Gladys Acacio, 25, a South Sudanese refugee, living in Pagirinya settlement in Adjumani, came to Uganda in June 2017 with her mother and four siblings. Gladys has recently graduated in motorcycle repair training.

It can take years before it is safe for forcibly displaced people to return, or to find a new place they can call home. For UNHCR, it is thus crucial to work with people of concern—and the communities which host them—to help them retain a sense of security, belonging and hope for the future; to enjoy basic services alongside nationals; to channel their resilience; and to help displaced people actively contribute to the countries and communities hosting them.

Building on recent policy shifts in the international community—the Global Compact on Refugees and the SDGs to name two—UNHCR strengthened its work on resilience and solutions for its people of concern, striving for more coherence in its approach throughout 2018.
This chapter outlines the initiatives taken by UNHCR in 2018 to secure comprehensive and durable solutions for those falling under its mandate. Throughout the year, the Office promoted comprehensive approaches to protection and solutions programming from the very onset of an emergency. This included advocating and supporting one of the three durable solutions: return or voluntary repatriation, local integration, or resettlement. It also included expanding the availability and impact of educational opportunities for people of concern; facilitating access to, inclusion in, and contribution to, formal economies; developing holistic settlements; and providing sustainable energy solutions for people in need.

“No country should be left alone to respond to a huge influx of refugees”
—Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Voluntary repatriation

As the preferred solution of many refugees, the Office facilitated voluntary repatriation to multiple countries, including Afghanistan, Burundi, Chad, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan. The number of refugees who returned decreased from 667,400 in 2017 to 593,814 in 2018. However, ensuring that conditions were ripe for return was especially challenging in 2018, and the number of those who opted to repatriate was far outnumbered by those forced into exile (or who had been in exile for years).

For refugees expressing an interest to return, UNHCR engaged with them on their intentions for the future, and provided them with accurate and objective information on the conditions in their location of origin for them to make an informed decision. For instance, UNHCR and the World Bank conducted research on the living conditions and settlement decisions of recent returnees to Afghanistan (some 16,220 in 2018), to better understand the factors that influenced return and to enhance the development of reintegration and livelihood projects.

In Burundi, a joint multi-year programme with FAO, UNDP and UNFPA supported local capacities for cross-border monitoring and access to justice, security and social services for returnees and local communities along with livelihoods opportunities. These efforts aimed to address issues of insecurity, governance and rule of law and, crucially, the inability of returnees to reclaim housing, land and property in alignment with SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

In other places, such as South Sudan, UNHCR observed self-organized returns and monitored their progress where possible. Such monitoring confirmed a number of common challenges in returning to unstable areas of origin, including: ongoing insecurity, persistent human rights concerns; unresolved political tensions; limited or damaged critical infrastructure; destroyed or occupied housing, land and property; limited absorption capacity; and a lack of livelihood opportunities.

UNHCR engaged with other key stakeholders to address the obstacles to potential future returns and establishing the legal frameworks necessary to underpin voluntary repatriation. Key examples of this approach were undertaken in the Myanmar and Syria situations (see the regional summaries for Asia and the Pacific, and the Middle East and North Africa).

Cash assistance is a crucial part of ensuring the sustainability of UNHCR’s voluntary repatriation programming, providing a safety net for families until they are able to secure access to national welfare systems or other forms of national support. Somali returnees, for example, were provided with cash assistance to facilitate their reintegration. With the assistance being spent in the local economy, this helped boost markets and contribute towards peaceful co-existence between returnees and their communities.

Real-time data from Afghan returnees provides key information on assistance needs

With returnees and IDPs facing challenges in Afghanistan, UNHCR partnered with Orange Door Research and Viamo to collect real-time data through mobile phone surveys, supplemented by surveys with the general population. In addition to UNHCR’s protection monitoring activities, these 14,000 surveys (conducted between August 2017 and January 2018) provided a unique perspective on population mobility trends and important data regarding assistance needs, protection risks and vulnerability, allowing for a more reliable response.
Local integration

Local integration for refugees is a complex and gradual process with inter-related legal, economic, sociocultural and civil-political dimensions, requiring adaptability by refugees and host communities alike. To support countries in providing options for local integration, UNHCR and partners contributed with financial and technical support to ensure that integration programming took into account the needs of both refugees and host communities. The ultimate objective of local integration is that refugees have a long-term legal basis to stay in a country, accompanied by equivalent cultural, social, civil-political and economic opportunities and enjoy their rights on a similar basis as that country’s nationals—enabling them to contribute actively to their country of residence.

Around the world, there were positive examples of local integration. In Europe, for instance, UNHCR nurtured innovative partnerships to promote access to labour markets and explore the role of youth and sport in integration. UNHCR worked closely with the OECD on a joint action plan to expand employment opportunities for refugees, resulting in a series of workshops that brought together potential employers, local authorities and people of concern in Bulgaria, Hungary and Malta.

In Turkey, refugees were provided with access to health, education and legal assistance. However, sustained support from the international community remained essential in maintaining the level of service. In Ukraine, following the adoption of a strategy on durable solution and integration for internally displaced people, the Government finalized an action plan for the elaboration of local integration plans and mechanisms to access temporary and affordable housing for IDPs.

In Africa, local integration was pursued for Ivorian refugees who chose to remain in Liberia. Programmes focusing on naturalization procedures, land acquisition, social cohesion, employment opportunities and the provision of basic social services in communities are already underway to prepare for the integration of some 8,000 refugees. In Ethiopia, legislative reform is expected to help facilitate the possibility of local integration and a more secure status, as well as allowing refugees greater freedom of movement and access to employment. Guinea-Bissau approved the eligibility for citizenship for Senegalese refugees who have lived in a state of limbo as a result of four decades of conflict.

While UNHCR supported the process of securing identification cards for some 7,000 Senegalese refugees, the Government reduced the administrative fees by 80%, thus facilitating greater access to the naturalization process.

In Asia and the Pacific, UNHCR collaborated with UNDP’s rule of law programme in Pakistan to enhance legal aid capacities to strengthen the national justice and security sectors. UNHCR directly operated nine Advice and Legal Aid Centres in Pakistan providing refugees with legal support, while engaging with UNDP’s support to the Pakistan Bar Council, law schools, community paralegals and community-oriented policing.

In the Southern Cone of South America a number of good practices fostered the local integration of refugees. UNHCR worked with States and civil society partners to extend the rights of refugees, including the right to work, access to health care and free education—despite an increasing number of arrivals. In the same region the Cities of Solidarity concept has, over the past 14 years, gained recognition for the important role of cities in facilitating refugees’ inclusion and integration in national systems.
Resettlement is a tangible, lifesaving mechanism for governments and communities across the world to share responsibility for the increasing number of refugees worldwide. Expanding third country solutions for refugees is a key objective of the Global Compact, however, these solutions are available to only a fraction of the world’s refugees.

According to data on UNHCR-facilitated resettlement, about 55,680 of the 1.2 million refugees in need of resettlement in 2018 were actually resettled—a 14% decrease compared to equivalent 2017 figures. The largest number of UNHCR-facilitated resettlement departures in 2018 were from major refugee-hosting countries, including Turkey (16,000) followed by Lebanon (8,390), the United Republic of Tanzania (6,490), Jordan (6,390) and Uganda (5,480). The top five resettlement countries accepting UNHCR’s submissions in 2018 were the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom, France and Sweden.

Out of more than 81,337 resettlement submissions to 29 resettlement States, the majority of referred refugees were from Syria (28,189), the Democratic of the Congo (21,807), Somalia (4,926) Eritrea (4,288) and Afghanistan (3,995). Although this represented an 8% increase in submissions compared to 2017 (75,188), the total number of places only covered 4.7% of global refugee resettlement needs in 2018. Of 2018 submissions, 68% were for survivors of violence and torture, those with legal and physical protection needs, and particularly vulnerable women and girls. Just over half of all resettlement submissions were children.

UNHCR helped States to implement protection-centred resettlement programmes, informing the priorities and composition of States’ resettlement programmes and advocated legal and policy reform related to resettlement, particularly within the European Union. The Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement focused on ways of expanding resettlement programmes and enhancing their effectiveness. Innovative approaches and partnerships, evidence-based communications and successful integration strategies were identified as key areas to expanding resettlement in line with the New York Declaration and the Global Compact.

These areas will be relevant to the development of UNHCR’s 2019-2021 strategy on resettlement and complementary pathways to help increase the pool of resettlement places, encourage more countries to participate in global resettlement efforts, and increase access to complementary pathways for refugees. The development of this consultative strategy, which started toward the end of 2018, should be completed by mid-2019.

UNHCR strengthened partnerships with non-traditional actors to expand resettlement, engaging, for example, with academia and the private sector. An example of this was the establishment in February 2018 of a new working group on innovative partnerships in resettlement, which consider the engagement of communities and citizens in community-based sponsorship programmes. UNHCR maintained its involvement in the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative, supporting community-based sponsorship programmes, including in Germany, Ireland and Spain. The Syria Core Group on Resettlement supported and advocated the resettlement of Syrians, including through complementary pathways (see overleaf), and the Central Mediterranean Core Group made significant efforts to advocate increasing resettlement capacity in countries along the Central Mediterranean route, as well as serving as a community of best practices for innovative processing modalities.

UNHCR and IOM’s work on the Emerging Resettlement Countries Joint Support Mechanism (ERCJM) supported countries such as Argentina, Brazil and Chile to realize their commitments to build resettlement and community sponsorship programmes. As a result of an evaluation of the programme in 2018, focus shifted towards capacity-building based on a better understanding of State processes and timeframes.

The Protection Transfer Arrangement (PTA), providing people at serious risk of harm or death in countries from the North of Central America with safe and legal access to a resettlement country, is another good example of a lifesaving mechanism.

From child refugee in Mozambique to school principal in the United States

Resettlement gave Bertine Bahige a new chance in life. The former Congolese refugee, resettled in the United States of America, would have never imagined he would one day call Wyoming home.

“Are refugees asking for an opportunity? Or are we all saying ‘How much is this going to cost me?’ And then you have to look at it from the other side — ‘What can refugees bring? How can they enrich our community?’”

—Bertine Bahige, Congolese refugee at his school in Wyoming.

An innovative lifesaving mechanism for people at heightened risk

The Protection Transfer Arrangement (PTA) is a unique example of a sub-regional burden- and responsibility-sharing mechanism providing people with safe and legal access to a resettlement country. Originally consolidated in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, it was successfully expanded in 2018 to new resettlement countries, including Australia, Brazil and Uruguay.

In 2018, 515 cases (1,456 people) were submitted to the United States of America, 36 to Australia, 18 to Uruguay, and six to Brazil. During the year, 150 people were resettled—142 to the United States and eight to Uruguay.

Since its inception, UNHCR and partners have identified almost 2,500 people at heightened risk and in need of international protection to be considered by the PTA. More than 1,000 cases were submitted to a resettlement country—one third of whom departed.

UNHCR hopes that submission capacity will ensure at least 1,000 people per year depart from the three countries. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the PTA was completed and the resulting recommendations will guide the PTA action plan in 2019.
Complementary pathways for admission to third countries

Complementary pathways for refugees can include family reunification, scholarships and education programmes, opportunities for labour mobility (including through the identification of refugees with skills needed in third countries), community sponsorship schemes, and special visa and humanitarian admission programmes.

With the objective of expanding such pathways, UNHCR provided guidance to the Irish Government on its Humanitarian Admission Programme 2 (IHAP) and to Sweden on family reunification. The Office also supported the Government of Japan’s initiative for the future of Syrian refugees to allow 30 refugees to complete masters’ degrees. Partnership with the NGO Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) helped to open up employment opportunities for refugees in third countries, and United World Colleges helped to expand secondary education for refugee students in third countries. By the end of 2018, some 12,000 people and over 200 professions were registered in the TBB refugee talent database in the Middle East and North Africa region.

There are challenges to achieving complementary pathways, with refugees frequently unable to obtain exit permits, visa or travel documents, for example. Some programmes lacked adequate protection safeguards in hosting countries, had limited resources to cover refugees’ needs, and others had strict eligibility criteria that did not take into account refugees’ specific situations. One of the most significant concerns is refugees’ inability to remain in the country of the complementary pathways programme in the event they are unable to return to the first country of asylum or their country of origin after the programme’s completion.

With data crucial to expanding complementary pathways, UNHCR and OECD released a joint report on the use of complementary pathways, focusing on first entry permits granted to nationals from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iraq, Somalia and Syria from 2010 to 2017. During this period, more than 1.5 million were granted either refugee status (890,000 people) or complementary forms of protection (633,000). This compares to a total of 566,800 first residence permits granted for family (487,300 permits), work (25,400 permits), or education-related reasons (54,200 permits). During the same period, some 350,400 people from the five populations arrived in OECD countries through resettlement processes. This report concluded that despite significant recourse to complementary pathways by the five nationalities in question, substantial potential exists for expanding the programme.

With regular updates, the report will be issued every two years, with the first one to be completed in 2020, covering 2018-2019 data. The findings from this report will contribute to the development of the 2019-2021 strategy to expand resettlement and complementary pathways as envisaged by the Global Compact on Refugees.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

POTENTIAL FOR VOLUNTARY RETURN REALIZED. IN 2018, UNHCR:

Support voluntary repatriation

Supported returns to countries including Afghanistan, Burundi, Chad, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan.

REINTEGRATION MADE MORE SUSTAINABLE. IN 2018, UNHCR:

Make reintegration more sustainable

Contributed to multi-partner durable solutions strategies in situations involving reintegration of refugees and IDPs, including through analysing and addressing housing, land and property issues. Maintained analysis and dialogue with refugees and returnees in countries where there was potential for return through focus groups, intention/perception surveys and return monitoring.

COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTIONS STRATEGY DEVELOPED, STRENGTHENED OR UPDATED. IN 2018, UNHCR:

Develop and implement strategy

Developed 16 and revised 6 strategies with partners implemented in 22 country operations. Finalized development of a rights-mapping tool, to be rolled out in 5-8 operations in 2019.

POTENTIAL FOR INTEGRATION REALIZED. IN 2018, UNHCR:

Make integration more sustainable

Worked with countries of asylum including Ethiopia and Liberia to identify legal and administrative barriers to local integration and provided support in addressing them.

POTENTIAL FOR RESETTLEMENT REALIZED. IN 2018, UNHCR:

Identify and submit resettlement cases

Submitted 81,337 resettlement dossiers globally to 29 States (target was for 100,000 people).

Submitted 11 resettlement proposals advocating key priority situations to resettlement States, which led to an 8% increase of resettlement places.

Arrange resettlement departures

Supported the departure of nearly 55,680 refugees to 27 resettlement countries.

Optimize the resettlement process

Rolled out a resettlement performance indicator dashboard to monitor monthly performance of UNHCR resettlement operations and States’ programmes.

Training and capacity building

Organized 2 resettlement learning programmes in Nairobi, training some 52 resettlement staff to strengthen the quality of resettlement processing in countries along the central Mediterranean route.

Supported Brazil with the reform of its legal framework to receive refugees as part of its humanitarian visa program, through the ERCM. The first arrivals are expected in early 2019 from the North of Central America.

Supported Argentina, through the ERCM, to grant residence permits to over 140 Syrian refugees, who now have access to work and education, and can apply for asylum and for citizenship after two-years of residence in the country.

Complementary Pathways

Implemented family reunification project facilitating 30 cases of resettlement to Sweden through the identification, counselling, processing and referral of eligible cases. Provided guidance to IHAP to allow humanitarian admission for S30 eligible family members of S30 claimants. Supported the implementation of a pilot project in Kenya and Lebanon to provide and improve access to labour mobility opportunities in Canada under the “Economic mobility pilot project” (the Government of Canada in partnership with RefugeePoint and TBB) which grants refugees permanent residency status.

Supported the Government of Japan’s initiative for the future of Syrian refugees creating opportunities for Syrian students and their families (30 people in total) from Lebanon and Jordan to complete masters’ degrees in Japan for the 2018-2019 academic year.

Supported the establishment of the “African Union Protocol on free movement of persons, right of residence and right of establishment”.

The joint UNHCR-OECD report “Safe pathways for refugees”
The Global Compact on Refugees and its integrated global programme of action provides an opportunity to enhance the quality and inclusiveness of national education systems, facilitating access to education for children and youth from refugees and host community alike. In line with SDG 4 (Inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all), and as a member of the SDG Education 2030 steering committee, UNHCR advocated inclusion of forcibly displaced people into the agenda of all regional SDG 4 meetings in 2018. This resulted in regional and global commitments for the inclusion of refugees, IDPs, asylum-seekers and stateless children and youth in education systems. UNHCR leveraged a variety of partnerships to advocate and support refugee-inclusive multi-year national education planning processes. For example, national action plans were developed in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda and Zambia together with experts from ministries of education and civil society partners to improve collaboration across humanitarian and development planning processes for improved quality and access to education for refugee and host community children and youth. In East Africa, a second meeting of IGAD Ministries of Education worked with UNHCR, the European Union and other partners to develop plans to support the systematic inclusion of refugees into national services across the region by 2020, guided by the goals of the Global Compact and the Djibouti Declaration. This includes developing costed plans in line with the September 2018 education response plan for refugees and host communities in Uganda. Between 2017 and 2018, the number of school-age refugee children increased by 1 million worldwide. With the combined efforts of governments, UNHCR and partners succeeded in enrolling over 500,000 children in school in 2018, but some 4 million refugee children still remained out of school. By the end of 2018, targeted programmes resulted in the enrolment of an additional 200,000 children (almost 50% of whom were girls) into primary education across twelve countries.

Strengthened collaboration and partnerships with ministries of education has been central to this endeavour. In Kenya, for example, all refugee camp schools have been registered as public entities and enrolment of host community children has been fostered. In Ethiopia, the Government committed to increasing refugee enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education as part of efforts to positively address refugee education within the national system. In Yemen, the Ministry of Education became an official UNHCR education partner in implementing the refugee education programme, an important step towards national system inclusion.

UNHCR’s youth education programme in Kenya, Pakistan, Rwanda and Uganda set a new benchmark for initiatives by seeking to ensure that more refugee youth have access to quality post-primary education. The four-year programme targets 232,000 youth in all four countries. Cash-based initiatives have been expanded due to the costs associated with the specialized teaching that secondary education requires, which are a central barrier to accessing education.
Empowering refugees through cash for education

The ultimate goal of cash for education is to increase access and retention in national education systems. A UNHCR report, “Cash for Education: A global review of UNHCR programmes in refugee settings”, concluded that cash assistance has a positive impact on school enrolment, attendance and educational outcomes of girls and boys. The size and duration of the transfer greatly influences its long-term impact.

In the DRC, this approach has proven very useful. Refugees highlighted that being able to pay for school and teachers themselves significantly improved their status in the community, and their influence on their children’s education.

“Cash for Education: direction and key considerations” includes guidance on a range of strategies, such as use of cash for education as part of cash for basic needs; the monetization of school material and a move from indirect to direct implementation, using UNHCR’s existing conditional to unconditional cash for education, where appropriate;

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For millions of women and girls among the world’s growing refugee population, education remains an aspiration, not a reality. “Her turn”, a UNHCR report launched in 2018, 14 DAFI refugee volunteers were deployed in Ghana and Senegal with various UN Agencies (IOM, UNCDF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, UN Women, and the UN University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa).

Close to 6,600 students received university scholarships through the DAFI scholarship programme for tertiary education in 2018. With the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), UNHCR launched a pilot project promoting refugee engagement and empowerment through volunteerism. Complementing the DAFI tertiary scholarship programme, this joint initiative offers newly graduated refugees a volunteer assignment with development organizations in their country of asylum. In 2018, 14 DAFI refugee volunteers were deployed in Ghana and Senegal with various UN Agencies (IOM, UNCDF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, UN Women, and the UN University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa).

Working in partnership to support innovative education programmes

UNHCR partnered with the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) and UNICEF to establish the first Humanitarian Education Accelerator (HEA). The programme builds on UNICEF and UNHCR’s earlier collaboration with DFID’s Amplify programme, which sought to nurture and test innovative ideas in the earliest stages of development, helping understand how to transform good pilot projects into scalable educational initiatives for refugees and displaced communities worldwide. By developing a cohort of successful humanitarian innovators, the goal is to build a strong evidence-base of effective methods to scale and evaluate programs for refugee education.

The HEA supported innovative education programmes through education partners—including Caritas Switzerland, Kepler, Libraries Without Borders, War Child Holland and World University Service Canada—across Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. As a result of HEA-facilitated work, education partners developed solid business models for scaling and rigorous monitoring and evaluation plans, to build on evidence on what does or does not work in their education programming.

By extension, these new skills and processes are allowing partners to reach more refugee children and improve overall learning outcomes. Data analysis and validation of findings for these evaluations and the larger HEA meta-evaluation began in the last quarter of 2018, with key learnings and recommendations to be developed for 2019.
Connected learning

Somali refugees pursuing a Bachelors in Education at York University (Canada) with UNHCR’s education partner, Windle International Kenya - Borderless Higher Education, at work in a computer lab in Dadaab refugee camp.

In partnership with the Vodafone Foundation, 35 instant network schools were established in the DRC, Kenya, South Sudan and Tanzania—transforming traditional classrooms into vibrant multimedia learning hubs. This expanding partnership has now benefited over 86,000 students and 1,000 teachers.

Another example of innovative programming is the partnership between UNHCR, Google and Learning Equality aimed at enabling refugee and host communities around the globe to actively participate in the digital education movement. Through this three-year collaboration that commenced in 2018, refugee communities in Jordan, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, for example, are helping to adapt an open source, offline platform (Kolibri) for more effective use in refugee contexts, and enabling secondary students to leverage cutting-edge digital resources focused on science, technology, engineering and maths, and life skills.

UNHCR worked with ministries and universities to host two roundtables in Jordan and Lebanon on the opportunities and constraints of connected tertiary education. These meetings fostered partnerships between local and international universities, building on the growth of the Connected Learning in Crises Consortium, which doubled its membership in 2018. Co-led by UNHCR and the University of Geneva, the Consortium includes 23 university and higher education partners dedicated to increasing access to blended higher education opportunities throughout the world, and specifically within the Middle East and North Africa region.

Key achievements

**Improve access to quality education. In 2018, UNHCR:**

- Leveraged partnerships and strengthened capacity for refugee inclusion in national education systems
- Supported sector planning in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, the Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Zambia.
- Worked with the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies and the Global Education Cluster to strengthen education coordination and response including in Ethiopia, the DRC and Syria to inform joint responses for education in emergencies and in supporting the inclusion of refugees in national education systems.
- Supported the enrolment of over 200,000 children (94,000 girls) in primary education by the end of 2018.
- Supported over 6,500 refugees at the tertiary level through the DAFI scholarship programme in 51 countries of asylum, with a new programme opening in Malawi in 2018.
- Supported the enrolment of 94,000 girls in primary education, with 2,600 female students awarded a DAFI scholarship.
- Developed country-based action plans in 12 countries to improve the availability of education refugee data through the new Refugee Education Management Information System, together with ministries of education, UNICEF and partners.
- Supported (through the Connected Learning Consortium in Crisis) over 7,500 participants to study through accredited connected learning programmes in over 12 countries.
- Guided Jigsaw Consult on impact evaluation of the instant network schools, a partnership between UNHCR and Vodafone Foundation.

**Population has optimal access to education**

- Advocate increased admissions in national education systems at all levels
- Provided country teams with capacity training to develop action plans to improve refugee access to quality education by including them in national systems across several countries.
LIVELIHOODS AND ECONOMIC INCLUSION

1.8M Benefitting
people of concern and host
community members

64 operations engaged with
development actors

57 operations engaged with private
sector

53 operations facilitated access to
financial inclusion

75 operations implemented livelihoods
and economic inclusion activities

In line with objective two of the Global
Compact on Refugees, in 2018 UNHCR
promoted the economic inclusion of those
who had been forced to flee their homes,
advocating their right to work and earn
a livelihood through market-oriented
programmes. The Office placed due
emphasis on refugees’ resilience,
knowledge and skills, recognizing the
contribution they can make to the
development of their host societies.

This work required strong collaboration
with development actors, the private sector,
government and civil society partners, and
mostly with refugees themselves. UNHCR
focused on ensuring the sustainability and
efficacy of its economic inclusion and
livelihoods initiatives across 75 countries,
which benefitted some 1.8 million people
of concern and host community members.

Working towards the financial
inclusion of refugees in host
countries

UNHCR and the Swedish International
Development Agency (Sida) made progress
in implementing the credit guarantee
facility in Jordan and Uganda through the
Grameen Credit Agricole Foundation. Local
microfinance institutions were selected,
and preparations made to initiate lending
operations to refugees. In addition, market
assessments were conducted through the
consulting firm Microfinanza to inform the
microfinance institutions on how to tailor
their services to the needs and challenges
of the refugees.

Access to affordable financial services is
a key component to ensuring the financial
inclusion of refugees. UNHCR and the
UNCDF launched a technical assistance
facility supporting financial service

providers operating in developing countries
in order to strengthen their capacity to
reach people of concern to UNHCR,
including host communities. The facility
extends grants, loans and technical
assistance including remittance services,
mobile money operators, mobile network
operators and aggregators, and initially
targeted eight countries—Cameroon, Chad,
the DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda
and Zambia.

UNHCR also increased the engagement of
local financial service providers resulting in
enhanced recognition of the refugee
population as a viable target segment for
financial services. It became clear that
service providers were unaware of the
potential of refugees and members of host
communities as likely clients, who are
reliable and trustworthy, as supported by
multiple studies. UNHCR’s engagement as
a convenor and facilitator resulted in greater
access to qualified providers.

Microfund for Women (in Jordan) and
Al Majmoua (in Lebanon) now serve more
than 12,000 refugee clients with individual
and group loans, while microfinance
institutions in Morocco (Imma and Attill) and
Tunisia (Enda Tamweel) are introducing pilot
lending schemes for refugee entrepreneurs.

The Office’s collaboration with ILO saw a
series of market systems and value chain
analyses of economic opportunities for
refugee communities in 15 countries
(Argentina, Brazil, Cameroon, Costa Rica,
Djibouti, the DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya,
Mexico, Niger, Pakistan, South Africa,
Tunisia and Zambia) over the last three
years. Assessments for three of them—
Ethiopia, Pakistan and Zambia—were
published in 2018 and the report of three
additional assessments in Brazil, Kenya
and Niger will be released in 2019.

Nearly 500 Congolese refugee
entrepreneurs were trained in business
skills and received strategic business
consulting services from INKOMOKO,
a business consulting firm that works with
micro, small and medium enterprises in
Rwanda. After conducting their due diligence,
INKOMOKO provided 5,400,000 KwF
($5.9 million) loans to 14 Congolese
refugee entrepreneurs to grow their businesses.

Previous loans provided to refugee
entrepreneurs had a 98% successful
repayment rate. Working to increase
refugee livelihood opportunities is a
priority of the comprehensive refugee
response in Rwanda. Strategic
partnerships with UNHCR and private
sector companies like INKOMOKO have
shown their worth. Refugees come
into the country with
knowledge, skills and a
different culture which
could be of added value.

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The assessments identified potential sectors or value chains for the inclusion of refugees and corresponding interventions were recommended to achieve this.

Building upon this work, ILO and UNHCR developed the “Systemic approach to inclusive markets for refugees and host communities”, an approach adjusted to local contexts, legal frameworks and market realities. It promotes target group-focused socioeconomic and market assessments to determine what is needed to tackle identified constraints and promote refugee livelihoods sustainably.

MADE51 – Linking refugees to global markets

Whenever refugees flee, they leave behind their livelihoods, their prospects and, critically, their capacity for self-reliance. But what many refugees do retain are their traditional skills and craftsmanship, from the leatherworking of the Tuareg in Burkina Faso to the fine embroidery of the Syrians in Jordan.

MADE51 helps refugees harness their skills for their own advancement, enabling them to participate in the growing global economy. By partnering with social enterprises, retail brands and buyers, UNHCR can connect refugee-made artisanal products with international markets where they are in demand. MADE51 products exude a real essence of humanity. They tell the timely and important story that refugees can be a vital contributing force within the world economy. The products of refugees engaged in the MADE51 project hit global markets in 2018 through the Ambiente Trade Show, in Frankfurt, which featured 12 export-ready product lines.

The level of buyer and visitor interest exceeded expectations, with follow-up on over 200 serious business contacts made as a result of the show and initial, trial orders placed at the event.

Goodwill Ambassadors emphasized UNHCR’s work around education and livelihoods with actress Gugu Mbatha-Raw meeting artisans in Rwanda working with the MADE51 project.

Building the economic self-reliance of the poorest refugees through the “graduation approach”

In 2018, Argentina, Ecuador, Malawi, Mozambique, Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe implemented the “graduation approach”, with Argentina as a new pilot and Ecuador progressing to its second cycle. Evaluations conducted in the four completed pilots—Burkin Faso, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Egypt—showed evidence of the effectiveness of this approach in facilitating the economic inclusion of refugees.

The graduation approach targets families in extreme poverty—those living on less than $1.25 a day—who are often marginalized within their communities, and lack access to much needed services and programmes.

Studying show cash assistance benefits refugees and generous host countries

Rwanda

Humanitarian assistance for refugees has a positive impact on the economies of surrounding host communities. Every dollar’s worth of food for refugees increased real income for the community around a camp by $1.20. In two other camps where refugees received monthly cash assistance instead of food, each dollar they received translated into $1.51 to $1.95 in the local economy.

Uganda

Cash assistance given to refugees produces an income multiplier for host communities. Each dollar increased real income in and around the settlements by an additional $1.10 to $1.50.

Lebanon

An evaluation of the winterization cash programme for Syrian refugees in Lebanon showed that cash assistance had a significant multiplier effect on the local economy. For each dollar spent, the programme generated about $2.13 in gross domestic product for the Lebanese economy and had no significant impact on inflation.

Promoting climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive agricultural programmes

The effects of climate change on agriculture and supporting resilience for livelihoods are an increasing challenge for refugees, and to UNHCR’s work with them. To increase the inclusion of refugees and host communities in agriculture-based activities, UNHCR strengthened its partnership with FAO, increasing food security and income opportunities for refugees in countries where both agencies are present. Through this collaboration, technical support was facilitated for the development of regional response plans in Ethiopia, Mozambique and Uganda.

UNHCR coordinated closely with WFP and relevant agencies to mitigate the impact of reduced food rations on the well-being of...
the refugees across many operations, most recently in Nigeria. Food assistance ration reductions of 18%-50% in WFP interventions nevertheless affected people of concern in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, the DRC, Ethiopia, Niger, Mauritania, Rwanda, South Sudan and Tanzania. The two agencies implemented their “Joint strategy on enhancing self-reliance in food security and nutrition in protracted refugee situations”, synchronizing the phase-out of food assistance with greater economic empowerment and inclusion. In this sense, UNHCR advocated that short-term humanitarian assistance be complemented by longer-term development interventions in order to build self-reliance and encourage economic inclusion. This also reduces the resource burden on host countries, allowing refugees to become productive contributors in their host communities.

Promoting the right to work

The right to work is essential to the economic inclusion of refugees. Despite the evidence of this, refugees are not allowed to work in approximately 50% of asylum countries. Even when the legal right to work is granted, other barriers hinder the de facto access to work. The absence of other close or related rights (such as freedom of movement, housing, land, education, access to justice and property rights) or the lack of access to relevant services (such as financial services, training, certification, social protection, or employment and business registration) effectively hinders refugees from fully enjoying the right to work.

Various studies have identified additional barriers to work, including limited resources or skills, exorbitant permit fees, and the physical location of refugees and refugee settlements. These barriers mean that many refugees end up working in the informal economy, at risk of exploitation, discrimination, arrest and other abuses. UNHCR and ILO promoted decent work opportunities for Syrian refugees and host communities in Jordan in line with efforts to advance SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth). The partnership aims to support both Syrian refugees and Jordanians in communities hosting the refugees.

In 2018, more than 150 employers engaged in consultations in Brussels, Copenhagen, Munich, and Toronto. The resulting 10-point multi-stakeholder action plan was published and a can of olive oil… I feel that this is a real achievement and a miracle.”

—Najwa, Syrian Refugee in Jordan.

Soap-making offers a fresh start to grieving Syrian refugee

Having fled to Jordan after losing her son and her home, a small act of kindness helped Najwa build a successful business and transform her life in exile.

“My story starts with 20 dinars ($28) and a can of olive oil... I feel that this is a real achievement and a miracle.”

—Najwa, Syrian Refugee in Jordan.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

LIVELIHOODS AND ECONOMIC INCLUSION IMPROVED. IN 2018, UNHCR:

- Build institutional capacity to develop market-oriented and results-driven livelihood programming.
  - Released a new Concept Note for the 2019-2023 “Global livelihoods and economic inclusion strategy” as updated guidance for field operations. 75 country operations participated in an annual data collection exercise, feeding into the evaluation of UNHCR’s 2014-2018 livelihoods strategies and approaches and development of the forthcoming strategy.
  - Completed, in partnership with ILO, market assessments and value chain analyses in Brazil, Kenya and Niger.
  - Rolled out revised livelihoods indicators in 28 country operations.
  - Carried out 44 missions in 36 countries to support different areas of livelihoods and economic inclusion programming. Expanded the roster of livelihoods experts with 28 new deployees.
  - Held trainings on livelihoods and economic inclusion in 16 countries, with participation of 500 UNHCR staff, government counterparts, development agencies, private sector and NGOs.
  - Conducted annual training with ILO on market-based livelihoods interventions with 40 global participants from various humanitarian development organizations.

- Promote the financial inclusion of refugees.
  - Identified microfinance institution partners in Jordan and Uganda to roll out the credit guarantee facility with the Grameen Credit Agricole Foundation.
  - Created technical assistance and financial incentives package with UNCDF to encourage providers to extend their services to refugees in 8 countries within 4 years.
  - Worked with Financial Sector Deepening Africa in Rwanda, to incentivize financial service providers to develop market-based financial solutions for refugees. Accelerator grants were awarded to 5 selected financial service providers.
  - Facilitated 4 workshops between financial service providers (FSP) and refugees resulting in increased access of refugees to financial services. 16 FSPs in 10 countries are currently offering financial services to refugees.
  - Provided technical assistance to over 1,000 refugee artisans in 11 countries in partnership with 12 local social enterprises. 3 global exhibitions were displayed to showcase the refugee-made product lines. 9 strategic partners were engaged to provide specific expertise in areas such as legal services, branding/marketing, ethical compliance and NGOs.
  - Engaged 150 employers in dialogues on employing refugees in Copenhagen, Brussels, Munich and Toronto. The resulting 10-point multi-stakeholder action plan was published in 2018.

- Increase access to livelihood for refugees, through the development of refugee-inclusive value chains.

- Promote an enabling environment to enhance economic participation and self-reliance of refugees.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Increased access of refugees to financial services. 16 FSPs in 10 countries are currently offering financial services to refugees.
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FINDING ALTERNATIVES TO CAMPS

61% of refugees reside outside of camps

39% of refugees reside in camps or camp-like settings

95% of refugees in urban locations were living in individual accommodation

79% of refugees in rural areas were living in some kind of camp location

The most recent figures show that 61% of refugees worldwide reside outside of camps while 39% reside in camps or camp-like settings. With more than half of the world’s refugees living in urban areas, city or municipal administrations are being recognized as some of the most important stakeholders in the delivery of protection and assistance to people of concern to UNHCR.

Recognizing the intrinsic link between urban and out of camp responses, and building upon existing infrastructure and ensuring strong links with host communities, UNHCR tackled challenges on the policy and operational fronts, looking to provide integrated support to national and local governments.

In contrast to trends from previous years, the proportion of refugees living in urban areas increased slightly from 58% in 2017 to 61% in 2018. Of those in urban areas, 95% were in individual accommodation of some kind. In rural areas, however, about 79% of refugees were living in some kind of camp.

The High Commissioner’s 2018 Dialogue focused on protection and solutions in urban settings with a particular focus on cities.

The Dialogue also provided an opportunity for different segments of society to showcase their unique contributions to comprehensive refugee responses in urban settings. The Dialogue was instrumental in renewing the Office’s commitment to working closely with organizations such as UN-Habitat on urban shelter and settlement guidance in 2019.

The operationalization of alternatives to camps is extremely contextualised, and differs worldwide. In order to provide practical guidance on how to achieve a more integrated settlements approach, UNHCR developed the “Master plan guiding principles” which supplements UNHCR’s Policy on Alternatives to Camps.

The master plan approach to settlement planning provides a framework for the spatial design of humanitarian settlements. It establishes a unique response vision aligned to national, sub-national and local development plans and recognizes that well-planned and designed cities and human settlements can optimize economies of agglomeration, protect the natural and built environment, as well as encourage social inclusion.

Concrete steps have been taken by a number of operations to implement the master plan’s guiding principles. In Kenya and Uganda, improved processes included strong engagement with local government and development partners. This resulted in multi-year funding and additional technical expertise helping to create longer-term approaches to land use and the planning of social and physical infrastructure interventions by governments and development partners. These approaches also benefited host communities and helped improve social cohesion with displaced populations. Through enhancing area-based approaches and utilizing the skills of multi-functional teams, comprehensive medium-term planning helped engage partners around economic, social and spatial/land use issues around a common understanding.

New clinic and schools save lives and build futures in Zambia

Refugees and their hosts are sharing services as part of a new approach in Zambia.

“It’s made a big difference because previously this local community were going 25-30 kilometres [for treatment]. We are saving lives with this institution.”

—Patricia Sampule, a Zambian nurse working at the temporary clinic in Mantapala Settlement.
Providing access to energy

Improving refugees’ access to sustainable sources of energy, in 2018 UNHCR collaborated with Engineers Without Borders USA to build two solar mini-grids in Mahama camp, Rwanda, which provided lighting for sports fields and electricity to other community facilities within the camp.

In Jordan, additions to the solar power plant now mean the Azraq refugee camp supplies 55% of electricity for shelter, and refugees now have 14 hours of power a day. The plant also benefits Jordan’s national objective of reaching 20% of renewable energy by 2025.

Partnerships were also strengthened with NORCAP (a standby roster operated by the Norwegian Refugee Council), and GIZ (Germany’s Agency for International Cooperation) to support country offices in programming and implementing energy related projects across the globe. These partnerships will improve delivery of energy programming in the field, benefiting both refugees and host communities, in line with the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

Environmental protection

The tragedy of forced displacement should not be exacerbated by damage to the local environment. A major focus of UNHCR’s work was addressing environmental hazards that threaten refugees and host communities, as well as mitigating environmental damage in refugees hosting areas. In Bangladesh, for example, the mapping of landslide hazard zones was completed in Kutupalong refugee camp, resulting in the subsequent relocation of 45,000 people out of very high-risk zones.

Forest preservation was a priority, with pressure on forests caused by the needs of both refugees and host communities for wood in many operations across the world. In Cameroon, the reforestation project with Land Life Company exceeded its forest restoration target by more than 100%, and in Uganda UNHCR and FAO collaborated on forest management plans which are now being used to inform the World Bank’s environmental investments under the International Development Association (IDA18) regional sub-window for refugees and host communities. Cooperation with FAO continued on valuation and management plans for non-timber forest products that will inform land management decisions in northern Uganda.

Some of the most successful projects, such as the reforestation programme in Cameroon with cocoon technology (see previous Global Reports for details) are now being replicated in places like Sudan, where UNHCR worked with UNEP, UNICEF and WFP in West Nile and Darfur states to address the pressure on the environment caused by the needs of refugees and host communities for wood.
AREAS OF INTERVENTION

BASIC NEEDS AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION HAS INCREASED ACCESS TO CLEAN ENERGY. IN 2018, UNHCR:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Create lighting solutions to improve safety</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provided 2,764,505 solar lamps to several operations. Supported the Rwanda operation with the construction of two off-grid solar systems in camps, as well as the provision of portable solar lanterns to more than 10,000 households.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Increase access to energy products and services</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Conducted consultations in Cameroon, Chad, the DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Niger, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan and Tanzania on using cash-based interventions for energy and provided necessary technical guidance.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reduce carbon emissions and lower operational costs</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Offset more than 7,800 tons of CO₂ from 10 operations including Algeria, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Geneva Headquarters, Hungary, Kenya, the Republic of the Congo, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, making those operations climate-neutral for 2018. Completed first phase of the 2 megawatt solar plant in the vicinity of the Azraq refugee camp.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Improve health and wellbeing of refugees</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Developed field guide for safe access to cooking fuel.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Build capacity and expertise and strengthen partnerships</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnered with International Renewable Energy Agency on technical expertise information on cleaner energy technologies, markets and financing mechanisms in Ethiopia and Iraq.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborated with Engineers Without Borders USA on technical support in the implementation of the 2 solar mini-grids project in Mahama camp, Rwanda, and quality control in the installations of solar street lights.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnered with NORCAP to strengthen technical expertise and capacity-building of UNHCR field operations in energy sector. 10 energy experts will be deployed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Refine and improve energy interventions through monitoring and evaluation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Developed new energy indicators in 10 operations, out of 2, that budgeted for energy programming in 2018 and launched the online platform of this monitoring tool, which provides real-time energy data (<a href="https://eis.unhcr.org/home">https://eis.unhcr.org/home</a>).</td>
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PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE PROMOTED

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<tr>
<th>SHARED ENVIRONMENT BETTER MANAGED</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prevent or remediate erosion in camp setting</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported environmental management plans in Tanzania and erosion control measures, including checked dams to slow water movement in all camps. Reduced landslide hazards in Kutupalong camp, Bangladesh, through soil stabilization. 1,155,880 seedlings and grass clumps planted and placed to stabilize ground at risk.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enhance community-based reforestation and forest management</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Achieved 100 hectares of land restored with economically and ecologically beneficial trees through the reforestation project with Land Life Company in Cameroon, exceeding the target of 40 hectares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed forest management plans in Uganda with FAO to inform World Bank environmental investments under IDA18.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prevent or remediate unsustainable use of surface water resources</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped protect waterways in Tanzania through reforestation around the edges of rivers. Developed environment section of the shelter section master planning guidelines and the master plan checklist to ensure inclusion of environmental considerations and redlines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Updated checklists for protection in emergencies to take account of environmental considerations, including ensuring surface water protection.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Support refugees and host communities to build resilience to climate change</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Awarded a grant to undertake a 2-year climate change adaption project in Burundi and Sudan. The grant value is for land and forest restoration and energy efficiency activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submitted a proposal with Land Life Company to support the restoration of 100 hectares of degraded land in the White Nile Region in Sudan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developed a proposal for submission to Green Climate Fund on climate change adaptation in the Tanzania, in partnership with UNEP.</td>
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