Mapping
Responses by
Cooperatives and
SSEOs to Forced
Displacement

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## 70.8 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide



One third of the global refugee population is hosted by least-developed countries

Less than 3% returned to country of origin

78% of all refugees have been in exile for five consecutive years or more

Cooperatives and other Social and Solidarity Economy Organizations (SSEOs) globally are among the diverse range of enterprises and organization structures effectively responding to forced displacement

## Objective of Assessment

To identify good practices, capture lessons learned and take note of potential areas of innovation by cooperatives and other SSEOs working in displacement contexts, with a view to enhancing their role in crisis response and promoting decent work

Types of Cooperatives Membership Structure Pathways for Engagement Roles **Key Characteristics Operational Insights Benefits and Challenges Enabling Environment** 



Cooperatives are an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise

## SSEOs

Distinct sector of the economy that is people-centred

Specifically produces goods, services and knowledge while pursuing economic and social aims and fostering solidarity

Focuses primarily on **providing services** rather than generating surplus or profit

Cooperatives Mutual benefit societies **Associations** Community-based organizations **SHGs Social Enterprises Foundations** 



## Supporting the Forcibly Displaced Through Collective Action

Cooperatives are uniquely positioned to address the needs of both displaced persons and host populations

## Role of Cooperatives

Community based, locally owned, sustainable, needs-based and inclusive

Deliver both practical services that allow economic and human development and foster social capacities and peacebuilding

Provide integrated and flexible response

**Goods and Services Employment Financing Knowledge Exchange Social Capacities Empowerment Gender Equality** Peacebuilding Resilience Agency



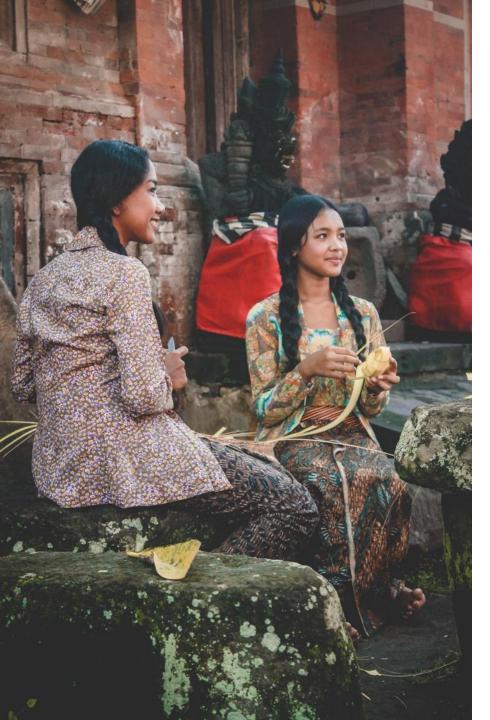
Pathways for Engagement



Host community cooperatives provide services to displaced persons

Host community cooperatives recruit displaced persons as workers

Host community cooperatives include displaced persons as members



Host communities provide capacity building and training for displaced persons to set up their own cooperatives

Displaced persons form cooperatives to provide services for themselves or their host community



Displaced persons and host communities organized into cooperatives by an international organization that then provide services for themselves or the host community

Returning displaced persons rebuild their own communities through cooperatives

## Structure Matters

A democratic and participatory management structure

**Local ownership** 

A strong focus on cooperative values including solidarity, working together and meeting member needs

# Cooperatives as Development Partners

Democratic nature, collective ownership and focus on self-help leads to a unique vehicle for empowerment

Partnering with and contracting them directly shows a commitment towards supporting local organizations



#### Formal legal recognition

fundamentally effects the ability of cooperatives to replicate, grow and become self-sufficient

## Meso Level: Supporting Organizations

Serve as a bridge between macro-level legal/policy frameworks and micro-level cooperative governance structures and values

Enabling
Environment:
International Agencies

Listen to local demand and find ways to support the goals and needs expressed to ensure cooperatives scale organically



Cooperatives are highly contextual, responding to myriad different needs in different ways, and programming should reflect this

Local cooperative federations provide advice, governance and management support for refugee-related cooperatives and can be a key entry point for engagement



Next Steps

## Build a Community of Practice

Workshops

Knowledge platform for sharing of resources

Adapting relevant tools, capacity building and training services

## Raise Awareness

Policy briefs, case studies, articles and other media placements on the role of cooperatives in displacement

## Invest in Research

Self Help Groups and social enterprises in displacement contexts

Cooperatives and internal displacement

Economics of refugee cooperatives

Cooperatives and women's empowerment and gender equality in context of displacement

## Thank You

