**1. Abstract**

This background paper will discuss and explain the issue of mass IDP exodus and refugee diaspora within the Arab World. This issue has expanded into many facets and affects a multitude of sectors within a stark number of member states. Especially considering the vast existence of civil wars, wars and domestic instability. Many member states are now threatened politically (internally and externally), economically and socially. This can cripple the economic state between member states.

**2**. **Introduction**

Established in 1950, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) dedicates itself to defending and aiding refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) across the globe. Tragically, many Arab League states grapple with immense refugee and IDP crises resulting from continuous strife and bloodshed. Statistics from UNHCR indicate that about 16 million men, women, and children have either been compelled to abandon their homes or look for safety beyond their nation's borders in Arab League countries like Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Libya, and Palestine. Facing such overwhelming demand, the Arab League, comprising 22 member states spread throughout North Africa, the Horn of Africa, and the Arabian Peninsula, plays a crucial role in responding effectively to this challenge.

To tackle this issue, UNHCR partners closely with the Arab League and individual members to deliver vital aid and services to affected populations. Collaborative success stories abound, including Lebanon and Jordan's adoption of strategic plans supported by UNHCR to enhance living standards and generate income sources for both native inhabitants and newly arrived refugees. Moreover, cooperation between UNHCR and the Arab League Education, Culture, and Science Organization (ALECSO) facilitates increased access to quality schooling for youngsters and adolescents whose educations have suffered because of displacement.

With ambitious goals in sight, UNHCR strives to intensify joint endeavors targeting peace negotiations, guaranteeing unfettered humanitarian passage, reinforcing legislation shielding the rights of the displaced, increasing monetary contributions, and enabling marginalized communities to establish solid foundations for thriving futures. Thus, pooled resources and commitment from UNHCR, the Arab League, and its associated entities remain instrumental in reinstating stability, tranquility, and progress to a beleaguered region grappling with severe refugee and IDP predicaments.

**3. Glossary**

1. **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):** Individuals forced to leave their homes due to violence, persecution, or conflict but who continue to reside within their country's borders.
2. **Arab League:** A regional organization consisting of 22 member states mostly located in North Africa, the Horn of Africa, and the Arabian Peninsula, aiming to promote political, cultural, scientific, and economic cooperation among its members.
3. **Conflict Sensitive Approach**: An approach adopted in policy planning and implementation processes that considers potential impacts on fragile contexts, attempting to mitigate harm and foster positive outcomes during interventions.
4. **Protracted Displacement:** Long-lasting instances where refugees or IDPs spend extended periods away from their original homes, usually exceeding five years without viable solutions to restore normalcy.
5. **Regional Protection Framework**: A comprehensive strategy devised by multiple actors, including regional organizations and governments, to improve protection measures for refugees, IDPs, and stateless persons, focusing on shared responsibility and burden distribution.

**4. Description of the Issue**

**● When and how did the issue originate?**

Conflicts and political instability across numerous Arab League countries, including Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Libya, and Palestine, triggered vast waves of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) seeking safety within and beyond their national boundaries. Since the early 20th century, tensions escalated due to factors like colonialism, border disputes, religious sectarianism, authoritarian rule, corruption, and foreign interference. Consequently, forced migration surged, leaving millions destitute and homeless.

* **Advantages and disadvantages:**

While granting asylum enables receiving countries to display generosity, hospitality, and moral leadership, absorbing large influxes of refugees may strain public infrastructure, employment markets, housing availability, and resource allocation. It could also increase competition for jobs and erode communal harmony if not managed properly. Nevertheless, refugees contribute positively to society via innovation, entrepreneurship, diversity, and labor force expansion when adequately integrated.

* **Groups affected by the issue:**

Refugees and IDPs bear the brunt of the hardships caused by prolonged exposure to deprived living circumstances, limited access to basic necessities, fragmentation of families, trauma, exploitation, discrimination, and reduced socioeconomic mobility. Host communities might face additional pressure on already scarce resources, social fabric disruption, and rising crime rates linked to the presence of desperate migrants. Local authorities must balance the interests of their citizens against those requiring urgent care amid delicate geopolitical environments.

* **Agreements/treaties in place:**

Key agreements shaping the landscape of refugee governance include the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol, and the 1969 Organisation of African Unity Convention governing specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa. Some influential declarations affecting the Arab League states are the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (2016), the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR; 2018), and the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). UN involvement: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) leads global efforts to shelter and secure the fundamental rights of refugees, asylum seekers, returnees, stateless individuals, and IDPs. Partner agencies, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and others complement UNHCR's activities, forming an extensive network delivering relief, recovery, and reconstruction initiatives.

* **Statistics**:

More than half of all forcibly displaced persons worldwide emanate from just three countries – Syria, Venezuela, and Afghanistan.

At least 16 million individuals are forcibly displaced inside the Arab League countries (Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Libya, and Palestine) as of 2021.

Turkey hosts the highest absolute number of refugees globally, followed by Colombia, Pakistan, Uganda, Germany, Sudan, Iran, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Lebanon . Between 2011 and 2016, the proportion of out-of-school refugee children dropped significantly, from roughly 50% to 36%, indicating improved access to education.

**5. History / Current Situation / Timeline of Events :**

* **Early 20th Century:** European colonialism in the Middle East leads to artificial borders being drawn, sowing the seeds for future conflict and instability.
* **Late 1940s**: After World War II, tensions between Jewish and Palestinian populations culminate in the establishment of the Zionist Entity in 1948, resulting in mass displacement of Palestinians who flee or are expelled from their homes. This event marks the beginning of the ongoing Zionist-Palestinian conflict and creates one of the longest-standing refugee crises in modern history.
* **1967**: The Six-Day War breaks out between the Zionist Entity and its Arab neighbors, further exacerbating regional tension and causing additional waves of refugees and IDPs.
* **1975-1990:** The Lebanese Civil War results in significant internal displacement and external migration, adding to the growing number of refugees and IDPs in the region.
* **1980-1988**: The Iran-Iraq War contributes to regional destabilization and causes large-scale population movements within Iraq and into neighboring countries like Iran and Turkey.
* **1990-1991**: The Gulf War sees another wave of displacement as hundreds of thousands of people flee Kuwait and other parts of the Persian Gulf following Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. Many return home after coalition forces liberate Kuwait, but some remain displaced due to continued unrest.
* **Post-2003:** Following the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, sectarian violence escalates, triggering massive internal displacement and refugee flows. By the end of the decade, millions of Iraqis have been forced from their homes.
* **Mid-2010s:** The Syrian civil war erupts, driving more than half of Syria's pre-war population from their homes – creating both the largest refugee crisis since WWII and the worst humanitarian disaster of our time. Millions seek safety in nearby countries, while others become IDPs inside Syria.
* **2014:** The Islamic State group seizes control of vast territories across Iraq and Syria, committing atrocities against religious minorities and forcing many communities to flee.
* **Present Day:** Ongoing political turmoil, economic struggles, and social unrest throughout the region continue to fuel new waves of displacement, including those related to the Yemeni Civil War, Libyan Political Crisis, and other localized conflicts.

**6. Possible Solutions**

* **Boosting Regional Collaboration:** Promote closer partnerships among Arab League members via data exchange, collective policymaking, and synchronizing domestic approaches concerning refugee and IDP care. Joint ventures could encompass expanding educational and work prospects, strengthening frontier administration to curtail illicit activities, and devising reparation schemes once favorable circumstances arise.
* **Amplified Global Backing:** Call for enhanced monetary aid, specialized knowledge, and capability enhancement from worldwide entities. Press wealthy countries to honor prior obligations made under extant accords, like the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which vows assets and backing for regions managing considerable influxes of refugees and migrants. Also, examine inventive finance methods, such as releasing bonds supported by contributor nations or personal financiers, to amass funds for crucial facilities and projects designed to assist refugees and host populaces.
* **Confronting Core Causes**: Tackle fundamental factors spurring volatility, armed strife, and consequent dislocation by advocating sound stewardship, legal adherence, and regard for individual liberties. Stress essential democratic procedures, equitable resource allocation, and involvement of all concerned parties - specifically neglected collectives, ladies, youngsters, and ethnic minorities. Bankroll societal advancement projects concentrating on susceptible zones, stimulating business growth, and decreasing impoverishment and disparity. Furthermore, champion dialogues and settlement attempts to settle persistent disagreements nonviolently, thus facilitating durable reintegrations of refugees and IDPs.

**7. Bibliography**

Global Compact on Refugees. (n.d.) Resource mobilization. Retrieved January 25, 2023, from <https://www.unhcr.org/globalcompact/>

Global Partnership for Education. (2018). Progress report 2018: On track to achieve our ambitions?. Retrieved January 25, 2023, from <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/progress-report-2018-track-achieve-our-ambitions>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2021). Figures at a glance. Retrieved January 25, 2023, from <<https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>>

 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). (2021). Operational data portal. Retrieved January 25, 2023, from <<https://data.humdata.org/>>