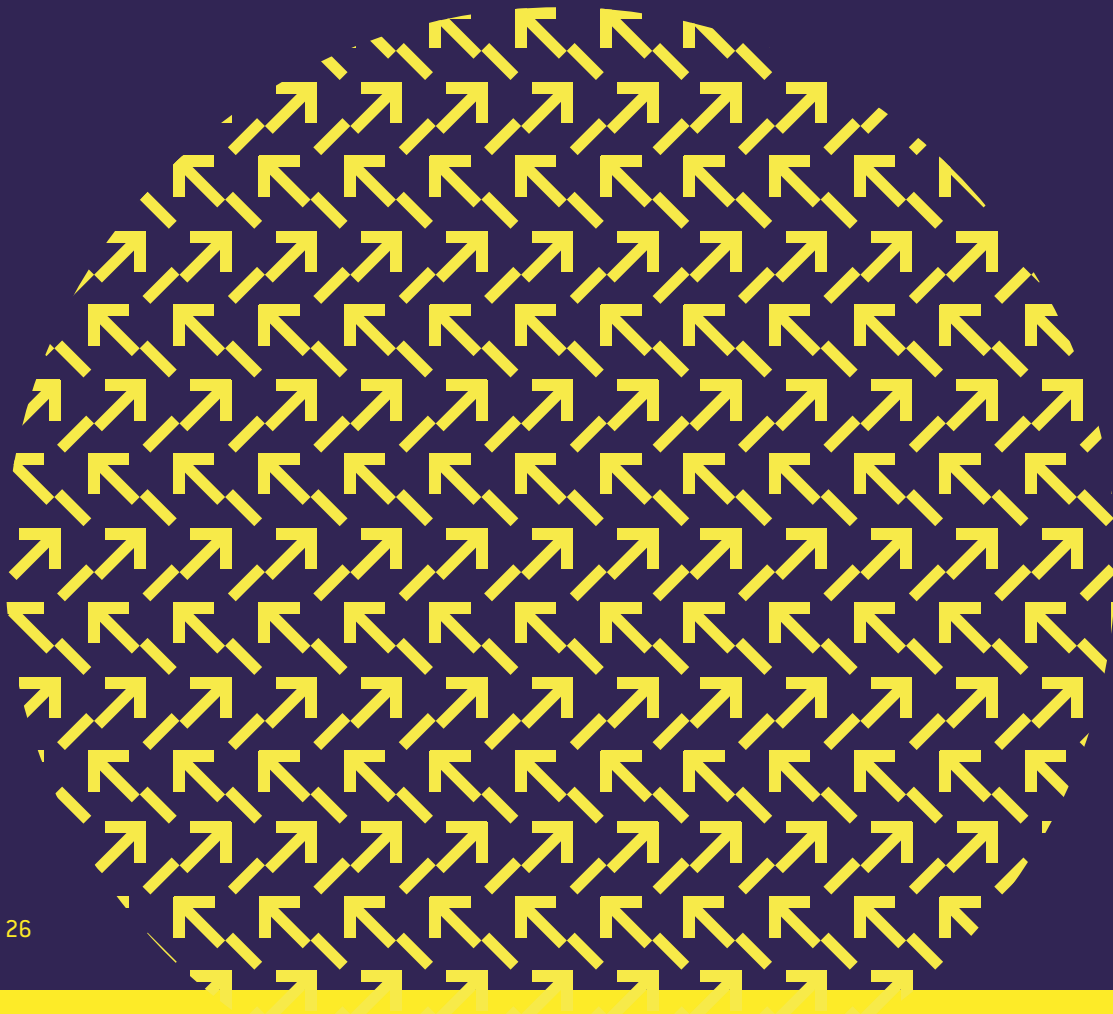
A total of 210 proposals from young innovators across Bangladesh (comprising approximately 800 youths) have provided unique ideas on earthquake preparedness. The final shortlisting process selected the top 10 teams from both Challenge Funds. The winning idea for 'The Shake-it App' (Challenge Fund One) consisted of a game to create an earthquake fighter community all over Bangladesh. The second winning idea for 'Cracks in the Campus' (Challenge Fund Two) based on the power of compelling story telling. It follows a three-step model in which the youth are, initially, given a visual of the true effects of earthquake, instilling a motivation to learn. Next, they are provided a taste of the actual earthquake experience with the help of modern technology. Finally, they are provided the tools to ensure their own personal safety, all to keep themselves and other students from universities across the country and eventually, the world, safe.



The UNDP Bangladesh Youth Strategy has always focused on building equity within youth communities; with the Youth Campaign for Earthquake Preparedness we have moved further on developing new ways of giving youth a voice on pressing issues. Further, we have created opportunities for youths to gain valuable skills for advancement and networking, and dispelled some of the misinformation on disaster-relief. We are proud of all participants in the Campaign, and greatly encouraged by the new dialogues on earthquake preparedness!

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# FOCAL PERSONS ON THE INITIATIVE



*Please feel free  
to reach out to  
the organizations  
for partnerships,  
knowledge sharing  
and additional  
information*



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