

Migrants and Refugees in the COVID-19 Response



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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 NO
POVERTY



2 ZERO
HUNGER



3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



5 GENDER
EQUALITY



6 CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION



7 AFFORDABLE AND
CLEAN ENERGY



8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE
ACTION



14 LIFE
BELOW WATER



15 LIFE
ON LAND



16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

SDG3 and SDG10



- Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Reduce inequality within and among countries
- ***We need to remember that most inequalities are human made ...***

Increase in global number of international migrants continues to outpace growth of the world's population

- The number of international migrants globally reached an estimated 272 million in 2019, an increase of 51 million since 2010.
- Currently, international migrants comprise 3.5 per cent of the global population, compared to 2.8 per cent in the year 2000 (UN, 2019).

- Forced displacements across international borders continue to rise.
- Between 2010 and 2017, the global number of refugees and asylum seekers increased by about 13 million (UN, 2019).



The virus itself does not discriminate, but social determinants of health do!

Examples of social media messages from humanitarian organizations to raise awareness on the situation with refugee camps:

- *Can't #stay home if you have none*
- *Can't #wash hands if there is one water tap for 1000 people and no soap*
- *Can't #avoid crowds if you live in a refugee camp*

- Migrants and refugees are disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Some countries report that the number of fatal cases of COVID-19 is unproportionally higher in some migrant groups..
- Problems in primary, secondary and tertiary prevention...

Problems in Primary Prevention

- Poverty: need to continue working under risky conditions for the infection
- Problems in accessing healthy foods (nutritional deficiencies)
- Problems with shelter and living environment (cold weather, overcrowded tents or houses with 4-5 families, long queues for food, shower etc, problems with social distancing)
- Problems in accessing water, soap, sanitation
- Stress provoking factors (higher levels of uncertainty, increased stigma and discrimination)

Problems in Primary Prevention

- Problems in access to reliable COVID-19 information and information about available services
- Lack of personal protective equipment
- Pause in outreach and work of NGOs and other institutions
- Pause in all asylum interviews, other services
- Deportation of positive cases to countries of origin

Physical, mental and social problems affecting the immune system and increasing vulnerability for the infection

Problems in Secondary and Tertiary Prevention

- Difficulties accessing COVID-19 testing
- Lack of proper quarantine and isolation opportunities - risk of further spreading
- Problems in access to treatment
- Absence of surveillance, lack of data about migrants (especially for undocumented migrants)...

No one should be left behind!

- **Social determinants of health** are strongly linked to how the COVID-19 pandemic evolves.
- **Vulnerable/disadvantaged groups** with respect to social determinants of health, including **migrants and refugees** should be on the agenda of policy makers and service providers for a **comprehensive and effective COVID-19 response.**

- Health and wellbeing of migrants and refugees are **not only important for migrants and refugees themselves**, but also important for:
 - Health and wellbeing of host societies;
 - Human and financial resources of host countries; and
 - Controlling the COVID-19 pandemic at the global level.

Key Interventions

- *Preventive measures for camps, immigration detention/reception centres*
 - Evacuation/re-organization of camps
 - Distribution of hygiene and sanitation kits
 - Training of personnel
 - Suspension of all public activities
 - Restricting number of visitors
 - Checking new arrivals for fever and other screening symptoms
 - Maintaining good sanitation..

Key Interventions

- *Preventive measures for all migrant/refugee/displaced populations*
 - Adequate supply of personal protective equipment
 - Linguistically and culturally appropriate health education and risk communication
 - Effective outreach approaches (community leaders, cultural mediators, hotlines, social media, mHealth..)

Key Interventions

- Universal Health Coverage (access to testing and treatment regardless of legal status, field hospitals, mobile clinics)
- Decreasing stigma and discrimination
- Community participation: Involvement of migrants/refugees in planning, implementation and evaluation of COVID-19 related policies and practices
- Intersectoral collaboration, sufficient funding

- *All countries need to have a **human rights based and inclusive approach** that leaves no one behind to control the COVID-19 pandemic and to promote health at the global level.*

