



G20 INTERFAITH FORUM 2022

Refugees and Forced Migration: Religious dimensions September 2022

Highlights

Forced migration, a central and growing global challenge, has taken on new dimensions during the COVID-19 emergencies, with rising numbers of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and straightened humanitarian finance. The situation is complicated by the increasing prominence of movement linked to climate change. Forced migrants are among the world's most vulnerable people, subject to immense human suffering and uncertainty. Addressing causes and consequences of forced migration belongs at the center of the G20 agenda.

Religious actors, including faith-inspired operational organizations and movements, moral leaders like Pope Francis, and scholars, play significant roles in direct support to forced migrants at all stages (advocacy, conflict resolution, service provision, resettlement) and places (conflict zones, host countries), in advocacy for support, and in understanding the forces that drive forced migration. Shared core values of religious communities involve compelling and unifying calls to compassion and hospitality. Religious communities, as transnational actors, can provide services and advocacy across borders.

Deeper and more strategic collaboration among religious institutions and faith-inspired organizations, G20 member governments, and those present and working in refugee-hosting communities can foster the tools, partnerships, and funding needed to implement the Global Compact on Refugees and associated action programs. They can bolster the work of local communities driven by humanitarian values to support those in need and address urgent problems like health care, protection, and education. Religious actors bring to the table as a leading concern the imperative of action to protect children in forced migration settings.

The G20 Summit offers a crucial venue to coordinate and advance responses for refugees and IDPs, who are primarily hosted in communities of low- or middle-income countries. With the COVID-19 emergency heightening burdens on both forced migrants and host governments, urgent financial pressures demand action and G20 members can and should assure humanitarian finance at this critical time.

Specific recommendations draw on the experience and the moral teachings, networks, resources, and experiences that religious communities and faith-inspired organizations can offer to the G20 agenda, looking both to specific priorities in the context of the COVID-19 crisis and longer term action. G20 members should give urgent attention to developing partnerships involving refugee-hosting countries, G20 members, development finance organizations, and international organizations (including faith communities), to meet immediate health care needs of refugees

and IDPs. Sharing promising practices for migrant situations and long-term integration of refugees and IDPs are first steps. Given significant service delivery expertise, and strong networks, faith inspired organizations should be fully engaged in planning and implementation. A priority is to stop dangerous migration; G20 leaders should support approaches that address dangerous migration routes, along the lines of the “humanitarian corridors”, with faith communities natural partners in origin and destination countries. The Global Compact on Refugees foresees expansion of countries involved in refugee resettlement and G20 leaders can advance this goal with clear time frames, including engaging faith leaders to build public support for refugee resettlement. Partnerships with faith-inspired organizations offer particular promise for two urgent issues: education and livelihood support.