

# MAINSTREAMING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLEAN ENERGY ACCESS IN THE REGIONAL REFUGEE AND RESILIENCE PLAN IN RESPONSE TO THE SYRIA CRISIS (3RP)

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## 2022





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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS



<b>CAMRE</b>	Council for Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment
<b>CSM</b>	Climate Security Mechanism
<b>DPPA</b>	United Nations Department of Political Affairs
<b>EAP</b>	Early Action Protocol
<b>EWEA</b>	Early Warning Early Action
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization
<b>FbA</b>	Forecast based Action
<b>FbF</b>	Forecast based Financing
<b>FFS</b>	Funding Facility for Stabilization
<b>GEF</b>	Green Environment Funds
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced People
<b>JEU</b>	Joint Environment Unit (of UNOCHA and UNEP)
<b>JICA</b>	Japan International Cooperation Agency
<b>LCRP</b>	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
<b>MEI</b>	Moving Energy Initiative
<b>SRP</b>	Syrian Resettlement Programme
<b>SWLRI</b>	Strategy for Water and Land Resources in Iraq
<b>3RP</b>	Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNOCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>WPS</b>	Water Peace and Security Initiative



# SUMMARY

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The Syria crisis continues to fuel the largest displacement crisis in the world. Ecological degradation and climate disruption are impacting and shaping the humanitarian and development operations that have been mounted in response. These include those under the umbrella of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis (hereafter known as the 3RP). 3RP countries - Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Türkiye - have been housing refugees of this crisis for over a decade. Together, they host a population of approximately 7.1 million refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless persons, as well as 12.9 million impacted host community members.

The urgent development and humanitarian challenges triggered by the Syria crisis are exacerbated by an interlinked, but often less visible, slow-motion crisis: ecological degradation in the form of growing water insecurity, rising temperatures, decreasing agricultural production, and the legacies of the conflict. Even before the conflict erupted in 2011, the sub-region was considered the world's most water scarce, and one where land and water resources were highly politically sensitive, both at a community level and across borders. The wider region was already grappling with a number of pressing environmental challenges:

in addition to water scarcity, these included deteriorating water quality, degraded landscapes, damaging air pollution, rapid biodiversity loss, soil degradation, and poor waste management.

The Syria crisis has taken a humanitarian, socio-economic, and environmental toll, not only on Syria but also on all the surrounding countries impacted by the large movement of refugees. The more than a decade of fighting has, directly and indirectly, damaged the environment. This has left a legacy that has worsened the crisis and complicated the humanitarian response. In 3RP countries, the influx of refugees and internally displaced people has put additional pressure on natural resources such as land and freshwater, on which host communities also rely.

As the demand for assistance in the 3RP countries has risen, so too has the environmental footprint of 3RP partners. Unintended environmental degradation resulting from humanitarian action can worsen a crisis by impeding the recovery of refugee and host communities who depend on natural resources for their livelihoods, with negative and long-term impacts on their lives and on the environment itself.

The state of the environment in 3RP countries is particularly relevant for both humanitarian and development action. It fundamentally shapes people's needs, vulnerabilities, and livelihoods.

In essence, the fortunes of the region's people have become more wrapped up with the health of their natural landscape than ever before. Environmental and energy issues are not a 'luxury' issue, to be tackled only once other priorities are resolved. On the contrary, they underpin many critical objectives for the 3RP, such as stabilization, recovery, resilience building efforts, water and sanitation, food security, water security, economic recovery, livelihoods, gender equality, infrastructure investment, and protection needs. Long-term peace and stability in the region, as well as the dignity and security of its inhabitants, requires a safe and sustainable environment and resilience to external shocks at both a national and a community level.

This report highlights the link between ecological fragility and humanitarian and development needs in the 3RP countries. It explores the relations between ecological degradation and the refugee crisis, showcasing some of the main challenges for 3RP partners and what 3RP is already doing best to cope with environmental degradation and energy access. It introduces a list of global, regional, and national stakeholders working on environmental sustainability and energy provision in 3RP countries.

Further mainstreaming environmental and energy challenges into 3RP programmes can achieve two broad objectives: The first is to anticipate risks and strengthen the resilience of both host communities and refugees. The second is to do no harm.

We propose an 8-step plan of action to raise awareness and create a space of actions, plan for success, reduce the environmental footprint of 3RP, harness frontier technologies to anticipate risks and strengthen resilience, unlock new sources of finance, build capacity, and support environmental voices in 3RP countries, coordinate with other actors, monitor progress, and ensure lessons are learned. Here is a brief overview:



## **STEP 1: RAISE AWARENESS AMONG 3RP PARTNERS AND CREATE SPACE FOR MAINSTREAMING ENVIRONMENT**

The Joint Secretariat of the 3RP needs to raise the level of ambition for environmental programming across the activities of the 3RP and make a convincing case for such action.

## **STEP 2: PLAN FOR SUCCESS**

Environmental mainstreaming in humanitarian and development programmes and projects depends on a systematic consideration of environmental risks, opportunities, and benefits in programme design, implementation, and throughout the project management cycle.

## **STEP 3: DO NO ENVIRONMENTAL HARM**

An important component of the 3RPs overall mainstreaming is that its operations do not inadvertently accelerate environmental degradation and energy insecurity by 'competing' with host or refugee communities for scarce resources, leading to solid waste or wastewater pollution.

## **STEP 4: HARNESS FRONTIER TECHNOLOGIES TO ANTICIPATE RISKS AND STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE**

Mainstreaming environmental sustainability requires evidence-based planning.

## **STEP 5: UNLOCK NEW SOURCES OF FINANCE**

The implementation of environmental policies, environmental management systems, action plans, and so on will inevitably incur some costs. These initial investments must be budgeted for, and that necessary expertise is made available.

## **STEP 6: BUILD CAPACITY AND SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL VOICES IN 3RP COUNTRIES**

Mainstreaming environmental action across 3RP's programming requires building the capacity of 3RP partners as well as national and subnational governments in 3RP countries.

## **STEP 7: COORDINATE WITH OTHER ACTORS**

3RP is already a major exercise in coordination, but several important actors can help mainstream environmental action in 3RP, who may not yet be involved in 3RP.

## **STEP 8: MONITOR PROGRESS AND ENSURE LESSONS ARE LEARNED**

Finally, 3RP needs to monitor the implementation of environmental mainstreaming, and ensure a continual learning and improvement process.

# PART 1: THE CASE FOR ACTION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The crisis in Syria, now in its eleventh year, has triggered the largest refugee situation in the world, with some 5.6 million registered Syrian refugees living among and alongside local communities in Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt - the five countries that have taken in the most refugees [1]. Nearly 95 percent of these people live in urban and peri-urban settings, sharing space with local communities [2]. This influx has stretched public services and infrastructure in host communities, exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities in some places [3].

In 2015, recognizing the unique challenges that host countries and communities faced by hosting Syrian refugees, the international community developed a comprehensive approach for both refugees and host communities. Going beyond emergency assistance, the new approach combined humanitarian and development responses to the Syria crisis into a single coherent plan in line with national plans and priorities, under the joint leadership of UNHCR and UNDP [4]. Known as '*The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis*', or 3RP for short, this approach recognizes that the multifaceted challenges of hosting large numbers of displaced people can impair the ability of host countries to advance sustainable development. The 3RP was created as a strategic, coordination, planning, advocacy, fundraising, and programming platform for the array of actors working at the frontier between humanitarian assistance and sustainable development. It comprises one regional plan with five standalone country chapters covering Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt [5], and aims to provide new and improved support systems for refugees and host country communities.

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[1] 3RP (2021a) An introduction to the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) An integrated humanitarian and development plan in response to the Syrian Crisis [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP\\_brochure\\_jun2021.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP_brochure_jun2021.pdf).

[2] 3RP (2021c) Regional Needs Overview – 2022, 3RP [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Regional\\_Needs\\_Overview\\_100dpi.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Regional_Needs_Overview_100dpi.pdf).

[3] 3RP (2021a) An introduction to the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) An integrated humanitarian and development plan in response to the Syrian Crisis [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP\\_brochure\\_jun2021.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP_brochure_jun2021.pdf).

[4] 3RP (2021a) An introduction to the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) An integrated humanitarian and development plan in response to the Syrian Crisis [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP\\_brochure\\_jun2021.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP_brochure_jun2021.pdf).

[5] 3RP (2021) An introduction to the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) An integrated humanitarian and development plan in response to the Syrian Crisis [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP\\_brochure\\_jun2021.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP_brochure_jun2021.pdf).



Buffeted by years of violent conflict, as well as drought, floods, the COVID-19 pandemic, economic crises, and exposure to the growing impacts of climate change, the 3RP countries are caught in the grips of a complex humanitarian and developmental crisis. It is estimated that more than 20 million people in Türkiye, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq will need some form of humanitarian and resilience support in 2022 [6]. This includes 7.1 million Syrian refugees as well as refugees and asylum seekers of other nationalities and stateless persons, and 12.9 million impacted host community members [7]. As of 2021, a further 6.7 million people were internally displaced within Syria [8].

The vast humanitarian consequences of the Syria crisis for host countries have overshadowed the rapid decay of their natural environment. Adding to the already multiple challenges of coping with the pressure of refugees and IDPs, 3RP countries are facing increased environmental stress. Lack of precipitation, more frequent heat waves, and rapid soil erosion are some of the drivers leading to increased water and food insecurity amongst both refugees and host communities.

Part 1 of this report lays out the rationale for addressing climate resilience, environmental sustainability, and access to clean energy as an integral part of the 3RP. It aims to highlight efforts to mainstream environmental sustainability in the sub-region to date and to inform future policy aimed at mainstreaming environmental sustainability. Part 2 describes options and ideas for action to pragmatically operationalize environmental considerations in 3RP programming.



Vocational training on installation, operating, maintenance & programming of Solar Photovoltaic Systems at West Bekaa, Lebanon

Photo by UNDP/  
Rana Sweidan

[6] The figure is based on 3RP countries' input: UNOCHA (2021) UNOCHA estimates that 45 million people will require some form of assistance across the Middle East and North Africa in 2022. UNOCHA. Middle East and Northern Africa, Global Humanitarian Overview

[7] 3RP (2021c) Regional Needs Overview – 2022, 3RP [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Regional\\_Needs\\_Overview\\_100dpi.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Regional_Needs_Overview_100dpi.pdf)

[8] UNHCR (12.2021) Operational Data Portal, Refugee Situation. Available at: [http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria\\_durable\\_solutions](http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria_durable_solutions) Accessed 14.12.2021

## 1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY CHALLENGES IN THE SYRIA CRISIS

Hidden behind the headlines and statistics of the decade-long crisis is an ongoing story of the socio-economic impacts of environmental change and degradation in Syria and the wider region. Even before the conflict erupted in 2011, the sub-region was considered the world's most water-scarce [9], where land and water resources were highly politically sensitive, both at a community level and across borders [10]. The wider region was already grappling with a number of pressing environmental challenges: in addition to water scarcity, these included deteriorating water quality, degraded landscapes, damaging air pollution, rapid biodiversity loss, soil degradation, and poor waste management [11]. Jordan has been enduring water deficits since the 1960s, with its current renewable freshwater resources at only around 100m<sup>3</sup> per person per year, far below the threshold for severe water scarcity of 500m<sup>3</sup> [12].

The causes of environmental degradation in the sub-region are many and complex. They stem from the legacies of years of conflict, as well as weak governance, climate change, and rapid, unplanned urbanization. Land degradation is reducing agricultural yields and heavily polluting nearby sources of water such as streams, rivers, or wetlands. Armed conflicts have a direct impact on land degradation directly through physical damage and indirectly through affected communities' behavioral changes caused by impairment to critical infrastructure, harming agricultural fields and thus reducing food production, or forcing refugees, IDPs, and host communities to adapt their use of natural resources. Addressing these challenges has been hindered by fractured responsibility for environmental governance and a lack of integration of policymaking and enforcement with data and science, though an active and growing civil society sector is pushing environmental action up the political agenda [13].

Environmental challenges can also set up a negative feedback loop that exacerbates political instability. Indeed, some experts argue that drought may have, in a roundabout way, helped create the context in which the Syria crisis first emerged [14].

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[9] Brown, O. and Crawford, A. (2009) *Rising Temperatures, Rising Tensions: Climate change and the risk of violent conflict in the Middle East*, Geneva: IISD

[10] Brown, O. and Crawford, A. (2009) *Rising Temperatures, Rising Tensions: Climate change and the risk of violent conflict in the Middle East*, Geneva: IISD

[11] Brown, O. and Crawford, A. (2009) *Rising Temperatures, Rising Tensions: Climate change and the risk of violent conflict in the Middle East*, Geneva: IISD

[12] UNICEF (2019) *Water, sanitation and hygiene Access to safe water and sanitation for every child*. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/jordan/water-sanitation-and-hygiene>

[13] Brown, O. and Wittbold, B. (2021) *The impact of COVID-19 on environmental sustainability in Iraq*, UNEP and UNDP. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/impact-covid-19-environmental-sustainability-iraq-enarku>

[14] Adelphi, et al. (2015) *A new climate for peace: Taking action on climate and fragility risks*. An independent report commissioned by the G7; available at: <https://www.newclimateforpeace.org/#report-top>





Farmer picking olives  
after rural road  
rehabilitation in  
Akkar, Lebanon

Photo by UNDP/  
Rana Sweidan

Between 2006 and 2009, the country suffered its most severe drought in some 500 years [15]. This devastated rural livelihoods, leading to the abandonment of farmland and the migration of between 40,000 and 60,000 rural families to cities [16]. Some experts argue that their subsequent disillusionment at perceived marginalization and lack of support from the government helped to animate the large-scale protests surrounding the Arab Spring in March 2011 and the violent crackdowns which sparked the civil war. While the extent to which such conflicts are directly attributable to climate change is controversial and difficult to ascertain [17], there is a general consensus that climate change is a formidable “force multiplier”, adding stress to an already geopolitically complex and unstable region [18]. This is not to blame a bloody civil war on a capricious climate, but rather to note that the drought may have contributed, in a small way, to subsequent events, while in no way seeking to diminish the actions by state and non-state actors in initiating and exacerbating the conflict.

The more than a decade of fighting since then has, directly and indirectly, damaged the environment. This has left a legacy that has worsened the crisis and complicated the humanitarian response. Fighters have attacked critical water and agricultural resources and infrastructure, including setting fire to fields as part of literal scorched earth strategies, with the intent of disrupting harvests and undermining food security for months to come [19]. Many oil refineries were targeted to destabilize the region’s economy, leading to open-air makeshift refineries and a terrible impact on the environment from an ecological and anthropological point.

[15] Ash, K. and Obradovich, N. (2019) Climatic Stress, Internal Migration, and Syrian Civil War Onset. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, SAGE: 1-29, DOI: 10.1177/0022002719864140

[16] Kelley, et al. (2014) Climate Change in the Fertile Crescent and Implication of the Recent Syrian Drought. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* Mar 2015, 112 (11) 3241-3246; DOI:10.1073/pnas.1421533112

[17] Some scholars disagree that there is a robust link. See, for example, Selby, J., Dahi, O., Fröhlich, C., and Hulme, M. (2017) Climate change and the Syrian civil war revisited. *Political Geography*, Vol. 60, pp. 232-244, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2017.05.007>

[18] ICRC Climate Centre (2021) Middle East Climate Fact Sheet. Available at: <https://www.climatecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/RCCC-ICRC-Country-profiles-Region-Middle-East.pdf>

[19] CBS (2019) Deliberate crop burning blamed on ISIS remnants compounds misery in war torn Iraq and Syria.” Available at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/isis-beaten-in-iraq-and-syria-but-remnants-crop-burning-hits-harvest-hard/>

Oil fires release environmentally damaging substances such as sulfur dioxide and heavy metals that greatly waterproof the soils and pollute the underground aquifers. These long-term effects directly impact human health and humanitarian response that cannot rely on the available natural resources anymore. Further, skyrocketing risks of respiratory diseases, cancers, and increased mortality greatly threaten the humanitarian response and endanger development efforts, further diminishing the regional capacity to recover from conflicts [20]. If not addressed, this environmental degradation will continue to hinder development and undermine recovery.

A less visible, but still far-reaching, environmental consequence of conflict is the breakdown of many traditional and modern systems for managing natural resources. This is coupled with the loss of expertise and institutional memory of environmental experts forced to flee internally or overseas, or institutional mechanisms for resource management forced to close their doors. In Jordan, refugees make up close to 20 percent of the population, adding a strain on schools, hospitals, and the job market. In 2016, close to 25 percent of the state budget was spent on helping refugees, leaving little spare budget for other priorities, including environmental management [21].

Meanwhile, the natural landscape is changing because of climate change. All five 3RP countries, as well as Syria, are facing hotter and drier conditions [22]. Shifting and less predictable rainfall, the shrinking of the winter snowpack that feeds critical rivers, and more frequent heat waves are likely to worsen existing water shortages, damage agricultural productivity, and directly affect people's health and well-being [23][24]. Alongside conflict and economic factors, climate change is likely to continue to be a contributing driver of displacement and migration in the Middle East [25].

The repercussions of these ecological threats may result in lower economic activity for the 3RP countries that are highly reliant on agriculture. Nevertheless, the most severe ecological threat currently affecting the 3RP countries is undoubtedly water scarcity. The low levels of water in the Euphrates River have had wide-ranging humanitarian impacts on Syrian refugees and host communities such as reduced electricity generated through hydrological power, increased reliance on fossil fuels for energy generation, limited access to water resources to irrigate agricultural productions leading to reduced economical gains, fewer jobs, increased starvation,

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[20] CEOBS (2016) Report highlights health and environmental impact of makeshift oil refineries in Syria. Available at: <https://ceobs.org/report-highlights-health-and-environmental-impact-of-makeshift-oil-refineries-in-syria/>

[21] BBC News (2016) Syria conflict: Jordanians 'at boiling point' over refugees. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-35462698>

[22] IPCC (2022) Interactive Atlas. Available at: <https://interactive-atlas.ipcc.ch/>

[23] ICRC (2020) When rain turns to dust. Understanding and responding to the combined impact of armed conflicts and the climate and environmental crisis on people's lives. Available at:

[https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/topic/file\\_plus\\_list/rain\\_turns\\_to\\_dust\\_climate\\_change\\_conflict.pdf](https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/topic/file_plus_list/rain_turns_to_dust_climate_change_conflict.pdf)

[24] Varela, R. Rodríguez-Díaz, L. Barriopedro, D. Castro, M. Costoya, X. García-Herrera, R. Gómez-Gesteira, M. (2021) Projected changes in the season of hot days in the Middle East and North Africa. Available at:

<https://rmets.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/joc.7360>

[25] ICRC Climate Centre (2021) Middle East Climate Fact Sheet. website: [https://www.climatecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/RCCC-ICRC-Country-profiles-Region\\_Middle\\_East.pdf](https://www.climatecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/RCCC-ICRC-Country-profiles-Region_Middle_East.pdf)



and reduced access to drinking water. In 2015, Iraq launched its strategy for water and land resources in Iraq (SWLRI) estimating a deficit in water of around 11 billion cubic meters by the year 2035 if all countries sharing water catchments complete their development plans.

At the same time, population growth and large infrastructure projects are changing the supply and demand for water, at a time when it is already under severe stress. The region is marked by a high population growth rate and a young population. Iraq has one of the youngest populations in the world, with 50 percent of the population under 18 and 70 percent of the population under 24, whilst in Jordan, close to 63 percent of its population is under the age of 30 [26]. These demographic trends are also stretching existing solid waste and wastewater management systems, while also carrying significant impacts on energy demand and consumption, which is rapidly increasing across the region [27][28].

Through this all, the fortunes of the region's people have become more wrapped up with the health of their natural landscape than ever before. Nevertheless, environmental action and cooperation may also offer a key to unlocking solutions that build the resilience of host and refugee communities while bridging the gap between life-saving humanitarian responses and life-affirming development. Long-term peace and stability in the region, as well as the dignity and security of its inhabitants, requires a safe and sustainable environment and resilience to external shocks at both a national and a community level.



*Residents of Mazboud, Mount Lebanon gain access to clean water*

*Photo by UNDP/  
Rana Sweidan*

[26] UNICEF Jordan (2019) *Youth A successful transition to adulthood for every child*.  
UNICEF Iraq (2021) *More than 72,000 young people raise their voice – U-Report is officially launched in Iraq*.  
[27] 3RP (2021c) *Regional Needs Overview – 2022*, 3RP. [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Regional\\_Needs\\_Overview\\_100dpi.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Regional_Needs_Overview_100dpi.pdf).  
[28] IEA (2022) 'Country profile, Jordan, Egypt, Türkiye, Lebanon and Iraq'. Available at: <https://www.iea.org/>

# 1.3

## HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AND THE ENVIRONMENT: A SELF-REINFORCING PREDICAMENT

Meanwhile, the influx of refugees and internally displaced people has strained precious natural resources such as land and freshwater, on which host communities also rely. The Syria crisis has taken a humanitarian, socio-economic, and environmental toll, not only on Syria, but also on all the surrounding countries impacted by the large movement of refugees fleeing conflict, poverty, and poor living conditions [29]. The severe environmental damage resulting from the conflict has been another push factor encouraging refugees to leave their homes and seek shelter in host countries [30]. Türkiye, with over 3.7 million refugees, hosts by far the largest number of displaced Syrians [31]. Meanwhile, Lebanon has the highest number of refugees as a proportion of its population, with 1.5 million registered refugees equating to 25 percent of Lebanon's entire population. This is followed by Jordan, with more than 670,000, Iraq with 252,000, and Egypt with 136,000 refugees. Most of these refugees live in urban areas while only around 5 percent live in refugee camps [32].

Such numbers are not easily absorbed in countries where critical resources such as arable land, water, and constructable space are already in short supply, and where government-funded public services rarely meet the needs of the existing population. Providing for refugees increases the demand for energy, water, food, health, education, waste management, and education. In Lebanon, owners converted fertile agricultural land to informal settlements hosting 10-100 Syrian refugee families in the middle of their fields. The locations of settlements so close to productive land and water sources have increased soil degradation and exacerbated pollution due to unsustainable waste management in open fields or near streams [33].

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[29] UNHCR (12.2021) Operational Data Portal, Refugee Situation. Available at:

[http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria\\_durable\\_solutions](http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria_durable_solutions)

[30] Gaafar, R. (2021) The Environmental Impact of Syria's Conflict: A Preliminary Survey of Issues. Arab Reform Initiative. Available at: [https://www.arab-reform.net/wp-content/uploads/pdf/Arab\\_Reform\\_Initiative\\_en\\_the-environmental-impact-of-syrias-conflict-a-preliminary-survey-of-issues\\_17955.pdf?ver=0280913d4236635f7b63078e1c06ce41](https://www.arab-reform.net/wp-content/uploads/pdf/Arab_Reform_Initiative_en_the-environmental-impact-of-syrias-conflict-a-preliminary-survey-of-issues_17955.pdf?ver=0280913d4236635f7b63078e1c06ce41)

[31] UNHCR (12.2021) Operational Data Portal, Refugee Situation. Available at:

[http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria\\_durable\\_solutions](http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria_durable_solutions)

[32] UNHCR (12.2021) Operational Data Portal, Refugee Situation. Available at:

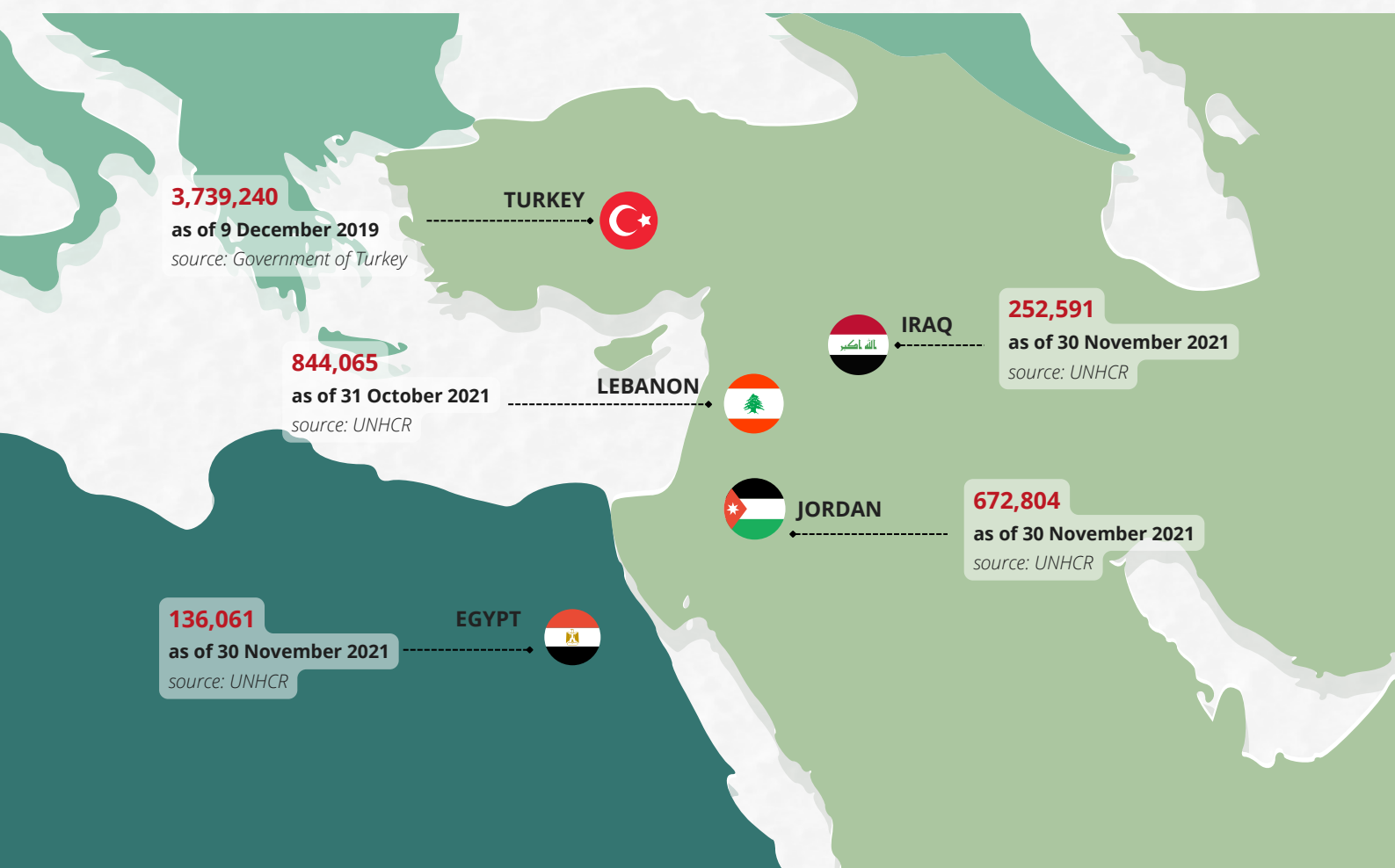
[http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria\\_durable\\_solutions](http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria_durable_solutions)

[33] Trovato, M. (2018) A Landscape Perspective on the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon. In: Asgary A. (eds) Resettlement Challenges for Displaced Populations and Refugees. Sustainable Development Goals Series. Springer, Cham.

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92498-4\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92498-4_4)



## Registered Refugees from Syria Breakdown by 3RP Country of Asylum



Source: Alp Analytica based on UNHCR Operational Data Portal-14.12.2021

These countries often have little economic buffer. Lebanon has been in the grips of a worsening and multifaceted economic crisis for several years. Among much else, the economic crisis has exacerbated water scarcity as the lack of fuel and spare parts has prevented water pumps from functioning properly, reducing water supplies for an estimated four million people. In Jordan, one of the region's most water-scarce countries, the economic crash has imperiled infrastructure investments to fix leaky pipes or execute large-scale desalination programmes [34].

[34] Stanford University (2021) Jordan's worsening water crisis a warning for the world. ScienceDaily. Available at: [www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/03/210329200315.htm](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/03/210329200315.htm)

Meanwhile, COVID-19 has stretched health systems and other basic services and intensified the already severe humanitarian needs [35]. It has led to a series of country-wide restrictions, such as the closure of schools in response to the pandemic, which has accelerated and aggravated existing challenges and disparities [36]. In some countries, this has led to significant falls in GDP – of 10 percent in Iraq (the worst contraction of its economy since 2003) and 20 percent in Lebanon [37]. This has contributed to surging poverty and increased unemployment – 41 percent of Lebanese households are struggling to meet basic needs [38].

The situation is worse still for many refugees. Food, rent, and health costs are the main reasons for debt in refugee communities. Many are resorting to harmful coping mechanisms to meet basic needs such as skipping meals, selling productive assets such as livestock, increasing debt, and keeping children out of school. Ninety percent of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, for example, are living in extreme poverty with limited access to food and water [39]. The economic crisis, including soaring inflation and fuel shortages in several countries, exacerbates already fragile food security and nutritional situation and erodes people's coping capacities. Meanwhile, the astounding public health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have obscured a range of significant direct and indirect environmental consequences, which could further exacerbate existing challenges stemming from high levels of climate vulnerability, pollution, weak governance, and ecological fragility in the region [40].

Economic crises increase vulnerability. For instance, female-headed households have contracted more debts for health spending than male-headed ones. Additionally, COVID-19 has also exacerbated the digital divide between the refugees and host communities during pandemic-related school closures. One example is in the provision of education, as remote learning platforms require stable energy access thus making access to education negatively correlated to energy prices. More stable and off-grid power production relying on renewable energies, such as solar panels, could greatly strengthen the knowledge infrastructure [41].

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[35] UNOCHA (2021) *Middle East and Northern Africa. Global Humanitarian Overview*

[36] 3RP (2021b) *2021 Progress Report: Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis, September 2021.*

[37] 3RP (2021b) *2021 Progress Report: Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis, September 2021.*

[38] WFP (2020). *Assessing the Impact of the Economic and COVID-19 Crises in Lebanon.*

[39] UNHCR (2020) *Nine out of ten Syrian refugee families in Lebanon are now living in extreme poverty, UN study says.* Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/lb/14025-nine-out-of-ten-syrian-refugee-families-in-lebanon-are-now-living-in-extreme-poverty-un-study-says.html>

[40] Brown, O. and Wittbold, B. (2021) *The impact of COVID-19 on environmental sustainability in Iraq, UNEP and UNDP.* Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/impact-covid-19-environmental-sustainability-iraq-enarku>

[41] Power for All (2020) *Why off-grid technologies are key in bridging the digital divide amid COVID-19.* Available at: <https://www.powerforall.org/insights/impact/why-grid-technologies-are-key-bridging-digital-divide-amid-covid-19>



Saida Waterfront  
with newly installed  
solar-powered  
street lights in  
South Lebanon  
Photo by UNDP/  
Rana Sweidan

Today, most refugees and displaced persons in the 3RP region rely on energy sources that are unsustainable and that can pose risks to their health and well-being [42]. Likewise, humanitarian organizations in the region rely heavily on diesel generators to provide refugee settlements with electricity for everyday needs. Apart from the environmental and health-related drawbacks, this results in high costs: the UNHCR alone spends more than US\$ 35 million annually on diesel fuel to produce electricity for its global operations [43]. Even for those refugee communities connected to the national electricity grid—as is the case for many refugee settlements in Iraq—frequent power cuts and voltage drops make operating electrical appliances a challenge, resulting in the use of diesel generators [44]. Still, in recent years humanitarian organizations have increased the deployment of renewable energy systems in refugee communities and the number of people served by off-grid renewables globally has expanded six-fold since 2011 [45]. This includes Jordan's Za'atari refugee camp, the largest solar-powered refugee camp in the world [46].

Nevertheless, with insufficient funding as well as limited policies and practices on sustainable and clean energy provision within the humanitarian community, current energy practices to cope with refugees' movements in host communities and settlements remain insufficient and all too often environmentally damaging. With the majority of refugees living in urban areas, the energy and water challenges facing refugees cannot be separated from wider national needs.

[42] UNHCR and IRENA (2019) *Renewables for Refugee Settlements: Sustainable Energy Access in Humanitarian Situations*. Available at: [https://irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2019/Dec/IRENA\\_Refugee\\_settlements\\_2019.pdf](https://irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2019/Dec/IRENA_Refugee_settlements_2019.pdf).

[43] UNHCR and IRENA (2019) *Renewables for Refugee Settlements: Sustainable Energy Access in Humanitarian Situations*. Available at: [https://irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2019/Dec/IRENA\\_Refugee\\_settlements\\_2019.pdf](https://irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2019/Dec/IRENA_Refugee_settlements_2019.pdf).

[44] UNHCR and IRENA (2019) *Renewables for Refugee Settlements: Sustainable Energy Access in Humanitarian Situations*. Available at: [https://irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2019/Dec/IRENA\\_Refugee\\_settlements\\_2019.pdf](https://irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2019/Dec/IRENA_Refugee_settlements_2019.pdf).

[45] IRENA (2018) *Harnessing the Power of Renewables in Refugee Camps*. Available at: <https://www.irena.org/newsroom/articles/2018/Aug/Harnessing-the-power-of-renewables-in-refugee-camps>.

[46] Jaffery, R (2021) Solar power has changed Syrian refugees' lives in Jordan – and they want more Climate Home News. Available at: <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2021/12/23/solar-power-changed-syrian-refugees-lives-jordan-want/>.



As the demand for humanitarian assistance in the 3RP countries has risen, it is likely that the environmental footprint of 3RP partners has too. Research shows that unintended environmental degradation resulting from humanitarian action around the world can worsen a crisis by impeding the recovery of refugee and host communities who depend on natural resources for their livelihoods, with negative and long-term impacts on their lives and on the environment itself [47].

While the 3RP is increasingly relying on cash-based assistance, multiplying the number of recipients by 7 between 2014 and 2020 [48], humanitarian organizations are still mostly reliant on disposable plastic packaging, which can become an unintended waste stream. Limited time, resources, and environmental infrastructure frequently lead to poor waste management in humanitarian settings [49]. Humanitarian organizations have also been known to contaminate ground and soil water or to deplete water tables as a result of unregulated pumping, defective infrastructure, inappropriate analysis of an aquifer, or lack of coordination between actors pumping from the same aquifer [50] [51]. While there is growing recognition and awareness of the environmental impacts of humanitarian aid, the integration of environmental protection and sustainability in humanitarian responses remains lacking [52].

## 1.4 THE 3RP APPROACH

The 3RP is specifically designed to bridge the gap between humanitarian response and long-term development action, recognizing that the situation requires long-term support to refugee communities, as well as the host communities in which they find themselves.

It aims to work on a common regional ground of principles with local, regional, and national partners in Türkiye, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt. The 3RP's guiding principle that 'no one is left behind' means that support to refugees must be accompanied by efforts to enhance the resilience of the most vulnerable host communities. To support these goals of regional resilience, all partners are aligned around four key strategic directions, aiming at supporting refugees and host communities (see Figure 2).

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[47] Brangeon, S. and Frances, S. (2020) *Environmental Footprint of Humanitarian Assistance Scoping Review*. Groupe URD. Available at: <https://www.urd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Groupe-URD-Inspire-studypublic.pdf>.

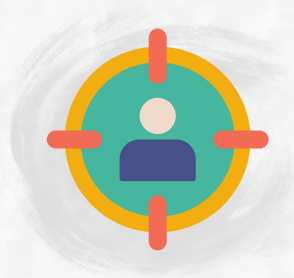
[48] 3RP. (2021) *An introduction to The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP)*. Available at: [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP\\_brochure\\_jun2021.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP_brochure_jun2021.pdf).

[49] USAID (2020) *Joint Initiative for Sustainable Humanitarian Packaging Waste Management*. Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Fact-sheet-Joint-Initiative-On-Sustainable-Humanitarian-Packaging-Waste-Management.pdf>.

[50] Brangeon, S. and Frances, S. (2020) *Environmental Footprint of Humanitarian Assistance Scoping Review*. Groupe URD. Available at: <https://www.urd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Groupe-URD-Inspire-studypublic.pdf>.

[51] Interview with Mike Robson, Representative, Food and Agriculture Organization, Syria - 2nd December 2021

[52] An example is the Humanitarian Implementation Plan of the European Commission's humanitarian agency ECHO in Türkiye integrating climate and environment actions to the specific operational guidelines and assessment criteria.



## Protecting people

With Syrians continuing to require access to international protection and asylum and facing a range of interlinked protection risks in host countries, protecting people is at the center of planning, design, implementation, and monitoring of all interventions of the 3RP to ensure no one is left behind.



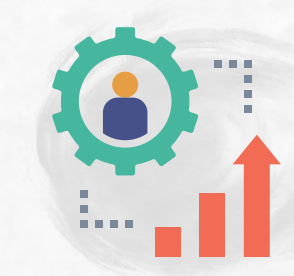
## Supporting durable solutions

Under the framework of a comprehensive protection and solutions approach, the 3RP works towards three possible durable solutions in line with international standards and frameworks: voluntary repatriation to Syria; third country resettlement; and local solutions and opportunities.



## Contributing to dignified lives

The 3RP aims not only to shelter refugees but also to contribute to dignified lives for all affected communities. Addressing the resulting needs and providing enabling conditions and opportunities for all to lead a dignified life is a priority for all 3RP partners across a range of sectors, including food security, basic needs, health, education, shelter, WASH, and social cohesion and livelihoods.



## Enhancing local and regional capacities

In all countries, enhancing local and national capacities rather than working through parallel systems, remains one of the priorities of the 3RP partners to build resilience and ensure the sustainability of support to those in need [53].

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[53] 3RP (2020) Strategic Directions, Regional Strategic Overview - 2021-2022. [http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/strat\\_dir.pdf](http://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/strat_dir.pdf)



# 1.5

## MAINSTREAMING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLEAN ENERGY ACCESS IN THE 3RP

The 3RP aims to achieve these strategic directions through two interconnected components: a refugee component which addresses the protection and humanitarian assistance needs of refugees, and a resilience component, which addresses the resilience, stabilization, and development needs of impacted individuals, communities, and institutions, aiming to strengthen the capacities of national actors [54]. Its approach is to focus on supporting national ownership, promoting access for Syrian refugees to national systems, helping to protect people, helping national and local systems to cope with the impacts of the crisis, improving the self-reliance of beneficiaries, and learning for policy and programming [55].

Although the 3RP is coordinated through a Joint Secretariat comprised of UNDP and UNHCR, the 3RP exists within a network of more than 270 local, national, and regional partners spanning intergovernmental organizations, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, community organizations, international financial institutions, and the private sector [56]. These 3RP partners have undertaken a variety of green recovery and resilience-building initiatives in countries affected by the Syrian crisis where action on the climate, ecosystems, energy, water, land, chemicals, and waste have been integrated into response and recovery activities. Such integrated planning, encapsulating environmental concerns alongside other development concerns, enhances sustainability and resilience. For example:



*UNDP has been working closely with national counterparts to strengthen national and local systems that provide environment and energy-related services. In Jordan, Lebanon, and Türkiye, UNDP has provided support to improve solid waste collection and processing. In Lebanon, UNDP has been providing community-level projects to improve the usage of natural resources [57][58].*

[54] 3RP (2021a) An introduction to the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) An integrated humanitarian and development plan in response to the Syrian Crisis [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP\\_brochure\\_jun2021.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP_brochure_jun2021.pdf).

[55] 3RP (2021a) An introduction to the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) An integrated humanitarian and development plan in response to the Syrian Crisis [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP\\_brochure\\_jun2021.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP_brochure_jun2021.pdf).

[56] 3RP (2021a) An introduction to the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) An integrated humanitarian and development plan in response to the Syrian Crisis [https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP\\_brochure\\_jun2021.pdf](https://www.3rpsyriacrisis.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3RP_brochure_jun2021.pdf).

[57] UNDP (2018) 'Integrated Solid Waste Management of Baalbek Caza' <https://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/projects/IntegratedSolidWasteManagementofBaalbekCaza.html>

[58] UNDP (2018) 'UNDP support to Municipal Resilience in Türkiye Increased capacities to respond to additional demands for services for Syrian refugees and host communities'. Available at: <https://www1.undp.org/content/dam/Türkiye/UNDP-TR-SUPPORT-TO-MUNICIPAL-RESILIENCE.pdf>.



*UNHCR has undertaken several projects throughout the MENA region to improve environmental sustainability in displacement settings, including the installation of solar lighting and solar power systems, the construction or improvement of water treatment facilities, and support to community-based solid waste management systems. One example is the construction of a solar plant in Jordan's Azraq refugee camp, funded by the IKEA Foundation's Brighter Lives for Refugees campaign with the cooperation of Mustakba, a Jordanian company. The solar network now provides 8,000-megawatt hours of electricity a year, eliminating 6,300 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and saving \$2.75 million annually. Additionally, the project supports Jordan in its renewable energy strategy goals: it sends all unused energy to the national grid free of charge, thus benefiting both Syrian refugees in the camps and host communities, further facilitating the inclusion of refugees while showcasing the expertise and relevance of local companies specialized in green energy [59].*



*Increasingly, 3RP partners are helping local institutions to incorporate disaster risk management and environmental concerns into their work. Thus, support to municipal services has increasingly moved beyond providing garbage bins and trucks to municipalities towards more sustainable initiatives, based on zero-waste, biogas generation, or recycling activities [60].*



*Whilst not under the 3RP, UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS), prioritizing stabilization initiatives based on the needs of a particular location, has been an example for the wider region, supporting over 1,000 projects for various stabilization needs across electricity, health, education, and infrastructure rehabilitation. A key focus of assistance has also been on the rehabilitation of water treatment facilities. With the support of partners in FFS, UNDP has supported twenty-five water rehabilitation initiatives in Ramadi, fourteen in the Ninewah Plains region, and twelve in Mosul. These and other activities are helping to expand water access for hundreds of thousands of people, supporting overall stabilization and resilience in crisis-affected parts of Iraq [61][62].*

[59] UNHCR (2017) Azraq, the world's first refugee camp powered by renewable energy. Website:

<https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2017/5/591c079e4/azraq-worlds-first-refugee-camp-powered-renewable-energy.html>

[60] UNDP (2018) Enhancing Climate Change Adaptation in the North Coast and Nile Delta Regions of Egypt. Available at: <https://www.adaptation-undp.org/projects/enhancing-climate-change-adaptation-north-coast-egypt#:~:text=Project%20Overview,change%20induced%20sea%2Dlevel%20rise>

[61] USAID (2015) Funding Facility for Stabilisation. <https://www.usaid.gov/iraq/fact-sheets/funding-facility-stabilization>

[62]





*In Türkiye, the partnership between UNDP and UNEP facilitated the creation of a set of environmental sustainability criteria for refugee-related economic sectors, with a list of recommendations based on the involvement of partners in local municipalities, central government including line ministries, and local, national, and international NGOs. These projects illustrate the value of partnerships for sourcing funding, expertise, and local and contextual knowledge.*



*In Lebanon, an Environment Task Force has been put in place under the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) under the leadership of the Ministry of Environment. It aims to mainstream environmental considerations under the plan in coordination with the Inter-Sector working group. Key priority sectors under the response are Energy, Food Security & Agriculture, Shelter, Social Stability, and Water sectors.*

To try to further systematize environmental mainstreaming, the 3RP has adopted in 2022 an Environment Marker in the planning process at the regional level. The marker aims at assessing the environmental impact of existing and future projects implemented through the 3RP framework. 3RP partners can use the Environment Marker to identify the potential positive and negative impacts of projects on the environment and to act on these considerations in work plans and funding proposals. At the country level, the agency in charge of the programme that potentially impacts the environment is encouraged to discuss the impact and mitigation measures with the national counterpart and partners. The Environment Task Force under the leadership of the Ministry of Environment has developed a specific “environmental marker” for the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan to ensure that environmental safeguards are applied to LCRP’s activities [63].


Despite this work, results differ. Investment has been concentrated in countries such as Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Türkiye, and benefits are often not felt among all sectors, particularly those occupied by poor and vulnerable communities such as refugees, IDPs, and host communities. Further efforts are needed to build resilience, use decentralized energy solutions, and stabilize the erosion of ecosystem services in medium-term and longer-term development planning.

Meanwhile, 3RP funding continues to run at a significant shortfall – \$1.8 billion or 31 percent in September 2021. This prevents 3RP from fully meeting its objectives to support refugees and host communities, meaning that 3RP and its partners were not able to expand necessary cash-based and food security assistance, protection services, WASH infrastructure, or livelihood support [64].

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[63] Lebanon Environment Ministry (2021) Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017- 2021 (2021 update)

[64] 3RP (2021b) 2021 Progress Report: Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syria Crisis, September 2021



Home farming project  
targeting 450 families in  
the Bekaa, Lebanon

Photo by UNDP/  
Rana Sweidan

## 1.6 MOVING FORWARD

What emerges from experience is that environmental and energy issues are not a 'luxury' issue to be tackled only once other priorities are resolved. On the contrary, they underpin many critical objectives for the 3RP, such as stabilization, recovery, resilience building efforts, water and sanitation, food security, water security, economic recovery, livelihoods, gender equality, infrastructure investment, institutional effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and protection needs (see Figure 2).

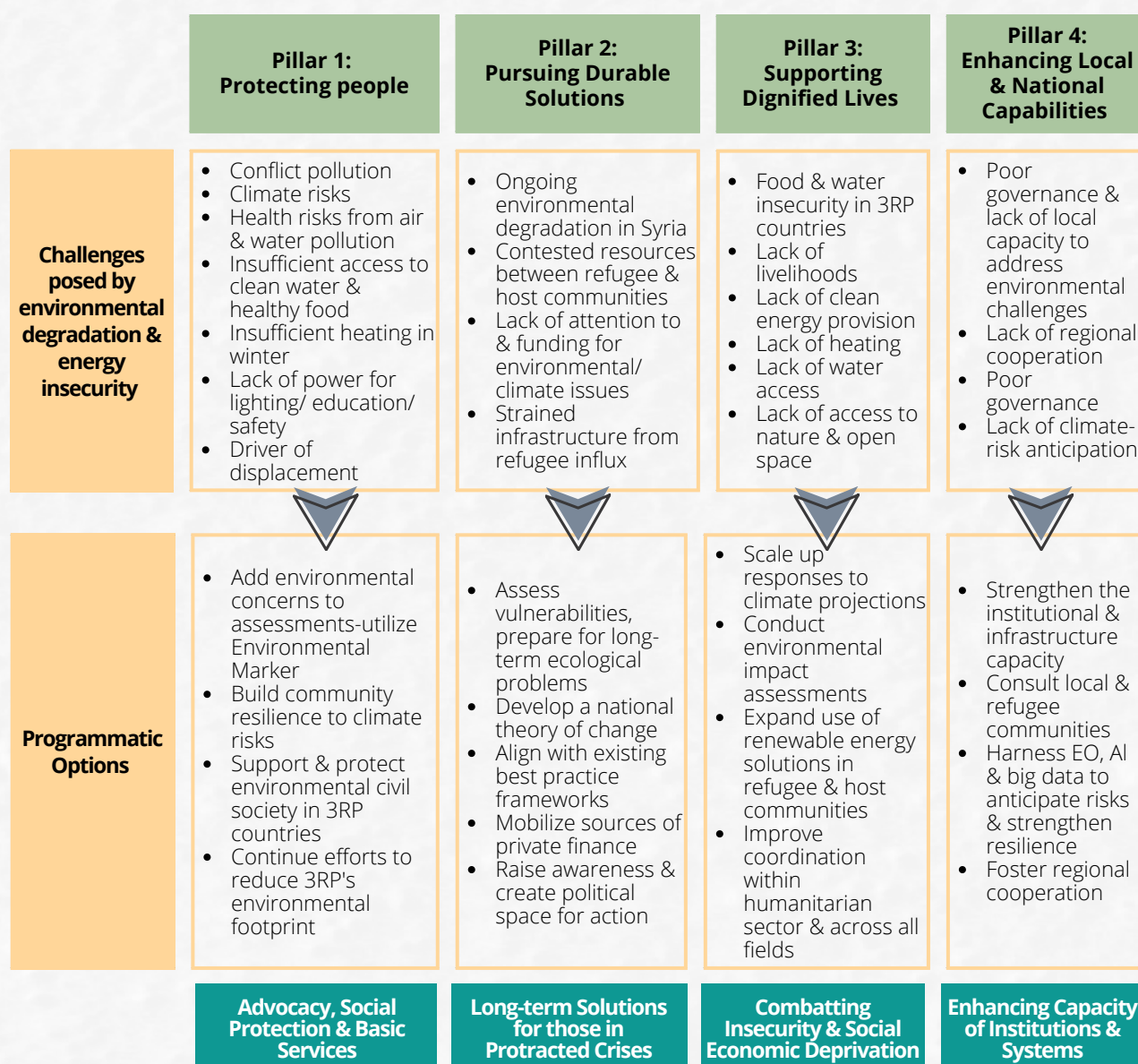
Conflict, displacement, economic crisis, and COVID-19 is a toxic combination that is worsening existing environmental fragility in 3RP countries. Pushing relevant national and regional policies to be adopted and implemented is key to building long-term resilience and supporting sustainable growth and requires addressing the impacts of climate change, reducing the impact of water scarcity, resolving chronic lack of access to clean energy, and improving ineffective solid waste and waste-water management systems [65].

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[65] Brown, O. and Wittbold, B. (2021) *The impact of COVID-19 on environmental sustainability in Iraq*, UNEP and UNDP - <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/impact-covid-19-environmental-sustainability-iraq-enarku>



**Figure 2: A healthy environment underpins the achievement of 3RP's strategic directions**



Environmental mainstreaming is an important way to support the 3RP and partner organizations in achieving humanitarian and development goals in the region. In 2022, the new environmental marker will provide more clarity to both partners and donors on the need for climate resilience and ecological protection and the ways programmes can achieve this. Supporting sustainable climate adaptation, clean energy provision, waste management, and biodiversity conservation in host countries benefit the inclusion of refugees by delivering long-term sustainable solutions that both boost the economy and mitigate the impacts of migration on climate and environmental resources. Tackling these challenges also creates an opportunity for innovative bottom-up solutions that reduce impending ecological threats in the 3RP countries whilst supporting economic growth and gender mainstreaming.



# **PART 2: OPERATIONALIZING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLEAN ENERGY ACCESS IN THE 3RP**

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## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Part 1 laid out the rationale for including environmental and energy issues more consistently in the 3RP's work. Part 2 aims to provide some ideas for how to do so.

The state of the environment in 3RP countries is particularly relevant for both humanitarian and development action. It fundamentally shapes people's needs, vulnerabilities, and livelihoods. Environmental degradation and energy will likely become increasingly prominent drivers of humanitarian needs in 3RP countries. Refugees, and the communities that host them, are disproportionately affected by climate change and environmental degradation, which results in worsened humanitarian impacts and new challenges to development. 3RP countries and partners need to adapt to these complex challenges while reducing their own environmental impacts.

The topic of environmental mainstreaming in both the humanitarian and development sectors has gained significant momentum in recent years. 3RP partners have come a long way in developing varied experiences in environmental and energy projects to deliver important benefits for refugee and host communities alike. However, all 3RP partner organizations should take a more systematic approach to become more environmentally responsible and adequately address the environmental dimensions of emergencies. Doing so presents an opportunity to improve the quality of humanitarian action beyond the short term, reduce operational risks, and transcend the humanitarian-development divide [66].

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[66] See IASC (forthcoming 2022) *IASC Guidance on ENvironmental Responsibility in Humanitarian Operations*, Inter-Agency Standing Committee - Informal Working Group on Environmental Responsibility in Humanitarian Operations.



While there are still challenges to be navigated (which are discussed briefly in the next section), there is also a great deal of progress to build on. This includes growing awareness of the links between environment, energy, and humanitarian action; many existing best practice frameworks to draw from; a vibrant community of practice working on these issues; powerful developments in information technology and earth observation that allow humanitarian and development organizations to monitor impacts in real-time; and a donor context which is increasingly demanding, and providing resources for, more environmentally responsible and aligned programming.

3RP is unique in that it encompasses a wide range of partners (more than 270 of them) working on both humanitarian response and development programming across five very different countries at all scales, including many different types of partners from national non-governmental organizations to national governments, to international non-governmental organizations and the United Nations. Consequently, each partner's scope and ability to mainstream environmental action will vary.

Further mainstreaming environmental and energy challenges into 3RP programmes can achieve two broad objectives:

The first is to anticipate risks and strengthen the resilience of both host communities and refugees in partnership with others and be aware of other key national efforts. The 3RP should expand investment in prevention to strengthen resilience to climate and environmental challenges.

The second is to do no environmental harm. The 3RP can lead by example to minimize its own environmental footprint by embedding environmental management in all operations.

The next sections describe some of the challenges that need to be navigated, then briefly outline some of the existing work done by various stakeholders working on environmental issues in 3RP countries and the lessons and opportunities that emerge from that work. Concluding with an 'action plan' for action in eight areas.



*Vocational training  
on installation,  
operating, maintenance  
& programming of Solar  
Photovoltaic Systems at  
West Bekaa, Lebanon*

*Photo by UNDP/  
Rana Sweidan*

## 2.2 CHALLENGES TO OPERATIONALIZING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY ACCESS IN 3RP COUNTRIES

Expanding the 3RP's positive environmental impact faces several hurdles, which are important to identify if they are to be navigated.

One immediate hurdle is the 3RP's capacity to fully meet the scale of the challenges in 3RP countries. The overlapping crises of forced displacement, new arrivals, COVID-19, and the economic contractions (across the region, but especially in Iraq and Lebanon), have had a direct impact on 3RP programmes, with a dramatic increase in the number of people requiring food and cash support at a time when the 3RP remains chronically underfunded.

However, as later sections will identify, there are a number of low-cost interventions that support environmental sustainability and clean energy security as a cost-effective element of 3RP's core mission. Moreover, addressing humanitarian and development priorities in tandem with national and global environmental goals may also unlock new and additional sources of finance through mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund, or the Global Environment Facility, to help address perceived risks and barriers and attract private sector engagement, finance, and investments in addressing environmental and energy challenges in situations of displacement and crisis, which could also help to bridge the 3RP's funding gap.

A second hurdle is that many regional governments pay insufficient attention to the environment in general, seeing it as a 'soft' subject, a luxury of the sort that only developed states can afford to indulge in. While certain ecological crises seen as pressing humanitarian issues have received consequent funding and strong policy and programs from national, regional, and municipal governments, these policies are primarily reacting to coping with the problem at hand without enforcing environmental protection policies aiming to prevent such crises or build strong resilience. Consequently, they have tended to underfund their environment ministries, many of which have very little power [67]. Even for many of those in government who do understand the significance of environmental and climate action, it can be hard to prioritize it amid so many other challenges and ongoing

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[67] World Bank (2011) *Republic of Lebanon Country Environmental Analysis*, World Bank





*Women earn cash for work in landscaping & attend training on their role in the green economy*

*Photo by UNDP/  
Rana Sweidan*

crises [68]. The often slow-burning, incremental nature of environmental degradation and some of the worst climate stresses can mean that their impact appears comparatively meager during, for example, a time of war and financial crisis.

A third is that as the land and water resources have already been highly politically sensitive in the 3RP countries, governments can be suspicious that environmental actors might be well-placed to harness the popular anger that is emerging out of environmentally related crises, such as worsening energy shortages in Lebanon and a lack of clean water in southern Iraq. States enforcing strict obedience have also proven consistently difficult workplaces for both foreign and domestic environmental and climate-related organizations and are often associated with higher levels of climate and environmental pollution [69]. As a consequence, NGO and donor operations remain limited and mostly confined to 'non-sensitive' parts of some 3RP countries.

This can be true, too, of civilian government actors, who are prevented by security personnel from involving themselves in militarized or distant and sometimes isolated borderlands [70].

A final hurdle is that political sensitivities across the region frequently prevent coherent action on environmental issues or clean energy. This is particularly true in the realm of transboundary cooperation over shared water courses but also appears in discussions over the future of clean energy in the region.

[68] Interview with Azzam Alwash, *Nature Iraq* - 2nd December 2021

[69] Ward, H. Cao, X. Mukherjee, B. (2014) *State Capacity and the Environmental Investment Gap in Authoritarian States. Comparative Political Studies*. Volume: 47 issue: 3, page(s): 309-343.

[70] Halawa, H. (2020) *Middle Eastern Environmentalists Need a Seat at the Table. The Century Foundation*

## 2.3 STAKEHOLDERS WORKING ON ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY PROVISION IN 3RP COUNTRIES

Despite these challenges, there has been a surge in environmental activism among civil society organizations in recent years, as well as growing awareness of the severity of some of the environmental challenges facing 3RP countries. There are a number of active stakeholders in this field in the five 3RP countries, who may already be involved with 3RP in some fashion or are worth engaging with.

There have been several regional collaborations between Middle Eastern states to address the environment and climate more holistically. **The Council for Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment (CAMRE)**, for example, is a mechanism that aims to facilitate regional strategies on climate change [71]. This organization was produced with the Arab Framework Action Plan on Climate Change, a climate policy framework that strengthened the capacity of member states to address climate issues, which ended in 2020. Similarly, the Arab Ministerial Council's Arab Water Security Strategy (2010-2030) and their Water Security Implementation Plan (2016-2035) are key regional policies launched to ensure sustainable and equitable water governance [72]. In energy, the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency is an intergovernmental organization with diplomatic status that aims to enable and increase the adoption of renewable energy and energy efficiency practices across pan-Arab countries [73]. Organizations such as the League of Arab States, however, are essentially non-actors in environment and climate change.

In 2019 the UNDP, UNEP, and UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) joined forces to create the **Climate Security Mechanism (CSM)**, a three-way partnership to collate and funnel information about climate security threats to the UN Security Council and across the UN system. In 2021 they started to deploy or second a network of mid-level technical professionals into a variety of regional organizations (such as the Liptako Gourma Authority [74], a regional authority to enhance and develop mining, energy, hydraulic, agricultural, pastoral, and fisheries

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[71] ICRC Climate Centre (2021) Middle East Climate Fact Sheet. Available at: [https://www.climatecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/RCCC-ICRC-Country-profiles-Region\\_Middle\\_East.pdf](https://www.climatecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/RCCC-ICRC-Country-profiles-Region_Middle_East.pdf)

[72] ICRC Climate Centre (2021) Middle East Climate Fact Sheet. Available at: [https://www.climatecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/RCCC-ICRC-Country-profiles-Region\\_Middle\\_East.pdf](https://www.climatecentre.org/wp-content/uploads/RCCC-ICRC-Country-profiles-Region_Middle_East.pdf)

[73] Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency. Available at: <https://www.rcreee.org/content/who-we-are>

[74] European Council on Foreign Relations (2020) Liptako-Gourma Authority (LGA). Available at: <https://ecfr.eu/special/african-cooperation/liptako-gourma-authority/>



resources in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger) or UN Peace Operations (such as UNSOM in Mogadishu). In December 2021, UNDP deployed an expert on climate security to the League of Arab States, based in Cairo, to work across the League's membership on climate security assessments, policies, and responses. These experts will be part of a larger **UN Community of Practice on Climate Security** which is also being managed by the CSM.

The **Joint Environment Unit (JEU)** of UNEP and UNOCHA monitors, assesses, and helps national governments address environmental emergencies arising from armed conflict, industrial accidents, and natural disasters across the region. They have been closely involved with assessing the environmental challenges in areas of Syria and Iraq retaken from ISIL/Daesh, and in particular, working with UN-Habitat to find ways to address the pollution and disposal problems created by the many millions of

tonnes of conflict rubble in Mosul [75]. The JEU also supports the Interagency Standing Committee's (IASC) reference group on environment and humanitarian action that provides support, guidance, and advice to humanitarian actors looking to mainstream environmental issues into their humanitarian responses [76]. The JEU also convenes an informal group of technical experts for its Environment and Humanitarian Action Network for regular meetings to share ideas and lessons learned [77].

Meanwhile, several NGOs and academic organizations are addressing aspects of the environment- climate-humanitarian 'nexus'. The **Water Peace and Security (WPS)** Initiative works in Iraq to raise awareness around water-related security risks and to foster peaceful cooperation over water resources [78]. Six partner organizations with expertise ranging from water and wetlands ecosystems to geopolitics, security, and peacebuilding, work together to motivate



Home farming  
project targeting  
450 families in  
Bekaa, Lebanon  
Photo by UNDP/  
Rana Sweidan

[75] UN Environment (2017) *Environmental issues in areas retaken from ISIL*, UNEP and OCHA.

<https://resources.eecentre.org/resources/un-environment-technical-note-environmental-issues-in-areas-retaken-from-isil/>

[76] IASC (2016) *Establishment of the IASC Reference Group for Environment and Humanitarian Action*. Available at: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/0363308.pdf>

[77] Environmental Emergency Center (2021) *The Environment and Humanitarian Action (EHA) Network*. Available at: <https://eecentre.org/partners/the-eha-network/>

[78] Water, Peace and Security (2021) *Regional Work—Iraq*. Available at: [https://waterpeacesecurity.org/info/iraq\\_](https://waterpeacesecurity.org/info/iraq_)

and support policymakers and communities to take coordinated action at an early stage. In the Middle East, WPS works in Iraq to a) develop data-driven dashboards to support stakeholders in addressing local water-security questions; b) deliver training modules and workshops that focus on the different elements of the water-security nexus; and c) support dialogues with Iraqi stakeholders at the local, provincial, and national levels. These initiatives aim to improve Iraq's water situation, mitigate water-related conflicts more effectively, and promote resilience against future water-related shocks. In a similar vein, the **Planetary Security Initiative** (funded by the Netherlands, among others) is supporting local level peacebuilding dialogues on environmental and climate issues and organized the first ever climate security dialogue in Southern Iraq in June 2021 [79].

The **Moving Energy Initiative (MEI)** is an international partnership among Energy4Impact, Chatham House, Practical Action, the Norwegian Refugee Council, UNHCR, and the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office to achieve access to clean, affordable, and reliable energy across displaced populations [80]. In Jordan, where the large majority (90 percent) of the Syrian displaced population reside in urban or rural settings, the Green Affordable Homes Project—in cooperation with the **Jordan Green Building Council** and **Habitat for Humanity**—aims to increase energy efficiency and resilience in refugee-affected areas by retrofitting housing with green building materials, raising awareness and capacity-building initiatives. The second initiative in Jordan, the Al Mafraq Hospital project, includes a new solar water heating system and boiler and solar PV to improve electricity provision and support water heating while reducing costs in a hospital that has experienced an influx of displaced persons needing treatment [81]. The MEI engages with stakeholders—including host communities, the private sector, displaced peoples, governments, donors, and humanitarian organizations—to ensure energy solutions are context-specific, gender-sensitive, and sustainable.

A few organizations are working to draw attention to and address the environmental impacts of conflict in the region. **The Conflict and Environment Observatory (CEOBS)** monitors environmental issues in several 3RP countries to document and raise awareness of the environmental and derived humanitarian consequences of conflicts and military activities, and to ensure that those affected are assisted. CEOBS works with international organizations, civil society, academia, and communities to a) monitor and publicize data on the environmental dimensions of armed conflicts; b) develop tools to improve data collection and sharing, and c) monitor and scrutinize developments in law and policy that could contribute towards the reduction of

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[79] PSI (2021) Planetary Security Initiative holds first ever climate security dialogue in South Iraq. Available at: <https://planetarysecurityinitiative.org/news/planetary-security-initiative-holds-first-ever-climate-security-dialogue-south-iraq>.


[80] Chatham House (2021) Moving Energy Initiative: Sustainable Energy for Refugees and Displaced People. Available at: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/about-us/our-departments/environment-and-society-programme/moving-energy-initiative-sustainable>

[81] Butorac, N. (2019) Learning Brief: Effective Engagement with Host Communities Moving Energy Initiative



humanitarian and environmental harm [82]. **PAX**, likewise, employs earth observation and open source intelligence to document the direct and indirect environmental impacts of conflict across the region [83]. Finally, universities such as **Duke University** [84] in the United States and the **American University of Beirut** [85] in Lebanon have generated policy-relevant research on the linkages between conflict, climate change, and the environment in the Middle East.

**There has also been a significant amount of attention from the international community paid to humanitarian needs resulting from environmental and climate challenges in the Middle East.** In Iraq, USAID and JICA, the Japanese development agency, have funded water and wastewater infrastructure, particularly in southern Iraq, the lack of which has maximized farmers' troubles and amplified the impact of drought.



Home farming project targeting 450 families in the Bekaa, Lebanon

Photo by UNDP/  
Rana Sweidan

## 2.4

## PROGRAMMATIC RECOMMENDATIONS: AN 8-STEP PLAN FOR ACTION

Healthy ecosystems are the foundation for resilient communities. The 3RP can take important steps to support resilience and recovery in terms of its own footprint (i.e., the domain under the control of 3RP Partners), in its programming (i.e., the domain over which the 3RP has an influence), and in its advocacy and influencing work (i.e., the domain that is outside the direct control of 3RP, but over which it has an interest) in a complementary fashion with national and regional initiatives.

Bearing in mind the challenges, the opportunities for action, and the progress thus far there are eight areas in which the 3RP might like to focus in 2022 and beyond (see figure 3):

[82] CEOBS. Available at: <https://ceobs.org/about/>

[83] PAX Available at: <https://paxforpeace.nl/what-we-do/countries-and-regions/middle-east>

[84] Duke University. Targeting of Infrastructure in the Middle East. Available at: <https://sites.nicholas.duke.edu/time/>

[85] American University of Beirut (2019) Climate Change and Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa. Available at: <https://www.aub.edu.lb/ifi/news/Pages/20190724-climate-change-and-conflicts-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa.aspx>

# STEPS

## 1 RAISE AWARENESS & CREATE THE SPACE FOR ACTION

The Joint Secretariat of the 3RP needs to raise the level of ambition for environmental programming across the activities of the 3RP and make a convincing case for such action. The support of senior management is essential to successfully mainstream environmental considerations into 3RP programmes and projects. In their capacity as co-leads of the 3RP, UNDP and UNHCR can:

- Assess national efforts and policies and articulate and communicate a specific set of environmental commitments for the 3RP which reflect the particularities of the 3RPs approach and programmes, in the form of an updated environmental policy. This can build on the newly introduced Environmental Marker (e.g., on minimising the humanitarian footprint, or climate and nature positive programming).
- Advocate for action on environmental mainstreaming at all levels, both internally across the 3RP partnership and with key partners, donors, and stakeholders.
- Lead by example, motivate, and build a culture of accountability for environmental performance.



## 2 PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Environmental mainstreaming in humanitarian and development programmes and projects depends on a systematic consideration of environmental risks, opportunities, and benefits in programme design, implementation, and throughout the project management cycle. Integrating environmental goals and indicators into short and long-term planning is necessary to reinforce the rhetorical commitment. In particular, 3RP actors can:



- Articulate high-level goals for environmental mainstreaming in the revised environmental policy and ensure that projects are planned around achieving those targets. Key environmental issues (and their interaction with other social, political, and economic factors) should be considered during project conception and initiation, as the natural environment is an integral part of the context in which the project will take place.
- Prioritize targets for action, linked to specific indicators, with short-term projects linked to longer-term desired impacts.
- Ensure that all projects, wherever possible and appropriate, build on environmental goals and take account of environmental risks in their theory of change, results, frameworks, and monitoring plans.



- Focus in particular on possible 'win-win' interventions where humanitarian and development projects can have beneficial environmental impacts, and where environmental interventions can support resilience (e.g. action on adaptation to climate change to strengthen resilience and support recovery; diversification from reliance on oil and towards a sustainable energy economy that harnesses clean renewable energies; improving water, waste and ecosystem management to reduce future risks).

### 3

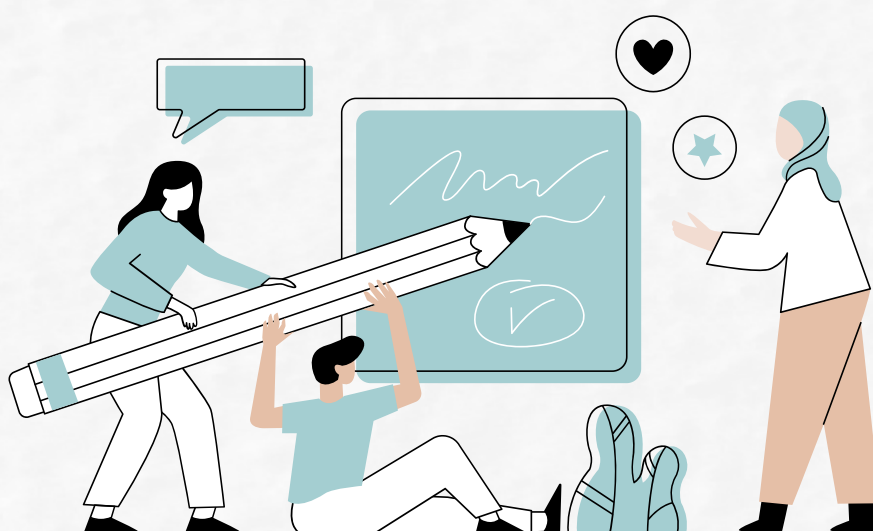
## DO NO ENVIRONMENTAL HARM: REDUCE THE ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT OF 3RP

An important component of the 3RPs overall mainstreaming is that its operations do not inadvertently accelerate environmental degradation and energy insecurity by 'competing' with host or refugee communities for scarce resources, leading to solid waste or wastewater pollution or setting a bad example and compromising 3RP's 'social license to operate'. This is a growing field with considerable expertise. Many 3RP partners have been prominently involved in its development and there is no need to reinvent the wheel. In particular, UNDP and UNHCR should:

- Tailor existing guidance to the specific needs of 3RP partners. There is no one-size-fits-all approach for each 3RP partner's environmental policy, which will vary depending on their size and operations. Some useful resources include (see Annex 2 for more information):

- IASC guidance on Environmental Responsibility in Humanitarian Operations (forthcoming 2022)
- UNHCR's Operational Strategy for Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability 2022-2025 (2021)
- UNHCR's Strategic Framework for Climate Action (2021)
- Protecting Lives, Livelihoods and the Environment in Humanitarian Operations (2021)
- Climate and Environment Charter on Humanitarian Organizations (2020)
- Environmental footprint of humanitarian assistance funded by DG ECHO: scoping review (2020)
- Going green: Strengthening the climate and environmental sustainability of response and recovery operations (2020)
- Compendium of Good Practices for a Greener Humanitarian Response (2021)
- Environmental Mainstreaming in Humanitarian Interventions (2020)
- Sphere thematic sheet: Reducing environmental impact in humanitarian response (2019)
- Guidance, standards and protocols in the humanitarian sector on reducing harm to the environment (2019)
- Mainstreaming Environment and Climate Change into Humanitarian Action (2015)
- Environment and humanitarian action: Increasing effectiveness, sustainability and accountability (2014)

- Ensure, as much of the above guidance proposes, that 3RP partners have articulated environmental policies and an environmental management system, are conducting environmental assessments, building internal capacity, and continuously improving systems.





## 4

**HARNESS FRONTIER TECHNOLOGIES TO ANTICIPATE RISKS & STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE**

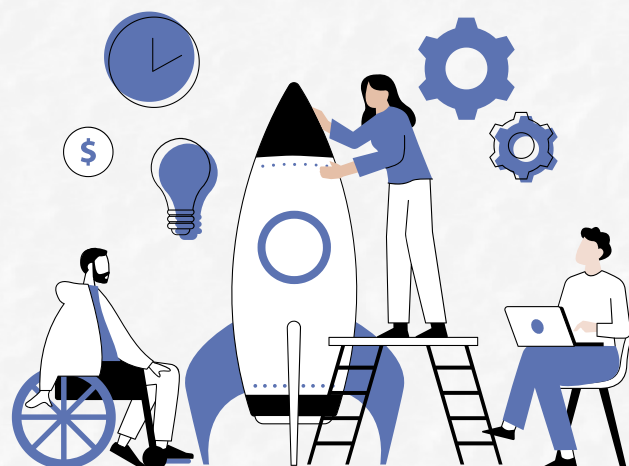
Mainstreaming environmental sustainability requires evidence-based planning. Natural resource management, climate change action, and sustainable energy responses all necessitate the mapping of short-term and medium-term opportunities, impact, and required operations. Data and information management is a critical component of these tasks to identify medium-term responses for identifying the minimum thresholds for the provision of basic services in critical government services, health, education, security, and water. 3RP actors may like to:

- Invest in environmental assessments to provide the necessary evidence base for the environmental mainstream, anticipate risks, and design proactive responses.
- Conduct desk review of harnessing frontier technologies such as satellite mapping, remote sensing, data analytics, and artificial intelligence which can provide powerful data and analysis to help to improve early warning, conflict prevention, monitoring, evaluation, and learning from climate and environment programming [86].
- For instance, the Global Crisis Group and Oxford Analytical reports have provided examples of how geo-information can be used to harness data on water insecurity and climate disaster prevention in the longer term. Similar information can be used to monitor the evolution and support local communities to better adapt in the long and the short term or prevent natural disasters from extensively damaging communities. By developing strategic partnerships with organizations already engaged in gathering specialized data on climate change, water security, food availability, or droughts and floods prevalence as the World Bank Group, FAO, or the WPF do, the 3RP can ensure humanitarian and development partners are well-informed of potential risks.
- Among the most relevant concepts are “Forecast-based Financing” (FbF), “Forecast-based Action” (FbA), and “Early Warning, Early Action” (EWEA). The goal of anticipatory humanitarian action is to predict disasters and their effects to provide the necessary support for communities at risk, enable early action even before disaster strikes, and release pre-approved funds based on forecasted climate and environmental risks. This allows pre-emptive measures

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[86] Ide, T., Bruch, C., Carius, A., Conca, K., Dabelko, G., Matthew, R. and Weinthal, E. (2021) *The past and future(s) of environmental peacebuilding. Environmental Peacebuilding, International Affairs*, London: Chatham House

to slow sudden-onsets of disasters and for 3RP to target more vulnerable households to limit harm. In recent years, individual actors have generated innovations in this field and thus achieved positive results. This program is intended to make anticipatory approaches accessible to a broader audience and further raise awareness of these approaches among humanitarian actors [87].



- Establishing an Early Action Protocol (EAP), developed with 3RP partners to frame the financing structure and conditions, can support early actions, and limit the costs of operations related to environmental and climate risks. Furthermore, it creates an environment for development and humanitarian funds to be activated jointly.
- Work towards strengthening data collection through collaboration and sharing with others to better inform programming and provide early warning of environmental stress.
- Enhance ability to forecast how climate and environmental changes will affect 3RP operations and ensure their programmes are climate resilient, while also anticipating where future climate and environmental-related conflict might take place (i.e., water-related conflicts that coincide with times of drought), allowing them to rush resources to likely hotspots before humanitarian disasters arise.
- Ensure that remote sources of data are balanced by the active inclusion of local voices and perspectives from both refugees and host communities.

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[87] Thalheimer, L. Simperingham, E.Jjemba, E. W. (2022) The role of anticipatory humanitarian action to reduce disaster displacement. *Environ. Research Letters*. Lett. 17



## 5

## UNLOCK NEW SOURCES OF FINANCE



The implementation of environmental policies, environmental management systems, action plans, and so on will inevitably incur some costs. These initial investments must be budgeted for, and that necessary expertise is made available. At the same time though 3RP might be to develop new sources of finance through public-private partnerships and from some of the global environmental funds, such as the Adaptation Fund, the Green Climate Fund, and the Global Environmental Fund.

Increasingly donors are requiring that organizations receiving funds can demonstrate a core level of commitment to environmental stewardship, such as having active environmental guidelines. 3RP actors can:

- Ensure that 3RP partners work towards meeting environmental criteria for major funders, and work to build capacity among 3RP partners to access environmental finance.
- Work with 3RP partners to focus on breaking down the barriers to finance and investment by mobilizing the private sector using innovative, global, and national finance incentives and mechanisms including risk guarantees as well as funding support provided by ODA and humanitarian assistance.
- Develop an enabling environment at the national level that redirects existing public investments to catalyze private finance towards mainstreaming environmental sustainability through sustainable energy, natural resource management, and climate action in 3RP.



## 6

## BUILD CAPACITY & SUPPORT ENVIRONMENTAL VOICES IN 3RP COUNTRIES

Mainstreaming environmental action across 3RP's programming requires building the capacity of 3RP partners as well as national and subnational governments in 3RP countries. It also requires creating space for civil society activism on environmental matters. 3RP actors can:

- Assess the role of the 3RP given other initiatives in this field.  
Encourage all 3RP partners to identify focal points for environmental mainstreaming.
- Conduct a capacity assessment across 3RP partners on environmental mainstreaming.
- Develop mechanisms to share best practices and ideas on environmental action in 3RP programmes.
- Adjust civil society partnership strategies to include specific climate activism support. This might include specific strategies to fund active environmental organizations and movements and support their creation [88], or to model UNEP's Defenders Policy, which works to end threats, restrictions, and violence against environmental defenders [89].

[88] Halawa, H. (2020) *Middle Eastern Environmentalists Need a Seat at the Table*. The Century Foundation

[89] UNEP Defenders Policy. Available at: <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/environmental-rights-and-governance/what-we-do/advancing-environmental-rights/uneps>



- Increase partnerships with organizations to give voice to environmental civil society figures on humanitarian and development programmes, particularly in places where they are being targeted and in conflict-affected countries.
- Support civic engagement on climate change and environmental issues and empower civil society actors more broadly, including in repressive environments.
- Make staff and partners aware of some of the online training and e-learning programmes that can build capacity on different aspects of humanitarian and development activities, for example:
  - Greening Humanitarian Aid (DG ECHO)
  - The Environmental Emergencies Centre (EEC) Training Centre hosts several online learning modules on different environment-humanitarian topics
  - Groupe URD's online learning platform includes several modules on the links between the environment and humanitarian action (in French)
  - Sustainable Development in Humanitarian Action (ICRC and IFRC)
  - Environmental Security and Sustaining Peace (SDG Academy)
  - MOOC on Nature-based Solutions for Disaster and Climate Resilience (UNEP and PEDRR)
  - Environment and Human Mobility (UNEP)

## 7

## COORDINATE WITH OTHER ACTORS

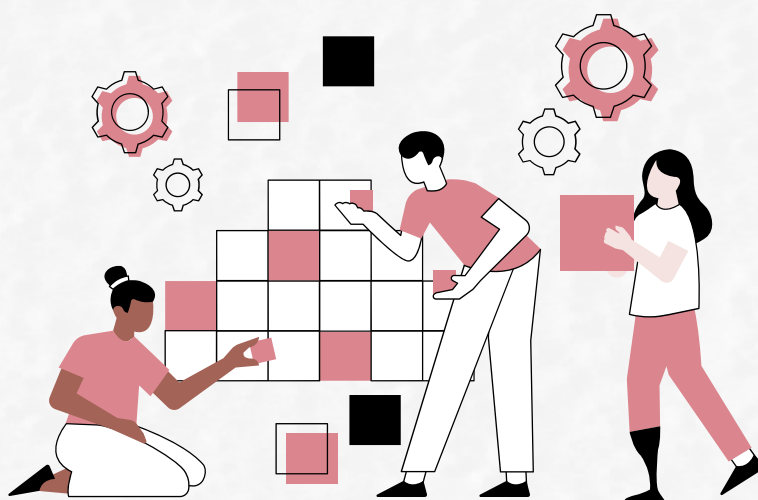
3RP is already a major exercise in coordination, however, several important actors can help in mainstreaming environmental action in 3RP who may not yet be involved in the response. In line with SDG 17, development within fragile and conflict-affected countries requires partnerships with different development agencies, donors, financial institutions, and other partner agencies. These networks must align their environmental and ecosystem services into their overall humanitarian and development support. In particular, UNDP and UNHCR could:

- Work to expand existing mechanisms where organizations working on issues relating to climate-environment and humanitarian responses sit down together in a formal and structured way to discuss what strategic planning they have in common and develop a common coordinated system. Examples may include the Inter-Agency Standing Committee or the Food Security Cluster [90].

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[90] Food Security Cluster. Available at: <https://fscluster.org/>

- Assess, and possibly improve, existing mechanisms for effective information-sharing, including environmental data.
- Identify knowledge gaps and knowledge of 'what works' from existing programmes to assist with programme development and environmental and climate mainstreaming.
- Foster regional cooperation in areas relevant to the 3RP. Effective cooperation and collaboration are critical to stability and sustainability across the region.



## 8

## MONITOR PROGRESS & ENSURE LESSONS ARE LEARNED

Finally, 3RP needs to monitor the implementation of environmental mainstreaming, and ensure there is a continual learning and improvement process. In particular, 3RP actors might like to:

- Conduct a formative evaluation of the environmental policies and programmes of 3RP partners to generate recommendations for action.
- Create fora through which 3RP partners can share best practices and lessons learned from environmental mainstreaming, based on the Lebanon environment task force for the LCRP, and aim to prioritize environment programmes by highlighting the outcomes of best practices.



## ANNEX 1: INITIATIVES AND FRAMEWORKS BY HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS TO REDUCE THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

Year begun	Initiative/ Strategy	Led by	Who's involved	What it hopes to achieve
2005	Sustainable Supply Chain Alliance	UN Global Compact	12,000+ companies based in over 160 countries	Assist organizations & companies in operating responsibly & in alignment with universal sustainability principles.
2007	Greening the Blue	UNEP Sustainable United Nations (SUN) Facility	Green Climate Fund, Swedish Environment Protection Agency, The Environment & Humanitarian Network (EHAN), Global Platform for Action (GPA), UN Environmental Management Group (EMG)	Engage & support UN System personnel at all levels of the organization in the transition to integrate environmental considerations into UN management decisions & actions.
2013	Environment & Humanitarian Action (EHA) Network	UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit	Composed of about 170 individual members, & endorsed by 10 organizations, including UNHCR	Avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental impacts of humanitarian action & to promote environmentally responsible humanitarian programming.
2018	Global Platform for Action on Sustainable Energy in Displacement Settings	Global Platform for Action (GPA)	Over 20 partners, including UNEP, UNDP & UNHCR	Promote actions that enable sustainable energy access & use in displacement settings.
2019	Joint Initiative for Sustainable Humanitarian Packaging Waste Management	USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance	UNHCR, UNEP, ICRC and IFRC, IOM, WFP, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Joint Environment Unit, the Global Logistics & Shelter Clusters	Minimize the impact of humanitarian packaging.
2019	Green Energy Challenge	UNHCR	UNHCR	Bring businesses, governments & organizations together to provide green & safe energy to populations that have been forcibly displaced.

Year begun	Initiative/ Strategy	Led by	Who's involved	What it hopes to achieve
2019	Global Strategy for Sustainable Energy: 2019 – 2025	UNHCR	UNHCR	Increase the sustainable use of renewable energy sources to minimize environmental impact.
2020	Statement of Commitment on Climate by Humanitarian Organizations	The Environment & Humanitarian Network	Groupe URD, ACTED, Action contre la Faim, ALIMA, CARE France, Electriciens Sans Frontières, Médecins du Monde, Première Urgence Internationale, Secours Islamique France & Solidarités International	Measure their own carbon impacts & halve CO2 emissions by 2030.
2020	Climate and Environment Charter on Humanitarian Organizations	ICRC & IFRC	Over 200 different humanitarian organizations, including UNHCR, UNICEF & UNOCHA	Guide humanitarian action in helping people adapt to a changing climate & environment, while also increasing our own environmental sustainability.
2021	Strategic Framework for Climate Action	UNHCR	UNHCR	Among other objectives, improve UNHCR's environmental sustainability by reducing greenhouse gas emissions & minimizing the agency's negative environmental impacts.
2021	Operational Strategy for Climate Resilience & Environmental Sustainability 2022-2025	UNHCR	UNHCR	Contribute to the implementation of UNHCR's Strategic Framework for Climate Action, by emphasizing data-driven baselines, improved planning & action in environmentally critical operational areas, innovative learning & developing ongoing measurement & accountability systems.



# ANNEX 2: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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## INTERVIEWEES

**Kishan Khoday**

Regional Team Leader for Nature, Climate and Energy, UNDP Global Policy Network

**Oliver Smith**

Senior Operations Officer, UNHCR MENA Bureau

**Azzam Alwash**

Founder and current CEO, Nature Iraq

**Glada Lahn**

Senior Research Fellow, Environment and Society Programme, Chatham House

**Mike Robson**

Representative, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Syria

**Maha Yassin**

Junior Researcher, Planetary Security Initiative (PSI), Clingendael Institute

**Susanne Schmeier**

Associate Professor in Water Law and Diplomacy, IHE Delft

**Michael Keating**

Executive Director, European Institute of Peace

**Julie Raasteen**

Programme Officer, Peace Practice and Innovation Unit, European Institute of Peace

**Andrew Harper**

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**René Nijenhuis**

Senior Humanitarian Affairs Officer, UN OCHA Yemen

**Barbara-Anna Krijgsman**

Senior Adviser, UNDP Iraq

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