

A world in turmoil

As of the end of 2017, there were some 71.4 million people of concern to UNHCR around the world— asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees, the internally displaced and stateless. Millions were newly displaced during the year, fleeing war, violence and persecution in countries including the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Iraq, Myanmar, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria). As a result, UNHCR was called on to address a succession of new or recurring or deepening displacement crises, some shifting in new and complicated directions.

Torn from their homes and propelled across borders, there could be no illusion that they were moving voluntarily, in search of a better life. Fleeing for their lives, their movement was often chaotic and improvised, their assets left behind. Almost two thirds remained internally displaced within their own countries, often unable to reach safety abroad as borders closed and restrictive admissions policies prevailed. At the same time, protracted crises remained entrenched. Refugees fled Afghanistan almost 40 years ago, but some two million are still hosted in the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan, and hundreds of thousands more across the world.

Marjan, 60, and her granddaughter Jannat Ara, 7, (in red) stand among other Rohingya refugees to receive aid at Kutupalong camp in Bangladesh. They fled their home in Myanmar two months ago with four other family members.

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As a result, UNHCR was called upon to respond, together with States, to a series of new and recurring emergencies in the course of 2017. Standby capacities including emergency funding mechanisms, personnel deployments, airlifts of relief items, and standby partnerships were activated through UNHCR emergency declarations for displacement related to crises in the DRC, Libya and Myanmar. Emergency capacities were maintained at regional and country level to respond to new displacement and returns in relation to Iraq, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen and elsewhere.

Efforts to address complex mixed movements, by trying to secure protection and solutions for refugees moving along dangerous routes such as through sub-Saharan Africa to the central Mediterranean and beyond, and across northern Central America, were also a growing priority, seeing UNHCR deepen its partnerships with the International Organization for Migration and others.

Growing weaknesses in international cooperation and in the ability of political leaders to prevent, mitigate, and resolve conflict remained prominent. Among the millions of people uprooted, just a small number were able to return home following effective international conflict resolution or progress towards stability. Those refugees or IDPs who did return often did so under less than ideal circumstances, returning to situations of hardship, destruction and ongoing risk. At the same time, weaknesses in international cooperation and solidarity undermined the global response to refugee flows, and state-by-state responses often prevailed amidst an ongoing politicization of the refugee issue at domestic, regional and international levels.

As this bleak series of events unfolded, host countries and communities continued to extend protection and assistance,

often despite significant pressure on their infrastructure and services, and despite waning international support. The majority of countries next to conflict zones kept their borders open and continued to receive refugees in a very practical expression of their commitment to international protection standards and humanitarian values.

Further afield, the picture was more mixed. In many parts of the world, genuine public concerns related to security, the economy, and identity have been distorted, and misperceptions of the nature, composition and impact of refugee flows have been fueled by irresponsible politicians. Refugee rights have been eroded and protection undermined—sometimes by States that have traditionally been champions of refugee protection.

An emerging model for change

And yet, despite—or perhaps because of—these many challenges, a powerful momentum emerged around the principles and approaches set out in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), adopted as part of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Now being applied in 13 countries and in two regional models, and described in more detail in this Global Report, it is driving more sustained attention to the role of host countries and communities, with the international community increasingly recognizing the need to do more to support them. The global compact on refugees, to be adopted by the General Assembly later in 2018, will underpin the CRRF with a programme of action to steer its application.

Notable progress has already been made through the application of the CRRF. The policy and legislative reforms, inclusive and open practices, and measures to expand refugee access to national health and education systems are described in

more detail particularly in the chapter on *Expanding partnerships*. With an emphasis on building resilience and self-reliance, by connecting refugees to opportunities and fostering their inclusion in host societies and economies, the new comprehensive response model is driving real change. The number of host countries adopting policies and practices consistent with the vision of the New York Declaration is lengthening—and this generosity and openness must be supported.

UNHCR also made significant strides in establishing closer links between humanitarian and development partners and other bilateral agencies, aimed at supporting host countries and communities and strengthening the resilience of refugees, and in making progress on solutions, even in the absence of wider progress in resolving conflicts. These efforts are also aligned with the reforms to the UN development system and peace and security architecture currently under way under the leadership of the Secretary-General.

The strong leadership of the World Bank continued to play a key role in driving change in 2017—in particular, through the IDA18 refugee sub-window for low-income countries and the Global Concessional Financing Facility for middle-income countries. A growing list of bilateral and multilateral institutions have also made important advances. The European Union's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, for example, is making considerable investments to support the CRRF roll-out in the Horn of Africa and Central America, and to address forced displacement in Asia. Other bilateral development agencies, including those of Denmark, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom, are also already engaged.

As this Global Report describes, new ways of using resources to target the longer-term needs of refugees and hosts became more prominent in 2017, in relation to education, employment, and the environment. Working with a much broader range of actors than in the past, important steps were taken related to refugees' financial inclusion and access to jobs. These steps included policy changes, new financing mechanisms, and the increasing engagement of a wide range of NGOs, civil society entities, municipalities, faith organizations, and the involvement of the private sector.

UNHCR is working closely with development partners and governments to accelerate the application of the instruments and resources made available, but the impact of the comprehensive response model will take time to be felt. And even as tangible results begin to emerge, providing proof that this new approach can make a difference, humanitarian action will continue to be a central aspect of the response to forced displacement—particularly in the early stages of new crises.

Certain aspects of the model require greater investments and action if they are to be fully realized. The number of resettlement places fell significantly in 2017, to around 75,200—just 54 per cent of 2016 levels. Yet, resettlement remains an important solution, both for the people concerned and as a concrete expression of burden-and responsibility-sharing. A number of countries are now working to expand their resettlement programmes, and to expand the pool of resettlement States by providing support to emerging resettlement countries. These efforts must be supported.

The scarcity of solutions in the context of today's proliferating conflicts is a matter of deep concern. The strong focus on solutions, notably voluntary repatriation, in the two regional applications of the CRRF

that have emerged—both in the Somalia context in the Horn of Africa, and in the Comprehensive Refugee Protection and Solutions Framework in the Americas—is therefore extremely welcome. The ongoing work to develop and implement the global compact on refugees will give further space for these efforts.

The #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness remained a corporate priority in 2017. Significant progress in reducing statelessness took place in countries including the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Thailand, and

legislative and policy reforms were also adopted in a number of States. Burkina Faso and Luxembourg both acceded to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. This work has been given additional momentum by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in particular SDG 5, which calls for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls everywhere, and SDG 16.9, which calls for legal identity for all, including birth registration.



UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi takes selfies with young Somali refugees who have been awarded scholarships by the World University Service of Canada at Dadaab camp, Kenya.

UNHCR: looking ahead

In January 2017, we issued UNHCR’s Strategic Directions, setting out clear orientations for our work for the period until 2021, against the evolving context of deepening displacement crises and the important opportunities emerging in the lead up to the global compact and beyond. These include the core directions of protect, respond, include, empower and solve.

In the course of 2017, we took a number of steps to steer critical changes to enable us to

pursue these directions in a more effective, efficient, agile and accountable manner.

These reform initiatives included an independent review of the design, structure and processes of our Headquarters, which made a compelling case for change to ensure that we remain a dynamic and field-oriented organization. Its recommendations are being taken forward by a change team and have already resulted in the establishment of a new Division for Resilience and Solutions, changes to

the management and coordination of our engagement with new and traditional partners, and other measures.

We made important investments in strengthening the integrity of our operations, including through reforms to our oversight systems, and in pursuing our zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. We developed “Risk Management 2.0”—an ambitious, new approach to managing risk, unearthing root causes of corruption and fraud, and improving programme delivery which is now being rolled out in key operations.

We undertook a significant reform of our human resources systems and, in August 2017, issued a new recruitment and assignments policy aimed at ensuring a flexible, highly-qualified workforce with the right profile, skills and expertise, with full attention to inclusion, diversity and gender equity.

We made a first set of investments to step up our capacity in relation to data on refugees and host communities, and reached an agreement on a new UNHCR-World Bank joint data centre, which will also work on data on statelessness.

We also worked to improve our engagement with IDPs, and began the redesign of our results-based management system, integrating it with a new Multi-Year, Multi-Partner approach.

Mobilizing resources and diversifying support

With growing needs, we saw encouragement from the solid level of funding that we were able to maintain in 2017, reaching over \$3.9 billion in fresh contributions, just under what we received in 2016, albeit against a larger budget. The commitments made at our 2018 pledging conference in Geneva in December 2017, including multi-year commitments, came close to \$1 billion for

the first time ever in an important expression of confidence in UNHCR and the course that we are pursuing.

We also, increasingly, noted the engagement of the private sector, including corporations, philanthropists and foundations—not just as donors but as active contributors that can bring important experience to bear including in terms of technology, employment, skills training, renewable energy and other areas. It is also particularly relevant to single out the interest and involvement of cities and mayors, who are often on the frontline of receiving refugees, but also integrating them, especially in industrialized countries. For instance, sport institutions such as the International Olympic Committee also have an important role helping to address refugee inclusion, giving hope and bridging gaps between communities.

Rising to the challenge

The comprehensive response model, and the global compact to come, are concrete, workable instruments of multilateralism in action, rooted in practical engagement that can be a rallying point for refugee protection and solutions, founded on the principles and standards of the international refugee regime. To work, they need resources, including funding, technical expertise, and political support.

Throughout 2017, there was a resolute and growing body of support for the new model, from a range of States with different capacities and characteristics, and from traditional and new donors. Sustaining and intensifying that support through 2018 and beyond will be critical, to translate the high level political commitments of the New York Declaration into real change in the lives of refugees and displaced people around the world.

The Special Envoy

This year marked a special moment in UNHCR's relationship with its Special Envoy, Angelina Jolie. Renewing her contract as Special Envoy during a visit to UNHCR Headquarters after 17 years with the Agency, she reaffirmed her commitment to refugees worldwide, and spoke of how proud she is to be with UNHCR. Referring to the many challenges facing the Office and the broader humanitarian community, she said to her UNHCR colleagues, "I am with you, not just for my contract, I am with you for life. You can't walk away once you've joined UNHCR."

While in Geneva, she delivered the annual lecture for the Sergio Vieira de Mello foundation. In her speech, "In Defence of Internationalism", she called on governments to renew their commitment to diplomacy and to the UN, saying that "there is no shortcut to peace and security, and no substitute for the long, painstaking

effort to end conflicts, expand human rights and strengthen the rule of law." She warned of the dangers of "narrow nationalism masquerading as patriotism," and urged citizens to "keep alive the flame of internationalism," adding that "a world in which we turn our back on our global responsibilities will be a world that produces greater insecurity, violence and danger for us and for our children."

She also tackled issues of populism, poverty and racism in her address, urging the audience to stay true to the ideals and purposes of the United Nations: "I hope all of us can determine that we shall be a generation that renews its commitment to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom." The Special Envoy called on individuals to play their part globally, to do good in their community and continue



UNHCR's Special Envoy Angelina Jolie and UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi meet in Geneva to sign Jolie's new contract.



UNHCR Special Envoy Angelina Jolie cuts a cake with young refugee women at the RefuSHE empowerment project in Nairobi, June 2017.

the progress started by Mr Vieira de Mello and other UN workers: "To do even a little of his good, to apply ourselves to the work he left unfinished, in whatever way we can, is a worthy task for any one of us."

It is in this spirit that the Special Envoy commemorated 2017 World Refugee Day in Kenya visiting with adolescent refugee girls in Nairobi who reside in a shelter run by RefuSHE, an NGO filling a crucial gap in care for girls and young women.

The girls fled extreme violence or persecution in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Somalia, and South Sudan. Almost all of them had suffered sexual and gender-based violence. With the option of resettlement scarce, RefuSHE focuses on helping refugees fully integrate within the Kenyan community. It was the Special Envoy's third visit to Kenya, home to hundreds of thousands of refugees from neighbouring countries.

"Over half of all refugees and displaced people worldwide are women and children. How we treat them is a measure of our humanity as nations."

—Angelina Jolie, UNHCR Special Envoy

GLOBAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2016-2017

UNHCR's Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs) for the 2016-2017 biennium set out important areas in which UNHCR made targeted efforts at improving the protection and the well-being of people of concern, and in seeking solutions. The GSPs are divided into two categories: a set of operational priorities for field operations and a set of support and management priorities for core corporate functions.

The operational GSPs guided the development and implementation of UNHCR's overall strategy and annual operational plans and informed strategic discussions at field level with partners and national authorities for prioritization. Throughout the year, progress against the GSPs were closely monitored and corrective actions were undertaken when required. Improvements have been made to better

align a number of the GSPs with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) covered by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, such as in the areas of gender equality, peace and justice, food security, health, education, livelihoods, and WASH. At the field level, UNHCR continued to take an active role in national SDG discussions to advocate the inclusion of people of concern in national plans.

Support and management GSPs provided direction to the work at UNHCR's Headquarters and regional offices engaged in providing oversight, policy development and operational support to field operations. In 2017, the support and management priorities included strengthening financial and programme management; providing support and policy guidance on protection matters; enhancing

UNHCR's emergency response; reinforcing UNHCR's capacity to ensure effective leadership and coordination of complex operation; and expanding staff development opportunities.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Focused efforts on core GSP areas yielded positive results in 2017, with many operations reporting improvements in the situation of people of concern. Sustained advocacy efforts and technical support led to positive changes in legislation and policies which directly impact the life of refugees, IDPs and stateless persons. To support these changes UNHCR built the capacity of key stakeholders, including governmental authorities and civil society organizations, and supported national authorities with law or policy development through provision of legal advice.

UNHCR continued to strengthen registration processes and quality data collection, including biometrics. The Office rolled out its biometric identity management system (BIMS) in an additional 17 operations, and a total of 4.4 million people of concern have now been biometrically enrolled in

48 operations. UNHCR and partners also continued to raise awareness of the importance of birth registration as critical to securing the rights of children.

Together with partners, UNHCR worked to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and used mass sensitization and awareness campaigns, alongside targeted trainings of community leaders and influential groups, including youth and men. The Office continued advocating for the inclusion of refugee children in national education systems and national child protection services.

UNHCR focused on reducing the cost and environmental footprint of water supply systems by installing solar powered water pumping systems. The expanded use of solar energy for water pumping in 19 operations reduced the associated cost of water supply by up to 80 per cent, mainly through fuel cost savings.

Progress was also achieved in improving relations between displaced populations and host communities. Working jointly with the peaceful coexistence committees, community support projects were implemented to enhance social cohesion

2017 PROGRESS AT A GLANCE | OPERATIONAL GSPs

FAVOURABLE PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT

- Legislative changes enhancing the protection of asylum-seekers and refugees were reported in 27 countries.
- Improvements in the national laws and policies on IDPs were reported in 10 countries.
- 12 countries amended their nationality laws to more effectively prevent statelessness or to protect the rights of stateless persons.
- A number of States took important steps to grant nationality to stateless persons, resulting in some 56,500 stateless persons who acquired or had their nationality confirmed.

FAIR PROTECTION PROCESSES AND DOCUMENTATION

- 64% of 53 situations maintained or increased the systematic issuance of birth certificates for newborn children.
- 81% of 96 situations maintained or increased the levels of individual registration.

SECURITY FROM VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION

- 85% of 104 situations maintained or improved the provision of support to known SGBV survivors.
- 79% of 70 situations reported increased community involvement in prevention and protection of SGBV survivors.
- 65% of 74 situations maintained or increased the number of unaccompanied or separated refugee children for whom a best interests procedure has been initiated or completed.
- 71% of 44 situations increased non-discriminatory access to national child protection and social services.

BASIC NEEDS AND SERVICES

- 62% of 98 surveyed camps or settlements met UNHCR's standard for global acute malnutrition ($\leq 10\%$).
- All of 135 monitored sites met UNHCR's standard for mortality among children under five years old ($< 1.5/1,000/\text{month}$).
- 61% of 70 situations maintained or increased the percentage of households living in adequate dwellings.
- 85% of 46 situations maintained or increased levels of water supply at sites.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF-RELIANCE

- 53% of 58 situations maintained or increased the participation of women in leadership structures.
- 48% of 65 situations reported improvements in the relations between people of concern and local communities.
- 84% of 38 operations reported an increase in the number of people of concern between the age of 18 to 59 who were self-employed or with their own business.
- 63% of 96 situations maintained or increased the enrolment rate of primary school-aged children.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- 55% of 42 situations reported some improvement in the local integration of refugees.
- 79% of 42 situations reported supporting refugees to repatriate voluntarily, in safety and dignity, where conditions permit.

and addressed the shared needs of local host communities and displaced people. Through these projects UNHCR used social, recreational, cultural, and livelihoods activities to bolster relationships between displaced and host community members, to enhance integration, and to increase self-reliance.

CHALLENGES

Difficulty in achieving progress in some priority areas was most often linked to the challenge of accommodating a comprehensive response with finite budgetary resources, and the need to prioritize certain interventions over others. The overall increasing needs in most countries where UNHCR was present largely exceeded the availability of resources. Limited resources resulted in cuts to food and

nutritional assistance, and a rise in food insecurity. Approximately 3.3 million refugees received less than acceptable standards of food assistance (based on 2,100 kcal/person/day).

Despite important progress made in 2017, UNHCR continued to face challenges in promoting equality and achieving meaningful participation of women and girls in decision-making processes and leadership structures. In a number of UNHCR's operations, societal attitudes hampering women's and girls' participation in leadership structures were common. Progress towards overcoming this challenge is slow, as beliefs and engrained societal expectations often require incremental change. Ensuring access to assistance and basic services was also challenging because of the increasing number of people of concern on the move, or living in urban areas.

In that regard, operations faced challenges in the implementation of effective best interests procedures due to limited specialized services and lack of quality community-based alternative care options for unaccompanied or separated refugee children, in particular for adolescent boys.

While UNHCR made important progress in expanding refugees' financial inclusion and promoting refugees' right to work, existing legal frameworks or practical obstacles, such as high unemployment and poverty rates in many host countries, continued to impede access to safe and sustainable employment for people of concern. UNHCR continued to advocate with States for legal work rights for refugees, and strengthened partnerships including with development actors and the private sector to increase access to work opportunities for people of concern.

MORE INFORMATION

A summary of progress made against UNHCR's GSPs in 2017 is presented below. Additional examples are highlighted throughout this publication. Detailed reporting on UNHCR's achievements and challenges across all GSP areas in 2017 can be found in the progress report, which is available on the Global Focus website (see QR Code below). The report outlines the progress achieved against each of the GSPs, includes additional highlights from field operations, and information on global and regional initiatives that further reinforced and complemented the actions taken.



2017 PROGRESS AT A GLANCE | SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT GSPs

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- UNHCR upgraded its enterprise resource planning system that adopts industry best practice and standards and will lead to improving overall effectiveness.
- The Office further strengthened its financial management capacity by issuing new guidance, tools and advanced learning opportunities.
- The financial statement for 2017 was prepared in compliance with IPSAS accounting standards.

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

- Legal advice, guidance and operational support on a range of protection issues was provided to field operations and States, including on legal obligations and individual rights of people of concern.
- In support of the #IBelong Campaign to end statelessness by 2024, UNHCR produced a number of new guidance materials, including a guide on programming for statelessness, a paper on good practices on birth registration for the prevention of statelessness, and a paper on the Sustainable Development Goals and addressing statelessness.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES

- UNHCR enhanced security governance, implemented an information security programme, and strengthened cybersecurity, data protection and privacy controls, ensuring protection of data of people of concern.
- For the first time, UNHCR mobilized the Refugee Emergency Telecommunications Sector mechanism that, within the framework of the Refugee Coordination Model, coordinates the provision of internet connectivity and security communications services to the wider humanitarian community in refugee emergencies.

COORDINATION

- The three Global Clusters for Protection, Camp Coordination and Camp Management, and Shelter provided guidance and field support to cluster members and field coordinators in over 20 operations, including through the deployment of surge capacity staff and technical experts.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

- UNHCR's Needs Assessment Handbook was issued, accompanied by a variety of actions to improve joint assessment analysis in the inter-agency context, as well as within UNHCR operations.
- Some 8 million people were assisted with cash in 94 countries. The Office provided technical support to 57 country operations and 5 regional offices in implementing cash-based intervention programmes.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

- Lifesaving assistance through core relief items was provided to 1.2 million displaced people in 2017.
- UNHCR trained 1,350 staff and partners on emergency preparedness and response, including through workshops on emergency management, senior emergency leadership programme, and situational emergency trainings, among others.
- A revised Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response was issued. The policy improves and simplifies access to human, financial and material resources, and has an enhanced focus on partnerships and inclusivity.
- Over 62 security support missions were conducted including to emergency operations in Angola, Bangladesh, Iraq and Uganda.

MOBILIZATION OF SUPPORT

- The level of donor support received by UNHCR reached over \$3.9 billion, with income from private sector fundraising of \$400 million.
- UNHCR's #WithRefugees campaign, which aims to showcase global public solidarity with refugees, measured more than 15 million solidarity actions in favour of refugees. This included 1.8 million signatures on the campaign petition.
- The Executive Committee grew from 98 to 101 Members, reflecting the increasing global interest and support of the work of UNHCR.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- UNHCR continued the work on ensuring that the Office is benefiting from a diverse workforce and achieving gender parity.
- Launched several new certification programmes, including on programme management, human resources and supply chain management and offered 30 key learning programmes to over 4,000 UNHCR staff.