

All for Health, Health for All

WHO investment case deep dive:
health and migration



World Health
Organization




Healthcare workers go over patient files in the labour ward of Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital in Nairobi, Kenya, 2019.

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Background

An estimated one billion people globally have migrated or been forcibly displaced. Migration and displacement are key determinants of health and well-being, as stressful migration journeys and poor living conditions often affect the physical and mental health of people on the move. More than this, access to medical services is often disrupted during travel or

unavailable even in a destination country with migrants and displaced people facing severe barriers to accessing health care, employment and social support. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the targets in WHO's 14th General Programme of Work, substantial investment in the health of refugees and migrants is needed.



WHO mission to health center as part of migrants' health programme, Jordan, 2023.

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Global targets and current progress

WHO supports global efforts to ensure meaningful migrant and refugee access to health and well-being in line with established policy frameworks including the WHO Global action plan on promoting the health of refugees and migrants, 2019 – 2030 (GAP), Global compact for migration, and Global compact on refugees.

WHO is developing a GAP monitoring framework and will set the first global monitoring baseline for refugee and migrant health by the end of 2024. The baseline and the monitoring framework will ensure WHO can monitor and report on progress throughout the GPW14 period.

Moreover, WHO annually invites countries to share positive practices in promoting the health of refugees and migrants. The country experiences documented through a WHO compendium on promoting the health of refugees and migrants demonstrated that 63

countries are making progress in addressing the health needs and well-being of refugees and migrants, ranging from the integration of refugees and migrants into the national policies, to successful practices in multisectoral coordination.

WHO's unique value add

WHO leads the global discourse on health and migration with a focus on the health and wellbeing needs of migrants and displaced persons. These needs vary greatly based on circumstance. For migrants, WHO takes a comprehensive approach that considers short and long-term health needs, addresses social determinants of health and their impact on the health of migrants, and advocates for inclusive health systems in line with UHC and PHC approaches. For forcibly displaced persons, WHO is the provider of last resort, delivering health services in refugee settings.

The GAP provides a full and comprehensive account of the health needs of refugees and migrants. It emphasizes the importance of joint, coherent, multisectoral, and multistakeholder approaches to tackle the social determinants of health and all necessary health policies.

WHO will leverage its normative work, leadership, global reach, and technical assistance to countries to play a critical role in improving migrants' and refugees' access to comprehensive, quality, and culturally sensitive health services as well as in promoting migrants' and displaced populations' health and well-being. In

this context, WHO will work together with IOM, UNHCR and other UN Agencies and intergovernmental organizations, donors, and relevant non-State actors to promote refugee and migrant health, convene policy dialogues to support evidence-informed policy-making, monitor the global progress in addressing the gaps in health responses through the GAP monitoring framework. WHO will also deliver technical assistance to strengthen countries responses to refugee and migrant health and provide health managers and workforce capacity-building, including through its flagship - the WHO Global School on the refugee and migrant health.

Stewardship



- ▶ WHO Global action plan on promoting the health of refugees and migrants, 2019-2030; regional strategies and action plans
- ▶ Global Compact on Refugees
- ▶ Global Compact for Migration

Guidance and global health goods



- ▶ World report on refugee and migrant health
- ▶ Global Research Agenda on health, migration and displacement
- ▶ Refugee and Migrant Health Toolkit
- ▶ Global Competency Standards for health workers
- ▶ Global evidence reviews on health and migration

Technical support



- ▶ Refugee and migrant health system reviews
- ▶ Global School on Refugee and Migrant Health
- ▶ Capacity building for policy-makers, health managers, and healthcare workers on the competency standards



A nurse administers COVID-19 vaccine to a migrant in Maesot, Tak, 2021.

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What WHO will achieve in GPW 14

WHO's efforts to improve the health of migrants, refugees, and displaced populations are characterized by three key elements: a systematic and strategic approach for maximum impact, responsiveness to emerging country needs and requests, and collaborative action on the ground

across the three levels of the Organization and in line with other programs and agencies.

WHO will support countries to promote access to health for refugees and migrants in the following ways:



16¹ countries will be supported to generate knowledge and evidence through the implementation research for evidence-based policy-making and formulation of national strategies and action plans.



30 countries² will be supported to strengthen the delivery of essential health services to migrants and displaced populations in line with acceleration progress toward UHC, including through training and in-country capacity-building sessions on competencies for health managers and healthcare workers.



WHO will disseminate country-positive practices examples on promoting the health of refugees and migrants through an online compendium that will be updated on an annual basis.



WHO will monitor progress in implementing GAP through the GAP monitoring framework, a tool that will be published by WHA78 in May 2025.

¹ The list of the countries will be updated and confirmed throughout the lifespan of GPW14. Support is ongoing and envisaged in Senegal, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, Philippines, Colombia, Chile, Estonia, Bulgaria, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon. The implementation of the Global research agenda on health, migration and displacement at regional level will further identify priority countries.

² The list of the countries will be updated and confirmed throughout the lifespan of GPW14. While the GAP monitoring Framework will provide a baseline for priority countries to be supported, specific support, due to aspects like number of refugees and migrants as well as climate change and routes of migration, is ongoing and envisaged for Niger, Mali, Senegal, Libya, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, Estonia, Poland, Lithuania, Moldova, Chile, Colombia, Panama, South Africa, Uganda, Kenya, Thailand, Bulgaria, Czechia, Morocco, Bangladesh, Maldives, Philippines, Cambodia, Fiji, Somalia, Armenia.

WHO's leadership and convening power will advance the health work across sectors through:



Global advocacy to strengthen the political commitment for the implementation of global frameworks by organizing, in collaboration with IOM and UNHCR, the 4th Global Consultation on the Health of Refugees and Migrants convening Member States, UN Agencies and other intergovernmental organizations and non-State actors



Capacity building through the annual Global School on refugee and migrant health, WHO anticipates reaching an estimated 20,000 participants between 2025 and 2028, attending the event and engaging in the online courses through the OpenWHO platform.



Global research prioritization exercises to identify gaps, further define key research priorities in health, migration, and displacement, and support evidence-informed policy-making



Identifying evidence-based approaches to strengthen health systems and improve the health of displaced and migrant populations impacted by climate change

Furthermore, new normative products will be developed including:



The 2nd and 3rd World Report on the Health of Refugees and Migrants, in 2025 and 2028 respectively providing an updated global landscape on access to healthcare by refugees and migrants



Global Evidence Review on Health and Migration reports on 1) health financing for inclusive universal health coverage; 2) health system strengthening in the context of climate change; 3) primary health care; 4) TB; 5) HIV; 6) dementia; and 7) social determinants of health. These reports aim to support evidence-based policy making and targeted interventions, by summarizing the best available evidence worldwide and proposing policy considerations for policy makers.

Box 1

Global School on refugee and migrant health

The WHO Global School on refugee and migrant health supports countries in addressing the health needs and rights of people on the move, convening Governments, United Nations agencies, researchers, non-governmental organizations, and individuals directly affected by migration.

The Global School aims to promote evidence-informed policy-making and targeted interventions by disseminating knowledge on the challenges and successes of implementing Universal Health Coverage (UHC) for refugees and migrants in diverse geographical and social contexts. Through the engagement of decision-makers in both health and non-health sectors of government,

the Global School facilitates the exchange of knowledge, sharing of experiences, and identification of information gaps, collectively paving the way to ensure that the health rights of refugees and migrants are upheld in line with the principles of UHC.

Through the Global School, WHO demonstrates its commitment to creating lifelong learning opportunities to promote the well-being of refugees and migrants and to build competencies in all regions. Since 2020, the School has been hosted by Switzerland, Jordan, Bangladesh, and Senegal, delivering in-person and virtual training to over 12,000 participants from more than 178 Member States, including courses on the OpenWHO.org platform.



Fourth WHO Global School on Refugee and Migrant Health, Senegal, 2023.

Box 2

WHO Global research agenda on health, migration and displacement

Globally, there is a lack of high-quality and policy-relevant research and evidence on health, migration and displacement. There is also a lack of clarity about which knowledge gaps should be addressed to best advance progress towards the WHO's GPW14 targets and the SDGs.

In 2023, WHO launched the Global research agenda on health, migration and displacement to guide research efforts across regions and countries, shaping responsive policies and practices worldwide. Based on the consensus of over 180 stakeholders globally, the agenda identifies five key research themes to strengthen evidence and address key challenges in five main areas: scaling up access to services

and UHC; strengthening health emergency preparedness and response; better understanding determinants of health; bringing visibility to under-researched groups; and finding new ways to collaborate in research.

Over the next four years, WHO will continue to support countries and regions to develop contextualized research agendas in line with the identified priorities to provide evidence to inform policy-making and policy implementation, and support country and regional efforts to respond to the health needs of migrants, refugees and other displaced populations within the SDGs.



WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus meets Chadian ministers over the Refugee situation in Adre, Chad.

