



# DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS



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# INTRODUCTION

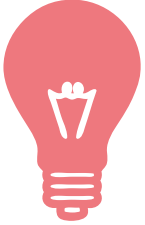
Data collection and analysis are essential to understand and develop appropriate responses to mixed movements. Accurate, up-to-date data can assist in assessing and monitoring the scale of, and trends within, mixed movements, in establishing a basic profile of persons arriving within mixed movements, in identifying travel routes and means of transportation, and in designing, implementing and evaluating policy responses and programmatic interventions. A variety of information can be collected to better identify and monitor mixed migration situations, as well as to define the characteristics of the groups within it. The information can include:

- The size of the mixed movement, i.e. the number of people at a given location at a given time, or the population “stock”;
- The demographic profile of individuals, e.g. their age, gender, civil status, economic situation, and whether they are travelling alone or with family members;
- The profile and size of different types of groups on the move, e.g. asylum-seekers, unaccompanied and separated children, victims of trafficking, or persons from certain countries of origin;
- The push and pull factors for movement, i.e. factors that forced individuals to leave and those that led them to a particular destination;
- The motivations and drivers of onward movements for different groups in a mixed movement;
- The migration routes, modes of transport, transit and entry points – as well as triggers and motivations for changes in them;
- The nature and scale of protection threats faced at the points of origin and along migration routes, including at sea;
- The perceptions of the security context at the point of origin, along migration routes, and at the destination country; and
- The prevalence of the use of smugglers or other facilitators in any given region or route.

Collecting data on mixed movements is as essential as it is challenging. Travel in these situations is itself often designed to be clandestine, and people on the move do not necessarily want to be identified. Smuggling networks and other illegal means are often used, with people transiting through areas with uncontrolled access. The rapid pace of change in the profiles and paths of migrants further hampers the ability to systematically gather information and track changes over time. In addition, few governments collect migration data. Those entities that gather migration data often do so independently in order to meet their own objectives and are not necessarily ready to share them. Finally, the organizations attempting to monitor movements and respond may use different definitions, criteria and parameters, making it difficult to disaggregate, share, compare and jointly analyse data.

Despite these challenges, sound data collection and analysis is indispensable to understand the nature, scale and trends within mixed movements, and to inform the design, implementation and evaluation of appropriate policies and responses. To enhance the availability of information in an area that has been traditionally data-poor, UNHCR and other organizations continue to develop systems to collect data and monitor mixed migration flows.

# OPERATIONALIZING DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: SUGGESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS AND SUPPORT UNHCR CAN PROVIDE TO PARTNERS



## SUGGESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

- Before data collection begins, identify the purpose and scope of the exercise, develop the necessary collection tools and guidelines, establish secure data storage capacity, and set up confidentiality and data protection safeguards.
- Identify the relevant qualitative and quantitative data to be collected, including refugee-related questions, and take steps to ensure that the data collected by different stakeholders is comparable.
- Compile other relevant primary or secondary data, including data collated by various institutions at the national level (e.g. population censuses, surveys, and interviews).
- Analyse data and cross-tabulate key variables to anticipate travel routes, entry and transit points, onward movements, and potential protection needs.
- Establish data-sharing agreements or information-sharing networks to share micro and/or aggregated data, as appropriate.



## SUPPORT UNHCR CAN PROVIDE TO PARTNERS

- Assist in developing data collection exercises for mixed movements, including identifying appropriate methodologies.
- Train government officials and partners on methods for accurate and reliable data collection, processing and analysis, as well as parameters for data sharing.
- Lobby for the inclusion of refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR in data collection and analysis.
- Provide guidance on the use of data to inform policy-making and appropriate responses to mixed movements.
- Share aggregated information obtained from UNHCR processes and procedures (including the *proGres* database) from the initial phase of displacement to the provision of durable solutions.



Members of UNHCR's Information Management Unit prepare the weekly report. UNHCR's information-sharing web portal ensures the dissemination of accurate information, which can help the humanitarian community make valid decisions, analyse the progress of undertaken activities, identify needs and gaps, and plan future actions. © UNHCR / Y. Kyvernitis / September 2016

## 2.1

### Data collection and analysis in mixed migration settings: Some key considerations

The following sets out some of the key considerations and factors to take into account before, during, and after data collection. In the context of mixed migration, as in any situation in which data is to be collected, a number of decisions should be made and tools developed before a data collection exercise begins. Proper planning helps to ensure that only information that will be used is collected, that information gaps are carefully identified, and that the feasibility of collecting the information has been assessed given context, time, and available resources.

#### *What is the purpose?*

It is important to clearly state the purpose and scope of the data collection exercise, since these will inform all subsequent decisions, from what information is collected from whom, to how and with whom it will be shared. Clarity of purpose helps data collectors avoid situations in which they omit valuable information because they do not realize how important it is, or they expose people to harm by collecting sensitive information, which may be at risk of misuse or that need not be collected as it will not be used.

Data collection can serve a variety of purposes, such as to:<sup>1</sup>

- Identify, monitor and analyse the profile, intentions and/or migratory behaviour of individuals or groups, notably to establish trends over time;
- Determine the nature, frequency and scope of protection risks and incidents at certain locations or along certain routes;
- Inform the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of migration and refugee policies, programmes and activities;
- Substantiate, corroborate, or supplement information received from third parties;
- Map the organizations that are operating in a certain location or region along certain basic parameters (who is doing what, where and when), notably to identify response gaps; and
- Prepare case studies or personal stories to support campaigning, fundraising and advocacy.

### *What information is needed to achieve the purpose?*

Information needs can be met using primary and/or secondary data.<sup>2</sup> Primary data can be collected directly from the people involved in or witnessing the mixed movement, including the migrants themselves, observers and smugglers. For example, people can be interviewed at departure points, entry points or reception centres on topics such as their motivations and the incidents they experienced en route. Observers – people who live in the areas where mixed migration flows occur – both see and interact with migrants, notably at transport hubs such as bus and train stations or through casual labour markets. Smugglers can provide information on how they operate, their incentives for establishing or supporting routes, and their links with other actors in the formal and informal sectors.

Secondary data is useful to complement, triangulate or verify primary data, to identify information gaps before the data collection exercise, and to do predictive modelling.<sup>3</sup> Useful secondary data includes, for example:

- Population figures and demographics (e.g. population breakdown by gender and age)
- Socio-economic data (e.g. average household size and livelihood practices)
- Spatial data (e.g. political boundaries and settlement locations)
- Health data (e.g. on mortality and food security).

Other useful contextual information may include documents on the national or regional legal frameworks, historical migration trends, in-country hazards and threats, and vulnerable groups. Relevant sources include the media and reports by governments, UN agencies and NGOs on their response activities to specific mixed migration situations, particularly when they include data on indicators, lessons learned, best practices and

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: ICRC, “Professional standards for protection work carried out by humanitarian and human rights actors in armed conflict and other situations of violence”, 2013 Edition, available at: <https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc-002-0999.pdf>, and Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Information Management, “Report on the outcome of the IASC Task Force on Information Management Workshop, 24-25 February 2011, Rome”, 24 March 2011, available at: <https://goo.gl/5rFDbf>.

<sup>2</sup> Primary data is data that is collected directly from individuals for a specific purpose, using methods such as interviews or questionnaires. Secondary data is data that is compiled from existing information sources; this data was collected by others, often for a different purpose.

<sup>3</sup> Assessment Capacities Project “Humanitarian needs assessment: The good enough guide”, 2014, available at: <http://goo.gl/OASA4g>.

recommendations. For more, see the resources on migration data and databases listed in the references at the end of this chapter.

It is important to remember that primary data collection in the field may not be necessary. A review of available sources via a secondary desk review and consultations with relevant partners will determine if the information needed is already available, if it is credible and reliable, and if and how it can be accessed. As a good practice, data that has already been collected should be used to avoid duplication of effort as well as unnecessary burdens and risks for data subjects.<sup>4</sup>

### *What are the risks?*

Mixed migration movements often occur in insecure environments and can be particularly dangerous given their clandestine nature and the use of smuggling networks and routes. At each step, ethical considerations and core humanitarian principles such as “Do No Harm” should guide all decisions to ensure that data activities do not cause harm to respondents and their communities, be it with regards to their physical safety, dignity, rights, or psychological well-being.<sup>5</sup>

Due consideration should also be given to the sensitivity of data to be collected. In insecure environments, sensitive information can become more vulnerable to unauthorized access or destruction. Similarly, information that is usually not sensitive can become sensitive or be perceived as such.

Overall, it is important to balance the expected benefits of collecting information with the potential risks of harm to both respondents and data collectors. Data collection should not be attempted if the risk of harm is too high, if the risk is disproportional to the expected benefits, or if there is not sufficient information to make an informed evaluation of the level of risk.<sup>6</sup>

### *What data needs to be collected, and from whom?*

Based on the purpose, information needs and risks, it is possible to determine who should be targeted for data collection: individuals in the mixed movement, observers, smugglers, humanitarian organizations, State officials, etc. It is useful to consult other actors to identify opportunities to develop data categories that are comparable. Proxy or indirect indicators can be used to approximate the existence or frequency of a phenomenon if the context or a concept does not lend itself to direct indicators. The level of precision, depth, reliability and accuracy of the indicators will also depend on the stated purpose and information needs.<sup>7</sup>

In most cases, both qualitative and quantitative data are necessary to understand a situation. For example, information on how many people are crossing a border per day (quantitative data) is more useful if it is accompanied by information on who is crossing and why (qualitative data). Valuable qualitative data includes, for example, people’s perceptions, feelings, attitudes, intentions, motivations and experiences. Quantitative data that might be collected includes, for example, the number of incidents reported per day per transit point, the average distance travelled per person per day, and the number of non-food item kits distributed at reception centres.

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<sup>4</sup> ICRC, op.cit.

<sup>5</sup> For more information on core protection principles that can guide data activities, see UNHCR, “Emergency information management toolkit”, available at: [http://data.unhcr.org/imtoolkit/events/index/lang:eng?ct=t\(PIM\\_Webinar11\\_11\\_2015\)](http://data.unhcr.org/imtoolkit/events/index/lang:eng?ct=t(PIM_Webinar11_11_2015)). For guidance on how to design ethics-compliant research, see European Commission, “Guidance note: Research on refugees, asylum seekers & migrants”, available at: <http://goo.gl/FLK4OQ>.

<sup>6</sup> OHCHR, “Chapter 2 [new]: Basic principles of human rights monitoring” in “Manual on human rights monitoring”, available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Chapter02-MHRM.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> ICRC, “Professional standards for protection work carried out by humanitarian and human rights actors in armed conflict and other situations of violence”, available at: <https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc-002-0999.pdf>.



### *What data collection methods and tools are required?*

The appropriateness of the methods and tools that are used to collect data will depend on a variety of factors, including the purpose of the exercise, the security and political context, existing regulations, available resources, and timelines. It is useful to have a document that clearly sets out the data collection methodology, including standardized definitions, the roles and responsibilities of all the actors involved, protocols for the secure transfer of data from the collection point to the storage point, and details on sampling approach and the data analysis plan. It is also useful to factor in time for piloting the process, translating the collection tools, and training enumerators.

Context is an important determinant of the methods and tools that can be used. For example, in volatile security environments, using mobile devices to collect data and upload it to a cloud can be a safer option than using paper questionnaires that can be confiscated at checkpoints. In other contexts, using mobile devices might be more dangerous, for example, if data is collected with GPS tags that can reveal people's locations. A good practice is to use a coding system to anonymize data that might identify enumerators, respondents and implementing agencies, or to use computer-assisted personal interviewing techniques when asking sensitive questions. See section 2.2 for examples of methodologies that have been used in mixed migration settings.

Due consideration should also be given to who is better suited to collect the data. In some settings, international staff may have better freedom of movement and enjoy greater legal protection than national NGO staff, who might be targeted for gathering sensitive information for international actors or blamed if assistance does not follow data collection. In other settings, national staff may have better access and a better understanding of the local context, both of which can ensure that the right questions are asked in the right way to the right people.

When collecting data, enumerators should inform people of the basic facts of the exercise, notably the specific purpose(s) for which data will be collected and processed, how the data will be used, and whether the data will be shared with other organizations. Personal information may be collected only after informed consent has been provided by the respondent. Potential respondents have the right to refuse to share information, to stop in the middle of an interview, to access their information, and to report misuse and abuse. To ensure that the data collection process is guided by ethical standards, it may be helpful to have a code of conduct for enumerators.

It may also be useful to include in procedures for data collection, a means to monitor the process. These help to ensure that enumerators are respecting procedures and that communication channels are available for them to share feedback on the progress and impact of the exercise. For example, they can share their views about the appropriateness of the selected locations, comment on the ease of their interactions with respondents or advise if the exercise is creating protection risks.

### *What systems are necessary to ensure safeguards for the collection, use, transfer, storage, archiving and disposal of data?*

Populations in mixed migration movements can be helped as well as harmed by data and data collection processes. They may be exposed to physical violence, discrimination, exploitation or other kinds of harm if data is misused, lost, stolen, used without authorization, modified or copied. Ensuring the privacy, confidentiality and security of personal information is essential to protecting people, their rights, and avoiding doing harm. Towards this goal, it may be useful to conduct a privacy impact assessment or a data protection impact assessment to identify potential data protection risks and feasible mitigation measures. For more, see the resources on data protection listed in the references section at the end of this chapter.

### *How will the data be analysed?*

Data analysis is the process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data to discover useful information, patterns and linkages. It allows us to answer questions with evidence, and to formulate explanations with that evidence.

Like data collection, the data analysis process can put individuals at risk, depending on the processing method, the unit of measurement, and the level of aggregation. Consider if the data could be used in connection with other sources to expose individuals, or if the analysis could be misinterpreted to their detriment. The nature and severity of the risks will likely depend on the type of analysis that is conducted. The main types of data analysis are listed here.

Type	Purpose	Example
<b>Exploratory</b>	Aims to discover the data and identify potential patterns, signals, and stories that are to be confirmed. It also assesses the relevance, completeness and reliability of the data. Exploration helps to understand not just what the data covers, but also what it represents, what seems wrong and what is potentially missing.	Conduct preliminary interviews with a small sample of refugees and migrants to identify the key factors that affected their decisions to leave, as part of efforts to identify the components of a larger study.
<b>Descriptive</b>	Aims to summarize and compare the data to answer basic questions regarding who, what, when, why and how. It generalizes the data through categories and aggregation, describes, compares, and seeks patterns, anomalies and trends.	Tabulate how many refugees and migrants are arriving where and from which countries over time.
<b>Explanatory</b>	Aims to connect and relate the data, to answer the why question. It identifies relationships, associations, correlations and other connections between data to develop plausible explanations and identify underlying processes, drivers and factors.	Conduct logistic regression on the probability of being a victim of sex and gender-based violence during the migrant journey according to various socioeconomic, geographic and cultural variables, based on a sample survey of refugees and migrants arriving by boat.
<b>Interpretive</b>	Aims to identify implications and conclusions. It moves beyond findings towards drawing and evaluating conclusions based on the strength of the evidence, argumentation and context.	Conduct a meta-analysis of research on the impact of allowing refugees and asylum-seekers to seek work in different countries, assess the quality of the evidence available, and make evidence-informed policy recommendations.
<b>Anticipatory</b>	Aims to predict, forecast and ascertain the likelihood of future trends, scenarios and outcomes based on current and historical data.	Cross-tabulate historical data on the impact of weather and political events on the rate of arrivals in a particular location to anticipate future arrivals.

### *Will the data be shared?*

From the initial planning stages, it is necessary to consider if, when and how data will be shared with different actors, including through data-transfer agreements or information-sharing networks. Since limited public data is available in the mixed migration environment, it is particularly important to ensure that timely and accurate information is shared with the right actors in the countries of origin, transit and destination and with actors operating at the local, country, regional and global levels. Sharing information correctly and promptly reduces duplication of effort, avoids wasting resources, facilitates collaboration, and promotes a more coherent response. It also serves a protection purpose since sources are not submitted to repeated questioning or exposed to unwelcomed attention.

The decision to share information should be based on a careful analysis of the risks and benefits, bearing in mind the sensitivity of specific data variables, the privacy and security of individuals, and their consent (in the case of personal data). A data dissemination plan or data-sharing protocol can be useful to determine in advance:

- What information will be shared, and at which level of aggregation (e.g. micro data, aggregated data, or findings);
- What data will be shared on a systematic basis versus what data will require specific arrangements;
- Who will receive information, through which formats or platforms, and for which purposes; and
- What confidentiality and accountability procedures are necessary.

To reduce the risk of harm, data may have to be selected, aggregated or filtered before it is shared. Usually, confidential or sensitive data such as personal identifying data is removed or replaced using methods such as data coding, pseudonymization, and anonymization.

Data can also be shared at the trends level to balance the benefits of data sharing with protection and confidentiality concerns. If population figures are small, special care should be taken when sharing aggregated data because aggregation may not be sufficient to protect the identity or location of individuals or communities.



UNHCR staff welcoming two Afghan women and their children at the entrance of the Moria Reception/Registration Centre in Mytilene, Greece. Greek authorities register new arrivals and collect data on refugees and migrants who have crossed the Aegean Sea from Turkey. © UNHCR/ A. Zavallis/ November 2015

## 2.2

### Examples of data collection and analysis in mixed migration settings

Data on mixed movements may be collected through a number of methodologies. For example, primary data can be obtained through individual and key informant interviews, questionnaires, surveys, participatory assessments and direct observation. Mobile survey tools are often useful since they can allow for quicker and more accurate data collection and analysis processes, especially compared to paper-based surveys.<sup>8</sup> Secondary data sources include censuses, registers, administrative records, and reports. It is often useful to combine different sources and types of data.

One prevalent methodology is profiling. Profiling aims to generate a comprehensive picture of a certain population that is on the move or displaced, and the context of that population's situation. Most often, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods is used at the household, individual and/or community levels to provide data that is disaggregated by location, sex, age and various diversity criteria such as ethnicity, religion and socio-economic status. Depending on the purpose of the profiling, sample-based surveys can be combined with focus-group discussions and key informant interviews to collect the information that is needed.

This section provides examples of data collection methodologies that have been implemented in mixed migration settings, both in countries of transit and in countries of destination.

<sup>8</sup> World Bank, "Using mobile phones in data collection: Opportunities, issues and challenges". Available at: <http://goo.gl/J340BX>.

## 2.2.1 Collecting and analysing data in countries of transit

2014–PRESENT

### Horn of Africa: Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative



#### A Background and rationale

Despite the high interest and concern around mixed migration, there are few systems in place nationally or regionally to monitor mixed migration flows. Policy formation, political debate and humanitarian programming often take place in a context that lacks concrete data, particularly with regard to protection issues in countries of origin and along the migration route. The challenges associated with data collection on mixed migration flows are considerable due to the clandestine nature of smuggler-dominated movements and the disparate routes and methods of movement. In mid-2014 the Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat situated in the Horn of Africa created the Mixed Migration Monitoring Mechanism Initiative (4Mi) as an attempt to address the need for better data on migration flows originating in the Horn of Africa. The 4Mi is an innovative, low-cost approach to collecting and analysing data on mixed migration flows, and particularly on protection risks.

#### B Actors

- Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat

#### C Actions

- 
- The 4Mi uses a network of monitors across the eastern tier of Africa from South Africa to Egypt and Libya as well as in northern Europe to better understand protection risks along migration routes. It uses purposive sampling targeting three categories of persons: migrants and asylum-seekers or refugees, observers of migration, and smugglers.
- 
- Monitors collect data from “hubs” or “nodes” situated along mixed migration routes such as at border crossing points or at reception centres. They administer individual questionnaires using mobile smart phones.
- 
- Data collected is sent in real-time to a central hub for collation and analysis.
- 
- Data analysis is conducted on the profiles of those interviewed on the mixed migration path, drivers of their migration or flight, secondary movements, interactions with smugglers, outlook, intentions at destination, financial concerns, access to information, family circumstances, assistance received, protection violations and concerns experienced on route.
- 
- The results of 4Mi data collection are presented both in written reports and visually with a series of maps and infographics available on the Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat and 4Mi websites.

## D Review

4Mi is a very useful mechanism for understanding mixed migration flows. It offers a non-traditional, innovative approach to capturing vital information on vulnerable populations in transit, including and in particular, those who do not approach or come into contact with international organizations, NGOs or government actors along their journeys.

The limitations of the sampling method include the possibility that monitors will be biased in selecting the sample and that the sample is not necessarily representative of the mixed migration flow. The first concern is mitigated through the careful selection of monitors in line with the 4Mi human resources policy and their extensive training in how to implement the individual questionnaires, how to use the smart phone app, and how to address the ethical implications that may arise in their work. The latter concern is mitigated, where possible, through a triangulated comparison of the data collected with other sources, checks on the time to complete the survey and GPS coordinates of the data collected, its careful analysis and the use of disclaimers.

## E Further information

The 4Mi website can be found at: <http://4mi.regionalmms.org>.

The Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat website can be found at: <http://www.regionalmms.org/>.

JANUARY–APRIL 2016

## Europe: Profiling groups arriving on Greek islands



### A Background and rationale

In 2015, 856,000 people made the journey across the Mediterranean Sea to Greece. In early 2016, UNHCR initiated a data collection and analysis exercise with support from the inter-agency Joint Internally Displaced Persons Profiling Service (JIPS), in order to better inform the wider humanitarian community of the profile of those arriving in Greece, and improve immediate response and longer term planning.

### B Actors

- UNHCR
- Joint Internally Displaced Persons Profiling Service (JIPS)

### C Actions

- The exercise was implemented on the Greek islands receiving the majority of arrivals, namely Chios, Lesbos, Samos and Leros. The joint JIPS/UNHCR mission went on multiple field visits to each island to identify the locations (e.g. registration sites, accommodation locations, ferry ticket booths) through which arriving individuals would have to pass in order to move on in their journeys.

- ➔ Following these field visits, a training session was organized in Lesvos for ten Arabic and Dari/Farsi speaking enumerators before they were dispatched to the islands for data collection.
- ➔ The methodology was designed using the individual as the unit of analysis, since many people traveled alone. Data from the Greek authorities on age and gender breakdowns of the Syrian populations arriving at the islands during the same period was used to apply weights to the data collected. This ensured that the findings represented each age and gender group based on the actual distribution of arrivals.
- ➔ The first data collection phase in January 2016 was used to pilot the methodology and the questionnaire form. During this month, the data collected and the administration of questionnaire were closely observed by UNHCR and JIPS. Subsequently, the sampling approach and the questionnaire were adapted to better reflect the situation and challenges in the field.
- ➔ From January to April 2016, four teams of Arabic speaking enumerators based in Chios, Leros, Lesvos and Samos as well as three teams of Dari/Farsi speaking enumerators based in Chios, Lesvos and Samos interviewed arriving individuals. The survey was administered in the locations through which all arriving individuals passed. To avoid creating additional stress on the population, the survey was not administered in closed facilities or to those who were waiting in line.
- ➔ JIPS and UNHCR collaborated on data cleaning and analysis as well as on the development of factsheets about the Syrian and Afghan populations arriving in Greece in the early months of 2016.

## D Review

The exercise provided relevant and up-to-date information to the humanitarian community on the profile of Afghans and Syrians arriving in Greece in the early months of 2016. More specifically, it provided comprehensive information on the socio-demographic profile of Afghan and Syrian arrivals, their reasons for leaving their countries of origin, the lengths of their journeys, the main reasons for onward movements, as well as routes and destination countries. This information was also useful for advocacy purposes.

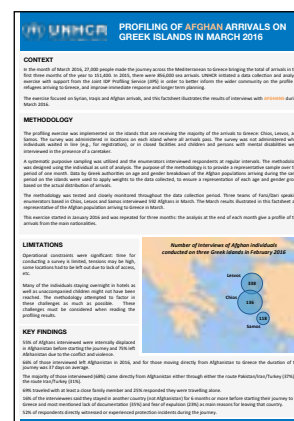
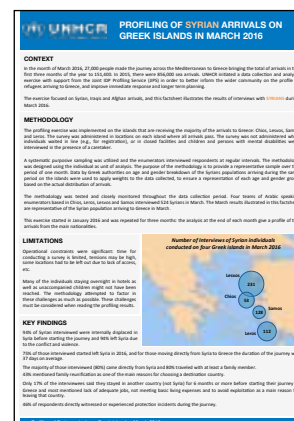
The main operational challenge during the exercise was related to the constant movement of the population and the need to obtain a sample that was as representative as possible. Onward movement and frequent changes to the registration system made it difficult to conduct in-depth interviews or ask detailed questions. Although a quantitative approach was adopted for ease of analysis and reporting, qualitative data collected through focus group discussions would have been useful to discuss more sensitive topics or obtain more granular data.

The approach used was found to be useful when a rapid assessment is needed for populations who are on the move. It could be used on major migration routes throughout the world to better understand the motivations and profiles of people on the move.

## E Further Information

UNHCR, “Profiling of Syrian arrivals on Greek islands in March 2016” is available at: <https://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/download.php?id=1393>.

UNHCR, “Profiling of Afghan arrivals on Greek islands in March 2016” is available at: <https://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/download.php?id=1398>





## The Americas: “Children on the run”, a study

### A Background and rationale

Since 2009, UNHCR has been registering an increased number of asylum-seekers – both children and adults – from the Northern Triangle of Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras) lodging claims in the Americas region. In October 2011, the Government of the United States of America began recording a dramatic rise – commonly referred to in the United States as “the surge” – in the number of unaccompanied and separated children arriving from these same three countries. Additionally, the number of Mexican children apprehended by United States Customs and Border Protection reached 18,754 in fiscal year 2013, a 44 per cent rise from the 13,000 in fiscal year 2011.

With a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, UNHCR Washington undertook an extensive study in March 2014 to identify the reasons why children fled from their homes and to determine if they were in need of international protection. While a significant contextual difference exists between the situation in Mexico and that in the Northern Triangle, the common denominator is that all four countries are producing high numbers of unaccompanied and separated children who are seeking protection at the southern border of the United States.

### B Actors

- UNHCR
- United States Office of Refugee Resettlement
- United States Customs and Border Protection

### C Actions

- 
- UNHCR conducted individual interviews with 404 unaccompanied or separated children aged 12 to 17 – approximately 100 each from El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico – who arrived to the United States during or after October 2011.
- 
- Such children, who have no parent or lawful guardian to protect their interests, have a special vulnerability. The design and implementation of the study were, therefore, guided by the following fundamental principles: the priority of the best interests of the child, “do no harm”, non-discrimination, confidentiality, and voluntary and informed participation.
- 
- Nearly all the children from Central America were interviewed while in custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement, an agency within the United States Department of Health and Human Services. After accounting for the parameters set for nationality, age, sex, date of arrival to the United States and type of federal custody, the children to be interviewed were identified by a random selection process. Interviews with Mexican children were conducted at the United States/Mexico border soon after their being taken into the custody of United States Customs and Border Protection and before they were returned to Mexico.



- To complement the interviews, UNHCR also conducted a review of literature from 2004 to 2013 on the reasons why unaccompanied or separated children were travelling from these four countries, with a focus on studies on children arriving in the United States.

## D Review

The study found that although the reasons children gave for leaving home included both protection-related and non-protection-related concerns, protection-related reasons were very prominent. The data revealed that no less than 58 per cent of the children interviewed had fled their homes because they had suffered or were in danger of harm, indicating a potential or actual need for international protection. Since the study was designed to be representative and statistically significant, the finding is a cogent justification for protection screening of unaccompanied or separated children in the same age range as the children in this study who arrive in the United States from these four countries. Two overarching patterns of harm related to potential international protection needs were identified, namely violence by organized armed criminal actors and violence in the home. In the case of Mexican children, a third category of harm was recruitment into and exploitation by the criminal industry of human smuggling.

The study informed a number of training and sensitization activities that were held with State officials, NGOs and international organizations. These activities mostly focused on providing information about the refugee component within mixed migratory flows to raise awareness of the need for appropriate identification and referral mechanisms. The study and its conclusions were also shared with participants.

The report also presented 13 recommendations to the five Governments regarding newly emerging forms of displacement in Central and North America, regional and national frameworks for ensuring international protection, and the need to address root causes.

## E Further Information

The full report of the study, “Children on the run”, is available at:  
<http://goo.gl/nz8Wnc>.

The executive summary of the study is available at: <http://goo.gl/5RT8UM>.



## 2.2.2 Collecting and analysing data in countries of destination

2014–2016

### Somaliland: Profiling of settlements and neighbourhoods



#### **A** Background and rationale

In 2014, Somaliland authorities and various NGO and UN partners established a profiling taskforce to lead a joint durable solutions profiling exercise in Hargeisa, Somalia. The overall aim was to provide an evidence base to inform solutions for displaced populations in line with the 2010 “Inter-Agency Standing Committee Framework on durable solutions for internally displaced persons”.

Profiling focused on internally displaced persons (IDPs), migrants, refugee returnees, refugees and asylum seekers, and the host community living in known IDP settlements in Hargeisa. The profiling adopted a comparative analysis framework of different target groups identified in the settlements. The objective was to obtain information on the following:

- Estimated IDP population figures disaggregated by age, sex, location, and diversity criteria;
- Displacement and migration history of the target populations in Hargeisa;
- Current situation of target populations, including their socio-economic situation, living conditions and protection concerns; and
- The needs, capacities, and coping mechanisms of target populations that inform their choices regarding local integration, return to place of origin or settlement elsewhere.

#### **B** Actors

The profiling exercise was led by a profiling taskforce that consisted of the following:

- Somaliland Ministries of Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction; Planning; and Labour and Social Affairs
- International organizations, including UNDP; UNICEF; UNHCR; IOM; OCHA; and UN-HABITAT
- NGOs, including Danish Refugee Council; Norwegian Refugee Council; Action Africa Help; Candlelight; Save the Children; Comprehensive Community Based Rehabilitation in Somaliland; Garsoor; and Finnish Church Aid
- The Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS)

## C Actions

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- The objectives and methodology of the exercise were endorsed by the profiling taskforce in September 2014 after field visits conducted jointly by the profiling partners and JIPS to IDP settlements and IDPs living outside the recognized settlement structures.

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- A mapping exercise including an enumeration of the settlement populations was conducted to identify locations and estimate the population numbers of each target group in settlements and in neighbourhoods in other urban locations. The mapping provided the required baseline information to design a sampling approach for a household survey. The profiling covered 14 settlements across the city and five neighbourhoods where IDPs were residing among host communities.

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- The data was collected in June 2015 and the final report was published in January 2016.

## D Review

Through a population mapping and an extensive enumeration, the profiling exercise identified the different population groups residing in IDP settlements in Hargeisa. In addition to IDPs and refugee returnees, host community members as well as migrants were also identified.

The profiling exercise, which was based on a sample-based survey, was able to provide a representative sample of the identified population groups in the settlements. The comparative analysis between the different groups in the settlements and the IDPs in the neighbourhoods provided evidence to better understand the respective living conditions of different groups and to identify recommendations for supporting durable solutions for these populations.

The collaborative nature of the profiling exercise was key to ensuring that the objectives and the methodology were in line with the data needs of the various partners working with displaced and displacement-affected communities in Hargeisa. The profiling taskforce met at key stages of the process to discuss challenges and identify solutions.

## E Further information

The final profiling report, “Internal displacement profiling in Hargeisa”, can be downloaded at: <http://www.jips.org/en/field-support/country-operations/somalia/somalia>.

To further explore the findings of the profiling, the data can also be accessed via JIPS’ Dynamic Analysis and Reporting Tool: <http://dart.jips.org/>.



## Horn of Africa: Regional study on forced displacement and mixed migration

### A Background and rationale

In 2014-2015, UNHCR and the World Bank Group collaborated on a number of regional studies to build the evidence base on the root causes of and solutions to displacement as well as the economic impact of refugees on host economies. Three studies were jointly conducted, focusing on the Great Lakes region, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa.

The Horn of Africa study focused on the inter-linkages between forced displacement and mixed migration. It was undertaken in the context of the World Bank's regional approach to the Horn of Africa and to support UNHCR's strategic shift in addressing the needs of displaced populations from care and maintenance to social cohesion and self-reliance. The study sought to analyse the nexus of forced displacement and development, explore the phenomenon of mixed migration, assess the impact of refugees and migrants on hosting areas and communities, identify ongoing innovative interventions, and propose entry points and practical steps to address the development dimensions of forced displacement and mixed migration in the Horn of Africa.

### B Actors

- UNHCR
- The World Bank Group

### C Actions

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- UNHCR and the World Bank Group worked jointly to prepare the study. The World Bank developed a research design in consultation with UNHCR. UNHCR planned and coordinated field visits and extensive meetings with a range of stakeholders, including representatives of refugees and IDPs, government officials, UN staff, and international partners.
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- The study was based on a secondary desk review drawing from a rich body of literature. During visits to the region, a study team obtained additional documentation and information through in-depth interviews and focal group meetings with displaced persons (refugees, returnees, IDPs), host communities, government agencies in the region, UN partners, bilateral donors, and NGOs. Field visits were undertaken to the Dollo Ado and Shire refugee camps in Ethiopia, the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, the Kiryandongo settlements in Northern Uganda, the Kilo 26 refugee camp in Sudan, the Ali Addeh refugee camp in Djibouti, and urban centres in Kampala, Uganda and Juba, South Sudan.

- The study sought to establish a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of forced displacement and mixed migration in the Horn of Africa. Toward this goal, the following elements were analysed:
  - Causes and drivers of forced displacement situations and mixed migratory movements;
  - The legal and institutional frameworks governing forced displacement;
  - The political, social and economic context;
  - The developmental challenges of protracted forced displacement and mixed migration; and
  - Regional and national initiatives addressing forced displacement and mixed migration.

## D Review

The study provided a timely contribution to the dialogue at the country, regional and global levels on immediate and longer-term action on displacement and mixed migration, including linkages to the broader humanitarian reform agenda. It provided specific recommendations for key actors on how to capitalize on the emerging positive trends to address forced displacement and mixed migration in the region, take forward the holistic approach to displacement that includes transitional and durable solutions, and harness the collaboration between a range of local national, regional and global partners.

The analysis and findings in the report were at the regional level, and therefore proposed solutions and recommendations were also at the regional level. Deeper analysis would be required to develop country-specific solutions and recommendations.

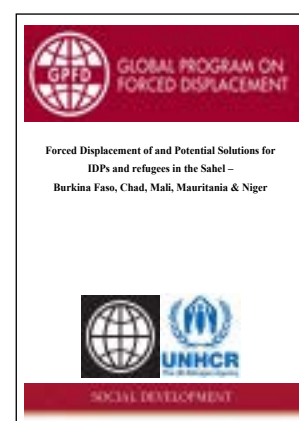
## E Further information

World Bank, “Eastern Africa: Forced displacement and mixed migration in the Horn of Africa” is available at: <http://goo.gl/iNRILF>.

World Bank, “Forced displacement in the Great Lakes region: A development approach” is available at: <http://goo.gl/NuiXmY>.



World Bank, “Forced displacement of and potential solutions for IDPs and refugees in the Sahel: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger” is available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/17617>.





## The Americas: “Women on the run”, a study

### A Background and rationale

Since 2009, increasing levels of violence in the Northern Triangle of Central America (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador) have been forcing thousands of women, men and children to leave their homes. Between 2008 and 2014, UNHCR recorded a nearly fivefold increase in the number of asylum-seekers arriving to the United States from the Northern Triangle, and a nearly thirteenfold increase in the number of asylum-seekers from the same countries arriving in Mexico and other countries in Central America. Complementing previous UNHCR studies on the plight of children fleeing the Northern Triangle, the study “Women on the run” aimed to gather first-hand accounts from women to better understand their motivations for fleeing and the obstacles they faced in seeking international protection.

### B Actors

- UNHCR
- United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement

### C Actions

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→ The design and implementation of the survey were guided by the principles of confidentiality and voluntary and informed participation. After distributing a notice to the United States Government, UNHCR requested and obtained access to 11 Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention facilities nationwide, where it distributed sign-up sheets to allow women to learn about the project and sign up for interview times. To identify interview candidates, UNHCR also coordinated with legal service providers in the majority of the facilities.

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→ From June to August 2015, UNHCR Washington interviewed 160 women between the ages of 18 and 57 from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. Of the women, 94 per cent were interviewed while in Immigration and Customs Enforcement custody, in spaces that met the project’s confidentiality requirements. All the women interviewed had most recently entered the United States on or after 1 October 2013. To serve the purpose of the study, UNHCR only interviewed women who had either been recognized as refugees or were screened by the United States Government as having a credible or reasonable fear of persecution or torture. To supplement the interviews, UNHCR also conducted an extensive literature review and consulted with experts on patterns of asylum and conditions in the countries of origin.

### D Review

The report was released on 28 October 2015. It revealed that women in the Northern Triangle and Mexico faced disproportionately high levels of violence on a near daily basis in their countries of origin. Of the women, 85 per cent described living in neighbourhoods under the control of *maras* or other transnational or local criminal groups.

Over 60 per cent of them reported that direct threats and attacks by members of *maras* were one of the primary reasons for their flight, and many described being raped, extorted, threatened and physically assaulted. Many women also reported that violence from criminal armed groups had occurred alongside repeated physical and sexual violence at home, and they described severe and prolonged forms of life-threatening and degrading domestic violence. Certain groups faced particularly high rates of violence, including transgender women, women associated with the police or other government authorities, and women suspected as belonging to rival *maras*. During the journey to countries of transit and asylum, women reported having to pay high fees to smugglers, detention, extortion, and further physical and sexual abuse.

The study called for a comprehensive regional approach to the management of migration and the implementation of policies that protect human lives and ensure that individuals fleeing persecution can find safety. It also presented dozens of recommendations to governments in the region regarding refugee protection and asylum procedures.

## E Further information

For more information, see the dedicated website featuring recordings and videos of women telling their stories at: <http://womenontherun/>.

The full study is available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/5630f24c6.html>.



OCTOBER–DECEMBER 2013

## The Americas: Study on unaccompanied children crossing into Mexico



### A Background and rationale

Since 2009, people from the Northern Triangle of Central America (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador) have been crossing into Mexico as part of their journey to seek entry into the United States or Canada. They are often driven by economic, political and social constraints in their countries of origin, the potential for family reunification, and insecurity due to different types of violence, including domestic violence, sexual and gender based-violence, and violence from criminal gangs. These movements often include a large number of unaccompanied and separated children who face threats both at home and while on the move. They enter Mexico undetected and unprotected, using routes and means invisible to the authorities and organizations that could offer services. The study “Arrancados de raíz (Uprooted)” was developed to establish a clearer picture of the magnitude and root causes of the movement of unaccompanied children crossing into Mexico from Central America.

## B Actors

- UNHCR
- Mexican Migration Institute

## C Actions

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- The study was financed by the European Commission, Directorate-General Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection. It was based on a mixed research methodology involving group discussions with 200 unaccompanied or separated children as well as individual interviews with 72 such children at detention centres in Mexico City and Tapachula, Chiapas, as well as at shelters in Tapachula, from October to December 2013.
  - Some children who participated in this study were selected by UNHCR, while others were referred to UNHCR by Mexican authorities; all were from the Northern Triangle of Central America.
  - One hundred twenty-six boys (54 from Guatemala, 19 from El Salvador and 53 from Honduras) and 74 girls (45 from Guatemala, 10 from El Salvador and 19 from Honduras) took part in the group discussions. Forty boys (11 from Guatemala, 7 from El Salvador, and 22 from Honduras) and 32 girls (14 from Guatemala, 3 from El Salvador and 15 from Honduras) were individually interviewed.
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## D Review

At the time of interview, 47.3 per cent of the children declared having arrived on Mexican territory within the previous 24 hours. Many of the remaining children had arrived from another migration detention centre in Mexico: 12.5 per cent reported having been detained for five days, 19.4 per cent from six to 10 days, 18.1 per cent more than 11 days, and 2.8 per cent did not respond or did not know.

The study found that violence caused by gangs and other organized criminal actors, as well as sexual and gender-based violence were the main motivations prompting Central American children to flee. More specifically, 49 per cent of respondents identified specific incidents of beatings, intimidation, threats and insecurity as the causes of their flight. Many more reported leaving to escape the future threat of such violence. The study found that boys are mainly victims within the context of community violence, while girls are often victims of sexual and gender-based violence usually perpetrated at home.

As a follow-up to the study, a number of training sessions on international and refugee law and sensitization activities on the special needs and identification of children in need of international protection were held with migration officials, child protection officers from the Mexican Family Welfare Agency and the Mexican Refugee Commission. The study and its conclusions were also disseminated to them, along with a series of recommendations to adequately respond to the main findings. As a key outcome, the Mexican Refugee Commission, UNHCR, and UNICEF developed standard operating procedures for the identification of unaccompanied or separated children in need of international protection.





## E Further information

The full study, “Arrancados de raíz”, is available in Spanish at: <http://goo.gl/EHIBwJ>.

An executive summary is available in English at: <http://goo.gl/EXjXiU>.

The standard operating procedures for the identification of unaccompanied or separated children in need of international protection, “Protocolo de evaluación inicial para la identificación de indicios de necesidades de protección internacional en niñas, niños y adolescentes no acompañados o separados”, is available at: <http://goo.gl/oRztWr>.

## 2.2.3 Data and information-sharing websites

2015–PRESENT

### The Mediterranean: UNHCR Information-sharing web portal



#### A Background and rationale

Since 2014, the number of refugees and migrants reaching European shores has increased considerably. Persecution, conflict, and poverty drove over 1 million people to seek access to Europe during 2015. Thousands of women, men and children have lost their lives or gone missing during the treacherous journey across the Mediterranean Sea. The situation urgently required enhanced coordination and improved information sharing between a variety of actors involved in the emergency response. As such, UNHCR launched a comprehensive data portal focused on the situation affecting refugees and migrants throughout the Mediterranean and on routes across Europe. This effort is part of a larger inter-agency effort to support data portal platforms focused on various other emergencies. The website makes available operational data, statistics, maps, reports and situation updates related to the Mediterranean crisis.

#### B Actors

- UNHCR
- International organizations, including UNICEF and IOM
- NGOs, including ACAPS, NetHope and the International Rescue Committee

## C Actions

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→ The information-sharing portal on the Mediterranean has been live at <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php> since September 2015.

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### → Information access

- The portal provides a regional overview with an interactive map indicating sea arrivals of refugees and migrants. Figures on the map are estimates from UNHCR on daily arrivals to each country. The data is shared by local authorities and shared with UNHCR and/or is collected by UNHCR during border monitoring activities.
  - The estimated number of those who perished or went missing in the Mediterranean is compiled from a variety of sources, including shipwreck survivors and family members. Information is collected by UNHCR staff, governments, humanitarian action teams, coast guards and navy vessels. News media and civil society are also important sources of information.
  - Featured pages focus on Greece and Italy as main countries of entry. These pages include specific country information and data.
  - A separate page was created in 2015 to capture the daily arrivals of refugees and migrants moving from Greece onward through different countries in the western Balkans. This page allows users to select a country and view the evolution of the number of daily arrivals from September 2015 until the present day by moving a cursor on a timeline.
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### → Enhanced coordination

- A variety of partner organizations such as UNICEF, IOM, ACAPS, NetHope and the International Rescue Committee use the website to provide their latest information products including situation updates, assessment reports and other visual products.
- UNHCR started the Inter-Agency Information Management Working Group in 2015 in Geneva. Co-chaired with IOM, the working group seeks to improve coordination and information sharing with other agencies and partners.
- Coordination with information management staff also takes place at the country level. Both UNHCR and IOM regional information management focal points coordinate on regular basis at the headquarters level as well as at the country level to ensure that arrival data provided on the web portals is harmonized using the same sources (i.e. government authorities).

## D Review

The portal is a tool to support the operational response of UNHCR and key stakeholders in the context of the Mediterranean crisis. The latest data and infographics on the evolving situation in Europe allow the organization to assess the needs of people of concern and share analyses with key stakeholders. The web portal not only presents a snapshot of refugee and migration trends in Europe but is also instrumental as a communication and advocacy tool in building awareness.

In addition, the page can be used as a coordination tool for partner organizations. By providing an overview of ongoing efforts, it enables organizations to identify potential overlaps or gaps in response.

Due to the complex nature of the situation, varying quality and reliability of data can be a challenge. In light of this, every effort has been made to work alongside information management colleagues and partners at the country level to ensure that all statistical information is verified and that figures on persons dead and missing at sea represent conservative estimates of a number that could possibly be higher than reported.

## E Further information

The web portal “Refugees/migrants emergency response – Mediterranean” can be found at:  
<http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>.

JUNE 2014–PRESENT

## South-East Asia: The Regional Mixed Movements Monitoring Unit



### A Background and rationale

Mixed maritime movements passing through South-East Asia have proliferated in recent years, with over 170,000 people estimated to have departed by sea from Myanmar and Bangladesh between 2012 and 2015. Such movements have been reported on by the media and NGOs, but their clandestine nature makes it difficult for UNHCR, and the international community generally, to verify these reports. The Regional Mixed Movements Monitoring Unit (R3MU) was established in the UNHCR Regional Office for South-East Asia, based in Bangkok, to remedy this information shortfall.

### B Actors

- UNHCR

### C Actions

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- The R3MU undertakes regular missions to interview individuals who travelled as part of mixed movements. Since its inception in June 2014, the unit has undertaken 80 missions in the region, mostly to Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia.
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- The unit monitors mixed maritime movements through regular contact with communities of potential travelers and through satellite imagery.
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- It publishes regular reports that detail the routes, conditions, and trends of mixed maritime movements in the region.
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- The R3MU produces public information material that raises awareness of the precarious situation of individuals in mixed maritime movements.
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- It has developed an information campaign to feed information on conditions of travel to communities of potential travelers.

## D Review

The establishment of the R3MU in mid-2014 has been very valuable in providing UNHCR with the most up-to-date and wide-ranging information available on movements in the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea. Since its inception in June 2014 and through its regional missions, the R3MU has interviewed over 1,000 individuals who travelled in mixed movements, largely by sea. Information gathered by the R3MU allowed UNHCR and its partners to immediately highlight and address the needs of some 5,000 refugees and migrants who were abandoned at sea in May 2015. The R3MU has published seven reports on mixed movements in South-East Asia that have been widely covered in the media, including on CNN and in *The New York Times*. The R3MU has also produced multimedia public information material to help raise awareness of the situation.

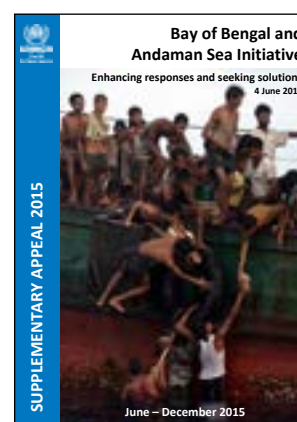
Through the R3MU and its partners, UNHCR was able to highlight the significantly increased scale and changing nature of movements in 2015 and to inform governments of the various protection concerns of those undertaking such movement. Through interviews with refugees and stateless people, the R3MU provided detailed information on the modus operandi of smugglers, the extortion of travellers' relatives, and the brutal treatment and, sometimes, killing of those making the journey. It was the discovery of mass graves in the smugglers' camps in Thailand and Malaysia that raised international awareness and drew media attention to the situation, giving rise to a new effort to meaningfully address a longstanding critical humanitarian situation.

The work of the R3MU will be continued and expanded to recognize new routes as they emerge and help meet the information campaign needs by providing factual information about the risks and mistreatment faced by travellers at the hands of smugglers and traffickers in source, transit and destination countries.

## E Further information

UNHCR, "Mixed movements update for south-east Asia", January–June 2016, is available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/57d00d8a4.html>.

A supplementary appeal, "Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea Initiative: Enhancing responses and seeking solutions", 4 July 2015, is available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/557040af9.pdf>.



A R3MU-produced multimedia feature on May 2015 events in the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea is available at: <http://tracks.unhcr.org/2015/08/abandoned-at-sea/>.