

Migration and displacement

Our approach
and priorities



Our approach

Migration is – and always has been – a fundamental part of human life.

Historically, such mobility has contributed to development, growth and more broadly to economic and social change for individuals and societies.

Yet managing global migration and displacement is not without its challenges, as recent events in Europe and beyond demonstrate.

Our research, policy engagement and public affairs examine how we can meet these global challenges. Our focus is on how to better manage human mobility for the benefits of all through realistic and sustainable actions.

Our priorities

What we do and aim to achieve

Journeys and borders

We know why people move: a combination of safety, aspirations and livelihoods. We also know that policies of potential destination countries do not always deter people from migrating: these are largely individual choices influenced by wider family and social networks, as well as security concerns and economic prospects.

Our research on drivers of migration, migrants' and refugees' decision making and on the costs and effects of deterrence policies has generated important insights for policy makers on what to do – and what to avoid – to better manage global migration. Our work increasingly focuses on the journeys of migrants and refugees, the role of intermediaries such as smugglers and informal networks, with a specific focus on Africa.

We want to understand what informs the decisions of people on the move. We consider the effects of different policies on migrants' choices from border security, to temporary visas, livelihood programmes and social protection measures.

Development and human mobility

Historically, human mobility was rarely considered in development debates. This has changed recently with the growing political urgency of resolving migration issues around the world, and the inclusion of migration in the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In our work we seek to better understand how migration interacts with economic and social development in different cities and countries. We consider how to effectively integrate human mobility in development policies and how mobility can enhance development outcomes in key sectors for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, such as health, women's empowerment, climate and education.

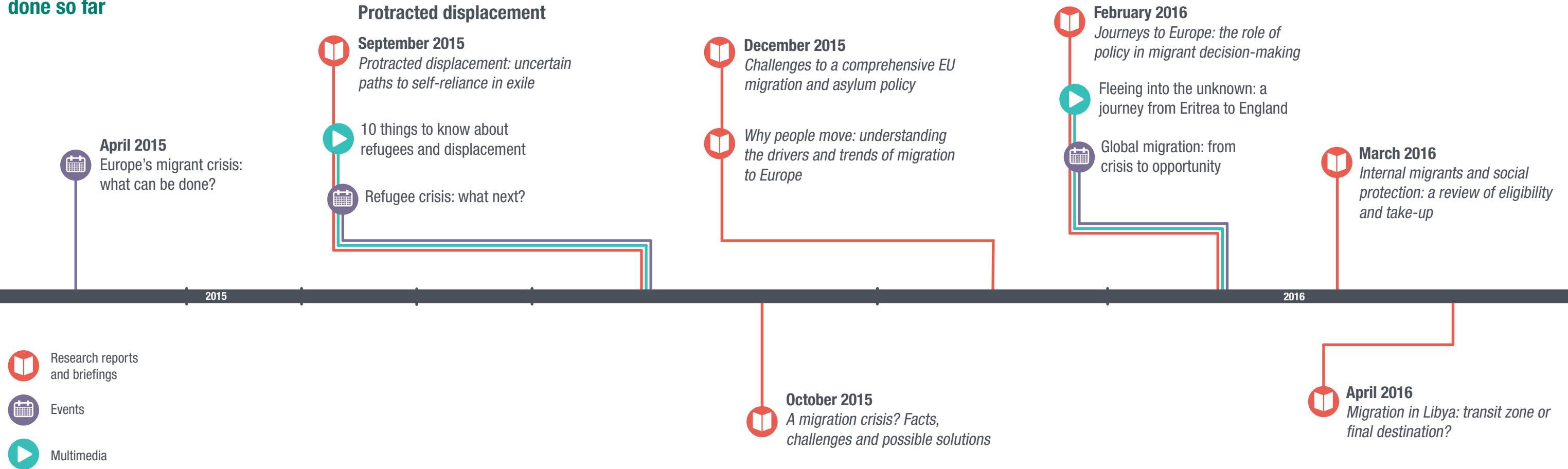
Refugees and displacement

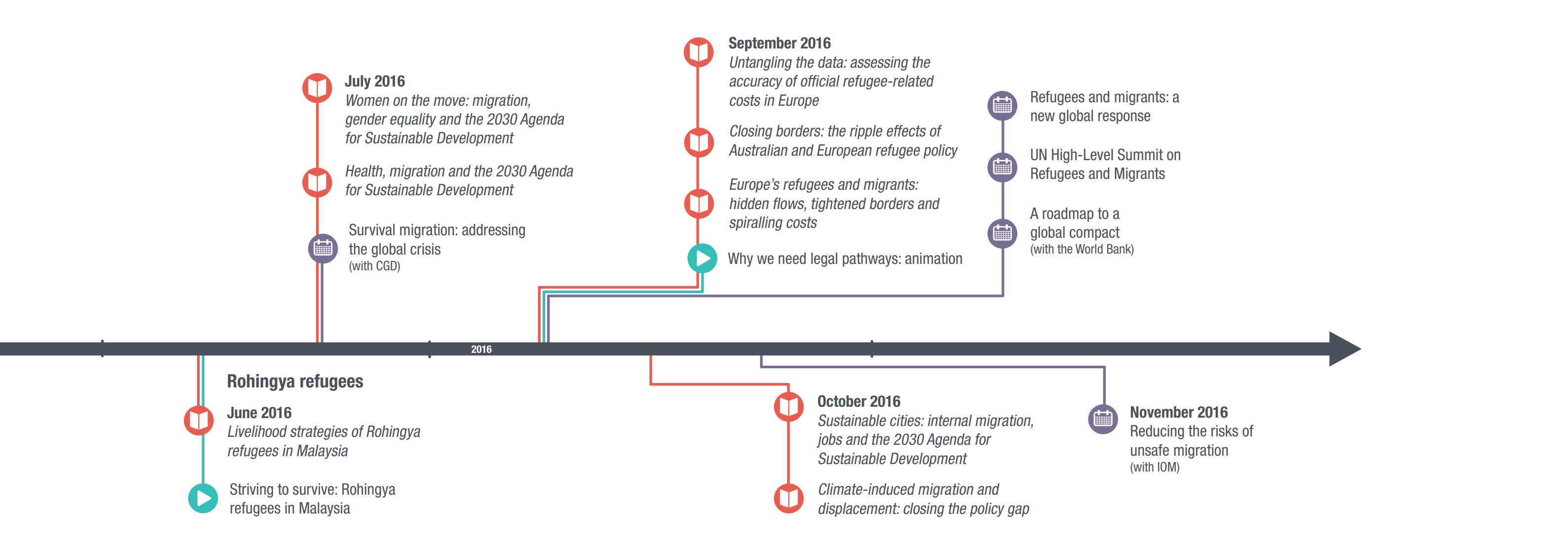
Middle and low income countries host the vast majority of the world's refugees, though this is rarely acknowledged in public debates on migration and asylum in Europe. We show how the restrictive refugee policies in Europe and Australia are having a ripple effect on the policies of these host countries in the region.

More and more refugees are in a state of protracted displacement. This requires a more sustainable developmental approach to refugees' lives and livelihoods, not only for the host country, but also in order to help refugees rebuild their lives.

In our work we explore refugees' institutional landscapes, networks and livelihood strategies – from their own perspectives, in order to understand refugees' aspirations, how they seek to achieve them, and what networks and institutions support or hinder their efforts to survive, and flourish. We also consider the effectiveness of different types of policies and programmes in supporting refugees' livelihoods.

What we've done so far





Team



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Our voice in the public debate

We proactively engage in public debates on migration and displacement. We convene conversations between policy makers in different parts of government and between actors across the development, humanitarian and migration debates. We are fostering a constructive search for common grounds and possible solutions. We work in partnership with other think tanks, NGOs, philanthropic organisations and governments. We hope to broaden our networks to mayors and local administrators as well as employers.

Our work has recently featured in leading newspapers such as The Independent (UK), The Telegraph (UK) and The Nation (Kenya). Our experts regularly contribute to news and analysis for leading news channels such as Channel 4, the BBC World Service (UK), CNBC Africa and Sky Australia. Our blogs and op-eds have been published by Al Jazeera, Huffington Post (US), the New Statesman, the Broker and El Pais.

For more information, and to
contact us, please visit:

odi.org/migration

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Photo: Migrants and refugees, Greece, 2015 ©
International Federation of the Red Cross

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international development and humanitarian issues.

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