



Kanto and Madilu sit beneath the makeshift shelter under which they also sleep in North Katanga, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They fled intercommunal violence in their village of Halay and struggle to find a place to take shelter from the rain. Access to food, shelter and basic services such as potable water, health care and education is a huge challenge for displaced people in North Katanga.



Demographic and Location Data

Introduction

DEMOGRAPHIC characteristics are central to the effective analysis of any population, often providing a more comprehensive understanding of the perspectives of that population. The importance of demographic data cannot be underestimated, especially in the area of forced displacement. In the field of humanitarian response, for instance,

detailed demographic data are essential in order to effectively respond to the requisite needs of the concerned population. In order to ensure efficient and judicious use of humanitarian resources, comprehensive demographic data are virtually indispensable.

It is in this context that this chapter focuses on the analysis of the demographic and location data of the populations of

concern to UNHCR, with an emphasis on refugees. Particular emphasis is placed on the sex and age distribution of refugees, while location characteristics of the population are also analysed. The chapter concludes with an article from an external contributor examining the historical trends in location and accommodation of refugee shelter from 2001 through 2013.

Background of demographic data

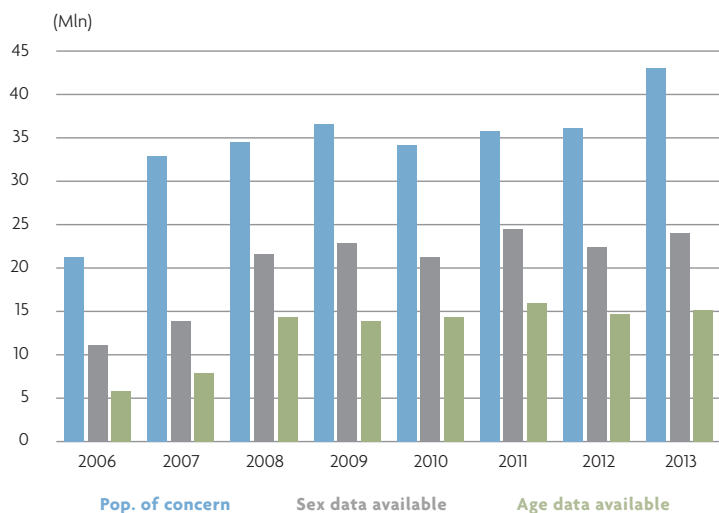
Forced displacement often results in unique population characteristics worthy of both study and analysis. Due to the nature of displacement, comprehensive data are often lacking. But even where they are available, data are mostly dispersed and incomplete. This uneven nature of demographic data on forced displacement is often particularly noticeable between countries. Demographic data are often more complete in countries where UNHCR is directly involved in the collection of that information. The overwhelming majority of these are developing countries, yet even here comprehensive demographic data are often available only in situations of a managed or planned camp.

In countries where UNHCR is not directly involved in data-collection activities, demographic data are often lacking or incomplete. The same applies to countries where governments are the

sole agents for this data collection. The available evidence shows that in industrialized countries, where governments

are often the sole agents for data collection, little or no information is available on the demographic characteristics of

Fig. 6.1 Demographic characteristics available on UNHCR's population of concern | 2006 - 2013



persons of concern to UNHCR. This poses a major challenge for comprehensive data analysis.

Of the various population categories, the refugee population tends to have the highest data coverage with regard to demographic information. A principle reason for this is the availability of a dedicated refugee

registration system for collecting comprehensive information on refugees, especially in locations where UNHCR is directly involved in refugee data collection. This primarily explains the significant differences in demographic data coverage of the various persons of concern, although other factors are also present. Collected demographic

data of populations of concern are often disaggregated by sex, age, and location. Such disaggregation is important for planning, programming, and decision-making at all levels, in terms of both designing and promoting the effective delivery of a humanitarian response.

Data disaggregated by sex

At the end of 2013, a total of 158 countries or territories had provided demographic information disaggregated by sex. This constitutes a decline from the previous year's value of 165, brought about in part by the large number of emergencies that took place during 2013, in several countries. After all, reliable demographic data are more difficult to obtain during emergencies than during a stable humanitarian operation.

At the end of 2013, data broken down by sex was available for 24 million persons, 56 per cent of the 42.9 million

persons of concern to UNHCR. This is an increase of 1.8 million compared to the previous year, when such data were available for 22.2 million individuals.

Statistical coverage during this period also differed among the various categories of populations of concern to UNHCR. For several years in a row, statistical coverage for refugees has been better than for other population groups. For instance, at the end of 2013, data disaggregated by sex were available for 72 per cent of the global refugee population but for just eight per cent of stateless

persons. Other population groups with relatively large availability of data coverage included asylum-seekers (56%), IDPs (56%), refugee returnees (55%), and others of concern to UNHCR (76%).

Based on available data disaggregated by sex, the proportions of male and female refugees are virtually at par. Women and girls accounted for 49 per cent of the refugee population at the end of 2013, almost unchanged compared to the 48 per cent recorded in 2012.

Data disaggregated by age

At the end of 2013, the overall availability of data disaggregated by age had increased only marginally, from 14.9 million in 2012 (42% of data coverage) to 15.2 million (35%). Again, data on refugees made up the greater proportion of this information.

By the end of 2013, refugee information disaggregated by age was available for 7.5 million refugees, 64 per cent of the total⁸⁸ as compared to 65 per cent in 2012. The available evidence indicated that refugee children constituted 50 per cent of the global refugee population in 2013, as compared to 46 per cent

a year earlier. That makes the 2013 figure for refugee children the highest in a decade, suggesting that one in every two refugees is a child. These averages,

however, hide significant variations across countries. Among the major refugee-hosting countries, for instance, the percentage of refugee children

TABLE 6.1 Demographic characteristics of refugees | 2003 - 2013
(% of total population)

Year	Women	<18 years	18-59	>60 years
2003	48%	49%	46%	5%
2004	48%	50%	45%	5%
2005	48%	46%	49%	5%
2006	47%	47%	49%	4%
2007	47%	46%	49%	5%
2008	48%	44%	51%	5%
2009	47%	41%	54%	5%
2010	47%	44%	51%	5%
2011	48%	46%	49%	5%
2012	48%	46%	49%	5%
2013	49%	50%	46%	4%

The percentages are based on available data and exclude countries where no demographic information is available. This is in particular the case for industrialized countries.

⁸⁸ The availability of information according to age breakdown is particularly limited for countries in Europe, North America, and Oceania. Thus, the figures are not fully representative of the entire population under UNHCR's responsibility.

ranged from 78 per cent in Uganda to 19 per cent in Yemen.⁸⁹

The available data indicate that, over the past decade, the number of refugee children has been growing intermittently. This figure has moved from a low of 41 per cent in 2009 to the current level of 50 per cent, an increase principally driven by the rising number of Syrian, Afghan, and Somali refugee children during 2013. In all of these refugee population groups, the number of children accounted for half of the individual refugee population. Together,

these three refugee groups constituted almost a third (31%) of refugee children globally. In contrast, over the past decade the percentage of refugees aged 60 or more has remained virtually stagnant at 4–5 per cent [see **Table 6.1**].

The proportion of statistical coverage by age for IDPs stood at 26 per cent at the end of 2013. Data coverage on age for the other various population groups remains a challenge, especially for stateless persons and asylum-seekers. Sharp differences arise when data coverage on age for refugees is compared

among UNHCR's regions around the world. For instance, the countries of sub-Saharan Africa combined recorded the highest data coverage on age for refugees, with 37 per cent. UNHCR's Middle East and North Africa region was second with 32 per cent, followed by Asia and the Pacific with 19 per cent. The regions of Europe as well as the Americas and the Caribbean recorded the lowest such coverage with 4 and 1 per cent, respectively.

Location characteristics

While UNHCR offices around the world reported information on the type of location of persons of concern, the breakdown for refugees was better than for the other population groups. Information on the geographic location of refugees is classified into three main groups: urban, rural, and mixed/unknown. In each of these, the type of accommodation is broken down further: planned/managed camp, self-settled camp, collective centre, reception/transit camp, individual accommodation (private), or undefined if the accommodation type is unclear. The table to the right explains the definitions UNHCR uses for types of accommodation.

There is no internationally agreed definition of urban and rural. Countries usually define both in accordance with their own national needs, often along population size or density. In some cases, this distinction will be blurred, in particular among industrialized countries. The separation of urban from rural location has become increasingly important for programmatic and reporting purposes. However, this distinction is not always easy to make despite its importance to UNHCR. Currently, UNHCR defines a rural population as below 5,000 persons, while an urban population is where the population is assessed to be over 5,000 persons.

At the end of 2013, UNHCR offices

Type	Definition
Planned or managed camp	Planned camps are places where displaced populations find accommodation on purpose-built sites, and a full services infrastructure is provided, including water supply, food distribution, non-food item distribution, education, and health care, usually exclusively for the population of the site.
Self-settled camp	A displaced community or displaced groups may settle in camps, independent of assistance from local government or the aid community. Self-settled camps are often sited on state-owned, private or communal land, usually after limited negotiations with the local population or private owners over use and access.
Collective centre	This type of settlement is where displaced persons find accommodation in pre-existing public buildings and community centres, town halls, gymnasiums, hotels, warehouses, disused factories, and unfinished buildings. They are often used when displacement occurs inside a city itself, or when there are significant flows of displaced people into a city or town. Often, mass shelter is intended as temporary or transit accommodation.
Reception and transit camp	Often times, it is necessary to provide temporary accommodation for displaced persons. These camps might be necessary at the beginning of an emergency as a temporary accommodation pending transfer to a suitable, safe, longer term holding camp, or at the end of an operation as a staging point of return. Reception and transit camps are therefore usually either intermediate or short-term installations.
Individual/private accommodation	There may be two types of individual accommodations: non-hosted and hosted. The former refers to displaced persons who occupy a single family dwelling on their own (either as legal tenant or squatting). The latter means displaced persons live in someone else's home with them, sharing resources and a hearth with another household group.

reported information on the type of accommodation for 9.5 million (81%) out of the 11.7 million refugees. More than half of this number was living in individual or private accommodation (58%), a higher figure than the previous year (54%). This change can be partly explained by the high number of Syrian refugees

renting apartments in urban agglomerations across the Middle East. Slightly over a third (35%) of refugees was reported to be living in planned/managed camps, virtually unchanged from the previous year. The percentage of refugees living in self-settled camps and collective centres stood at 4 and 3 per

⁸⁹ Figures based on at least 50 per cent data coverage.

TABLE 6.2 Accommodation of refugees | end-2012 and end-2013

Type of accommodation	No. of refugees		Distribution		% women		% children		% Urban	
	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012*	2013**
Planned/managed camp	2,955,500	3,274,300	35.3%	34.4%	50%	51%	56%	56%	0.4%	7.1%
Self-settled camp	542,300	345,800	6.5%	3.6%	52%	53%	58%	60%	0.5%	1.0%
Collective centre	323,500	304,300	3.9%	3.2%	48%	48%	56%	35%	18.0%	93.9%
Individual accommodation (private)	4,551,900	5,559,900	54.3%	58.4%	46%	48%	39%	46%	93.4%	88.3%
Reception/transit camp	2,100	33,900	0.0%	0.4%	53%	51%	60%	59%	8.3%	2.8%
Sub-total	8,375,300	9,518,200	100%	100%	48%	49%	46%	50%	53.4%	56.1%
Unknown	2,122,700	2,181,100								
Grand Total	10,498,000	11,699,300								

Notes

* Percentages are based on data available for 8.1 million refugees. Calculation excludes accommodation types which are unknown.

** Percentages are based on data available for 9.0 million refugees. Calculation excludes accommodation types which are unknown.

cent, respectively. Compared to 2012, these percentages declined slightly.

On average, refugee children accounted for more than half of residents in camp-type accommodation,⁹⁰ whereas their proportion dropped to 46 per cent of those in non-camp accommodation.⁹¹ During 2013, UNHCR offices around the world were requested to specify with greater accuracy information on the accommodation type being used by persons of concern, in particular refugees. This initiative is part of continuous efforts to improve data quality throughout the various points of data collection.

Information on geographic location was available for 9 million out of the global refugee population of 11.7 million by the end of 2013 (77%). In other words, nearly a quarter (23%) of location information for refugees is unknown or not reported. More than half (56%) of these 9 million refugees were reported by UNHCR offices as residing in urban areas and 44 per cent in rural areas. However, these figures should be considered as indicative only, as location data for about 2.7 million refugees were either unknown or unclear. As in previous years, the greater proportion of refugees in camps is found predominantly in rural areas. Individual accommodations (private), on the other hand, were the typical residence for refugees in urban areas.

UNHCR's efforts put in place to improve location information resulted in a partial change in the proportional distribution of refugees reported to be residing in urban areas. For instance, the proportion of refugees residing in

a planned/managed camp in an urban area increased from 0.4 per cent in 2012 to 7 per cent in 2013, a shift caused mainly by the high number of Syrian refugees residing in this type of accommodation in Turkey. During the same period, the proportion of refugees reported to be living in individual accommodation (private) in an urban area declined slightly, from 93 to 88 per cent [see **Table 6.2**].

The regional proportion of refugees residing in camps in sub-Saharan Africa has consistently increased over the past three years, from 60 per cent in 2011 and 63 per cent in 2012 to 64 per cent in 2013. This trend also implies that the overwhelming majority of refugees in sub-Saharan Africa tend to reside in rural locations, as most camps are located in rural areas. As in previous years, 93 per cent of camps globally were located in rural areas, and the majority of these were found in sub-Saharan Africa or Asia. Regionally, 25 per cent of refugees in Asia reside in camps, while the majority of refugees in the Americas (96%) and Middle East and North Africa (76%) reside in individual accommodation types, mainly in urban locations. This high proportion of refugees in UNHCR's Middle East and North Africa region is due largely to Syrian refugees, who live predominantly in individual accommodation. ■

⁹⁰ This refers to planned/managed camp, self-settled camp, and reception/transit camp.

⁹¹ This refers to individual accommodation (private) and collective centres.



An Iraqi woman and her son, both internally displaced from Mosul, walk on the road outside Garmava transit camp between Mosul and Dahuk. Many IDP families are also sheltering in schools, mosques, churches and unfinished buildings.

Refugee Shelter: Demographic Trends in Location and Accommodation, 2001–2013

– by Alphonse MacDonald⁹² –

INTRODUCTION

The provision of shelter is one of the main concerns of agencies dealing with refugees. The origin, direction, and magnitude of flows of refugees are seldom predictable, and host countries and humanitarian agencies need swift action in order to provide adequate shelter in a secure location. UNHCR has adopted

a location-accommodation typology to be used in the registration of and reporting on refugees. It is a combination of two dimensions: the physical location, in terms of the urban or rural dimension; and the type of accommodation occupied, such as individual accommodation or collective accommodation in a camp or centre.

The UNHCR historical database on demography and location contains location information dating to 2001, which allows for trend analysis over a 13-year period.

⁹² Former Director of UNFPA Geneva Office. The views and opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Data on the type of accommodation are also available back to 2010, and hence the UNHCR typology can be constructed and analysed for 2010 through 2013. The analysis in this section is limited to a study of the characteristics of refugee locations for Africa and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regions for the period 2001–2013.

Over the years, UNHCR has issued several instructions on how to record accommodation types in statistical reports. For the purpose of this article, the different accommodation types collected between 2010 and 2013 have been re-coded to account for changes in classification. The category ‘Individual accommodation’ has been retained unchanged. The categories ‘Planned/managed camp’, ‘Camp’, and ‘Self-settled camp’ were recoded as ‘Camp’. The categories ‘Settlement’, ‘Reception/transit camp’, ‘Collective centre’, and ‘Centre’ were recoded as ‘Centre’. Finally, the categories ‘Undefined’ and ‘Dispersed’ were recoded as ‘Undefined’.

Since the re-coded variables ‘camp’, ‘centre’ and ‘individual accommodation’ may be reported in both urban and rural areas, the analysis of location data will be based on six categories: Urban Camp, Urban Centre, and Urban Individual accommodation; and Rural Camp, Rural Centre, and Rural Individual accommodation.

LOCATION TREND ANALYSIS: AFRICA AND MENA, 2001–2013

The available statistical information shows that refugees in Africa are predominantly located in rural areas, with the period average⁹³ for the rural population being 81 per cent. In MENA, however, refugees are predominantly residing in urban areas, and here the period average for the urban population stood at 90 per cent.

In Africa, the urban refugee population increased irregularly and slightly from 19 per cent in 2001 to 20 per cent in 2009, before decreasing to 10 per cent in 2013. This development can partly be explained by the significant number of new refugee camps being established as a result of new emergencies in the West, East, and Horn of Africa. In MENA, the urban percentage throughout the period 2001–2009 fluctuated and stood at nearly 100 per cent, before declining from 2010 to 85 per cent in 2013.

The refugee population in Africa shows an increasing number of females, in particular in rural areas, whereas in the MENA region it remains overwhelmingly male. The proportion of female refugees in urban areas in Africa has remained relatively stable over the years, at between 48 and 49 per cent. In rural areas, however, the average percentage of female refugees over the period is close to 51 per cent. This figure

increases relatively regularly from 49 per cent in 2001 to almost 52 per cent in 2013.

The percentage of female refugees in urban areas in MENA shows a similar pattern to that of the urban areas of Africa. It remains relatively unchanged in Africa over the period, whereas in MENA it increases from 49 per cent in 2001 to 51 per cent in 2013. Since 2010, the percentage of refugee women and girls in urban areas in MENA is higher than its corresponding value in Africa. Hence, recent years saw an increased percentage of women in the proportion of urban refugees, but the extent to which this is the beginning of a trend remains to be seen.

The percentage of refugee women in rural areas in MENA shows a very irregular pattern, indicating abrupt changes in the sex composition of refugees in certain years and countries. In rural areas there is an increased percentage of refugee men, with the percentage of females decreasing from 47 per cent in 2001 to 44 per cent in 2013.

The age-sex distribution shows that refugees in urban areas in Africa are relatively older than those in rural areas, with slight differences between the sexes. Between 2001 and 2013, the percentages of the two

⁹³ The period average is the average of the variable calculated over the period.

Fig. 6.2 Distribution by location for Africa and MENA | 2001 - 2013

(calculation excludes undefined locations)

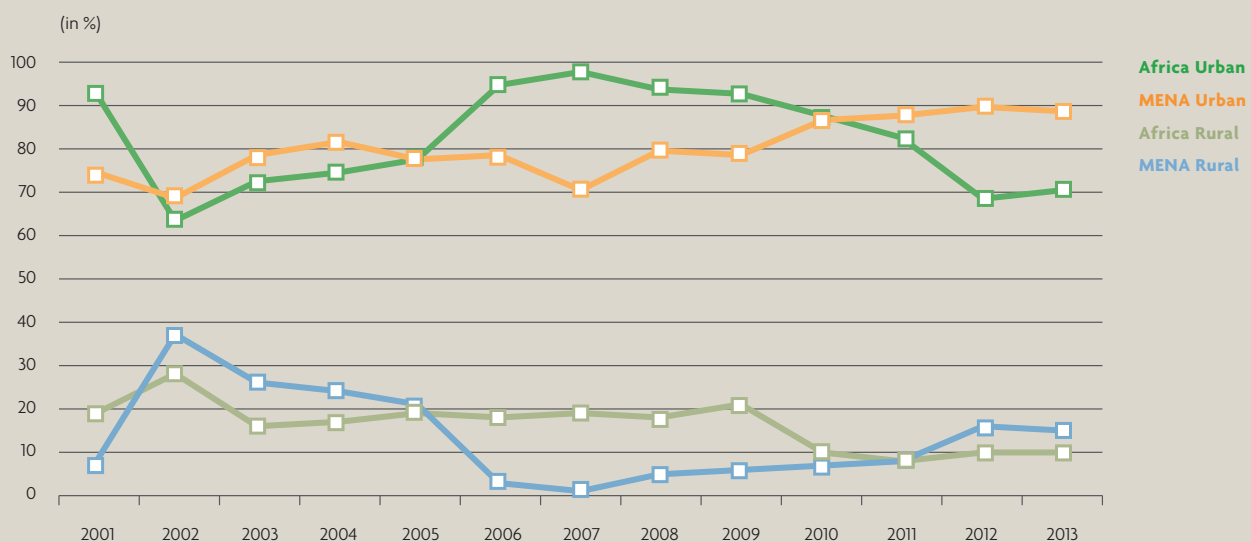
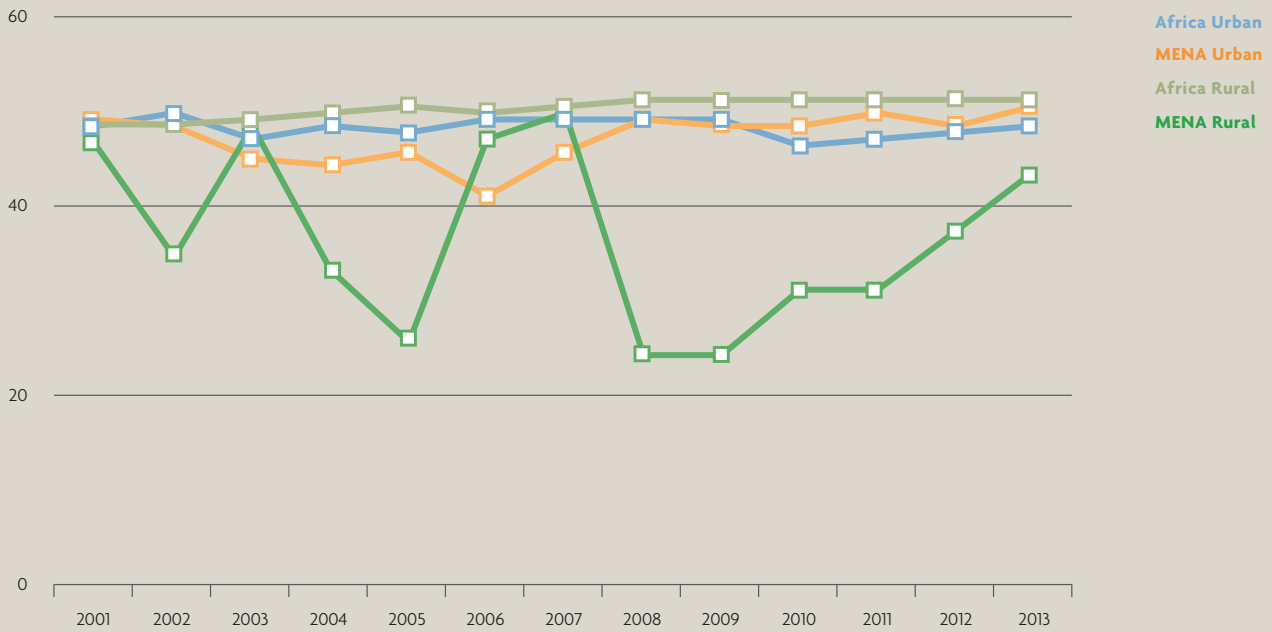


Fig. 6.3 Percentage of refugee women by location | 2001 - 2013 (in %)



younger age groups, 0–4 and 5–17 years, decreased among urban areas. At the same time, the age-sex distribution of rural areas remained more or less stable.

In contrast, in MENA the population in urban areas is relatively younger than that of the rural areas. In urban areas, the youngest age group (0–4 years) nearly

doubles between 2001 to 2013, while those 5 to 17 years of age remain more or less stable. Hence, refugees residing in urban areas of MENA became younger over time, even when compared to the urban group in Africa.

The available evidence suggests that refugees residing in rural areas in Africa are

younger than those in MENA. While there are only minor changes in the age-sex distribution in Africa, in MENA there are considerable changes. Here, the percentages of the two younger age groups decrease, while there is a considerable increase in the size of the age group 18–59 years, especially for males. In 2013, the percentage

Fig. 6.4 Age and sex composition in 2001 and 2013 by location for Africa and MENA | 2001 - 2013

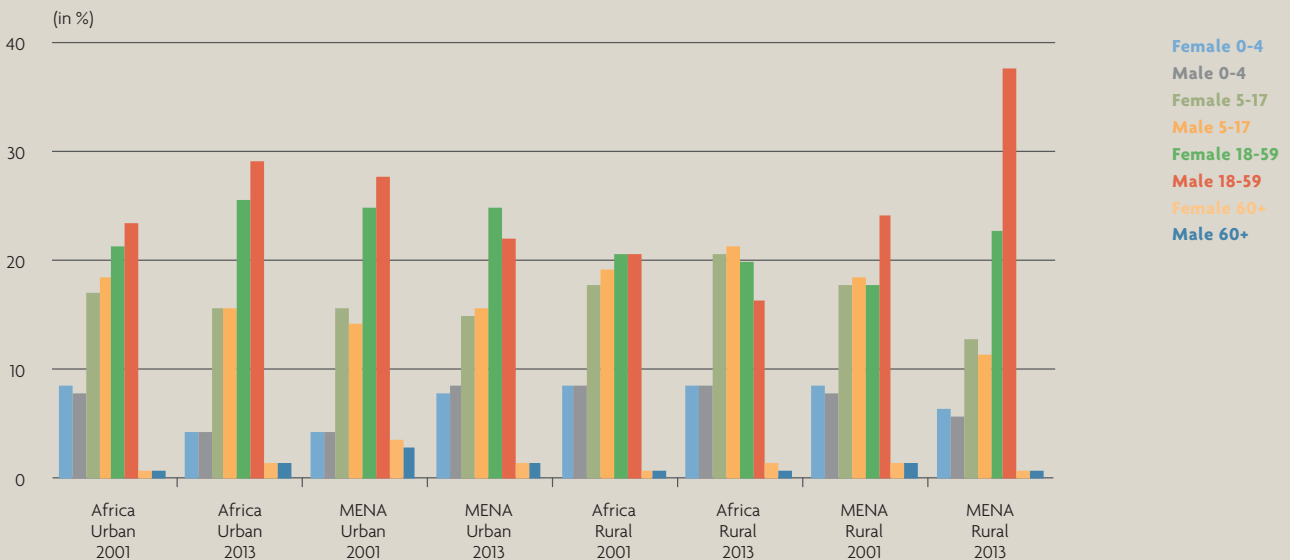


TABLE 6.3 Location-accommodation modalities by UNHCR region | 2010 - 2013

Location accommodation	Africa	Asia and Pacific	Europe	Americas	MENA	Total*
Urban Individual	8.2	47.7	31.7	9.4	63.8	36.7
Rural Individual	8.2	0.9	0.9	0.2	4.6	3.6
Urban Camp	0.3	0.5	5.1	0.0	0.0	0.8
Rural Camp	68.4	20.1	3.5	0.0	6.7	27.8
Urban Centre	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.1
Rural Centre	7.7	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	2.1
Undefined	7.0	30.6	58.4	90.3	24.6	28.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of refugees	10,400,581	14,312,173	4,267,800	1,753,763	7,675,774	38,410,091

* This is the number of refugees included in UNHCR's demographic database. It is incomplete, as a number of countries did not provide the required information. For the purpose of this analysis, only the information contained in the database has been used, and the numbers reported for regions and countries may differ from those reported elsewhere.

of refugee men in this age group stood at 48 per cent, compared to 30 per cent in urban Africa.

LOCATION-ACCOMMODATION TYPOLOGY ANALYSIS, 2010-2013

Since 2010, UNHCR has collected information on accommodation, which allows for a contraction of the UNHCR-proposed location-accommodation typology.⁹⁴ Ideally there should be six distinct categories, but for a variety of reasons this information is not available for all eligible countries.

For the location-accommodation modalities analysis, the characteristics of refugees will be limited to Africa, which has the most complete data. Here, refugees reside across all six types of accommodation, with the rural camp the most widely used. Use of the rural camp increased from 55 per cent in 2010 to 83 per cent in 2012, before

dropping to 74 per cent in 2013. Throughout this period, individual accommodation in urban areas has been used by about 8-9 per cent of the refugee population. Individual accommodation in rural areas, meanwhile, appears to have been used more in recent years, increasing irregularly from 2 per cent in 2010 to 14 per cent in 2013. These three types are currently in use. In the past the rural centre has also been used, but in recent years its reporting has practically halted. The urban camp and urban centre, finally, seem to be used sporadically for very small numbers of refugees.

The number of refugees reported as living in rural camps in Africa has nearly doubled, from 1.16 million in 2010 to 2.08 million in 2013. This is mostly a reflection of the refugee influx from Somalia into neighbouring countries. This population is predominantly female, with the percentage of refugee women fluctuating at

around 52 per cent. It is also an increasingly young population, as the two young age groups (0-4 years and 5-17 years) together increased steadily from 56 per cent in 2010 to 58 per cent in 2013.

The number of refugees residing in individual accommodations in urban areas across Africa increased only irregularly, from 170,000 in 2010 to 180,000 in 2013. This is a predominantly male population, with a slightly increasing percentage of females from 46 per cent in 2010 to 48 per cent in 2013. The population is also comparatively older than that residing in refugee camps in rural areas, though the percentage of the two young age groups did increase from 38 per cent in 2010 to 41

⁹⁴ In these tables, Urban Individual and Rural Individual will be used to describe the Urban Individual Accommodation and Rural Individual Accommodation modalities. In the figures, the abbreviations Urban I and Rural I will be used.

TABLE 6.4 Location-accommodation modalities by year for Africa | 2010 - 2013

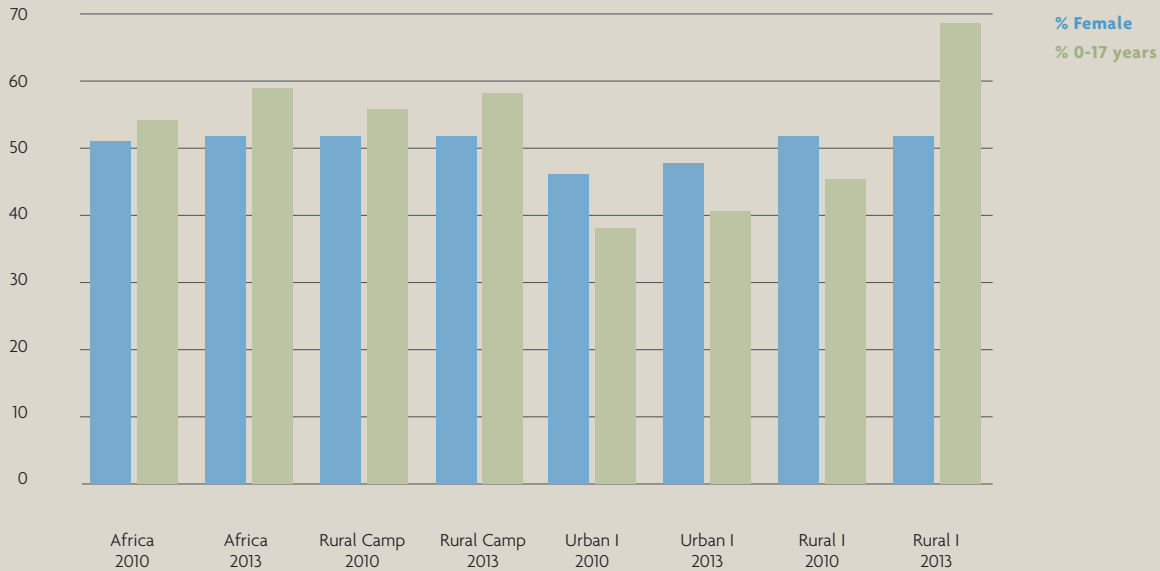
(in %)

Location-accommodation	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total*
Urban Individual	8.0	6.7	8.7	9.1	8.2
Rural Individual	1.7	10.2	5.2	14.1	8.2
Urban Camp	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.4	0.3
Rural Camp	54.6	59.2	82.8	73.5	68.4
Urban Centre	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2
Rural Centre	15.9	15.5	0.7	1.1	7.7
Undefined	19.1	8.2	2.0	1.8	7.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of refugees	2,125,207	2,634,671	2,702,048	2,938,655	10,400,581

* This is the number of refugees included in UNHCR's demographic database. It is incomplete, as a number of countries did not provide the required information. For the purpose of this analysis, only the information contained in the database has been used, and the numbers reported for regions and countries may differ from those reported elsewhere.

Fig. 6.5

Percentage females and percentage 0-17 year old refugees by location-accommodation modalities in Africa | 2010 - 2013



per cent in 2013. The age-sex distribution is more irregular than that of rural camps.

The number of refugees residing in individual accommodation in rural areas in Africa increased significantly, from 275,000 in 2010 to 404,700 in 2013. It is an increasingly expanding female population, with women constituting an average of 52 per cent overall, and shows degrees of fluctuation similar to those of the rural camp. However, this group also has a very quickly growing young population, with the collective proportions of the two youngest groups (0–4 and 5–11) increasing from 45 per cent in 2010 to 68 per cent in 2013.

In sum, camps in rural areas constitute the most frequently used facility in Africa. Females are in the majority among refugees, except in urban areas. And the populations are both growing and young, especially in rural areas.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of location types used by refugees in Africa and MENA has manifested two fundamentally different uses of space. In Africa, rural areas are predominantly used to accommodate refugees, whereas in MENA urban areas predominate.

The analysis of location-accommodation modalities in Africa indicates

that there are two main types used: urban individual accommodation and the rural camp. Other modalities seem to be used only sporadically. There also appears to be an increased number of refugee women over time, as well as an increased younger refugee population; populations in rural camps have higher levels of refugee women, but not relatively younger groups. The rise over the period 2010–2013 indicates that these two groups have a higher rate of increase in refugee populations residing in urban individual accommodations than among those in rural camps. ●