Safeguarding fundamental rights

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Supporting disembarked refugees in Libya.

Conflict, violence and persecution continued to drive unprecedented levels of forced displacement with some 74.8 million people of concern to UNHCR affected worldwide—in particular in the regions and countries that neighbour today's conflicts, where the majority of the world's refugees live.

The changing scale and scope of forced displacement generated a spike in global attention, characterized by fluctuating political and public support. There are persistent challenges in connection with complex, irregular movements of refugees and migrants, including proper identification of protection needs and addressing smuggling and trafficking. In recent years, a growing focus on border control and damaging narratives around people on the move have had a direct and negative impact on refugees. Many host countries have generally maintained access, showing remarkable commitment and generosity towards those in need of international protection. In some instances, however, protection space has shrunk, and serious gaps have emerged in asylum and reception systems.

The Global Compact on Refugees provides a framework for fair and predictable arrangements for burden- and responsibility-sharing. It also addresses the underlying root causes and drivers of displacement, as well as the need to advance as early as possible on solutions to avoid creating situations of protracted displacement. These needs include strengthening the rule of law, promoting good governance systems based on inclusivity, ensuring access to justice, supporting legislative frameworks that are applied fairly, building effective and accountable institutions, and undertaking reforms in the security sector.

None of this is easy. It requires far-sighted leadership, collaboration and comprehensive approaches, by all involved, to overcome the challenges and seize the opportunities associated with human mobility. This chapter outlines the challenges UNHCR faced, and the key achievements it made, in providing international protection for refugees and other people of concern.

ENSURING ACCESS TO PROTECTION

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UNHCR staff member Rocio Castaneda talks to Venezuelan refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants at the Divine Providence community kitchen in Cúcuta, Colombia.

Throughout 2018, UNHCR engaged with the United Nations human rights machinery to advocate greater respect for the rights of all people of concern, including through individual complaint procedures, treaty-monitoring bodies, Universal Periodic Review, and Special Rapporteurs.

Recommendations from these mechanisms affected a broad range of forced displacement and statelessness issues that touch the human rights framework, such as: reference to accession to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951 Convention), the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions, refugee status determination, sexual and gender-based violence, detention of asylum-seekers, respect for the principle of *non-refoulement*, and universal birth registration.

These achievements at the global level had a direct impact at the national level. Canada, for example, reconsidered its detention policy for children irregularly entering the territory; Chile acceded to the Statelessness Conventions; Cyprus amended its refugee legislation to extend disability assistance schemes to refugees; and Spain granted refugee status to victims of human trafficking in need of international protection.

With the support of UNHCR and partners, 2018 saw positive legislative developments in Afghanistan, which facilitated the sustainable reintegration of refugee returnees and IDPs; in France, where refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection were issued four-year residence permits; and in Ireland, where asylum-seekers can now access the labour market nine months after having submitted their claim for asylum.

UNHCR issued detailed comments on proposed revisions of several EU asylum instruments; published legal considerations on state responsibilities for people seeking international protection in transit areas or international zones at airports; and examined state practice on refugee law and cross-border movement in the context of conflict and/or situations of violence as well as the adverse effects of climate change. In addition to providing authoritative legal guidelines, UNHCR played an important role, engaging with the judiciary and legal community, and provided tailored advice and comments on legislation and policy where needed.

UNHCR's judicial interventions in 2018 touched upon a vast array of issues including: the detention and the reception of asylum-seekers; the effectiveness of asylum procedures; eligibility for international protection based on persecution related to membership in a particular social group; discretion or concealment of religious faith or gender identity in order to avoid persecution; statelessness; non-penalization of refugees for irregular entry or stay; as well as the cardinal international legal principle of *non-refoulement*.

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UN Member States have domestic laws or decrees pertaining to refugee protection.

Building and strengthening fair and efficient asylum procedures

During 2018, as asylum systems the world over were challenged by increasing numbers of arrivals, UNCHR supported States to implement or strengthen fair, efficient and adaptable national asylum processes. Particular assistance was provided to States interested in establishing national asylum systems through, for example, support in drafting legislation, advice on asylum system institution building, as well as assistance in developing the capacity of government staff, all while ensuring that such refugee status determination (RSD) transitions were undertaken in a sustainable manner.

For States with national asylum systems whose capacity needed strengthening, UNHCR supported them in assessing their capacity needs as well as effectively managing their case processing by providing advice and support on differentiated case processing methodologies (including simplified and/or accelerated RSD) and providing refugee law trainings.

UNHCR also supported national asylums systems in defining procedural safeguards, implementing quality assurance mechanisms and initiatives (particularly in Eastern Europe and Central and South America) as well as provided advice on staffing structures, file and data management, and case scheduling procedures.

In situations where a State was not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and/or did not have a fair and efficient national asylum procedure in place, UNHCR continued to conduct RSD under its mandate where there was an identified protection benefit in doing so, while seeking to enhance the quality of its procedures as it registered 250,216 applications in 2018.

To assist RSD decision-makers (including State officials and UNHCR staff) in assessing international protection needs, UNHCR issued several country-specific policy guidance documents and engaged with a variety of partners on their implementation.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

FAVOURABLE PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT

LAW AND POLICY DEVELOPED OR STRENGTHENED. IN 2018, UNHCR:

Advocate the adoption or revision of laws consistent with international standards	Provided technical advice to 53 States or regional legislative entities to enact new or revised legislation and policy guidance incorporating international protection standards.
	Intervened in 22 cases, across 12 jurisdictions, providing its interpretation of the relevant principles of international refugee and human rights law.
	Commented on:
	• 33 country reports to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and 117 reports to treaty-monitoring bodies.
	• 7 written reports to brief Special Rapporteurs in advance of their country visits.
	• Delivered 10 webinars to support UNHCR field operations' engagement with human rights mechanisms.
Develop, publish and disseminate guidance on international refugee protection	Issued legal guidance on State responsibilities for people seeking international protection in transit areas or international zones at airports.

FAIR PROTECTION PROCESS AND DOCUMENTATION

ACCESS TO, AND QUALITY OF, STATUS DETERMINATION PROCEDURES IMPROVED. IN 2018, UNHCR:

Further develop and oversee the implementation of policies, guidance, standards and procedures relating to RSD	Undertook a comprehensive review of procedural standards for RSD under UNHCR's mandate to reflect the latest developments in UNHCR's policies, guidance and practice.
	Conducted a pilot project on staff welfare in individual case processing with key outcomes identified.
	Maintained engagement with civil society (legal aid providers and NGOs) to promote collaboration and understanding of UNHCR policies, procedures and processes.
	Built capacity of UNHCR staff and partners to support national asylum systems, including through technical missions and the development of policy guidance.
	Engaged with governments and other stakeholders on RSD eligibility standards and procedures, including in the areas of exclusion, cancellation, extradition and matters relating to the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum.
Strengthen the capacity of UNHCR RSD staff and operations, including through deployments	Launched the "Introduction to RSD e-learning" programme, available to UNHCR staff and external partners, and conducted RSD-specific trainings.
	Rolled out the interview learning programme for 5 cohorts at country (2) and regional (3) level, benefiting 113 UNHCR, partner and government staff involved in interviewing in RSD and resettlement processing.
	Deployed 6 RSD experts to operations and 2 remote reviewing experts to increase quality and consistency in 8 UNHCR mandate RSD operations.
Provide access to decision-makers on asylum claims with up-to-date country of origin information and country-specific policy guidance	Published country-specific policy guidance on Afghanistan, Guatemala, Libya, Nicaragua, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, as well as other legal and policy documents.
	Provided, with partners, 15 country of origin information products for use in asylum procedures.
	Finalized the first phase of the redesign of Refworld, the online RSD decision-making support platform.

Alternatives to detention

While many countries continue to routinely use immigration detention as a deterrent, sometimes using it in an indiscriminate manner and for long periods in often unsuitable conditions, UNHCR and its partners maintained their advocacy for alternatives to detention. Distinct results were noted in relation to the detention of children and the importance of appropriate care arrangements. This has led to the reduction, in some contexts, of children in detention, and in others the prohibition of the practice altogether. In other contexts, the length of immigration detention was significantly reduced, with specific groups—such as children, young girls and women, or families—benefiting from alternate arrangements.

Fleeing Horn of Africa, new arrivals find more peril in Yemen

On arrival in the war-torn country, refugees and migrants are routinely subjected to detention and abuse as UNHCR calls for unhindered access to detainees.

"I landed in Yemen about a month ago. I was dragged by armed men who held me captive for over a month. They beat me so badly that I lost track of what was happening."

—Jon*, Ethiopian refugee in Aden, Yemen.

*Name changed for protection purposes.

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Working with governments and other partners, UNHCR pursued three main goals: to end the detention of children; to ensure alternatives to detention are available in law and implemented in practice; and to ensure conditions of detention, where unavoidable, met international standards.

At the country level, the implementation of the strategy had an impact in strengthening the monitoring of places of detention, including accessing places where refugees and migrants were held. Monitoring allowed UNHCR and partners to influence the conditions and treatment of detainees by engaging in better dialogue with authorities, for example by facilitating access to asylum. Much of this rested not only on active advocacy and monitoring, but on training, for both UNHCR staff and with partners, and for authorities to sensitize them and support use of alternatives.

With three new learning programmes related to immigration detention now online and available to all staff and partners, a significant leap in knowledge and implementation capacity is expected in the next few years.

A range of advocacy and guidance tools were finalized, including guidance on assessing and implementing alternatives to detention, guidance on monitoring stateless persons in detention, a checklist for practitioners, as well as a compilation of legal norms and standards applicable to the immigration detention of people of concern.

During the year, UNHCR continued to implement technical assistance and capacity building to prevent detention of children and to protect children and other asylum-seekers in detention through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Project in Indonesia, Iraq, Malaysia, Mexico and the Republic of North Macedonia. There were positive developments in these countries in reducing the number of children detained.

Important partnerships, in particular with IOM, OHCHR and UNICEF, as well as the International Detention Coalition, the Association for the Prevention of Torture and the International Committee of the Red Cross, were critical to progressing the alternatives to detention agenda.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

FAVOURABLE PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT

LAW AND POLICY DEVELOPED OR STRENGTHENED. IN 2018, UNHCR:	
Advocate relevant legal and policy frameworks related to detention and alternatives to detention, in accordance with international standards	Provided technical advice to support the enactment of new legislation, policy or practice related to alternatives to detention in 20 focus countries and other operations, in line with the 2014-2019 global strategy "Beyond detention".
	Continued implementation of EIDHR in 5 participating countries.
	Developed 1 e-learning programme on the fundamentals of immigration detention and 2 self-study modules on monitoring immigration detention and reception, care arrangements and alternatives to detention for children and families.
	Rolled out learning programmes through 5 regional workshops, reaching over 300 staff and partners, and consolidated pool of 20 training-of-trainers on immigration detention.
Work towards ending the detention of children	Convened global roundtable on reception and care arrangements for children in Thailand to advance thinking and awareness on reception and care arrangements for children and families within asylum and migration systems without recourse to detention.
	Supported development of the immigration detention chapter of the "UN Global study on children deprived of liberty".
	Provided technical advice to government and other stakeholders on alternatives to detention and care arrangements for children.
	Supported the implementation on practice of pilot projects and programmes of alternatives for families and children.

Addressing and responding to mixed movements

Venezuelan refugees and migrants cross the Simon Bolivar International Bridge into Colombia.

The adoption of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration marked a significant step forward in effective cooperation to address the plight of refugees and migrants.

Given its mandate and expertise, UNHCR participated in the process leading to the establishment of the UN Migration Network, and will continue to do so, as a member of its Executive Committee.

People, including those moving in mixed flows, are at great risk of exploitation, such as trafficking for the purpose of forced marriage, sexual exploitation, forced begging, debt bondage (including domestic servitude), and forced recruitment or abduction by armed forces. In order to assist staff in responding to these risks, UNHCR worked with the Inter-Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking in

Persons as well as IOM and the Hartland Alliance, through the Global Protection Cluster, to analyze the needs of practitioners in the field and to develop tools that will be valuable to them.

(For more information on mixed movement contexts, please see the regional summaries for *the Americas, Europe*, and *the Middle East and North Africa*.)

Central Mediterranean route

Sea arrivals to Europe across the Mediterranean decreased in 2018, and for the first half of the year, more people arrived in Greece than Italy or Spain. In the second half, however, the primary entry point became Spain. Elsewhere in Europe, Bosnia and Herzegovina recorded some 24,000 arrivals as refugees and migrants searched for new routes into the EU.

The UNHCR Central Mediterranean Risk Mitigation Strategy, launched in October 2017, outlined a cross-regional approach with activities in countries of origin, transit and destination across North and sub-Saharan Africa to Europe. UNHCR and its partners were able to demonstrate added value in enhancing the protection of people in need of international protection in mixed movements.

UNHCR worked with IOM to develop a Regional Disembarkation Mechanism, a regional arrangement to ensure cooperation for the predictable disembarkation and processing of people rescued at sea. It offered support to States in addressing the ongoing protection challenges in the Mediterranean Sea.

In response to an appeal for 40,000 resettlement places to benefit refugees hosted in 15 priority countries along the Central Mediterranean route, 25,000 places were committed. Between 1 September 2017 and 31 December 2018,

23,873 refugees have been submitted for resettlement from these 15 countries (of which 11,352 departed). This has increased access to safe and legal alternatives to the dangerous journey via Libya. The Emergency Transit Mechanism in Niger is one such alternative, through which 995 people departed for resettlement in 2018.

UNHCR also expanded its outreach, including the provision of services directly or through partners, to people moving along the routes towards Libya. This outreach led to more people in need of international protection, referrals, or assistance being identified. UNHCR mapped the primary protection risks along the different routes and identified key areas where refugees and migrants—in particular, children—face higher risks. This helped offices in the region identify how best to respond, depending on security conditions. Because of insecurity, UNHCR faced restricted access to people of concern in Libya, and along the routes.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

FAVOURABLE PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT

LAW AND POLICY DEVELOPED OR STRENGTHENED. IN 2018, UNHCR:

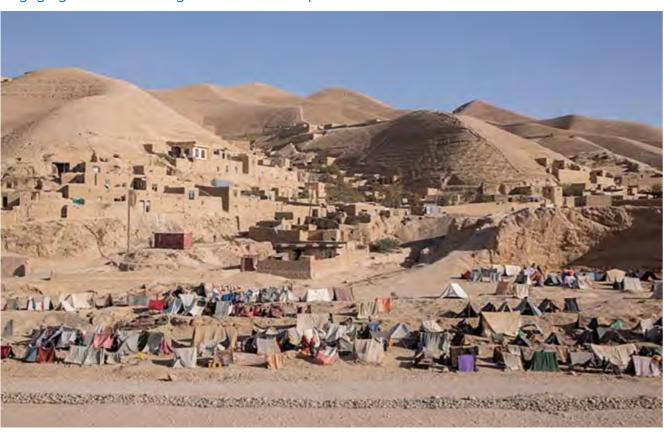|	
Advocate migration management policies, practices and debates to consider the particular needs and rights of people in need of international protection	Advocated appropriate references to mixed movements in the Global Compact on Refugees and in the Global Compact for Migration.
Develop the capacity of States and partners to meet asylum and mixed flow management challenges in a protection-sensitive manner	Developed guidance and technical advice on mixed movements including through active participation in inter-agency fora such as the Inter Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking in Persons, publishing issue briefs on Trafficking in Children and the Role of the Sustainable Development Goals in Combatting Trafficking in Persons.
	Participated actively in the work of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, Alliance 8.7, and the Global Protection Cluster's Task Team on Anti-trafficking in Humanitarian Action.
	Delivered trainings on law and policy issues related to mixed movements, such as the mixed movement learning programme and its sub-modules on protection-at-sea and trafficking in persons.

Engaging in climate change and disaster displacement

Juggling insecurity and drought, tens of thousands of residents of Badghis Province have fled either to the provincial capital Qala-i-Naw, or further west to Herat city, capital of neighbouring Herat Province in Afghanistan.

Many of the people of concern to UNHCR reside in climate change hotspots, exposed to the risk of secondary or multiple displacement due to disasters linked to natural hazards and the effects of climate change. This can also inhibit their ability to safely return home. In some contexts, disaster displacement may be interrelated with situations of conflict or violence, whereby climate change acts as a "threat multiplier", compounding pre-existing vulnerabilities or exacerbating tensions over depleted resources. Ensuring the protection of people displaced across borders in the context of climate change and disasters, and enhancing the resilience of communities is thus a concern to UNHCR.

In 2018, UNHCR responded to climate change, disasters and displacement by advancing legal, policy and practical solutions to protect people displaced by the effects of climate change and disasters, in line with commitments articulated in UNHCR's 2017-2021 Strategic Directions. The inclusion of key references to climate change and disaster displacement in the final texts of both Global Compacts reflects States' concerns.

UNHCR also conducted research and analysis on the applicability of refugee law frameworks for people displaced across borders in the context of conflict or violence, disaster, or climate change. "In Harm's Way" examined how destination States have used refugee law to provide international protection in nexus situations. The study was well received by the State-led Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) and will pave the way for further guidance on the applicability of refugee protection in climate change and disaster contexts.

UNHCR participated actively in the PDD, amplifying the message that people fleeing the effects of climate change and disasters must be adequately protected, and ensuring that human mobility stayed firmly on the global policy agenda. The Office contributed to implementing core PDD workplan activities such as addressing knowledge and data gaps, enhancing the use of identified effective practices, and promoting policy coherence and normative development in gap areas.

Linked to the 2014 Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action, UNHCR provided substantive inputs to a study on cross-border displacement, climate change and disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean, building the evidence base for further normative development in the region.

Contributions were also made to "Words into Action", guidelines on disaster displacement under Target E of the 2015-2030 Sendai Framework which will help to reduce risk, address impacts and strengthen the resilience of affected populations, mainstreaming human mobility challenges in disaster risk reduction strategies.

UNHCR played an instrumental role in the Task Force on Displacement under the leadership of UNFCCC, contributing to recommendations on integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change, endorsed by Parties at the COP 24 meeting in December 2018. Throughout the Conference, UNHCR worked with partners to advocate for the mainstreaming of human mobility challenges across relevant policy and action areas.

In Harm's Way

Words into Action

PROTECTION RESPONSES

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Ethiopia, Nguenyyiel Camp. Four-year-old Mary and her caregiver, who found her alone on the road to the Ethiopian border and who has taken care of and protected her ever since.

Identifying and meeting the needs of people at heightened risk

Age, Gender and Diversity Policy

UNHCR applies an age, gender and diversity (AGD) approach in all its work. This approach is situated within human rights frameworks and implemented through community engagement at all stages. The AGD approach allows for the inclusion and equal enjoyment of rights by all people of concern with diverse age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and other characteristics.

UNHCR's updated AGD Policy aims to ensure that the voices, perspectives and priorities of people of concern are at the centre of decisions that affect their lives. The Policy outlines ten core actions, strengthens accountability to affected people (AAP), and advances gender equality. It also includes enhanced monitoring and reporting mechanisms and assigns clear responsibilities from the highest levels of management through to field operations.

Achieving AGD goals requires a community-based protection (CBP) approach, working collaboratively with women, girls, men and boys as equal partners to enhance their protection. This approach has proven effective in promoting social cohesion among communities, advancing AAP, enhancing the identification of people and communities at heightened risk, and engaging communities in addressing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), gender inequality, child protection issues, and the exclusion of marginalized groups.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

PROTECTION OF PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

ENHANCE COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION AND EMPOWERMENT. IN 2018, UNHCR:	
Strengthen country operation capacity to design, implement, monitor and evaluate protection and assistance programmes, in close collaboration with people of concern	Delivered community-based protection (CBP) learning programme to a global cohort, of 28 staff from 21 operations. Operations subsequently developed action plans to advance participation, community ownership and inclusive programming.
	Piloted CBP training of trainers in the Middle East and North Africa region, expanding capacity to deliver contextualized learning on CBP at country and regional levels.
	Disseminated annual AGD Accountability Report highlighting progress made towards inclusion and targeted protection of different AGD groups.
	Developed CBP mandatory online module as part of the certification programme on international protection.
Strengthen UNHCR's participatory approach and promote methods for meeting commitments to accountability to affected populations	Launched updated AGD Policy in March, including work streams reflecting: AGD inclusive programming, AAP, and gender equality. Supported roll-out of the Policy with multi-functional teams conducting support missions to Algeria, Chad, Morocco, Poland and Uganda.
	Conducted survey on the 4 AAP core actions with UNHCR representatives with responses received from 42 operations highlighting key areas of focus for planned support on AAP.
	Engaged in IASC Task Team on AAP/PSEA which concluded a key tool on including AAP in multisector needs assessment that allows for communication, feedback and response actions based on community preferences to be accounted for from the beginning of a response.
	Engaged with the Grand Bargain participation revolution work stream on a framework for the measurement of progress in including affected populations in responses at an organizational and inter-agency level, producing draft indicators.

Children have specific rights and needs, but refugee and displaced children often found themselves without the protection mechanisms that they enjoyed at home, and more exposed to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. UNHCR strengthened its application of the principle of the best interests of the child, ensuring safe and appropriate care and protection for children of concern. Identifying and supporting unaccompanied and separated children to be reunified with their parents remained a challenge and priority for many UNHCR operations, especially in emergency situations. Working with States, UNHCR operations supported the development or strengthening of best interests' procedures for separated and unaccompanied children as well as other children at risk, and their integration into national child protection systems. In support of these efforts, UNHCR issued new global guidance on best interests' procedures and trained over 300 staff and partners.

UNHCR worked with diverse groups of young people to identify creative solutions to the protection problems they faced in displacement, including SGBV and discrimination, integration with host communities, and the lack of education and livelihoods opportunities. Moreover, UNHCR's Global Youth Advisory Council actively contributed to the drafting process for the Global Compact, resulting in specific commitments on refugee children and youth. In addition, the global Youth Initiative Fund supported 25 projects led by refugee and host community youth groups in 22 countries. The International Disability Alliance also had an important role in providing input to the development of the Compact.

Participation by persons with disabilities in programming is central to a rights-based approach, which recognizes their role as actors for protection. Such persons face heightened risks of violence, exploitation and abuse; are often excluded from education and work opportunities; and are disproportionately represented among people living in poverty. These risks are compounded in forced displacement: persons with disabilities can be separated from supportive communities, or be excluded from services in host countries.

One key priority for UNHCR was improving the collection and use of data on persons with disabilities to better inform inclusive planning, and better monitor how they accessed services and assistance. As part of this effort, UNHCR worked towards improving identification of persons with disabilities at the stage of registration.

In addition to severe discrimination and violence in their countries of origin, asylum-seekers and refugees of diverse sexual orientation or gender identity, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals are frequently subject to continued harm while in forced displacement, including from within their own communities. UNHCR built the capacity of staff and partners and operations expanded collaboration with local and international partners, including LGBTI organisations, creating safe spaces, strengthening response capacity and seeking solutions.

UNHCR promoted gender equality through strengthened implementation of the AGD Policy and the renewed commitments to women and girls, which include concrete and measurable actions to promote gender equality. Capacity building of UNHCR staff, development of gender equality tools and technical support to operations also supported strengthened gender equality programing.

Integrity

UNHCR enhanced the integrity of its programmes in line with its Policy on Addressing Fraud Committed by Persons of Concern (Anti-fraud Policy), launched in 2017. The Policy promotes the highest standards of integrity throughout the individual case management continuum by providing guidance to staff in preventing, identifying, and responding to fraud committed by persons of concern from the initial stages of registration, in all protection and assistance activities, and in implementing solutions.

The "Learning programme on addressing fraud committed by persons of concern" was launched to provide staff with the knowledge to implement the Policy and enhance the measures taken to prevent, detect and respond to fraud in the field. Engagement and coordination on anti-fraud efforts were strengthened in the context of the Risk Management 2.0 initiative, with newly appointed "risk managers" briefed on the Anti-fraud Policy and the most critical components of its implementation prior to their deployments. By the end of 2018, some 80 dedicated anti-fraud focal points were operational in the field, strengthening the integrity of protection processes and the operational capacity to proactively and effectively respond to fraud.

Multi-functional integrity support missions to several operations assessed procedural and operational vulnerabilities to fraud in protection programming, implementing proactive responses and safeguards accordingly. Additional tailored guidance and training on the Anti-fraud Policy and its implementation were provided as required.

> More than **215** staff in **35** operations were trained and supported on implementing the Anti-fraud Policy in 2018.

With resolve and a cell phone, blind refugee resumes school

Determined to get an education, Syrian teenager Alaa made the most of a gift from a relative to overcome communication barriers and thrive at school in Lebanon.

"I don't really feel different from others. I can do things that others can't do."

—Alaa, Syrian refugee in Lebanon.

© UNHCR/Houssam Hariri

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AREAS OF INTERVENTION	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

PROTECTION OF PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE. IN 2018, UNHCR:

AREAS OF INTERVENTION	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS
Strengthen child protection programming in emergencies	Deployed 2 roving child protection officers for 35 weeks to emergencies including Bangladesh, Uganda, and the Venezuela situation. Provided regional support (verifications, action plans) to operations in Southern Africa on unaccompanied and separated children, including in relation to the influx from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).
Strengthen capacity for the protection of children	Developed and implemented child protection plans in 29 UNHCR operations. Organized 5 training of trainers on UNHCR's revised best interests procedure guidance and caseworker training package and trained 24 staff in UNHCR's francophone Child Protection Learning Programme.
Reinforce programming for adolescents and youths	Implemented 25 Youth Initiative Fund projects in 22 countries. 6 operations incorporated strategies for engaging and empowering youth as part of the roll out of the AGD Policy. Facilitated participation of 15 delegates of the Global Youth Advisory Council in Global Compact on Refugees consultations, the NGO consultation, and the High Commissioner's Dialogue. Delegates conducted in-country consultations with over 250 young people and community members, drafted strategic recommendation papers, and spoke at or chaired global advocacy events and panels.
Advocate and strengthen partnerships around children on the move	Observed 4 partnership countries demonstrate efforts to include children of concern to UNHCR in their national action plans. Advocated the inclusion of strong commitments to children and youth in the Global Compact on Refugees. Worked closely with the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action to include considerations specific to refugee children in the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.
Strengthen active participation of people with specific needs—LGBTI people, people with disabilities, older people, ethnic, religious, linguistic minorities among other groups—in programming	Facilitated representative organizations of persons with disabilities and older persons to provide input to the Global Compact on Refugees, including through consultations and written submissions.
Build capacity of UNHCR staff and partners to ensure equal access to protection and assistance and address protection risks facing people with specific needs	Translated LGBTI learning programme into French and Spanish and developed content for an LGBTI online course as part of protection certification programme in UNHCR, with 31 staff having completed the first cohort of the francophone version. Developed and disseminated awareness-raising activities and material for the inclusion of LGBTI people of concern around the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. Finalized e-learning on inclusion of persons with disabilities. Established new partnership with UNICEF to strengthen inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action by promoting disability inclusion in humanitarian response plans under the DFID Humanitarian Investment Programme, working jointly with IOM, OCHA, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO. Participated in the first Global Disability Summit, committing to strengthen identification of persons with disabilities at registration; enhancing their participation throughout UNHCR's operations management cycle; and improving their access to education and livelihood opportunities. Participated in the IASC Task Team on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action. Published "Cash assistance and gender", outlining key considerations throughout the operations management cycle to ensure safe and equitable access to cash assistance for diverse groups of women and girls.

STRENGTHEN GENDER EQUALITY KNOWLEDGE, SUPPORT AND CAPACITY. IN 2018, UNHCR:

AREAS OF INTERVENTION	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS
Develop and implement gender equality policy, guidance and good practices	Self-assessment tools developed as part of the roll-out of the updated AGD policy to support priority countries selected for in-depth analysis (Algeria, Chad, Morocco, Poland, and Uganda). Completed report documenting promising practices on gender equality programming ("Learning from Experience to Advance Gender Equality: Promising Practices in Asia), and disseminated report on gender equality ("Gender Equality Promising Practices–Syrian Refugees in the Middle East and North Africa"). Implemented project in Niger and South Sudan identifying barriers to, and recommending solutions for, the full and meaningful participation and leadership of IDP women and girls in national policy and legal mechanisms and solutions. Supported the updating of the IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action, the revision of the IASC Gender Policy, and the development and roll-out of the Gender and Age Marker, which has been linked to the roll-out of the AGD Policy.
Provide gender equality capacity-building to UNHCR staff	Second cohort of the gender equality learning programme completed with a focus on gender equality programming in the Americas. Provided training to UNHCR staff to strengthen links between work on gender equality and SGBV.
Provide gender equality technical expertise	Gender equality materials incorporated into the programming for protection trainings, rolled out in Nigeria, Pakistan and Ukraine. Technical support provided to field operations and the deployment of surge capacity and support coordinated through the GenCap project to various emergencies.

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Identity management, registration and profiling

A newly arrived South Sudanese refugee child is registered at the Aru transit centre, in the DRC.

> UNHCR now holds the biometric records of
> **7.2 million**
> people of concern.

International protection for asylum-seekers and refugees begins with admission to a country of asylum, and with the registration of refugees by national authorities or UNHCR. The process of registration not only facilitates access to basic assistance and protection, but also enables the early identification of individuals with specific needs and their referral to an available and appropriate protection response. The very fact of being registered can, in many contexts, protect against *refoulement*, arbitrary arrest and detention. It can keep families together, or assist UNHCR in reuniting separated children with their families.

The roll-out of UNHCR's digital identity management system—the Population Registration and Identity Management Ecosystem (PRIMES)—intensified in 2018, with over 3,000 users currently accessing and contributing to the system, including members from 32 governments and external partners. The system comprises a single, centralized database with population registry and case management modules (proGres v4), UNHCR's Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS), and the newly-developed Rapid Application tool (RApp) that allows for refugees and other displaced people to be registered off-line.

By the end of 2018, proGres v4 had been rolled out across 58 UNHCR operations and regional offices. Biometric records for 2.4 million people of concern were captured, raising the total number of individuals with biometric records in BIMS and IrisGuard (the iris scanning equipment used across operations in the Syria situation) to 7.2 million across 60 operations. Biometric enrolment is a core component of UNHCR's registration processes; it helps to ensure that an individual's identity is unique and cannot be lost, stolen or misrepresented. The use of biometrics at registration and during other protection functions supports UNHCR's targeted assistance.

Identity management at food and other assistance distribution points was also enhanced by the Global Distribution Tool (GDT), another element of PRIMES, which ensures the integrity and efficiency of the distribution process. Eight operations used this tool in distribution environments in 2018. In places like Uganda, it helped ensure the integrity of aid delivery through smoother verification of beneficiaries' identity, faster and more secure distribution processes, and better real-time management of information.

The complementarity of PRIMES tools, including providing partners with secure access to data for continuity of identity in resettlement case management, digital distribution processes and biometric identity verification, has had tangible benefits. Incidents of misrepresentation, recycling of identities and multiple distributions have been mitigated, leading to the assurance that assistance is being provided to the intended beneficiaries.

UNHCR increased its engagement with strategic partners to ensure that these digital identities further enable refugees to access services from humanitarian partners as well as the private sector. Working closely with the World Bank's Identity For Development programme to ensure inclusion in action plans to realise SDG Target 16.9 of a legal identity for all by 2030, including birth registration, UNHCR promoted the inclusion of all people of its concern—including those at risk of statelessness—in governments' digital identity management systems, with a focus on refugee-hosting countries in Africa.

In September 2018, UNHCR and WFP signed a data-sharing addendum to their 2011 memorandum of understanding, bringing their commitment to sharing data and information for specific purposes in line with data protection principles and robust information security.

Field operations received support throughout the year for transition planning, as well as through training and the deployment of emergency registration specialists to operations such as Bangladesh, Brazil, Chad, Nigeria, Peru and Uganda.

> Identity For Development

AREAS OF INTERVENTION	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

FAVOURABLE PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT

QUALITY OF REGISTRATION AND PROFILING IMPROVED OR MAINTAINED. IN 2018, UNHCR:

Improve data for evidence-based decision-making	Rolled out case management database across 17 operations in 2018, bringing to 58 the number of country operations and regional offices with web-based system.
	Migrated records of 4.1 million people of concern in proGres v4.
Provide/strengthen support to field operations in emergencies, as well as in ongoing registration and verification exercises	Built and trained roster of skilled and deployable staff, including trainings on emergency registration (TER); increased deployment rate for tools, including biometrics; and continued the management of a stockpile of registration equipment and supplies.
	Deployed 21 of the 53 staff on the TER roster to emergencies in Bangladesh, Brazil, Chad, Peru, Nigeria and Uganda.
	Conducted 19 population verification exercises, including in Bangladesh, Rwanda and Uganda.
Establishing and anchoring identity	Maintained progress to achieve Grand Bargain commitment of 75 country operations benefiting from biometric identity management system by 2020.
	Rolled out biometric systems across 12 operations, bringing to 60 the number of country operations using BIMS and IrisGuard.
	Enrolled 2.4 million people into the biometric systems, 10% more than the preceding three years, bringing to 7.2 million the number of people enrolled in BIMS and IrisGuard.
	Rolled out GDT across 5 operations.
	Integrated BIMS with the offline registration tool, RApp, and integrated GDT with proGres v4.
Established PRIMES User Support Unit	Established multi-functional team to provide PRIMES support.
Update policy and guidance on Registration and Identity Management	Published four chapters of revised "Guidance on Registration and Identity Management" (previously the "Handbook for Registration"), reflecting doctrinal, operational and technological developments, and changing inter-agency collaboration.
Development of a UNHCR Digital Identity and Inclusion Strategy	Developed and began implementation of Digital Identity and Inclusion Strategy and strengthening of PRIMES.

PREVENTING AND ENDING STATELESSNESS

Bangladesh. Grieving Rohingya family seek rights, peace and safety before any return to Myanmar.

Achieving solutions

Notable progress was made in 2018 in line with UNHCR's #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness by 2024—including accessions to the statelessness conventions and the passage of important national legislation—thanks to the dedication of a range of partners, including stateless persons themselves. The most important result of all: thousands of stateless persons being granted nationality. Significant progress was made in Central Asia, for example, where some 57,200 people have had their situations resolved since the launch of the #IBelong Campaign in 2014.

With technical support from UNHCR, eleven States reformed their nationality laws, policies and procedures to close gaps that may lead to statelessness. This included the introduction of safeguards to prevent statelessness of children born abroad, the adoption of provisions to allow for facilitated naturalization of stateless persons, and the removal of barriers to birth registration.

Ensuring gender equality in nationality laws was a major element of UNHCR's advocacy. While this resulted in commitments being made in several regional declarations, women are still unable to confer their nationality to their children on an equal basis with men in some 25 countries worldwide. Furthermore, over 50 countries deny women equal rights with men in their ability to acquire, change or retain their nationality, or to confer nationality on non-national spouses.

A reported
56,400
people who were formerly stateless or of undetermined nationality acquired nationality or had their nationality confirmed in 2018.

UNHCR continued supporting States in establishing and improving statelessness determination procedures, with five additional States implementing such procedures. The correct identification of a person as stateless is a critical first step to ensuring that a person receives the protection to which he or she is entitled. The establishment of statelessness determination procedures also strengthens data in countries hosting stateless migrants.

Q&A: Head of Kenya's Makonde people recounts long walk from statelessness

Thomas Nguli, now 62, tells how a life without citizenship stole his dreams.

"I felt I was not a human being because I had no documents – no birth certificate, no immigration paper, no nothing."

—Thomas Nguli.

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Deepening partnerships to end statelessness

States engaged in the "Friends of the #IBelong Campaign" raised awareness on statelessness, including through their participation in the Universal Periodic Review.

In February 2018, a Ministerial meeting was convened in Tunis, by the League of Arab States together with UNHCR, leading to the adoption of the "Arab Declaration on Belonging and Legal Identity". In a further example of regional commitment to take action in line with the #IBelong Campaign, the "N'Djamena Initiative on the Eradication of Statelessness in Central Africa" was adopted by Member States of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa.

UNICEF and UNHCR operations in more than 15 countries established joint strategies to address childhood statelessness as part of the "Coalition on every child's right to a nationality", thus also reinforcing advocacy around ensuring gender equality in nationality laws. Coalition efforts in Albania led to the adoption of amendments to the country's civil status law to remove barriers to birth registration, reducing the risk of statelessness—particularly for children of Albanian parents born outside the country and for children of the Egyptian and Roma communities. Work through the Coalition also helped to promote dialogue between countries in Central Asia to improve birth registration and include safeguards to prevent childhood statelessness in nationality laws.

The creation of a new inter-agency working group on statelessness involving IOM, OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women, the World Bank, and others has enhanced inter-agency partnership in addressing statelessness, including through advocacy for the reissuance of the United Nations Secretary-General's Guidance Note on statelessness in November 2018.

Partnerships with civil society were strengthened with the creation of new regional networks and UNHCR's annual global retreat with NGOs working on statelessness. Together with Namati, and the Open Society Justice Initiative, UNHCR launched a new "Community-based practitioner's guide on documenting citizenship and other forms of legal identity", drawing on the experience of over 30 organizations providing individual legal and paralegal assistance. The guide is aimed primarily at capacitating organizations to help clients to access proof of citizenship and other documentation of legal identity, such as birth certificates.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION | **KEY ACHIEVEMENTS**

FAVOURABLE PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT

LAW AND POLICY DEVELOPED OR STRENGTHENED. IN 2018, UNHCR:	
Advocate and provide technical advice to governments for reform of nationality laws, policies and procedures to close gaps that may lead to statelessness, to ensure that stateless persons can acquire a nationality	Provided technical advice and guidance to 11 States that reformed their nationality laws, policies and procedures to prevent and reduce statelessness, including: • Albania, which removed barriers to birth registration. • Armenia, which adopted amendments to its nationality law to allow children born to an Armenian national and a foreigner to obtain Armenian citizenship based on the consent of only one parent. • Brazil, Ecuador, Iceland, Paraguay and Uruguay, which adopted procedures for facilitated naturalization of stateless persons. • Côte d'Ivoire, which adopted special procedures for late birth registration. • Cuba and Paraguay, which adopted safeguards to prevent statelessness of children born to nationals abroad. • Peru, which passed an amendment to its constitution to facilitate access to citizenship for persons born abroad to nationals. • Lebanon, which adopted simplified birth registration procedures for Syrians born in the country. Published "Good practices in nationality laws for the prevention and reduction of statelessness" with the Inter-Parliamentary Union.
Advocate and provide technical advice to governments for the introduction or improvement of statelessness determination procedures	Assisted Brazil, Ecuador, Montenegro, Paraguay and Uruguay establish statelessness determination procedures.
Advocate and provide technical advice to governments for the elimination of gender discrimination in nationality laws	Advocated the removal of gender discriminatory provisions from nationality laws, with notable progress made in Togo with review of the nationality law to bring it in line with the Constitution that provides for gender equality in the conferral of nationality to children.

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AREAS OF INTERVENTION	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS
INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL INSTRUMENTS ACCEDED TO, RATIFIED OR STRENGTHENED. IN 2018, UNHCR:	
Promote accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness	Welcomed 5 accessions to the statelessness conventions; Chile and Haiti acceded to both conventions and Spain acceded to the 1961 Convention.

FAIR PROTECTION PROCESSES AND DOCUMENTATION

IDENTIFICATION OF STATELESSNESS IMPROVED. IN 2018, UNHCR:	
Support identification/registration exercises and surveys to increase knowledge of the number of stateless persons, their situation and possible solutions	Baseline studies conducted in Albania, Burundi, Kenya, Portugal, Rwanda, South Sudan, Switzerland, in the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.
Advocate and provide technical advice for improved statistics on stateless persons	Statistical data made available in 75 countries.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

GREATER REDUCTION OF STATELESSNESS IS ACHIEVED. IN 2018, UNHCR:	
Develop and implement strategies to address protracted situations of statelessness	Supported operations to reflect statelessness in 3 multi-year solution strategies, addressing protracted situations of statelessness. Assisted Burkina Faso and Guinea-Bissau in adopting national action plans on eradication of statelessness.
Assist stateless persons, and those with undetermined nationality, to acquire or confirm their nationality	A reported 56,400 stateless persons acquired nationality or had it confirmed.
Provide training and technical advice to government officials on statelessness reduction measures, including the acquisition or confirmation of nationality by stateless persons and those with undetermined nationality	Conducted 3 courses on statelessness at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in Sanremo, Italy, and in Antigua, Guatemala. Conducted course on statelessness supported at Tilburg University in the Netherlands. Conducted 4 trainings on the prevention and eradication of statelessness for government officials from Central Africa, West Africa, and Europe.

ENGAGING IN SITUATIONS OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Internally displaced people collect vital aid supplies in rural Aleppo, the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria).

Many of the large-scale situations of internal displacement, including in Burundi, Cameroon, Nigeria, the North of Central America, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen are characterized by critical protection and humanitarian conditions. Situations of internal displacement require coherent and concerted action from a broad array of actors, including primarily the State affected as the entity responsible for the protection of people internally displaced on its territory.

Yemenis displaced by fresh violence face bleak winter

Renewed fighting has displaced more than 32,000 Yemenis in the past two months, adding to the millions already forced to flee and facing a harsh winter.

"Our hope is for this ugly war to end and the warring sides to leave us to live in peace."

—Fatemah Murai*, Yemeni displaced grandmother.

*Name changed for protection purposes

Working across the displacement continuum

In 2018 UNHCR took a range of measures to engage across the displacement continuum. Early preparedness and early engagement in emergencies was improved, including through pilots in the DRC and Ethiopia. Evidence on internal displacement was created by sharing protection monitoring and analysis in Afghanistan, Somalia, and Ukraine. Integrated programming was promoted to remove internal barriers to achieving protection outcomes for all people of concern. As an example, refugees and IDPs in Sudan benefitted equally from community-based projects.

UNHCR led
24 of 26 field protection clusters and cluster-like mechanisms.

Solutions for internally displaced people

Launched as part of the 20th anniversary of the "Guiding Principles on internal displacement" (the Guiding Principles), the 2018-2020 multi-stakeholder "GP20 Plan of Action", contributes to system-wide coherence in preventing, responding to and resolving internal displacement. GP20 national plans of action have helped formulate a draft IDP law in South Sudan, and the passage of the first law on internal displacement in line with the Kampala Convention in Niger; included the voices of IDPs and IDP leaders in strategic discussions in the Central African Republic and Colombia; promoted agreement for a plan to address protracted internal

UNHCR led or co-led
14 CCCM clusters or cluster-like structures.

displacement in Ukraine; and supported efforts to collect data on houses abandoned by displaced families in Honduras.

Global Protection Cluster

To maintain a coherent and integrated protection response, the Cluster and its Areas of Responsibility jointly held a protection conference reflecting on the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles. The conference addressed initiatives such as improving the humanitarian programme cycle, localization, the Centrality of Protection in the "new way of working" and the "GP20 Plan of Action".

The Cluster marked the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles by convening round-table discussions with government and NGO partners in Jordan and Ukraine, contributing to a stocktaking exercise with Resident Coordinators, United Nations agencies and the ICRC on implementation of IASC protection policy.

Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster

The Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster continued to set global standards and policies, build preparedness and response capacity, and provide operational support to country-level CCCM coordination platforms to enable them to fulfil their core functions. The Cluster's Area-based Approaches Working Group focused on two interrelated streams: remote management and mobile

approaches, while ensuring coherence with the Global Shelter Cluster's Urban Settlements' Working Group.

In 2018, UNHCR completed seven site management/CCCM field missions, including, in support of CCCM clusters in Iraq and the DRC; to collect information from the cross-border Syria operation in order to draft remote management guidance; to provide tailored trainings for partners and national authorities in Ethiopia and the Sudan; and to support refugee operations in Mexico and Brazil.

In situations where CCCM needs were identified but the cluster not formally activated, alternative ad-hoc arrangements were found. For example, coordination mechanisms for CCCM were implemented under the Shelter Cluster in Afghanistan, and the Protection Cluster in Ethiopia and Niger.

Global Shelter Cluster

UNHCR supported the coordination of more than 500 partners providing shelter and NFI support to over 8 million people, with the Cluster providing 362 days of mission support, and 269 days of remote support to 17 country-level clusters and cluster-like coordination mechanisms.

UNHCR hosted the Cluster's annual coordination workshop and meeting, with partners from 41 different organizations representing 25 shelter clusters and cluster-like coordination mechanisms worldwide, covering conflict, disaster and

preparedness situations. More government officials attended the meeting than previously, bringing their perspectives to global shelter policy.

The annual satisfaction survey showed 87% satisfaction by partners with the services of the Cluster's Support Team, including special appreciation of the team's new roving capacity. Achievements were made in field coordination capacity, with the Cluster co-leading two cohorts of the "Humanitarian shelter coordination training", a Masters-level certified programme delivered in partnership with IFRC and Oxford Brookes University.

Working groups (WG) developed a range of guidance and tools to enhance the integrity of shelter responses. Examples include six market assessments supported by the Cash WG; the promotion of local building practices emphasizing indigenous knowledge and self-reliance in Bangladesh, the DRC, and Ethiopia by the WG promoting safer building practices; the publication of a practitioners' manual on "Good construction practice standards in humanitarian settings" by the Construction Standards WG; and the finalization of "Shelter projects 2017-2018", a collection of shelter projects ranging from emergency to permanent.

UNHCR led
12 and co-led 1 of the 28 activated country-level shelter clusters.