



# *Working in* Partnership



**I**n order to respond to the complex challenges of forced displacement and statelessness across the globe, UNHCR works with a wide range of actors, in particular other UN agencies, governments, international bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and academic institutions. This chapter presents some of the main trends in UNHCR's collaboration with partner organizations and gives a preview of anticipated work in this area in 2016. ●●●

With the help of an interpreter from the Greek NGO METAction, UNHCR staff provide procedural and legal information to a group of refugees on Chios island, Greece.

UNHCR/A. KITIDI

# Collectively building a more effective humanitarian system

**U**NHCR remains an active member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). Within the framework of the Transformative Agenda, in 2016 the Office will engage with the Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team and will further align UNHCR's emergency response systems with those of the IASC.

The organization will continue engaging in the Humanitarian Country Teams, while upholding its cluster leadership roles.

The IASC Accountability to Affected Populations and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Task Team, co-chaired by UNHCR, supports operational agencies to develop a culture of accountability throughout the humanitarian system. This task team has disseminated good practices and developed an advocacy strategy to ensure all humanitarian actors understand their roles and responsibilities.

The Refugee Coordination Model will remain a cornerstone of UNHCR's efforts to provide predictable and inclusive leadership and delivery of effective responses in refugee emergencies. Regional refugee response plans will provide a common platform for planning, delivering and fundraising, and refugee coordinators will be designated as needed. Close attention will be given to addressing the specific vulnerabilities and needs of refugees alongside those of other displaced and affected populations. UNHCR will revise and refine inter-agency coordination policy guidance as necessary in evolving situations,

and will participate in joint inter-agency missions to provide support to field colleagues. In mixed settings, the Joint UNHCR-OCHA Note on Mixed Situations of April 2014 will guide coordination.

## ANTICIPATING THE 2016 WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT

The World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in May 2016, provides an opportunity to consider options to better meet mounting humanitarian needs. UNHCR will argue that protection and forcibly displaced people must be at the centre of humanitarian action. This will require innovative approaches and additional resources for protracted crises as well as emergencies.

## UNHCR IN NEW YORK

UNHCR's Liaison Office in New York will continue providing support for the Office's engagement in the Chief Executives' Board, the High-Level Committee on Programmes, the High-Level Committee on Management and the UN Development Group. It will remain similarly engaged in the wide-ranging work of the General Assembly and its committees.

In addition, UNHCR will continue to contribute to the work of the Secretary-General's Office, particularly in areas focusing on the protection of human rights, and comprehensive responses to forced displacement. The latter will include efforts to link development and humanitarian interventions in support of affected States and ensure 'no one is left behind' as part of the 2030 Development Agenda.

## Partnering to protect

As the lead of the Global Protection Cluster (GPC), UNHCR will continue in 2016 to strengthen and expand partnerships to promote protection as central to the humanitarian response. This will include contributing to the development of inter-agency policies, protection standards and guidance at the global level (see also *Engaging with IDPs* chapter).

Moreover, partnerships with key operational agencies such as the Danish Refugee Council, the International Rescue Committee and the Norwegian Refugee Council to reinforce the capacity and coordination of field protection clusters will be bolstered. Collaboration will be strengthened with OCHA in the area of protection mainstreaming; with Oxfam on communication and cluster training activities; with the Danish Refugee Council on protection information management; with InterAction on donor engagement; and with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre on law and policy initiatives.

UNHCR continues to work closely with global, regional and national stakeholders on asylum and migration issues, particularly within the Global Migration Group and the Global Forum on Migration and Development. The organization works with IOM, OHCHR and others to find pragmatic approaches to situations where asylum and migration intersect. Promoting a rights-based approach to migration is supported by these partnerships and will be intensified in 2016. Partnerships with UN agencies and NGOs will also help address human trafficking and other abuses in different regions, including the East and Horn of Africa.

As part of the global strategy Beyond Detention (2014-2019), UNHCR works with others to

promote alternatives to detention, improving detention conditions and strengthening monitoring in places of detention. Following the second Global Roundtable on Reception and Alternatives to Detention held in April 2015, UNHCR and the International Detention Coalition (IDC) will coordinate to implement recommendations. The Office will also work closely with IOM on a proposal to collect migration and refugee detention statistics, as well as with the Association for the Prevention of Torture to provide training in the use of the jointly published *Monitoring Immigration Detention: Practical Guide*.

UNHCR will continue liaising closely with the UN human rights mechanisms, who advise and report on thematic and country-specific human rights issues.

In line with the publication *Combating Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance through a Strategic Approach*, UNHCR will prepare and publish a good practice guide to respond to racism and promote diversity and tolerance among societies. As a member of the UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Minorities, it will engage with other UN entities to combat racial discrimination, and will continue to contribute to the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights' annual reporting on hate crimes.

UNHCR is partnering with a number of global organizations to raise awareness, increase capacity and promote solutions to statelessness. In November 2015, UNHCR and the Interparliamentary Union, together with the South African Parliament, will co-host a major conference aimed at parliamentarians to examine ways in which they can help to implement the goals of the Global Action Plan

to End Statelessness. This builds on existing initiatives, including the joint publication *Nationality and Statelessness: A Handbook for Parliamentarians*, revised in 2014.

UNHCR continues to support the work of the Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights, which aims at achieving gender equality.

## Engaging with NGOs

UNHCR places particular importance on continuously improving its collaboration with NGOs, particularly at a national level. The organization works with more than 900 partners, the majority of which are non-governmental entities. In 2014, UNHCR channelled 40 per cent of its expenditures through NGOs, and a significant portion of this work is undertaken by national NGOs.

To strengthen these partnerships, maintain sound stewardship of the resources allocated and manage the corresponding risks, an Enhanced Framework for Implementing with Partners has been developed with key stakeholders. An innovative and interactive web-based facility, the Partner Portal, was also introduced

in 2015 to support the Framework, strengthen transparency and enhance mutual understanding among UNHCR and partners.

Follow-up to the High Commissioner's Structured Dialogue on the NGO-IFRC-UNHCR Partnership will continue through joint missions with the International Council of Voluntary Agencies and InterAction, to facilitate field-level dialogue and identify opportunities to improve the application of principles of partnership in practice.

Ongoing investment in bilateral partnerships will continue with major international and national NGO partners, to explore further complementarities and engage in regular strategic discussions to identify common priorities in operational activities and advocacy.

“A key aspect for UNHCR's future is its commitment to partnership. [...] The majority of our 720 NGO partners are national organizations, who are usually among the first responders and whose deep insights on local capacities and priorities are an invaluable asset.”

—High Commissioner  
António Guterres

### ANNUAL UNHCR-NGO CONSULTATIONS

UNHCR and partners increasingly use the Annual UNHCR-NGO Consultations to build networks for policy discussions and develop advocacy approaches. In 2016, the overarching theme will be youth, providing an opportunity for UNHCR and partners to strengthen their work with young people. A series of regional consultations will be held prior to the 2016 Annual Consultations with young refugees, internally displaced and stateless people, and hosting communities around the world. Youth representatives from various regions will attend the global meeting and play a key role in shaping the recommendations that the different sessions will produce.

### GLOBAL STATELESSNESS NGO RETREAT

The yearly Global Statelessness NGO Retreat has proven to be catalytic in forming and strengthening the partnerships that UNHCR has with NGOs working on nationality, statelessness and related issues. In 2016, the Retreat will focus on partnerships with large international NGOs such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. The creation of an NGO-international agency coalition around ending childhood statelessness is also envisaged for 2016. Finally, UNHCR is strengthening its partnerships with NGOs and others to ensure robust engagement with UN human rights mechanisms on topics that support the prevention and resolution of statelessness.

## Including people of concern in sustainable development efforts

The 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development provides a timely framework for advancing the inclusion of displacement issues in national development priorities. This is especially relevant for protracted refugee situations, which go beyond the scope of short-term humanitarian response, but often lack financial support.

UNHCR is advocating for people of concern to be included in the policy framework and corresponding implementation plans of the 2030 Agenda. The Office has already collaborated successfully with several partners – particularly OCHA, IOM and the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) – on including references to

refugees, IDPs and migrants in the 2030 Agenda.

With regard to the inclusion of stateless people, UNHCR works in collaboration with think tanks, such as the Civil Registration Centre for Development, and international NGOs, such as the Open Society Foundations. These entities are particularly concerned with Sustainable Development Goal 16, which includes a target relating to the universal provision of legal identity, including birth registration, by 2030.

To make the Agenda's principles of equality, universality and human rights for all a reality, UNHCR will highlight the economic conditions of refugees and others of concern, as well as the needs of host country nationals, particularly in countries with high proportions of refugees.

## Collaboration in thematic areas

**P**artnerships are vital to help the displaced stay healthy and resilient, not least by boosting livelihoods, the availability of household energy and public health (see also *Providing for Essential Needs* and *Encouraging Self-Reliance*).

### LIVELIHOODS

UNHCR has developed several networks to create livelihood opportunities for people of concern. These include international agencies and NGOs, as well as social enterprises, for instance in East Africa, where UNHCR is exploring access for refugees to sustainable models of smallhold farming.

Collaboration with other specialized agencies, such as ILO and the International Trade Centre (see box), as well as with academia, ensures the soundness of entrepreneurial and microfinance management training and supports refugees' access to markets of medium and small-size enterprises. A joint approach with WFP to improve refugees' self-reliance is being piloted in Chad and Uganda.

Innovative partnerships with the private sector are a means of broadening employment opportunities. Syrian artisans are now suppliers for high-end decor lines in the Middle East, while in Kenya, the Maisha Collective teaches business management skills to young refugee women who design and produce unique textiles for international markets. An artisan project in Burkina Faso with Malian Tuareg refugees has drawn interest from private-sector companies abroad wishing to purchase and sell their products. UNHCR also partners with multinational companies such as UNIQLO to sell items produced by refugees in its flagship stores around the world.

### CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS

UNHCR is exploring how cash-based interventions (CBIs) can be more effective in delivering humanitarian assistance, notably through collaboration with WFP, OCHA, and UNICEF, as well as a number of NGOs including DRC, Save the Children, NRC, Oxfam and the Cash Learning Partnership.

Coordination, deployments and the development of tools are essential for building the required capacity to use CBIs effectively in the humanitarian sector. The European Union has supported these efforts to build a strong partnership network through an ECHO Enhanced Response Capacity grant, which funds work in such areas as protection, targeting and data privacy, and continues to enhance emergency preparedness with the support of the UK Department for International Development. UNHCR will pursue the expanded use of CBIs in its operations, relying on close coordination with partners to achieve this.

### ENERGY

UNHCR aims to meet the energy needs of refugees with renewable and cost-saving energy technologies in ways that benefit host communities. At country level, UNHCR partners with governments, national agencies, the private sector and NGOs alike on specific projects. Multiple partners such as the Swiss Development Cooperation Agency, the Government of Spain, the Polytechnic University of Madrid and the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves are among those supporting efforts to explore energy options for refugees in the Shire camps of Ethiopia.

## ● Partnership with the International Trade Centre

UNHCR and the International Trade Centre (ITC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in January 2015 to increase opportunities for displaced people to participate in the global marketplace. Through the ITC, refugees have access to additional opportunities for income generation, such as an ongoing project in the Horn of Africa to help refugees access international ethical fashion markets and internet-based services through partnerships with social enterprises.

In 2016, ITC will support social enterprises in sourcing products from refugee communities. ITC will support market development activities, branding, promotion, pricing and distribution, and will provide technical expertise in areas such as product design, packaging and quality assurance. ■

The existing partnership with the IKEA Foundation on renewable energy will also be expanded to new initiatives under UNHCR's Global Strategy for Safe Access to Fuel and Energy 2014-2018. Through international initiatives such as the Moving Energy Initiative and the UN Secretary General's Sustainable Energy for All initiative, the organization aims to ensure that displaced people are taken into consideration in global discussions and efforts to address energy poverty.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH

While emergency response will remain a defining priority for public health activities, UNHCR will also encourage governments to include refugees in national service delivery and health-care financing mechanisms. In parallel, the Office will pursue dialogue with NGO partners and WHO to share experiences and harmonize non-communicable disease strategies and tools in refugee situations at a global level.

UNHCR and UNFPA partner in planning reproductive health programmes and interventions to adequately respond to the reproductive health needs of refugees residing in and outside camps. Together with governments, WHO, UNICEF and other stakeholders, UNHCR continues to improve the expanded immunization programmes. To promote the sustainability and cost effectiveness of water, sanitation and hygiene programmes, UNHCR and the IRC-Netherlands are working to enhance water supply management.

#### SHARING DATA AND STATISTICS

Data and statistics are important for coordination. Accurate and relevant data enables partners to make informed decisions and better respond to refugees' needs. UNHCR collaborates with a number of agencies, including other UN agencies, to streamline information management. It maintains in particular a strategic partnership with DRC to develop a Protection Information Management Framework, related tools and training for the benefit of, and in collaboration with, other humanitarian partners.

Together with the Environmental Systems Research Institute, WFP and the World Bank, UNHCR continues exploring new uses for data about people of concern, developing standards for data exchange and methods to improve the data.

The Office is also working in partnership with governments, regional statistical authorities and the UN Statistical Commission to produce the first international recommendations on refugee statistics, which will ensure the integration of refugees into national statistical programmes. UNHCR will work more closely with UNOSAT to produce data to facilitate settlement planning, such as topography, contours and geographical and flood mapping. ■

## ● *World Bank*

The efforts of the World Bank to address the challenges of poverty across the globe are today being extended to include the needs of forcibly displaced people who have often lost not only their homes and possessions but also their livelihoods. UNHCR is working with the World Bank to develop opportunities for refugees and other people of concern through inclusive economic and development policies, approaches and facilities at national level.

In recent years, the World Bank and UNHCR have deepened their engagement through joint projects such as building an evidence base on root causes and solutions to displacement, and studying the economic impact of refugees on host economies. Together, the two organizations are co-funding regional and single-context studies on forced displacement in Africa (in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel) and planning subsequent projects in all three regions. Other initiatives include a poverty and welfare study for Syrian refugees and an enhanced policy dialogue through working groups and joint technical missions. ■