

# **Operational Update**

October 2019

On 11 October, with support by UNHCR and UNICEF, six children from refugee families had a chance to accompany football players to the field during the Ukraine-Lithuania UEFA game in Kharkiv. UNHCR is grateful to the Ukrainian Football Development Organization for making this possible and bringing joy to the children that participated in the opening of the match. In October, the Cities of Solidarity Forum organized by UNHCR in Kharkiv brought together more than 100 participants from 36 cities and towns of Ukraine. The event focused on durable housing solutions for displaced persons and produced a set of recommendations on practical ways for IDPs to access social housing and other solutions. See page 6.

**Donbas** Jointly with the Development Centre (DDC), UNHCR provided non-food items (NFI) more than 250 to households with specific needs in 21 villages along the 'contact line'. All families who benefited from this assistance had lost almost everything when their homes were hit by shelling. See page 2.

# **KEY INDICATORS**

#### 22,455

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other conflictaffected persons have received legal assistance from UNHCR partners in 2019.

# 817

IDPs and other conflict-affected persons have been selected to **receive cash for protection** through the individual protection assistance programme (IPA) in 2019.

# 2,338

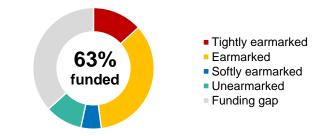
Households in eastern Ukraine have benefited from UNHCR shelter assistance in 2019.



This school hall in the conflict-affected village of Svitlodarsk was filled with joy and excitement by the visit of Clowns Without Borders-Spain (Payasos Sin Fronteras) who performed for local children and their parents. In October, the artists of CWB performed in dozens of settlements along the 'contact line'. CWB's performance included practical tips on techniques that can be used to cope and relieve stress. This was the third visit of CWB to Ukraine since 2018. Photo by UNHCR.

# FUNDING (AS OF 22 OCTOBER 2019) USD 27.8 million

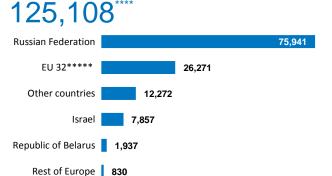
UNHCR's financial requirements 2019



INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)\* AND OTHER CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS\*\*

# 1.5 million<sup>\*\*</sup>

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS FROM UKRAINE



\*Residing more permanently in government-controlled areas (GCA) \*\*Vulnerable, conflict-affected persons living along the 'contact line' in GCA and non-government controlled areas (NGCA)

\*\*\*Sources: 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), UNHCR

\*\*\*\*Source: UNHCR PopStats, December 2018



# **Operational Highlights**



**Security Situation:** In October, a reciprocal disengagement of troops and arms was completed near the town of Zolote in Luhansk oblast, following a similar disengagement near Stanytsia Luhanska in June. The OSCE's Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) recorded 36,850 ceasefire violations, or a 111 per cent increase as compared to the previous month. In this context, the UNHCR-led Shelter Cluster reported 82 new civilian houses damaged or destroyed as a result of shelling or a 49 per cent increase compared to September. *Photo (first on the left) shows recent damages by shelling in the settlement of Vodiane in Donetsk oblast. Photo by UNHCR.* Twelve conflict-related civilian casualties (two killed and 10 injured) were reported by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in

Otober. In total, since the start of 2019, OHCHR recorded 155 civilian casualties (25 killed and 130 injured), the lowest level for this period since the start of the conflict.

**UNHCR's shelter programme reaching new settlements:** In October, UNHCR jointly with its NGO partners the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and Proliska were able to include residents of Opytne in Donetsk oblast into their shelter programme. During the month, fifty persons with specific needs received cash for shelter rehabilitation to repair their destroyed houses.

**Reaching those most in need:** Joining forces with its NGO partner the Donbas Development Centre (DDC), in October, UNHCR provided non-food items to more than 250 households with specific needs in 21 villages along the 'contact line'. This assistance includes blankets, bed linen, towels, solar lamps, kitchen sets and buckets. All families who benefited from this assistance lost almost everything as a result of the conflict. *Photo (first on the right) by DDC.* 





**Freedom of movement**: In October, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine recorded **1,23 million crossings** over the 'contact line', or a four per cent increase, compared to the previous month. During the reporting period, UNHCR's NGO partner the Right to Protection (R2P) **surveyed 2,352 individuals** at all five entry-exit checkpoints (EECPs) across the 'contact line' and reported the death of an elderly man at the Stanytsia Luhanska EECP. On 11 October, the movement across this EECP was suspended due to a bomb threat which caused the evacuation of civilians. Based on the appreciation for and usefulness of the first electric car functioning at Stanytsia Luhanska EECP since July, UNHCR and its NGO partner Proliska launched a second electric car to support additional

persons with specific needs across an 800-metres long stretch between both sides of the 'contact line'. During the reporting period, 18,214 individuals, 94 per cent out of which are elderly and persons with disabilities, benefited from this service. *Photo (second on the left) by UNHCR.* 

**PCP opening ceremony**: On 30 October, UNHCR launched a rehabilitated school hall in the settlement of Druzhba, which is located approximately three kilometers away from the 'contact line'. The facility will serve as a space for social events and leisure activities for the displaced and host communities. As part of its Peaceful Coexistence Projects programme, UNHCR supported repair works and facilitated the delivery of new chairs for their community meetings. *Photo (second on the right) by UNHCR.* 

**Protection monitoring**: During October, UNHCR and its NGO partners – DDC, Proliska, R2P, the Tenth of April, Most and Slavic Heart - conducted 577 protection monitoring visits to conflict-affected areas along the 'contact line'.





#### UNHCR'S RECENT REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS:

**[ONE PAGER] Latest Information Products:** this one page guide summarizes all of UNHCR Ukraine's recent IM products, reports and documents such as thematic factsheets, dashboards and UNHCR-led Clusters' reports.

[ARTICLE] "Millions in eastern Ukraine endure invisible wounds of war": this article explores the challenges faced by conflict affected persons who suffer from mental health related issues and the support provided by UNHCR and its partners to them.

[REPORT] "Protracted Temporality: How IDPs Live in Collective Centres": this report by UNHCR and R2P explores the challenges faced by IDPs who live in collective centres in Ukraine as well as UNHCR's advocacy around the issue.

**[ARTICLE] "27 years away from home"**: this article tells the story of a refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo whose struggle to become a citizen of Ukraine took 27 years.



# Humanitarian Development Nexus

On 2 October, UNHCR and UNDP held a joint meeting with communities in the conflict-affected settlement of Krasnohorivka. The joint event gathered local NGOs, community members, leaders and local authorities who jointly identified ways to address humanitarian and development challenges faced by persons residing in Krasnohorivka. The participants also learned about the different activities implemented by UNHCR and UNDP respectively. Recommendations and solutions identified will feed into the planning processes of both UNHCR and UNDP as the two agencies increase their efforts to work closely on finding solutions for conflict-affected communities in the framework of the Humanitarian-Development Nexus (HDN). *Picture (on the right) shows UNHCR facilitating a discussion between the different participants. Photo by UNHCR.* 





# **Donor Relations**

**Renovation of an ambulance centre by Hungary:** On 1 October, UNHCR facilitated a visit of the Ambassador of Hungary in Ukraine to the conflict-affected areas of Luhansk oblast. During his visit, the Ambassador of Hungary met with conflict affected communities, saw the challenges faced by them as well as visited the Stanytsia Luhanska EECP. During his visit, the Ambassador signed a partnership agreement between Proliska and the Hungarian Government to jointly renovate an ambulance station in Valuiske, which serves one of the largest districts in eastern Ukraine. The renovation of the Ambulance Station will benefit displaced persons and local villagers, all of which are conflict-affected. *Photo (second on the right) by UNHCR.* 





**ECHO mission to Stanytsia Luhanska EECPs:** On 22 October, UNHCR facilitated a visit of the EU's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) mission to Stanytsia Luhanska EECP. Focused on the improvement of conditions for crossing the 'contact line', the delegation observed the restoration of the damaged bridge and the electric cars launched by UNHCR and its NGO partner Proliska to assist conflict-affected people to cross between the two sides. *Photo (first on the left) by UNHCR*.

EU DG NEAR mission with UNHCR: On 29 October, UNHCR and UNICEF hosted

a delegation of the Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR). The delegation visited Hnutove EECP and a school in the village of Talakivka supported by UNHCR as a part of its community-based protection initiatives. **Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation's visit to Chermalyk:** On 29 October, UNHCR jointly with the UN Resident Coordinator office, UNICEF and OHCHR facilitated a mission of the Swedish Minister for Development Cooperation to eastern Ukraine. The delegation visited a community centre in Chermalyk, supported by UNHCR and its NGO partners. The Minister also expressed his interest in activities implemented jointly by UNHCR and UNDP in line with Humanitarian-Development Nexus. Photo (third on the right) by UNHCR.





NansenFest event by the Embassy of Norway: On 12 October, the NansenFest in Kyiv brought together more than 100 participants who came to celebrate the legacy of the first High Commissioner for Refugees (mandated by the League of Nations): Fridtjof Nansen. During the event, UNHCR's Representative delivered a speech on Nansen's visionary and innovative leadership that has greatly shaped and positively impacted the protection of displaced persons worldwide. Mustafa Jemilev, traditional leader of the Crimean Tatar people, who won UNHCR's prestigious "Nansen Award" in 1998 also participated. *Photo (on the right) by UNHCR.* 



# **Key Advocacy Messages for October**

UNHCR has long been advocating with the Government of Ukraine to introduce an administrative procedure for registering births and deaths happening in non-government controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts or the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. For nearly two years, there was little progress in the development of by-laws required to simplify the registration procedures. On 23 October, the Government adopted a resolution regarding an administrative procedure for birth and death registration; however, the text of the resolution has not been published. Neither UNHCR nor other UN or civil society organizations had an opportunity to comment on this particular text. Following the publication and analysis of the text, UNHCR will work with the authorities on implementing the procedure in a manner that is responsive to the specific needs of persons residing in NGCA and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.



#### MULTI-SECTOR RESPONSE TO REFUGEES AND STATELESS PERSONS

### **Protection of Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

- On 4 October, UNHCR's DAFI scholarship selection committee awarded scholarships to five new refugee students for the 2019-2020 academic year.
- Between 23 and 26 October, UNHCR's NGO partners the Right to Protection and the Tenth of April conducted training sessions aimed at enhancing the capacities of local legal partners in Lviv and Odesa oblasts. More than 30 lawyers and judges of administrative courts attended both events and improved their knowledge of international refugee protection standards.

1,988 Legal consultations

were provided to refugees and asylum seekers in Kyiv, Odesa, Zakarpattya and Kharkiv regions in October Social consultations were provided to refugees and asylum seekers in Kyiv, Odesa, Zakarpattya and Kharkiv regions in October Psychosocial Assistance provided to Refugees and asylum seekers received in October Home visits undertaken for refugees and asylum seekers, including unaccompanied minors in October

# Livelihood Interventions for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Since the start of 2019, UNHCR has approved 15 refugees' applications for self-reliance business grants. In October, the next interview cycle started to select candidates who will develop their business plans with UNHCR's support.



73

Refugees have started their own businesses with UNHCR self-reliance grants since launch the of the program in 2018



Naraiman\*, an asylum seeker from Tajikistan, has always been passionate about cars. This passion guided his career choice back home where he worked in a car repair shop. Naraiman has since owned a few workshops in the Russian Federation and in Crimea. However, in 2018 he fled to Ukraine with his family. From the beginning he found it difficult to find a job that would sustain them. Thanks to the UNHCR self-reliance grant opportunity, Naraiman was able to open his repair shop and register his business. He now has many clients and has even hired other refugees and asylum seekers. Photo: Naraiman explaining to UNHCR Deputy Representative about his life in Ukraine. Photo by UNHCR.



## Assistance to Stateless Persons and Persons at Risk of Statelessness

On 9 October, UNHCR delivered a lecture at the Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University on statelessness in Ukraine. During the lecture, UNHCR emphasized the obstacles faced by persons living in non-government controlled areas and conflict affected locations on obtaining civil documentation. The lecture was attended by 30 students from the Law Faculty and was part of activities aimed at observing the fifth anniversary of the #iBelong Statelessness Eradication Campaign in Ukraine



Stateless persons (or at risk of) were identified and provided with legal aid in Kyiv, Odesa, Zakarpattya and Kharkiv regions in October thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners' support



#### passports in October thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners' support

Persons received

Persons received duplicates of birth certificates in October thanks to UNHCR and NGO partners' support



#### PROTECTION FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED AND OTHER CONFLICT-AFFECTED PERSONS

#### **Protection Cluster**

- During the reporting period, the Protection Cluster reviewed projects for the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan. In total, 48 projects were submitted by 41 organizations. In 2020, Protection Cluster partners will target 1.35 million people. The humanitarian response will focus on advocacy at the national level, as well as on improving security for the local population through demining activities and mine risk education; enhancing protection of conflict-affected persons through mine victim assistance; provision of psychosocial support, counselling and individual case management on legal, GBV and child protection issues; and capacity building of local service providers. Many projects focus on assisting persons with specific needs, particularly those living in the isolated settlements.
- The Protection Cluster updated its Guidance Note on Gender and Protection Lens to assist partners in the preparation of their projects for the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan. The package of documents includes a General Information Notice, Updated Cluster objectives and strategic priorities, updated Protection Cluster Activity Matrix, Protection Cluster Vetting Criteria, Gender as well as thematic guidance from previous years.
- On 3 October, the Protection Cluster gave a presentation on the Protection Cluster's PSEA baseline survey to the Humanitarian Country Team. The survey was developed by the Protection Cluster to measure needs and gaps in PSEA prevention and response in Ukraine, and the results will form the basis of an action plan implemented by the PSEA Task Force.
- On 29 October, the Mine-Action Sub-Cluster held a meeting in Pokrovsk where partners discussed the harmonization of standards and approaches in delivering Mine Risk Education.
- On 31 October, the Protection Cluster released an Advocacy Note on Protection Concerns Related to Land Taxation in eastern Ukraine. Agricultural production is a key contributor to the food security and incomes of the population living in rural areas. More than 60% of households in rural areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions are involved in agricultural activities. The security situation, use of land for military fortifications and significant mine contamination prevent local residents and businesses from using land plots they own or rent. However, they still need to pay tax on this land, which is a key protection concern as it leads to financial difficulty. The note outlines the key challenges and advocates for tax exemption for agricultural lands, which cannot be used by their owners and renters.





# **UNHCR Protection Activities**



Durable housing solutions: On 3 October, UNHCR organized the Cities of Solidarity Forum in Kharkiv during which a set of recommendations were developed on how to improve access for IDPs to social housing and offer them long-term solutions. Recommendations included the establishment of revolving funds, leasing and 'rent-to-own' programmes for example. The Forum was attended by central and local authorities, donors, humanitarian actors and representative of displaced communities. *Photo (on the left) by UNCHR.* 

Advocacy interventions: On 16 October, UNHCR participated in the "Human Rights Agenda for the Parliament" Forum aimed at elaborating legislative solutions for conflict affected and internally displaced persons in Ukraine. The discussion centered on key protection areas, such as freedom of movement, access to pensions, overcoming discriminatory practices, and mine action.

**Communities' capacity building:** On 26 and 27 October, UNHCR's NGO partner Crimea SOS organized the "Ideas for Communities" festival where IDP and refugee-led organizations exchanged experience on advocating for housing solutions, NGO management and engaging youth into community work. In total, 88 representatives of 37 organizations from 15 oblasts participated in the event.



Persons benefited from individual protection counselling in October **49** 

Group consultations on protection-related issues were provided to 717 persons (63% female, 37% male) in areas along the 'contact line' in October



Internally displaced and other

conflict-affected persons

(72% female, 28% male) received

legal assistance from UNHCR and

its partners in October

In the month of October, UNHCR's NGO partners provided social accompaniment to 221 individuals who needed support in obtaining personal documentation, accessing state services, or receiving authorization to cross checkpoints, among other things. In some cases, individuals were supported with transportation to access public buildings and register for social services.

Andriy\*, 72, from Avdiivka in Donetsk oblast, survived the destruction of his home by shelling and subsequent fire in January this year. The fire destroyed all his documents and caused him to be hospitalized to treat the injuries he incurred. With no place to go and no family to turn to, Andriy remained in the hospital for over six months. Thanks to UNHCR's NGO partner Proliska, Andriy was supported by a social worker who helped him restore his passport and other official documents. The social worker also showed him how to processes the paperwork to confirm his disability status, and therefore, apply for social benefits. Proliska also negotiated with a medical home that will host Andriy and finalize his treatment. Photo by Proliska.





77% Female | 23% Male Persons received consultations in October During the reporting period, UNHCR's NGO partners Proliska and Most provided 151 vulnerable persons with psychological consultations to help conflict-affected persons deal with symptoms of psychological trauma, domestic violence, grief, depression, anxiety, and psychological tension.



# Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

On 5 October, UNHCR and its NGO partner Slavic Heart met with the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender in Sviatohirsk. During the event, the gender-based components of UNHCR's projects were discussed, including the assistance provided to survivors of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in conflict-affected areas and the role of women in rebuilding peace and security in eastern Ukraine.

# Individual Protection Assistance (IPA)

IPA cash and inkind beneficiaries selected in October UNHCR continues identifying and providing the most vulnerable conflict-affected individuals in eastern Ukraine with cash for protection, used to cover different types of needs – from winterization and livelihood items to medical examination or procedures. In September 2019, the number of beneficiaries, selected for IPA programme was 34 persons.

Alina\*, is a 63-year old pensioner who resides in a conflictaffected neighborhood of Donetsk city. She takes care of her 42-year-old daughter who is a person with a disability and her husband who has recently been diagnosed with cancer. Today, the family's scarce income is spent on life-saving activities and products, such as medical services, medicines and food. For the longest time, the family was unable to buy a wheelchair for their daughter. For this reason, Alina's daughter had to crawl around their apartment and could not go outside. Thanks to UNHCR's IPA-in-kind, the family received a wheelchair, providing a dignified way for Alina's daughter to move around. The wheelchair also means that Alina's daughter has greater autonomy and Alina can cater to other needs of their household. Photo by UNHCR.



# Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs)

**69** Projects approved in 2019

UNHCR supports small to medium-scale infrastructure repairs proposed by communities or local authorities in eastern Ukraine. PCPs aim at creating an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence between the displaced populations and host communities and complement the resilience of IDPs and affected communities. In total, since the beginning of 2019, UNHCR has initiated the implementation of 69 Peaceful Coexistence Projects (PCPs) in eastern Ukraine.



In the conflict-affected village of Oleksandrivka, residents needed to dismantle a 40-year-old playground which became unsafe for children and teenagers. The conflict compounded the deterioration of the playground because residents spent less time outside due to the conflict. Although well organized and mobilized, the residents were unable to raise enough funds on their own for the dismantling and reinstallation of a new playground. With support by UNHCR and its NGO partner the Donbas Development Center (DDC), the old playground was finally dismantled and a new one was constructed. Now the community can benefit from a modern playground that is accessible for children with disabilities. Photo by UNHCR.





Initiative

approved

in 2019

# Community Support Initiatives (CSIs)

UNHCR in Ukraine empowers communities of internally displaced and other conflict-affected persons throughout the country. CSIs implemented in the spirit of Community-Based Protection approach include a range of activities designed to mobilize and empower communities, strengthen their ability to organize emergency responses and self-advocate with local and national authorities in order to find durable solutions for their own protection.

There were no street lights in the village of Bulavynske in Donetsk oblast for the last years as the electric cable that was connected to this settlement's power grid was frequently damaged by conflict-related incidents. Local residents created an initiative group and turned to UNHCR and its partner DDC for support. As a result, 13 solar street lights were provided to the community and installed near schools, kindergartens, transport stops and other social institutions. These lights use only solar energy which means that local residents will be able to feel safer on the streets, regardless the availability of electricity in the settlement. Photo by DDC.





Shelter and NFI Achievements, Impact, and Identified Needs

719 Shelters repaired in 2019 thanks to UNHCR and partners' support

Persons received cash for shelter repairs in 2019 thanks to UNHCR and partners' support **1,039** Persons received Acute Emergency Kits in 2019 thanks to UNHCR and partners' support 7,818 Persons provided with NFI assistance in 2019 thanks to UNHCR and partners' support

### Shelter/NFI Cluster

During the reporting period, the UNHCR-led Shelter/NFI Cluster conducted working consultations with NGO partners to facilitate projects submission for the 2020 HRP process. In total, 21 projects with shelter component from 18 partners were selected to the HRP and were formally approved by Vetting Committee. These projects will target more than 119 thousand conflict-affected persons to address their shelter needs.



**13** Conflict-affected families relocated to safer homes in 2019 In 2019, with the conflict in Ukraine entering its fifth year with many families with specific needs still living under very difficult conditions in locations affected by the conflict, UNHCR initiated a pilot project of voluntarily relocating families who live in dangerous areas along the 'contact line'. Persons who benefit from this project are carefully selected based on protection vulnerability criteria and a security assessment of the settlements where they are relocated to.



# **Working in Partnership**

The humanitarian response to displacement in Ukraine is a coordinated effort by the government, international organizations, national and international NGOs. In providing support to persons of concern, UNHCR works closely with the Government of Ukraine. In the case of IDPs, UNHCR has signed a Letter of Understanding with the Ministry for Veterans, Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons. In the case of refugees and stateless persons, UNHCR cooperates closely with the State Migration Service of Ukraine. UNHCR works together with 13 NGO partners. UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster and Shelter/Non-food Items (NFI) Cluster. UNHCR together with OCHA also co-leads the logistics working group that is mainly responsible for humanitarian convoys to eastern Ukraine.

## **Financial Information**

UNHCR is grateful for critical financial support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programs with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

The indicative level of funding for the operation is US \$4,669,183 million. This figure is based on contributions earmarked to Ukraine, the indicative allocation of flexible funds and adjustments.

#### UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

#### Special thanks to the Major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Sweden 99.8 million | Private donors Spain 61.2 million | United Kingdom 44.6 million | Norway 44.5 million Netherlands 37.5 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 31 million | Germany 26.7 million
Denmark 24.4 million | Switzerland 15.1 million | Private Donors Japan 16.1 million | France 14 million
Private donors Italy 14.2 million | Private donors USA 11.7 million | Private Donors Sweden 10.4 million
Ireland 10.2 million

#### SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of softly earmarked contributions that can potentially be used for this operation due to their earmarking to a related situation or theme, or to the region or sub-region.

#### United States of America 14.9 million | Private donors Australia 10.12 million Private donors Republic of Korea 2.1 million

#### EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS TO UKRAINE | USD

United States of America 6.7 million | European Union 2.1 million | Germany 1.1 million | CERF 0.93 million Japan 0.84 million | Canada 0.57 million | Sweden 0.55 million | Norway 0.34 million | Russian Federation 0.25 million | Estonia 0.23 million | Lithuania 0.03 million | Private donors 0.03 million

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#### Links

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Please note that this report attempts to highlight the main activities implemented by UNHCR and its NGO partners within the selected reporting period. Please note that it is by no means exhaustive. For additional details about our work, do not hesitate to check www.unhcr.org/ua or, contact us directly at ukrkicom@unhcr.org.

\*Please note that the names of persons who appear in this report have been changed for their protection.