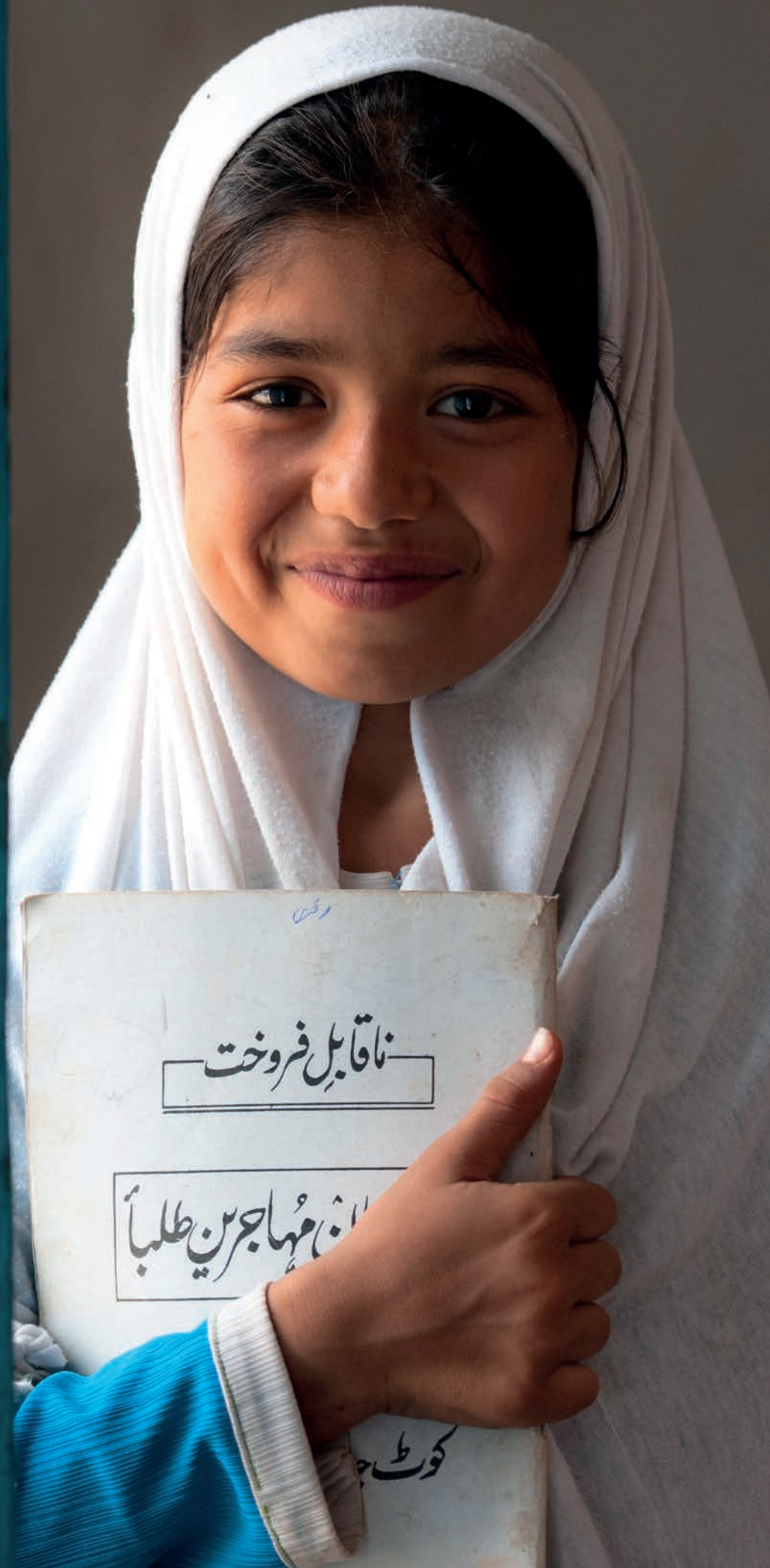


Bibi Ayisha, eleven years old, is an Afghan refugee studying at a school for girls in Kot Chandana refugee village, Pakistan.



BUILDING BETTER FUTURES

The ultimate objective of UNHCR's work is to seek durable solutions for those who are forced to flee from conflict and serious human rights violations. Nevertheless, it can take years before it is safe for displaced populations to return home, or to find a new place they can call home. And so it is fundamental to help these individuals and communities to retain a sense of human dignity and hope for the future.

UNHCR works to empower refugees and other people of concern and to help them maximize their potential for growth and development. The Office assists in this process by promoting access to education, skills training and productive livelihoods.

The organization continues to promote more inclusive, sustainable and development-oriented approaches to programming for refugees.

In addition, UNHCR continues to facilitate resettlement for refugees with specific protection needs that cannot be addressed in the country where they have sought asylum.

In this chapter:

- Multi-year planning for solutions
- Complementary pathways to protection and solutions
- Promoting access to inclusive and quality education
- Facilitating voluntary repatriation in safety and dignity
- Building self-reliance
- Enabling access to energy



UNHCR/Frédéric Noy

MULTI-YEAR PLANNING FOR SOLUTIONS

The number of people of concern to UNHCR today continues to rise at a higher rate than comprehensive durable solutions are being realized. UNHCR takes a progressive approach to solutions that entails incorporating solutions-oriented planning into the early stages of displacement and that recognizes that truly durable solutions for all population groups require long-term investments, through multi-year, multi-partner strategies that address the four dimensions of a solution: the legal, the economic, the social-cultural and the civil-political.

UNHCR has launched a multi-year planning pilot to explore how the existing planning system supports or hinders planning. Selected operations in Tanzania, Ghana, Senegal, Uganda, Ecuador and Costa Rica are developing protection and solutions strategies,

working with all levels of government and with a wide array of partners on strategies designed to achieve concrete, longer-term protection and solutions objectives.

The pilots will provide an evidence-base to improve support to other operations already moving towards multi-year planning and to identify and design any necessary changes to planning, budgeting and reporting systems. The pilot will serve as the first step towards adapting to a planning and programming environment that recognizes the longevity of displacement and statelessness situations and, therefore, the necessity of direct and early links to a wider range of national actors and to national development planning, as well as to international actors focused on longer-term support.

Tanzania is implementing an integration strategy for some 160,000 newly naturalized Tanzanians and those former Burundian refugees whose processes are ongoing. The strategy is also exploring how emergency and longer term responses for other populations can be better designed to support local growth and multiple solutions over the medium to longer-term, complementing ongoing large-scale resettlement of the Congolese refugee population.

Uganda is focusing on enhancing self-reliance and resilience and supporting a range of pathways towards legal solutions, including resettlement, as an integral part of national development and regional planning.

Costa Rica and Ecuador are both addressing the links between economic self-sufficiency and eligibility for naturalisation and Ghana is exploring how refugees from ECOWAS member states can benefit from regional agreements in the search for definitive solutions. In Senegal, the last elements of a comprehensive approach to solutions for Mauritanian refugees will require regional commitment but the strategy aims for definitive solutions for the people caught in a generation-long situation.

Other operations are also working towards comprehensive solutions

planning, including with the support of the Solutions Alliance. The strategy developed in Zambia supports a comprehensive solution including a strong legal element, as well as ties to broader development planning in settlement areas. In Somalia, the goal of the national group is to use the national development plan and support from international donors and technical experts to improving the inclusion of refugee and IDP returnees in national development plans and priorities. Protection and solutions planning in other regions is also leading to approaches that will be formalized in the coming years.

Seeds for Solutions

Through Seeds for Solutions funding, more than 20 UNHCR operations have been provided financial and technical support in 2015 and are currently applying solutions-oriented interventions in their programming, including in the documentation of legal solutions; support for greater self-reliance; skills training; infrastructure investments to support social cohesion and the inclusion of persons of concern to UNHCR in national systems and other key contributions to comprehensive solutions. In the cases of Niger, Sri Lanka and Somalia, Seeds for Solutions facilitated the launching of programmes that were later able to continue independently of the initiative's support.



UNHCR/Roger Arnold

COMPLEMENTARY PATHWAYS TO PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS

UNHCR works in partnership with governments and others to identify and share information about and, where necessary, to adapt legislation, policy, and existing administrative systems that can facilitate refugees' search for protection and solutions. Humanitarian pathways, such as resettlement and other humanitarian admission programmes, private sponsorship programmes for individuals in humanitarian need, some special humanitarian visas, and medical evacuation are designed to provide protection and solutions for refugees at risk.

Complementary pathways may not be specifically based on the protection risks faced by refugees, but can offer protection and solutions for refugees and serve as an important expression of solidarity and responsibility sharing. Such pathways may include: family reunification for extended family members that do not fall within resettlement criteria, points-based and labour migration and labour mobility schemes and academic scholarships and apprenticeships.

UNHCR has been exploring the possibility of alternate pathways to solutions for some time, including through formal studies in the MERCOSUR and ECOWAS regions exploring how schemes that permit nationals to move and work freely could offer secure futures for refugees. In addition to new opportunities opening for safe labour mobility and education schemes, some West African States are looking at how the ECOWAS framework and their own national laws could offer facilitated pathways to permanent residency and, in some cases, naturalization.

Ensuring protection through resettlement

In 2015, global resettlement needs exceeded 1 million places for the first time. The number of refugees and migrants arriving in mixed flows in Europe increased dramatically, prompting a surge of political and public interest in refugee and migration issues. Many countries

announced additional resettlement quotas in 2015 specifically for Syrian refugees, who made up the majority of arrivals to Europe.

UNHCR resettlement submissions to resettlement countries in 2015 exceeded 133,000 – a 28 per cent increase on 2014. The number of resettlement States also grew, with Italy and the Republic of Korea announcing pilot resettlement programmes which began in 2015.

The organization's submissions from Africa exceeded 38,800 individuals in 2015 – a 147 per cent increase since 2012. Almost 90 per cent of the total resettlement submissions from Africa in 2015 were made to the United States.

Resettlement out of Asia continued to decrease; however there was one notable milestone during the year: the number of Bhutanese refugees resettled out of Nepal since 2007 reached more than 100,000.

“Globally, resettlement continued to play a crucial protection role in UNHCR's response to forced displacement. More than 81,000 refugees departed for resettlement in 2015.”

- High Commissioner Filippo Grandi

From the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey, some 70,000 people were submitted for resettlement and humanitarian admission during 2015, including more than 52,000 Syrian refugees. The Syria Core Group has played a pivotal role in ensuring continued support for resettlement from host States in the region, by demonstrating that large-scale resettlement can be an effective means of sharing responsibility for refugee protection. The Syria Core Group has also been an important forum for addressing issues related to integrity and status adjudication, enabling States to move forward with expedited and simplified resettlement procedures to address the needs of displaced Syrians.

The resettlement needs of Iraqi refugees remained significant, with more than 11,000 Iraqi refugees submitted for resettlement in 2015.

The unprecedented level of interest in resettlement and other forms of admission for refugees required UNHCR to significantly increase its response capacity. Preparation for a global upscaling of resettlement began in late 2015, as UNHCR predicted a 37 per cent increase in resettlement submissions in 2016 in order to meet quotas.

The Office continued to focus on upholding the integrity of asylum systems throughout the year, as well as reviewing and revising its relevant policy and operational guidelines in order to reduce the risk of fraud. A new policy and guidelines – to be issued in 2016 – are expected to provide a comprehensive framework for addressing fraud and include prevention, detection, and investigation measures aimed at all stages of case processing, including registration, refugee status determination and resettlement. Emphasis will be placed on tracking and reporting fraud or fraud-like incidents, which will allow the organization to proactively identify trends. Dedicated anti-fraud posts were introduced in several operations, including Kenya and Malaysia.

The chairing of the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) and the Working Group on Resettlement (WGR) was passed to the Netherlands by the Norwegian Government. During 2015, resettlement States, UNHCR, NGOs, and resettled refugees participated in no less than five WGR meetings. It was agreed that core and contact groups would meet on an annual basis to discuss work plans and how to achieve a simpler approach to resettlement processing, including the potential use of electronic submissions. ■

Areas of intervention in 2015	Key achievements in 2015
Durable solutions	
Comprehensive solutions strategy developed, strengthened or updated	
Develop and implement solutions strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ UNHCR in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda piloted a multi-year and multi-partner protection and solutions strategy. ■ 20 countries received Seeds for Solutions (see <i>Glossary</i>) funding to strengthen their solutions strategies and interventions, and to support the implementation and the monitoring of activities.
Potential for resettlement realized	
Submit resettlement files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In 2015, UNHCR resettlement submissions rose to more than 133,000 – 28% more than the 103,890 individuals submitted in 2014. ■ Efforts were made with resettlement States to reduce the time between submission and departure. 81,273 people departed in 2015 – an 11% increase on 73,330 in 2014. ■ Since the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement in July 2014, UNHCR has been calling for the resettlement of 10% of the Syrian refugee population. At the end of 2015, more than 162,000 pledges of resettlement places were made for Syrian refugees. ■ There were slightly fewer resettlement submissions than the previous year from Iraqi refugees in the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey – 10,930 were submitted in 2015, a 6% decrease compared to 11,608 in 2014. ■ More than 52,000 Syrians were submitted for resettlement consideration from the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey, compared to 20,903 Syrian refugees in 2014. This included Syrians from Jordan (22,273), Lebanon (18,476) and Turkey (8,091). ■ UNHCR submitted more than 38,800 resettlement applications from Africa in 2015, compared to 35,079 in 2014. This includes more than 20,460 Congolese refugees, bringing the total since 2012 to over 57,000. ■ In 2015, 56 victims of trafficking were submitted for resettlement consideration from Egypt, compared to 203 in 2014. Victims of trafficking who departed for resettlement increased from 51 individuals in 2014 to 175 individuals in 2015. ■ In some places, insecurity made access to refugees challenging in 2015 necessitating the continued use of video conferencing from Yemen, the Syrian Arab Republic, and some operations in Africa.
Assure the integrity of resettlement procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A revised policy and operational guidelines were drafted to address fraud committed by people of concern to UNHCR.
Undertake capacity-building initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 500 UNHCR staff and affiliate workforce participated in a number of webinars conducted in 2015, covering resettlement registration form writing, the worldwide refugee admissions processing system, and resettlement assessment tools.



UNHCR/Jonathan Rashad

PROMOTING ACCESS TO INCLUSIVE AND QUALITY EDUCATION

UNHCR's *Education Strategy 2012-2016* places particular focus on assuring the provision of refugee education, not as a peripheral stand-alone service, but as a core component of UNHCR's protection and durable solutions mandate. Quality education that builds relevant skills and knowledge enables refugees to live healthy, dignified, productive lives and become more self-reliant.

In 2015, UNHCR implemented multi-year, country-specific education strategies in 25 priority countries and continued its work to achieve greater inclusion of refugee children in national education services.

Through the Educate a Child (EAC) global programme, in 2015 UNHCR launched a three-year initiative to provide access to education for more than 700,000 refugee children who are currently out of school in 12 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. This initiative built on existing efforts by EAC and UNHCR that

has already given more than 400,000 refugee children access to primary education since 2012.

The Office continued to utilize technology and innovative learning modalities to increase access to quality, certified education. This work is the focus of UNHCR's Learn Lab, which works to enhance and expand educational programming for people of concern using innovative approaches. More than 80,000 students in 11 countries participated in Learn Lab initiatives, and a notable improvement in exam performance results in Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, as well as a positive psychosocial impact, have been observed.

In addition, more than 3,400 refugees in 42 countries were given higher education scholarships through the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) and other programmes in 2015. ■

GLOBAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Education

School enrolment rates for Nigerian refugees in the Far North region of **Cameroon** significantly increased in 2015, from 61 per cent to 90 per cent. UNHCR and partners have been running a bilingual curriculum to conform to the education system of Cameroon. Three primary schools were established in Minawao camp and

staffed with both Cameroonian and refugee teachers. Student-parent-teacher associations were created to support awareness raising and community engagement in relation to education.

In **South Sudan**, however, major protection concerns persist despite intensified efforts to improve

access and retention in primary education and include refugees in the national education system. Dropout rates remained high due to reductions in food rations, child labour, teacher strikes and lack of sanitary materials for girls.

Areas of intervention in 2015	Key achievements in 2015
Basic needs and essential services	
Population has optimal access to education	
Provide technical support to operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-year, country-specific education strategies were implemented in 25 priority countries, in line with <i>UNHCR's Education Strategy 2012-2016</i>. Regional education strategies were developed for the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Syria situations.
Increase enrolment rates for out-of-school children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the Educate a Child (EAC) and UNHCR partnership, new efforts have been made to provide access to education for more than 700,000 out-of-school refugee children in 12 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. EAC and UNHCR had already enrolled more than 400,000 refugee children in primary education since 2012.
Strengthen data management and monitoring of learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data management was strengthened globally, with a focus on measuring enrolment and retention in school, and on developing the capacity of UNHCR staff and partners at country-level on data analysis to help improve evidence-based programming.
Promote the use of technology in education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 80,000 students in 11 countries participated in Learn Lab initiatives, with improvements noted in exam performance results in Kenya and Tanzania during 2015.
Enhance access to tertiary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 3,400 refugees in 42 countries were granted higher education scholarships through DAFI and other initiatives, with the number of Syrian refugee recipients doubling between 2014 and 2015. Certified connected e-learning initiatives using blended approaches (face-to-face and online instruction) enabled 1,400 students in Jordan, Kenya, Malawi and Rwanda to participate in higher education. A connected learning consortium of higher education partners worked together on new means to improve learning outcomes for refugees through blended approaches.



UNHCR/Diana Diaz

FACILITATING VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION IN SAFETY AND DIGNITY

In 2015, conditions for voluntary repatriation continued to be challenging and not conducive to the safe return of refugees in many operations. In 2015, a total of 201,416 refugees opted for voluntary repatriation, 75,416 higher than the 126,000 refugees who voluntarily repatriated in 2014.

A total of 58,460 Afghans repatriated to Afghanistan in 2015. Shrinking asylum space and lack of access to protection elsewhere is thought to have contributed to these returns, which are an increase over the previous year despite deteriorating security conditions.

In Côte d'Ivoire, voluntary repatriation resumed in late 2015 (after the suspension in 2014 due to the Ebola virus) and 1,226 refugees returned to their communities of origin by end December. Significantly more have returned since the beginning of 2016 and the pace continues to increase.

UNHCR and partners supported the voluntary repatriation of 5,709 individuals from Kenya to Somalia. In Mali, the registration of returnees was resumed in August, leading to the registration of 4,088 spontaneous returnees by the end of 2015.

The Office had planned the voluntary repatriation of 20,000 Rwandan refugees from North and South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2015, although only 5,193 people repatriated voluntarily.

UNHCR closed the chapter on the voluntary repatriation of former Angolan refugees with approximately 4,600 persons returning in 2015, of which 3,886 returned from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. ■



UNHCR/Sebastian Rich

BUILDING SELF-RELIANCE

UNHCR works to enable refugees to carry out safe and secure livelihood activities while they are living in host communities and after they go home, with various forms of support services, to help them gain lawful access to markets and acquire the human, financial, social, and physical capital that may be required to work productively.

In 2015, the Office continued to implement its five-year *Global Strategy for Livelihoods (2014-2018)* which aims to ensure a sustainable income for refugees by linking their productive capacity to market opportunities through evidence-based and technically-sound livelihoods programming.

In line with the Global Strategy, *Operational Guidelines on the Minimum Criteria for Livelihoods Programming* were issued in 2015. The minimum criteria outlined the most important steps for effective planning, implementing and monitoring of livelihood programmes in

order to maximize the impact of UNHCR's interventions. Through these minimum criteria, UNHCR operations were able to conduct socio-economic and market assessments, as well as value-chain analyses, to assist in developing context-specific, multi-year strategic plans, while ensuring results through proper targeting, quality partnerships and expertise. By the end of 2015, 97 UNHCR operations had compliance plans in place for achieving the mandatory minimum criteria.

Right to work

UNHCR partnered with ILO and others to support field operations in conducting market assessments and value-chain analyses. In Zambia, UNHCR and ILO organized entrepreneurial training programmes to ensure sustainable livelihood opportunities for refugees.

UNHCR has also been working with the International Trade Centre to promote access to work with governments and employers.

Collaboration with Governments, NGOs and civil society in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas is exploring how civil society and the private sector can contribute to employment opportunities for refugees and others of concern.

The Graduation Approach

Throughout the year, UNHCR successfully pursued the Graduation Approach (see *Glossary*) in Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt and Zambia, which aims to help people to 'graduate' out of poverty through a targeted, sequenced and time-limited livelihood support process. This process would see them earn an income to cover their basic needs through safe and sustainable work opportunities or self-employment.

In Costa Rica, the Graduation Model was included in the country's 2015-2018 National Development Plan. Progress was made in granting refugees access to national programmes on poverty reduction, employability and development. Through its corporate social responsibility scheme, *Vivir la Integración*, UNHCR worked with roughly 90 companies in Costa Rica to provide access to training and sustainable employment opportunities for refugees. Since 2014, an estimated 2,000 people of concern in Costa Rica have begun to achieve socio-economic integration thanks to the Graduation Approach, and 300 refugees and asylum-seekers had found employment through *Vivir la Integración*.

UNHCR's graduation programme in Egypt supported refugees in urban areas to improve their livelihoods through obtaining a sustainable wage or self-employment. A mid-term evaluation

conducted in 2015 showed that 754 participants had been employed and 797 had successfully started their own business. According to initial estimates, the average income per person per month had increased by around 18 per cent in Cairo and 27 per cent in Alexandria.

A business incubator model developed by UNHCR in Ecuador, together with the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador Esmeraldas, sought to provide refugees, asylum-seekers and vulnerable populations with entrepreneurial skills to develop their businesses. The initiative has supported 28 enterprises over two years with only a few unsuccessful ventures (14 per cent) compared to the significant 90 per cent overall failure rate of enterprises in Esmeraldas within two years. On average, the businesses supported by this initiative have increased their income by 10 per cent.

New opportunities

Three additional sectors in which refugees have demonstrated great potential to be active economic agents of change are artisan work, agriculture and telework (working remotely with the aid of online technologies). These sectors were chosen for specific support in view of the global growth trends, as well as their potential for employing large numbers of people in developing countries.

In 2015, an estimated 37 per cent of Malian refugees in Sahel camps and the urban centre of Bobo-Dioulasso were skilled artisans, of whom 19 per cent were heads of household. A value-chain analysis revealed the high potential of the artisan sector for refugees to generate sustainable income, and UNHCR worked to address some of the challenges

that refugee artisans face in accessing tools, skills and markets. To harness the potential for artisan activities in Burkina Faso, the Office started a project to contribute to the socio-economic well-being and self-reliance of 1,000 Malian refugee artisans in Goudebou and Mentao camps, as well as in the urban centre of Ouagadougou. It supported product innovations, facilitated access to production inputs and infrastructure, developed skills and entrepreneurship, and provided links to local and international markets.

Nonetheless, despite concrete successes and UNHCR's ongoing

efforts to increase its technical expertise, the implementation of livelihood programming in many contexts remained complex and were hindered by the lack of an enabling environment, resulting in legal, political, social and economic challenges for people of concern in accessing work and market opportunities. Sparse resources continued to limit the capacity of the Office and its partners to design, implement and monitor livelihood programmes that could make a remarkable difference in opening up economic opportunities for people of concern. ■

GLOBAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Local integration

Political support for local integration varies greatly across different operational contexts. In **Georgia**, UNHCR contributed to the development of an integration strategy and action plan to improve prospects for integration of refugees, which has now been approved by Parliament. In **Bolivia**, the Government established a coordination mechanism to address local integration issues, in line with a comprehensive plan to strengthen protection and durable solutions, developed with technical guidance and funding of UNHCR.

In the **Gambia**, advocacy efforts targeting local authorities enabled refugees to acquire plots of land for residential and farming purposes and secured a waiver of the 'expatriate' tax for refugee employees. In September 2015, the Government of **Zambia** approved expanded criteria for the local integration of Angolans, offering local integration to all former Angolan refugees who arrived in Zambia by 2003, as well as for some 4,000 Rwandans.

Areas of intervention in 2015	Key achievements in 2015
Durable solutions	
Self-reliance and livelihoods	
Improve the quality of livelihoods programming in UNHCR field operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Technical support was provided to: 3 country operations for rural and agricultural programming; 3 operations for artisanal programming; and 2 operations for community technology access programming. ■ Technical training on the <i>Minimum Criteria for Livelihoods Programming</i> was conducted for 12 operations. ■ Operational guidelines on the <i>Minimum Criteria for Livelihoods Programming</i> were released and global compliance was monitored through a survey covering 97 operations. Country-specific compliance plans were also developed.
Develop multi-year self-reliance strategies in priority countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strategies to link refugee profiles and market opportunities were completed in 5 additional countries.
Expand field capacity to deliver quality livelihoods programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An online roster of livelihood experts was developed and managed. ■ 6 additional expert livelihood practitioners were recruited in the field. ■ 2 regional livelihoods officers were deployed to better support operations. ■ A livelihoods learning programme was developed for UNHCR and partner staff.
Build internal UNHCR capacity to integrate and adopt the graduation approach in livelihoods programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A workshop was held with all 5 Graduation Approach pilot operations in order to gather lessons learned and develop guidelines on its adoption for urban refugees.
Improve refugees' access to entrepreneurial loans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Case studies and guidelines drafted in partnership with the social performance task force were used as advocacy and training tools for financial service providers willing to provide loans to refugee entrepreneurs.
Potential for integration realized	
Facilitate acquisition of residence permits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2,557 temporary residence permits were delivered to former Angolan refugees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. ■ 1,120 residency visas were issued to refugees and asylum-seekers in Ecuador. ■ It was anticipated that 2,000 Togolese refugees would receive residence permits in Ghana in 2015. However, a different strategy on legal local integration is being pursued to ensure longer-term residency rights (including potentially naturalization). ■ Some 1,200 residence permits have been distributed to former Angolan refugees in Zambia. Some 1,100 former Angolan refugees and Zambian nationals have been allocated land plots under the national settlement scheme as part of the Government of Zambia Local Integration Strategy for former Angolan refugees. ■ Technical and financial support was provided in the Americas (Panama, Nicaragua, Mexico, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, El Salvador, Guatemala), as well as in India and Georgia, for 1,291 refugees to pursue alternative migratory solutions, including by obtaining family reunification visas, residence visas or naturalization. ■ The Government of the Gambia agreed to provide multi-year residence and work permits (5 to 15 years) to refugees to integrate locally and approved the exemption of expatriate tax on refugees, which encourages employment of refugees and facilitates their economic integration. ■ Practical guidance on rule-of-law initiatives, such as right to work, housing land and property and access to justice, were developed in the Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Myanmar and Senegal, with pilot projects in housing land and property initiated in the Central African Republic, Myanmar and Senegal.
Naturalization process facilitated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Over 151,000 former Burundian refugees received citizenship certificates from the Government of Tanzania as part of a multi-party comprehensive solutions strategy.
Community mobilization strengthened and expanded	
Strengthen delivery of community-based protection interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The <i>Community-Based Protection in Action</i> series was produced, with the first two issues covering community centres and community-based outreach, to support the operationalization of community-based protection by highlighting successful approaches and methodologies based on good practices from UNHCR operations. ■ An online community of practice was developed with partners, bringing together resources and examples of good practices from the field to facilitate peer learning between humanitarian and protection actors around the world. ■ Targeted technical support was provided to 8 operations through field missions, training and remote support.



UNHCR/Ivor Prickett

ENABLING ACCESS TO ENERGY

UNHCR launched a five-year *Global Strategy for Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE)* in 2014 to improve the quality of life in refugee camps and hosting communities by enabling refugees' access to clean energy facilities for cooking and lighting. The provision of lighting, energy and fuel in camps contribute to safeguarding refugees from protection risks such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), which often occurs in the search for firewood and during hours of darkness. In 2015, UNHCR's operations paid particular attention to supporting the use of new or improved renewable energy technologies for refugee households in a number of settings, and to documenting these efforts to determine whether and how they may be replicated.

The Office has ongoing solar farm projects in Azraq and Za'atari refugee camps in Jordan, to meet lighting and low-powered energy needs. Excess energy is channeled back to the Jordanian national grid. In Bangladesh, UNHCR was able to convert all human

waste in one camp into biogas that could be used for cooking.

In the Jijiga camps in Ethiopia, refugees who previously used kerosene now use healthier and safer ethanol-fuelled cooking stoves. This shift resulted in the creation of a carbon financing project to generate carbon credit that allows UNHCR to provide additional stoves, fuel or other services. UNHCR is expanding the use of ethanol cooking stoves to three additional locations in the country.

In Kenya's Dadaab camps, a pilot test using liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) was underway. In addition to the health benefits stemming from clean energy, the use of LPG for cooking reduces negative environmental impacts and has the potential to lessen tensions that may arise between refugees and the host community over the depletion of common natural resources.

The integration of a responsible natural resource management component into energy programming remains fundamental to UNHCR. It is key to

addressing some of the negative environmental impacts that often accompany refugee influxes and associated humanitarian operations, and for determining ways in which well designed, innovative and participatory resource management can contribute to securing safe and sustainable energy access and livelihoods in these contexts.

UNHCR operations supported a range of environmental resilience projects, including

reforestation programmes in refugee sites and environmental-awareness promotion. Similarly, the Office was looking at ways to reduce its carbon footprint and energy costs by utilizing renewable energy sources for staff accommodation, administration and water delivery. Seeking accreditation to the Green Climate Fund and financing opportunities will have considerable impact on potential funding for environmental management, renewable energy and climate change adaptation. ■

Areas of intervention in 2015	Key achievements in 2015
Environment and energy	
Implement the UNHCR Global Strategy for Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 10 operations developed a country-specific SAFE strategy (Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nepal, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda). These strategies resulted in a shift from over-reliance on firewood as the main source of cooking energy to other eco-friendly sources. In Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Kenya, for example, ethanol, solar cookers, liquefied petroleum gas and other alternative energy technologies have been tested. ■ In 2015, close to 99,000 households received fuel-efficient cookstoves in five countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda) and more than 99,700 households received solar lanterns. In Ethiopia alone, 52% of households received clean cookstoves and 66% solar lamps.
Increase knowledge of energy interventions through strengthened monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In collaboration with the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves and Berkeley Air Monitoring, UNHCR worked to set minimum standards for cooking technologies that can be procured at various stages of an emergency response. The Office was working simultaneously to produce guidance on monitoring, evaluation and performance measurement of energy programming, with the aim of ensuring the use of appropriate and sustainable cookstoves and fuel supplies. ■ A study in Chad for the Light Years Ahead project indicated that with the introduction of solar lamps, households had cut their expenditure on lighting by half. Moreover, 94% of the individuals interviewed indicated that the solar street lights had greatly improved the sense of security at night time.
Expand energy and environment expertise and capacity in field operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Energy and environment training was conducted for participants from 17 country operations. ■ An online learning programme on safe access to fuel and energy in refugee situations was developed to build UNHCR and partner staff's awareness and capacity to handle this. The eLearning programme was due to be rolled out in 2016.
Test innovative approaches to energy and environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The carbon credit cooking stove project, launched in Rwanda with the involvement of 300 refugees, not only helped the refugees to earn an income but also generated EUR 50,000 in 2015. ■ The introduction of the environmental management plan for Mahana camp in Rwanda included: the procurement of improved cooking stoves for 20,000 households; the establishment of a sludge-management system for the temporary water treatment plant and a specific environmental management plan for the construction and operation of a permanent water treatment plant at the site. ■ Pay as you go (PAYG) technologies linked livelihoods and energy priorities, and the first renewable energy and livelihoods joint intervention to create energy co-ops and income-generation opportunities for refugee and host communities across 3,300 households was launched. ■ The Azraq Electrification Project was implemented in Jordan. In Chad, UNHCR was developing hybrid systems for offices and accommodation in addition to designing a land restoration pilot project. ■ UNHCR in Nepal is exploring the feasibility of installing a mini-grid with Engineers Without Borders. Mini-grids provide power in remote areas that are not linked to the national grid.

Giving refugees from Colombia a stable life in Ecuador

This article is an adapted version of a UNHCR news story.
8 April 2015

SANTO DOMINGO DE LOS TSACHILAS,

Ecuador | Her grandparents share Paula's* dream that someday she will be a veterinarian, but success is unlikely without stable employment. A new programme involving UNHCR is giving 200 refugee families like them new hope.

"Since she was a child, Paula has dreamed of becoming a veterinarian," said Amelia, looking at her 15-year-old granddaughter. "All I want is to offer her the opportunity to make her dream come true."

Their chances of success are being increased by a new programme, the Graduation Model, which is using a comprehensive approach to make refugees self-sufficient. In addition to the previous relief assistance, participants will receive vocational training, financial education and legal assistance.

Amelia has raised her granddaughter Paula since they fled to Ecuador in 2006 after death threats by members of an illegal armed group in Colombia. Paula's mother, pregnant at the time, stayed in their home country.

Despite their efforts, it has been hard for Amelia and her husband – both elderly – to secure stable employment. The odd jobs they have taken on are barely enough for daily needs. Paula is often forced to miss entire weeks of school to help her grandmother.

Many Colombian refugees in Ecuador – lacking social networks and resources – cannot find stable employment. Creating



UNHCR/G.Menezes

Families attending the official launch of the Graduation Model programme in Ecuador.

employment opportunities is essential to alleviating poverty and integrating these vulnerable people.

To address this need, UNHCR and a number of state and partner organizations, in coordination with the private sector, have launched the Graduation Model in Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, a refugee-hosting city 200 kilometres from the capital, Quito.

The pilot – involving the local government, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the Jesuit Refugee Service, the national Banco del Pichincha and a financial education provider *Fundación CRISFE* – supports self-employment, formal wage earning and microfinance to create livelihood opportunities.

It goes beyond providing simple relief assistance to a more targeted and self-

empowering approach that offers consumption support, legal assistance, financial education and vocational training to refugees.

By participating in the Graduation Model, Amelia's family is hoping to secure a more stable income, allowing them to put some money aside for later needs like her granddaughter's education.

Banco Pichincha, Ecuador's largest banking institution, are providing these families with individual savings accounts and basic financial education.

In a couple of weeks, Amelia and her family will start receiving food support and will attend their first classes on financial education and self-reliance. •

**All names have been changed for confidentiality.*