

NRC Global Strategy 2022–2025

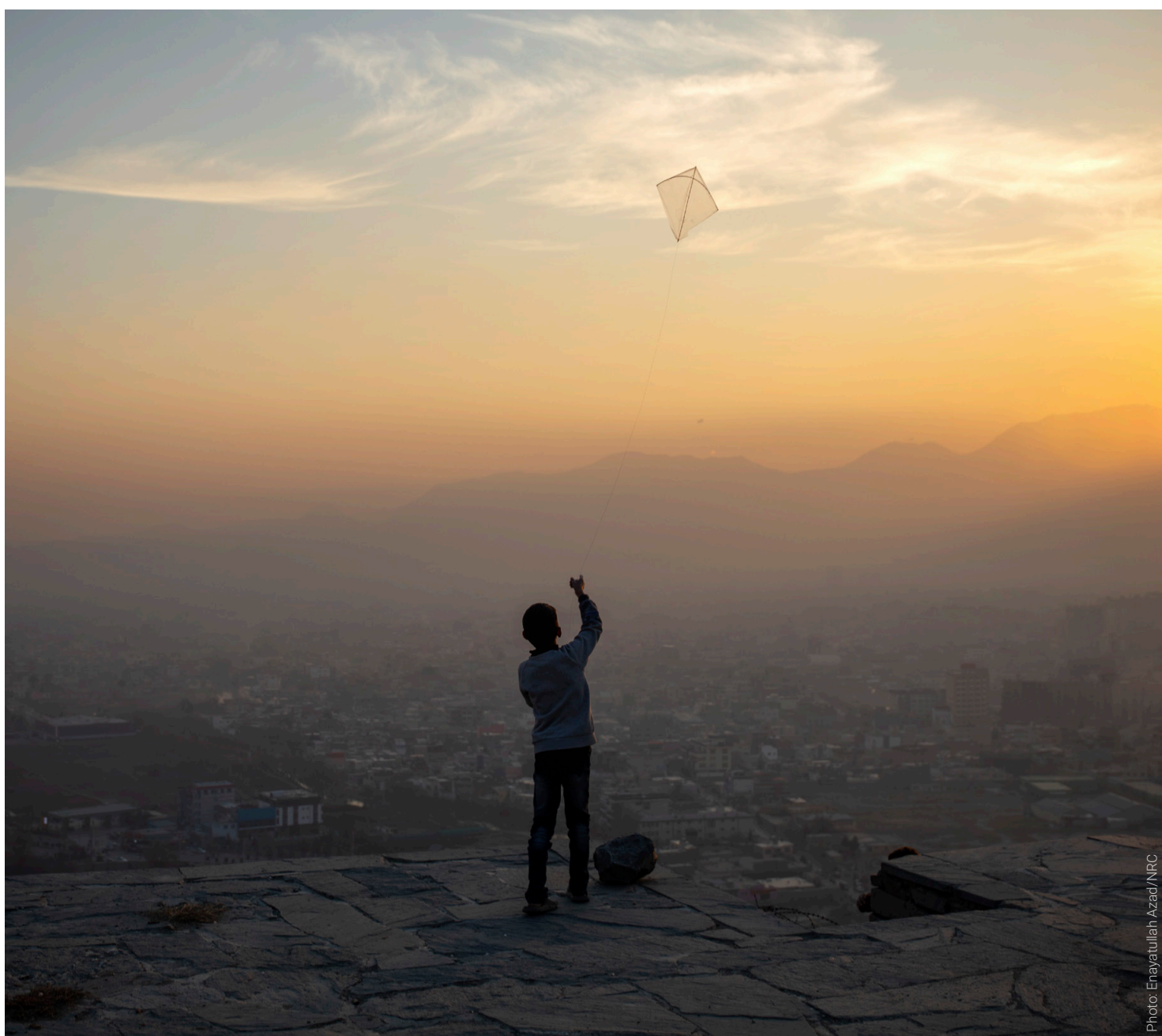


Photo: Enayatullah Azad/NRC



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Introduction

More people are reportedly displaced now than at any time since World War II. More people in more countries are affected by violent conflict, political instability and protracted fragility. New dimensions of crisis have been brought about or compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic. Climate change is leading to unprecedented environmental challenges for those already contending with conflict, displacement and limited access to natural resources.

The outlook is bleak for humanitarian organisations seeking to protect the rights of people forced to flee their homes. Adherence to international humanitarian law is eroding and our operating environment is increasingly complex.

Our humanitarian principles are challenged by political, security and development agendas, and donors are becoming increasingly risk averse. The pandemic has exposed serious inadequacies in global crisis financing at a time of accelerating needs.

In facing these challenges, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) does not stand alone. We form part of a diverse and dynamic global ecosystem and we recognise, more than ever, the multiplying impact of collaborative action.

We are observing a steadily widening gap between humanitarian needs and the resources available to meet them.



To maintain and grow our expertise in responding to the challenges of global displacement, we commit to connecting actively and deliberately across the system. We intend to be a leader where our expertise can inform change, to follow where others know better, to create more space for local solutions, and to exchange skills and resources with those who work alongside us.

At the centre of this system are displacement-affected people themselves. We recognise that their needs and aspirations are as varied as their communities are heterogeneous. We commit to do more to ensure that displacement-affected people have choices and are listened to, to meet people where they are, and to promote their right to make informed decisions about their own lives, including in emergency situations.

Working towards our Ambition 2030, NRC's Global Strategy 2022–2025 provides a blueprint for action over the next four years. It defines the change we want to see for displacement-affected people: they have access to quality services and protection, they are safe and can exercise their rights, they can secure durable solutions.

NRC is committed to building on our recognised strength as a principled humanitarian actor while developing our ability to meet new and emerging challenges. By 2025, we must be able to track improvements in the lives of the people we assist.



Photo: Khelid Al-Banna/NRC

Purpose of our Global Strategy 2022–2025

NRC's Global Strategy 2022–2025 sets out how we will work towards realising our Ambition 2030.

The three guiding objectives set the broad parameters of our work, and the eight sub-objectives define our contribution to achieving them. The strategy also sets out five strategic enablers that describe how we will strengthen our organisational capacity to work effectively and efficiently.

This strategy takes account of lessons learned from NRC's Global Strategy 2018–2021. It will help us to approach our work differently and deliver results for displacement-affected people by:

- strengthening organisational accountability
- providing a transparent framework by which to make decisions
- enabling adequate planning for and allocation of resources
- allowing greater scope for contextualised responses at the regional and country levels



Ambition 2030

NRC's vision is a world where rights are respected and people protected. We cannot accept that an increasing number of people suffer in situations of conflict and displacement with little or no protection or assistance. Nor can we accept that more and more people become displaced while solutions to displacement are increasingly out of reach. For the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved, displaced people and the communities hosting them must not be left behind.

NRC works to ensure that by 2030, **those forced to flee are safer and can exercise their rights, quickly access the services needed to regain control of their lives and are able to become self-reliant and find solutions.** To bridge the widening gap between needs and the aid and protection provided, we must transform our humanitarian response, reach more people, and maximise our impact over the next decade. Our Ambition for 2030 is comprised of nine key elements:

Promote systemic change to transform people's lives

Be present where needs are greatest and where we have the most added value

Use innovation and technology to extend our reach and impact

Partner with others to maximise collective impact

Put the people we serve at the centre

Use evidence to drive action

Mobilise and better use resources

Value, invest in and protect our staff

Make a positive environmental impact

Vision	Rights respected, people protected				
Ambition 2030	NRC works to ensure that by 2030, those forced to flee are safer and can exercise their rights, quickly access the services needed to regain control of their lives and are able to become self-reliant and find solutions.				
Strategy 2022–2025 Global Objectives	Displacement-affected people can access quality services and protection	Displacement-affected people are safe and can exercise their rights	Displaced people secure durable solutions		
Sub-objectives	Accelerate	Quality, accountability and learning in our response	Changes to laws, policies and practices that enable displacement-affected people to exercise their rights	Efforts to address the impact of climate change on displacement-affected people	Collaboration and exchange of expertise with local actors
	Consolidate	Self-reliance and durable solutions for people in protracted displacement	Humanitarian assistance to hard-to-reach populations	Promotion of a more principled, efficient, accountable and effective aid system	Protection programming to make people safer and reduce risks from conflict and violence
Strategic enablers	<p>Efficient internal systems and processes</p> <hr/> <p>Digital transformation</p> <hr/> <p>Grow partnerships, diversify resources</p> <hr/> <p>Reduced environmental footprint</p> <hr/> <p>Value and build our people</p>				

Sub-objectives

Our target group, as mandated in our mission, is “populations or people affected by displacement”. For NRC, populations and people affected by displacement include: IDPs, refugees, returnees, people at risk of displacement and people who are unable to flee (whether they are being obstructed or because they lack the means or ability to do so). Given the important role that host communities have in supporting displaced people and in contributing to durable solutions, we also include members of host communities in our programmes.

NRC primarily works in situations of armed conflict, providing assistance, protection and concrete solutions. In some countries where we operate, we can expand our target group to include people affected by displacement from disasters (previously called natural disasters) caused by natural hazards, adverse effects of climate change and generalised violence, and vulnerable migrants



SUB-OBJECTIVE 1:

Quality, accountability and learning in our response

The quality of our advocacy and programmes is paramount. We give priority to delivering a relevant response, appropriate to the context and based on evidence. We meet people where they are, including in emergency situations, to understand their needs and the ways in which we are well-positioned to respond, through our core competencies, advocacy and/or local collaborations. We integrate our response when relevant and appropriate. Our programmes incorporate and apply basic protection principles throughout the design and implementation phases. We use evidence from our response to improve and adapt our programmes, advocacy and policy work.



A. Evidence-based action and decision making

We systematically collect and analyse information to help us formulate the most relevant and appropriate response. We assess whether the assistance we are providing is achieving positive results and meeting quality standards. We document our failures and use evidence to continually improve our response.

B. Highest possible technical standards

We aspire to the highest possible global standards across our core competencies. We maintain and build technical expertise that contributes to further developing standards and good practices in our sector.

C. Safe programming

Our programmes adhere to Safe Programming Minimum Standards. Programmes are designed to include the most vulnerable, and offer accessible ways for communities to provide feedback on the services they use.

D. Engagement with communities

Our programmes are informed by the people we serve. We work together with displacement-affected people to identify the services they need and how to best provide them. We exchange information with people in a language they understand, using their preferred mode of communication.

E. Programme development

We look ahead to anticipate emerging trends and challenges, exploring new ideas and innovating responsibly to deliver aid in the most effective way. We test methods that can expand the quality, reach and impact of our work, and we adopt new solutions that have a proven added value for the people we serve.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 2:

Changes to laws, policies and practices that enable displacement-affected people to exercise their rights

Advocacy is an integral component of every NRC response. While we deliver programmes that meet immediate needs, we also work to change the circumstances that create and exacerbate these needs. We use our programmes to identify and solve problems, mobilising capacities across all levels of the organisation to influence those with the power to make changes. We use private and public approaches to reach our targets with advocacy that is founded in our operational and policy work, offering credible analysis and realistic solutions.



A. Programme-based advocacy

Our advocacy aims to make positive changes in the lives of the people we serve. We advocate for access to aid and protection, for the removal of barriers to self-reliance and durable solutions, and to address the political factors that create or sustain displacement.

B. Ways of working

We collect evidence from our programmes, document risks and challenges to assistance and protection for displacement-affected people, and develop recommendations for how to address these. We build strategies to change relevant laws and policies, and work across all levels of the organisation to implement them. We use different tools and methods to influence decision-makers.

C. Perspectives of displacement-affected people

We amplify the views and concerns of displacement-affected populations. We communicate with people to understand their perspectives and bring these into our public and private advocacy.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 3:

Efforts to address the impact of climate change on displacement-affected people

The impacts of climate change and environmental degradation worsen the situation and prospects for displacement-affected people. They prevent durable solutions, limit access to natural resources, restrict livelihoods and exacerbate conflict. We work within the scope of our core competencies to respond to these risks and support people to cope with them. Our response helps people to adapt to changing environmental conditions in ways that increase resilience.

A. Environmental analysis

We systematically use assessment tools that consider immediate and longer-term environmental threats, and the ability of displaced populations to cope with these. We work with our partners to better understand the linkages between climate change, conflict and displacement.

B. Environmentally sustainable programming

Our programmes contribute to more sustainable outcomes for displacement-affected people. We respond to environmental risks affecting communities and help strengthen their future resilience to shocks and stresses.

C. Clean energy

We promote access to clean and sustainable energy for displacement-affected communities and explore programmes that contribute to carbon offsetting where this has direct benefits for displaced populations.

D. Collective action

We cooperate across the humanitarian system and with affected communities to strengthen climate and environmental action, and to promote standardised approaches. We bring attention to the impact of climate change and environmental degradation on displaced people based on evidence from our programmes.



Photo: Iban Ceballos/NAC

SUB-OBJECTIVE 4:

Collaboration and exchange of expertise with local actors

We collaborate purposefully to improve outcomes for displacement-affected people. Our approach is based on respecting and complementing the capacities of others, working within the framework of our principles and values. Collaboration extends beyond implementing partnerships to networking and cooperation that enhances our capacity and allows us to contribute to action by others. This includes work with private sector organisations, academia, local institutions and authorities, as well as NGOs.



A. Create space

We remove barriers for local actors to provide assistance and services to displacement-affected populations. We use our influence to promote the interests of all frontline responders. We use our access to connect local actors with affected communities and other humanitarian actors. We promote inclusive coordination mechanisms.

B. Engage local knowledge and capacities

We work with local actors such as NGOs, academic institutions and the private sector to improve the quality of our analysis, advocacy and programmes. We actively engage local expertise to ensure our response is informed by local knowledge and capacity.

C. Partner for implementation

We partner with local NGOs and institutions to extend and sustain the impact of our response. Our partnerships are based on shared objectives and complementary expertise. We gain from the skills and geographical reach of our local partners, and in turn contribute with different capacities and resources.

D. Engage with authorities

We recognise the responsibility of national and local authorities to provide assistance and protection to people within their jurisdiction. Within the framework of a principled response, we complement and/or support their ability to meet their obligations to displacement-affected people.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 5:

Self-reliance and durable solutions for people in protracted displacement

Our responses aim to help people permanently resolve their displacement situation, and have access to the resources they need to be self-reliant in the meantime. We engage with the three pathways to durable solutions: safe and dignified return and reintegration, local integration, and resettlement. The first two are a central focus in our response from the onset of a displacement crisis onwards, and particularly in situations of protracted displacement. Through our core competencies, policy and advocacy, we work to achieve a situation where people no longer have specific assistance and protection needs linked to their displacement and can enjoy their rights without discrimination.



A. Self-reliance for people in limbo

Our programmes are designed to facilitate access to rights and resources that allow displaced people to meet their needs without relying on humanitarian assistance. We work to help displaced people participate equally in the social and economic life of their communities, for their own benefit and that of host communities.

B. Local integration or return

We plan responses that allow people to make informed choices about their future. We deliver programmes and advocacy that enable free, voluntary, safe and dignified return and reintegration, or integration into the local community, with secure access to the full range of rights this entails.

C. Coordination with authorities and development and peace actors

We work cooperatively with local and national authorities, as well as peace and development actors, to achieve durable solutions. Our responses embrace a whole-of-system approach, where the humanitarian assistance we provide is complemented by the work of others to address the drivers of displacement and to develop institutions, systems and capacities that make durable solutions possible.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 6:

Humanitarian assistance to hard-to-reach populations

We enable the delivery of assistance where needs are greatest, both in emergencies and protracted crises. This includes populations in hard-to-reach locations, as well as those whose need for or access to aid is being denied or actively impeded. Our response is founded in a commitment to principled humanitarian action. Our organisational systems, programmes, and policy and advocacy work together to defend humanitarian space, allowing NRC and other actors to deliver safely to populations most in need of aid and protection, including as a first-line responder in emergency situations.



A. Delivery of assistance to hard-to-reach populations

We provide direct assistance and protection to hard-to-reach populations across our core competencies. Hard-to-reach responses are institutionalised within NRC. Our internal systems and decision-making processes, including those around duty of care for our staff, are designed to make hard-to-reach responses the norm rather than the exception.

B. Engagement with all relevant actors

We engage with the full range of stakeholders that can influence our presence, the quality of our response, the way we engage with affected communities, and the services to which people have access. This includes engagement with non-state armed groups, governments, informal authorities and affected communities.

C. Access coordination and actions that enable others

We work to coordinate and improve sustainable and principled access that helps meet the needs of hard-to-reach populations. We use the full range of operational and advocacy resources available to us to help facilitate humanitarian access for other actors.

D. Addressing systemic failures

We analyse and respond to the politicisation of aid, including measures that link aid to political and security agendas. This extends to policies that make donors and/or humanitarian actors less able to operate in high-risk environments. We draw on our operational experience to influence the laws and policies that protect humanitarian space and promote principled humanitarian action.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 7:

Promotion of a more principled, efficient, accountable and effective aid system

Our humanitarian policy work promotes system-wide improvements to the way aid is delivered for the benefit of the people we serve. It is grounded in the humanitarian principles, international humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights law. We work with other actors, both within and outside the humanitarian system, that can help us effect change. We engage with development and peace actors to find more effective ways of working towards collective outcomes.

A. Coherent institutional positions

We have institutional positions that ensure coherence in our operational, advocacy and policy work. They are based on our evidence and expertise, aligned with our principles and values, and take relevant risks into account.

B. Evidence- and expertise-based policy work

Our policy work is based on knowledge gained from our operational experience and technical expertise. We use this to influence the current and future direction of the aid sector in areas where we can exercise thought leadership or add value. We raise issues emerging from our country-level work to relevant decision-makers and in global processes.

C. Humanitarian coordination and leadership

We actively participate in relevant coordination mechanisms and networks at country, regional and global levels to promote more effective and inclusive action. Our engagement is connected and informed across different levels. We take on leadership or representation roles within the sector, based on our capacity, expertise and ability to influence.

D. Political action that affects the humanitarian system

We advocate for political action with all relevant decision-makers. This includes traditional stakeholders such as donor states, regional and multilateral organisations, and UN Security Council members, as well as new and emerging actors, including the private sector, that have influence on the humanitarian system.



SUB-OBJECTIVE 8:

Protection programming to make people safer and reduce risks from conflict and violence

We deliver standalone protection programmes that lead to measurable protection outcomes for populations at risk. We analyse protection risks in the contexts where we work and the actors available to address these. We identify NRC's added value and capacity to respond with protection programming, advocacy or partnerships that ensure displacement-affected people are safe and protected.

A. Standalone protection

Our protection programmes are carried out within an established core competency framework that defines our areas of intervention. Our protection programmes build on existing capacities and priorities, including our other core competencies, our advocacy, and our work with hard-to-reach populations.

B. Coordination and policy

We advocate and work with others to promote the primacy of protection in humanitarian response to mobilise resources and improve coordination within the sector. We promote and facilitate access for specialised protection actors in the contexts where we work.

C. Specialised services

We deliver specialised protection services, including case management, where no other services are available or able to reduce protection risks. We build staff capacity to deliver high-quality services, ensuring we meet minimum standards and do no harm.

D. Community safety

We work with communities to design programmes that promote safety and reduce risks. We support and build on existing community strategies and help develop new approaches for displacement-affected people to move in safer ways and mitigate their protection risks.



Strategic enablers

1. Efficient internal systems and processes

The achievement of our strategic objectives depends on the appropriate use of resources and effective ways of working. We work to build a culture of “end-user value” and continuous improvement within NRC. While we adhere to high compliance standards and manage risk, we design our systems and processes to be as accessible, lean and easy-to-use as possible.

2. Digital transformation

We use digital technology to expand our reach, connect with different stakeholders, improve information flows and provide the services that people need. Within the organisation, technology allows faster, more transparent and connected work, driving efficiency through automation and simplification. To transform the way we work, we will continue to build an ecosystem that includes digital tools, skills, processes, governance and culture.

3. Grow partnerships, diversify resources

We develop a broader range of partnerships and new resourcing models to expand the expertise and funding available to support our strategic objectives. This approach depends on creating adequate governance and new financial models, but also on creating a philosophy and culture that harness the full gamut of skills, ideas and resources needed to deliver effectively.

4. Reduced environmental footprint

We continue improving the environmental sustainability of our programmes and reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. We aim to become carbon-neutral by reducing our emissions and establishing projects that remove carbon from the atmosphere. We are also working to reduce waste and to adopt environmental minimum standards in our programmes.

5. Value and build our people

A diverse and capable workforce is our most important asset. We work systematically to build a positive working culture in which all staff feel valued and supported and have a sense of belonging. We prioritise their safety and wellbeing, invest in building technical and leadership capabilities, and develop systems that promote greater mobility across the organisation.





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