

Conclusion of the Executive Committee on youth

The Executive Committee,

Noting the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016;

Considering that youth are an increasingly large proportion of populations of concern to UNHCR;

Reaffirming the importance of mainstreaming age and gender sensitive approaches for youth of concern to UNHCR;

Noting that this conclusion applies to youth of concern to UNHCR, including refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons and returnees, as well as internally displaced people on the basis of specific requests from the Secretary-General and with the consent of the concerned State; and that UNHCR engages in activities in support of youth of its concern and in host communities, as appropriate;

Noting that refugee, internally displaced and stateless youth have particular vulnerabilities and are often negatively affected, and can be at heightened risk due to their situation.

Acknowledging the value of enabling participation of youth, where possible, in humanitarian assistance and other decision-making processes relevant to them and their communities;

Acknowledging that young people, in many circumstances, have the capacity to make considerable contributions to their communities; *Noting* the Global Refugee Youth Consultations conducted by UNHCR in partnership with a number of States, the Women's Refugee Commission, and civil society in 2015 and 2016, and the consultations undertaken by UNHCR on stateless children and youth in 2015;

Taking note of relevant international legal instruments relating to the protection of children as applicable to youth, and recalling the guidance provided in past Executive Committee Conclusions of relevance to youth, including, in particular, Conclusion No. 98 (LIV) 2003; No. 99 (LV) 2004; No. 100 (LV) 2004; No. 101 (LVI) 2005; No. 102 (LVI) 2005; No. 105 (LVII) 2006; No. 107 (LVIII) 2008; and No. 108 (LIX) 2008.

1. *Takes note* of the contributions of youth through participatory approaches to protection and assistance programmes for themselves and their communities, noting that they are often overlooked in humanitarian situations as a group with specific needs based on their stage of life and development, and who have the potential to make important contributions;

2. *Encourages* UNHCR, States and relevant stakeholders to pursue ongoing engagement, consultation and activities with the active participation of youth of concern to UNHCR, including the Global Refugee Youth Consultations, as appropriate;

3. *Encourages* UNHCR, States and relevant stakeholders to proactively identify ways to engage youth in protection and assistance programmes, in youth strategies and action plans as appropriate, including through their meaningful participation and representation in their community management and decision-making processes;

4. *Encourages* systematic collection and use of reliable age and sex disaggregated data on youth of concern to UNHCR, while respecting their privacy and the principle of confidentiality, to ensure that their specific and diverse needs can be more effectively met;

5. *Calls* upon the international community to provide the necessary support and resources for UNHCR, concerned States and partners, to meet the specific and diverse needs and build the capacities of youth of concern to UNHCR;

6. *Acknowledges* that UNHCR programmes are undertaken in accordance with its mandate and international refugee law, and calls on UNHCR, Member States and relevant actors, as appropriate, and with the consent of concerned States, and in accordance with their national law, to:

(a) *Increase* support for and participation of youth of concern to UNHCR in programmes that foster leadership, including those that enable them to develop partnerships and networks at all levels;

(b) *Address* the needs and facilitate the contribution and participation of adolescent girls and young women as partners among UNHCR's youth of concern, with the active involvement of young men and adolescent boys;

(c) *Support* the active participation and contributions of youth of concern to UNHCR, including in partnership with national youth structures, where available in hosting and receiving states, in planning, programming and achievement of solutions which benefit them;

7. *Commits* to strengthening the engagement and participation of youth of concern to UNHCR, including through education and training and life skills building and livelihood opportunities, with the consent and in accordance with the laws of host States, and in ways which contribute to the support of host communities through strengthened international cooperation and responsibility- and burden-sharing, and encourages the international community to mobilize the necessary financial and other resources;

8. *Highlights* the urgent need to take further measures to prevent childhood statelessness and engage with and find solutions for stateless youth, including as reflected in UNHCR's Global Campaign to End Statelessness and the 2015 'I am here, I belong' report, and encourages the continuation of efforts to promote adherence to the Conventions on Statelessness, where applicable, and the taking of measures at the global, regional and national level.
