



NEW YORK CITY, NY, USA

19 - 23 March (Conf. A) / 9 - 13 April (Conf. B)

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## OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES BACKGROUND GUIDE 2017

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# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS



# THE 2017 NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2017 National Model United Nations New York Conference (NMUN•NY)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This year's staff is: Directors Auric Kaur (Conference A) and Angelina Pienczykowski (Conference B), and Assistant Directors Carolin Huber (Conference A) and Samantha Hall (Conference B). Auric completed her B.A. in International Studies with a focus in Diplomacy, Foreign Policy, and Peace & Security from the University of Washington. She works for Microsoft and is continuing her career in the public sector for Microsoft's National Empowerment Plan. Angelina received her M.A. in International Relations and European Studies from the Central European University in 2014. She currently works at a private grantmaking foundation in the field of migration. Carolin has a B.A. in Business Administration from the University of Regensburg and is working towards a B.A. in Political Science. She is currently a Student Assistant at the Institute for International and Transatlantic Relations. Samantha completed her B.A. in International Studies and Political Science in 2016 and is currently pursuing an M.A. in U.S. Foreign Policy and National Security at American University.

The topics under discussion for UNHCR are:

- I. Promoting Livelihoods and Education for Refugees and Displaced Persons
- II. Addressing Protracted Displacement
- III. Environmental Migration and the Future of Displacement

UNHCR is tasked with protecting the rights and well-being of refugees and other displaced persons. With a record number of migrants and refugees in 2016, the international community came together at the Summit for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016 to adopt the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants*. With so much momentum to address pressing issues relating to refugees and migrants, delegates will need to understand how UNHCR works and what actions it can realistically undertake in today's climate and based on the political will of Member States.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 March 2017 in accordance with the guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the [NMUN•NY Position Papers](#) website.

Two essential resources for your preparation are the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) and the [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) available to download from the NMUN website. The [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. In tandem, these documents thus serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions.

Please take note of information in the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) on plagiarism and the prohibition of pre-written working papers and resolutions. Additionally, please review the [NMUN Policies and Codes of Conduct](#) on the NMUN website regarding the Conference dress code; awards philosophy and evaluation method; and codes of conduct for delegates, faculty, and guests regarding diplomacy and professionalism. Importantly, any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. Adherence to these policies is mandatory.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Department, Sarah Walter (Conference A) and Jess Mace (Conference B), [usg.hr\\_ha@nmun.org](mailto:usg.hr_ha@nmun.org).

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Sincerely,

**Conference A**

Auric Kaur, *Director*  
Carolin Huber, *Assistant Director*

**Conference B**

Angelina Pienczykowski, *Director*  
Samantha Hall, *Assistant Director*

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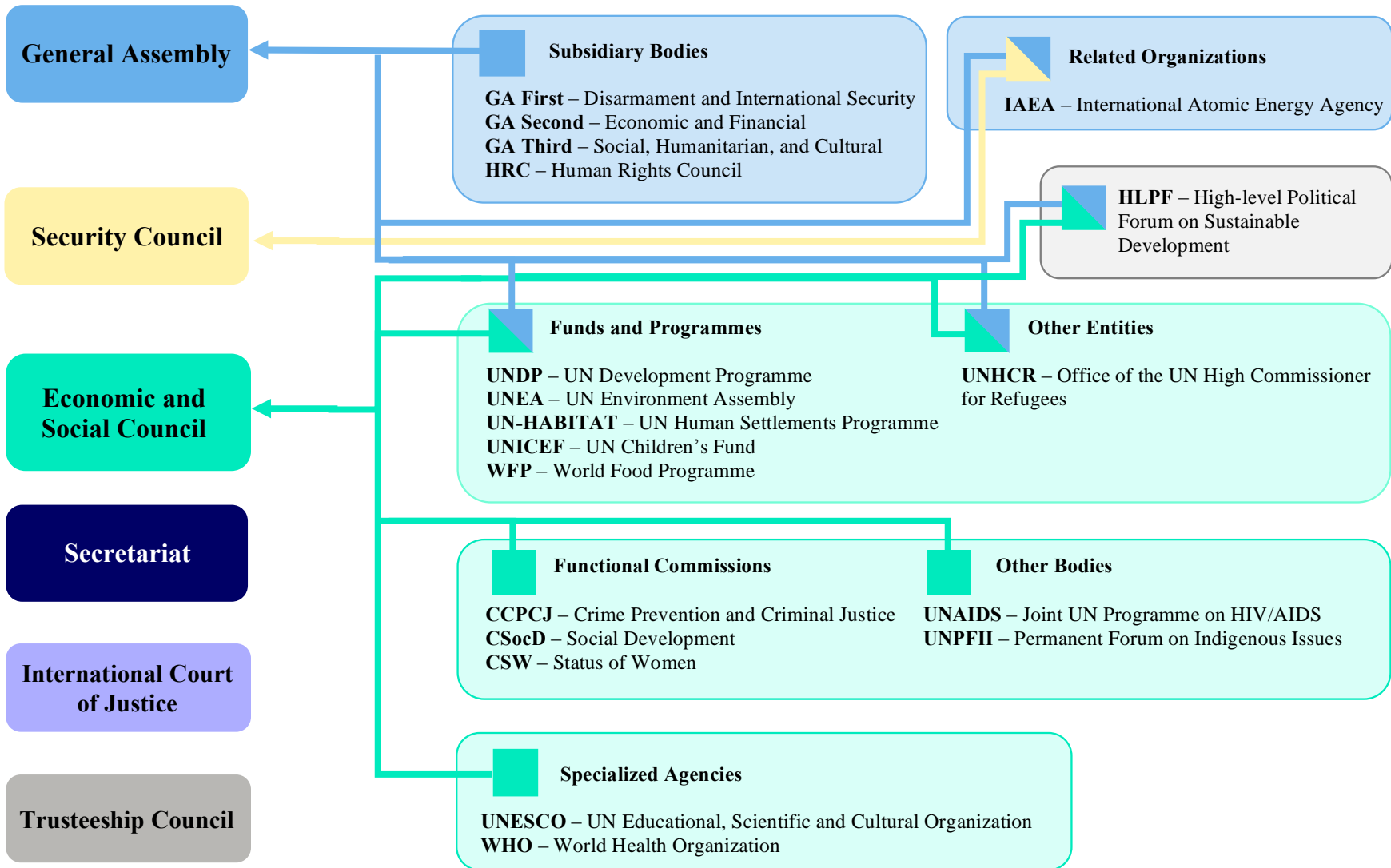
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## United Nations System at NMUN•NY

This diagram illustrates the UN system simulated at NMUN•NY and demonstrates the reportage and relationships between entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose, and powers within the UN system.





## Abbreviations

<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>BRAC</b>	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
<b>CERF</b>	Central Emergency Response Fund
<b>CGAP</b>	Consultative Group to Assist the Poor
<b>CPC</b>	Committee for Programme and Coordination
<b>CRC</b>	<i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>
<b>CRR</b>	Comprehensive Refugee Response
<b>DAFI</b>	Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster risk reduction
<b>ECOSOC</b>	Economic and Social Council
<b>EFA</b>	Education for All
<b>GPC</b>	Global Protection Cluster
<b>GSP</b>	Global Strategic Priority
<b>HRC</b>	Human Rights Council
<b>IDP</b>	Internally displaced person
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>IPCC</b>	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>RSC</b>	Refugees Studies Centre
<b>SAFE</b>	Safe Access to Fuel and Energy
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SSAR</b>	<i>Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees</i>
<b>UDHR</b>	<i>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i>
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNFCCC</b>	<i>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change</i>
<b>UNHCR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

## Committee Overview

*Instead of burden sharing, we see borders closing, instead of political will there is political paralysis...yet, there is cause for hope. In contrast to the toxic narrative repeatedly played out in the media we have often witnessed an outpouring of generosity; by host communities, by individuals, and by families opening their homes.<sup>1</sup>*

### Introduction

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is the United Nations (UN) agency whose primary purpose is the protection of the welfare and rights of refugees.<sup>2</sup> It was established by the UN General Assembly in 1951 as a result of the aftermath of World War II.<sup>3</sup> Initially, it had a three-year limited mandate to address the high number of Europeans who were displaced due to the war.<sup>4</sup>

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is a programme and fund of the United Nations, reporting to the Economic and Social Council and General Assembly.

UNHCR faced its first significant emergency in 1956, following a violent Soviet intervention in Hungary, highlighting its essential role in delivering aid for those fleeing the conflict and seeking refuge in neighboring states.<sup>5</sup> In the 1960s, the decolonization of Africa began, leading to the involvement of UNHCR in the region.<sup>6</sup> During the following two decades, UNHCR expanded its reach to Asia and Latin America in response to several crises situations arising.<sup>7</sup> Due to the necessity of UNHCR's continued work, the General Assembly repeatedly extended UNHCR's mandate every three years until 2003, when it decided to prolong the mandate indefinitely, until the end of the refugee problem.<sup>8</sup>

Most of UNHCR's resources are dedicated to supporting operations at the field level, in order to address the needs of specific groups, such as refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and asylum seekers.<sup>9</sup> A refugee is a person who, reasonably fearing persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political conviction, has left the country of their nationality or habitual residence.<sup>10</sup> Further, the definition states that they are unable to or, because of such fear, are not willing to return to the sovereign territory of the country they fled.<sup>11</sup> IDPs are defined as individuals who have had to flee their homes, but have not crossed an international border.<sup>12</sup> Asylum seekers are those who look for protection in a different country, but whose claim for refugee status has not been ascertained; 2015 saw the highest number of asylum seekers ever recorded.<sup>13</sup> All of these groups can be categorized as victims of "forced migration."<sup>14</sup>

UNHCR provides humanitarian aid in a variety of forms, including food and nutritional supplements, basic shelter, as well long-term accommodation such as camps or other forms of housing, cash assistance, and legal services.<sup>15</sup> The agency is also involved in efforts to integrate refugees into their host state or, if refugees are able to return, to resettle and reintegrate them into their state of origin.<sup>16</sup> UNHCR also works closely with other agencies to address the needs of individuals who have been displaced due to natural disasters, as was the case this year with a major

<sup>1</sup> UNHCR, *High Commissioner, Filippo Grandi on World Refugee Day*, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> UNHCR, *What We Do*, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> UN General Assembly, *Refugees and Stateless Persons (A/RES/319 (IV))*, 1949; UNHCR, *History of UNHCR*, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> UN General Assembly, *Refugees and Stateless Persons (A/RES/319 (IV))*, 1949; UNHCR, *History of UNHCR*, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> UNHCR, *History of UNHCR*, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> UN General Assembly, *Implementing actions proposed by UNHCR to strengthen the capacity of his Office to carry out its mandate (A/RES/58/153)*, 2003.

<sup>9</sup> UNHCR, *Executive Committee*, 2016.

<sup>10</sup> *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951; *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1967; UNHCR, *Refugees*, 2016.

<sup>11</sup> *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951; *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1967; UNHCR, *Refugees*, 2016.

<sup>12</sup> UNHCR, *Internally Displaced People*, 2016.

<sup>13</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR 2015 Global Trends, Forced Displacement*, 2016.

<sup>14</sup> Forced Migration Online, *What is forced migration?*, 2012.

<sup>15</sup> UNHCR, *Cash in Hand*, 2011; UNHCR, *Protection*, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps*, 2014; UNHCR, *Public Health*, 2016.

earthquake occurring in Ecuador, leaving nearly 73,000 people displaced.<sup>17</sup> An additional area of concern are stateless individuals, who lack an official nationality due to discrimination, state succession, or conflict.<sup>18</sup>

UNHCR evolved over the decades and has since seen a dramatic shift in the dialogue surrounding the situation of refugees.<sup>19</sup> From 1945 to 1985, UNHCR focused mainly on the resettlement of refugees; however, after this period, as the causes of displacement varied, the agency shifted towards the concept of repatriation as a possible solution.<sup>20</sup> In 1993, the idea of providing refugees with the possibility to return safely to their homes by offering temporary protective measures, including providing the basic necessities of life, was solidified.<sup>21</sup> From the mid-1990s, the number of cases related to refugees seeking to return home expanded, as measures to resolve Cold War conflicts increased.<sup>22</sup> As a result, UNHCR's role in reintegration evolved to include infrastructure and community development, as well as a focus on the importance of reconciliation and peacebuilding in affected communities.<sup>23</sup> It is no longer feasible to simply treat short-term humanitarian crises.<sup>24</sup> Instead, the international community must think of long-term strategies, such as resettlement and integration into host communities, as well as emphasizing the need for lasting peace accords.<sup>25</sup>

### ***Governance, Structure, and Membership***

UNHCR employs over 9,700 national and international staff members working in 126 Member States, including in Geneva, Switzerland, where UNHCR's headquarters are located.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, UNHCR has increased its budget from \$300,000 in its first year to \$7,184.7 million in 2016, and now addresses the needs of over 65 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide.<sup>27</sup> UNHCR falls under the UN's Programmes and Funds, reports directly to the General Assembly, and is governed by the Member States that make up its Executive Committee (ExCom).<sup>28</sup> The ExCom approves the agency's annual program priorities and budget.<sup>29</sup> Member States are elected by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to become members of the ExCom, and are selected according to equitable geographical allocations.<sup>30</sup> At its creation, the ExCom was comprised of 24 members; the membership has since grown to 98 Member States.<sup>31</sup> The ExCom reports directly to the General Assembly Third Committee, and it must follow directives issued by either the General Assembly or ECOSOC.<sup>32</sup> The ExCom meets once per year, usually in October, to review financial matters for the coming year, to give advice to the High Commissioner, to authorize appeals for funds, and to approve biennial targets.<sup>33</sup> In 1995, the ExCom created a Standing Committee, which meets three times per year to discuss the work of the body as a whole, and any new situations to be addressed.<sup>34</sup> In January 2016 the General Assembly elected High Commissioner, Filippo Grandi, to serve a five-year term.<sup>35</sup> Grandi works in close collaboration with the Deputy High Commissioner and the Assistant High Commissioner for Protection and Operations to oversee the work of the agency's secretariat and its regional offices.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> UNHCR, *One month after the earthquake, humanitarian needs persist in Ecuador*, 2016.

<sup>18</sup> UNHCR, *Ending Statelessness*, 2016.

<sup>19</sup> Chimni, *From Resettlement to Involuntary Repatriation*, 2004, p. 54.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Macrae, *Aiding Peace...and War: UNHCR, Returnee Reintegration, and the Relief-Development Debate*, 1999.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR and partners warn in Syria report of growing poverty, refugee needs*, 2016

<sup>25</sup> UNHCR, *Solutions for Colombia's displaced key to peace*, UNHCR chief, 2016.

<sup>26</sup> UN General Assembly, *Refugees and Stateless Persons (A/RES/319 (IV))*, 1949; UNHCR, *History of UNHCR*, 2016.

<sup>27</sup> UNHCR, *2015 Global Trends, Forced Displacement 2016*; UNHCR, *Fact Sheet: Global Forced Displacement*, 2016.

<sup>28</sup> New Zealand, *United Nations Handbook 2016-17*, 2016, p. 264.

<sup>29</sup> UNHCR, *Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*, 2010, p. 2.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>31</sup> UNHCR, *ExCom Membership*, 2016.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> UNHCR, *ExCom Membership*, 2016; UNHCR, *ExCom Structure and Meetings*, 2016.

<sup>34</sup> UNHCR, *ExCom Membership*, 2016; UNHCR, *ExCom Structure and Meetings*, 2016.

<sup>35</sup> UNHCR, *The High Commissioner*, 2016.

<sup>36</sup> UNHCR, *Governments and Partners*, 2016.

UNHCR's budget rests on four pillars: refugees, stateless people, reintegration programs, and IDPs.<sup>37</sup> This translates to a revised projected budget of \$7,184.7 million for 2016 and an expected \$7,309.7 million for 2017.<sup>38</sup> The budget stems almost entirely from voluntary donations by Member States, intergovernmental institutions, corporations, foundations, and individuals worldwide.<sup>39</sup> As a means of acquiring these donations, UNHCR releases an annual Global Appeal that provides detailed information regarding the major areas of concern for UNHCR, as well as supplementary appeals that address specific situations worldwide.<sup>40</sup> Included in this budget are contributions from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which provides funding in the case of situations that require an immediate response, such as a natural disaster or violent conflict.<sup>41</sup> UNHCR is facing unprecedented challenges with displacement and migration creating the ever-rising funding gap, which corresponded to 42% of the 33 UN appeals being funded in 2015.<sup>42</sup> UNHCR's 2017 Projected Global Resettlement Needs reports that 1.19 million refugees will need to be resettled next year.<sup>43</sup>

### ***Mandate, Functions, and Powers***

The basis for UNHCR's mandate is Article 14 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), which specifically recognizes the right of all individuals to seek asylum in another country.<sup>44</sup> The founding document of UNHCR is General Assembly resolution 428 (V), known as the *Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (1950).<sup>45</sup> Here, UNHCR's mandate is defined as: "providing international protection, under the auspices of the United Nations, to refugees who fall within the scope of the present Statute and of seeking permanent solutions for the problem of refugees by assisting Governments and [...] private organizations to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of such refugees, or their assimilation within new national communities."<sup>46</sup>

Other fundamental documents for UNHCR include the 1951 *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, which defines the term "refugee" as well as the rights and obligations of refugees; and the 1967 *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, which expanded the 1951 Convention and UNHCR's mandate to include refugees from conflicts occurring after 1951.<sup>47</sup> UNHCR's mandate also includes other groups, such as stateless people, as defined in the 1954 *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, and the 1961 *Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness*.<sup>48</sup> While its mandate does not extend specifically to IDPs, UNHCR's expertise in displacement has resulted in the gradual inclusion of IDPs in its work.<sup>49</sup> The 1998 *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, adopted by ECOSOC, outline the rights and protections for IDPs.<sup>50</sup> In 2007, after a series of inter-agency consultations, the ExCom adopted the policy framework and implementation strategy titled *UNHCR's role in support of an enhanced humanitarian response to situations of internal displacement*.<sup>51</sup> The framework emphasizes the agency's primary responsibility to refugees and stipulates that aid to IDPs must be given in collaboration with national governments, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other UN agencies.<sup>52</sup> The mandate of UNHCR was further expanded in the 2011 ExCom report entitled *UNHCR's role in support of an enhanced*

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<sup>37</sup> UNHCR, *Biennial programme budget 2016-2017 (revised) of the Office of UNHCR*, 2016.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> UNHCR, *Donors*, 2016; UNHCR, *UNHCR Global Appeal 2016-2017: Working in Partnerships*, 2016; UNHCR, *Partnerships*, 2016.

<sup>40</sup> UNHCR, *The Global Appeal and Supplementary Appeals*, 2016; UNHCR, *UNHCR Global Appeal 2016-2017*, 2016.

<sup>41</sup> UNHCR, *UN Sister Organizations*, 2016.

<sup>42</sup> UNHCR, *Needs and Funding Requirements*, 2016.

<sup>43</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR's Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2017*, 2016.

<sup>44</sup> UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948; UNHCR, *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 2010.

<sup>45</sup> UNHCR, *Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*, 2010, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>47</sup> UNHCR, *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 2010; UNHCR, *History of UNHCR*, 2016.

<sup>48</sup> UNHCR, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, 1954; UNHCR, *Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness*, 1961; UNHCR, *Ending Statelessness*, 2016.

<sup>49</sup> UNHCR, *Internally Displaced People*, 2016.

<sup>50</sup> UN ECOSOC, *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (E/CN.4/53/Add.2 (1998))*, 1998.

<sup>51</sup> UNHCR ExCom, *UNHCR's role in support of an enhanced humanitarian response to situations of internal displacement: Policy framework and implementation strategy*, 2007.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.



*humanitarian response for the protection of persons affected by natural disasters.*<sup>53</sup> The report emphasizes UNHCR's primary focus on conflict-related disasters, and that its role in natural disaster relief should be limited to pre-existing refugee or displacement operations.<sup>54</sup> Notably, paragraph seven of this report draws attention to the framework's implications for state sovereignty, particularly when it comes to natural disasters.<sup>55</sup>

In recent years, partnerships have become more central to the organization's activities and priorities.<sup>56</sup> For the first time ever, the Secretary-General called for a World Humanitarian Summit, which was held between 23-24 May 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey.<sup>57</sup> UNHCR was involved in multiple thematic and regional consultations leading up to the Summit with key messages to the international community and partners echoing an inclusive humanitarian system, the imperative need to bridge the humanitarian-development divide, and restructuring how the humanitarian field meets its financial needs.<sup>58</sup> It was at the Summit where the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* was discussed in the context of providing a framework to overcome the humanitarian-development divide.<sup>59</sup> UNHCR continues to play a crucial role in advocating for the inclusion of displacement issues in national development priorities and for people of concern to be included in the policy framework for implementing the 2030 Agenda.<sup>60</sup>

### ***Recent Sessions and Current Priorities***

UNHCR held its 67<sup>th</sup> ExCom session between 3-7 October 2016.<sup>61</sup> The ExCom mainly made decisions on financial matters, especially concerning adjustments required due to a rise in crises worldwide, and the fiscal gap currently facing UNHCR.<sup>62</sup> It also appealed for more generous donations by the international community.<sup>63</sup> Last year's ExCom session highlighted two themes for 2016: (1) international cooperation from a protection and solutions perspective; and (2) youth.<sup>64</sup> A few weeks before the scheduled ExCom session took place, the UN General Assembly convened a UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016 that fed into the decisions of the ExCom session for 2016.<sup>65</sup> Following this summit, on 20 September 2016, a Presidential Summit led by United States President Barack Obama convened with the following key goals: to raise financial commitments from governments to the refugee crisis, and to make further commitments towards resettling refugees.<sup>66</sup> Lastly, the ninth annual High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges will take place on 8-9 December 2016.<sup>67</sup> The Dialogue's theme of 'children on the move' echoes similar conversations reflected in the 2016 annual NGO Consultations whose theme was 'youth,' both events recognizing the particular struggles of young people when fleeing violence.<sup>68</sup>

Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs) were first introduced for the 2010-2011 biennium and has served as a guide for UNHCR to develop country level operational plans and activities according to their annual budget.<sup>69</sup> The GSPs

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<sup>53</sup> UNHCR ExCom, *UNHCR's role in support of an enhanced humanitarian response for the protection of persons affected by natural disasters*, 2011.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> UNHCR, *Strategic partnerships, including coordination and the World Humanitarian Summit*, 2016.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015.

<sup>61</sup> UNHCR, *2016 Executive Committee Session*, 2016; UNHCR, [67<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, 2016](#).

<sup>62</sup> UN General Assembly, *Report of the sixty-sixth session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme: Report of the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/1154)*, 2015, p. 9.

<sup>63</sup> UN General Assembly, *Report of the sixty-sixth session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme: Report of the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/1154)*, 2015, p. 9.

<sup>64</sup> UNHCR, *Oral Update on ExCom Conclusions Process*, 2016.

<sup>65</sup> UNHCR, *United Nations Summit for Refugees and Migrants*, 2016.

<sup>66</sup> United States Department of State, *Leaders' Summit on Refugees*, 2016.

<sup>67</sup> UNHCR, *High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges*, 2016.

<sup>68</sup> UNHCR, *High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges*, 2016; UNHCR, *UNHCR-NGO consultations open in Geneva, focused on youth*, 2016; UNHCR, *Youth*, 2016; UNHCR, *Non-Governmental Organizations*, 2016.

<sup>69</sup> UNHCR, *Update on the global programmes*, 2016.

consist of eight objectives and 22 indicators, which measure the progress of its thematic areas and priorities.<sup>70</sup> Complementary to the GSPs are its operational priorities that help steer the strategic planning and provide oversight in policy development.<sup>71</sup> With the implementation of the 2016-2017 GSPs, UNHCR regarded each biennium as continuous to its overall progress, therefore many of the 2014-2015 objectives are still in place and remain in the current 2016-2017 GSPs.<sup>72</sup> The UNHCR's *Strategic Framework* for 2014-2015 highlights its goal in devising new strategies to work with Member States and organizations to find lasting solutions for persons of concern.<sup>73</sup> The framework includes clear indicators of achievement in relation to its objectives, and builds on the areas of focus for the 2014-2015 period.<sup>74</sup> UNHCR's *Strategic Framework* for 2016-2017 includes the pursuit of comprehensive solutions, efforts to strengthen the international protection regime and to increase host countries capacities to provide asylum and protection.<sup>75</sup> However, the Strategic Framework for 2018-2019 is the most comprehensive and includes goals set under the 2030 Agenda, as well as durable solutions in the context of bridging the development and humanitarian gap.<sup>76</sup>

There are two regions with ongoing crises that have been particularly of focus for UNHCR this year, the first being Central America, dealing with migrants trying to cross to the United States, and the other in Syria where the civil war still remains.<sup>77</sup> To highlight the crisis in Central America, UNHCR held its first international meeting of its kind focused on forced displacement in San Jose, Costa Rica 6-7 July 2016.<sup>78</sup> There have already been over 100,000 people displaced in 2015 from the region.<sup>79</sup> To bring attention to the Syrian conflict that has caused millions to flee and many more millions to become internally displaced, UNHCR convened a ministerial-level meeting on 30 March 2016 to promote global responsibility sharing through pathways for admission of Syrian refugees.<sup>80</sup> The meeting explored various mechanisms for the admission of Syrian refugees from resettlement and providing special humanitarian visas to additional pathways such as family reunification and labor mobility schemes.<sup>81</sup> The ministerial meeting will feed into the larger high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 19 September 2016.<sup>82</sup>

### Conclusion

This year presents itself as both a challenge and an opportunity for the international community to come together. The Global Trends report for 2015 recorded 1.8 million people have fled their state, with only 340, 500 refugees returning back home.<sup>83</sup> UNHCR's upcoming work will need to address these unprecedented figures of displacement leaving nearly 6.7 million in protracted displacement situations at the end of 2015.<sup>84</sup> The world is at a crossroad for action, and that action must have an integrated approach.<sup>85</sup> UNHCR recognizes this as it is championing the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* to encompass all and leave no one behind.<sup>86</sup> Durable solutions will become the key for finding greater synergy between the humanitarian and development fields.<sup>87</sup> It is imperative for the

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> UNHCR, *Global Appeal and Supplementary Appeals*, 2016; UNHCR, *Report on the 2014-2015 global strategic priorities*, 2016; UN General Assembly, *Proposed Strategic Framework for the Period 2014-2015 – Programme 21: International protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees (A/67/6(Prog.21))*, 2012.

<sup>73</sup> UN General Assembly, *Proposed Strategic Framework for the Period 2014-2015*, 2012.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> UNHCR, *Proposed Strategic Framework for the Period 2016-2017*, 2014.

<sup>76</sup> UNHCR, *Proposed Strategic Framework for the Period 2018-2019*, 2016.

<sup>77</sup> UNHCR, *Roundtable on Protection Needs in the Northern Triangle of Central America*, 2016; UNHCR, *UN Secretary General says more help needed for Syrian refugees*, 2016.

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<sup>81</sup> UNHCR, *Pathways for Admission of Syrian Refugees*, 2016; UNHCR, *UN Secretary General says more help needed for Syrian refugees*, 2016.

<sup>82</sup> UNHCR, *United Nations Summit for Refugees and Migrants*, 2016.

<sup>83</sup> UNHCR, *New Approaches to Solutions*, 2016.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Wilton Park, *Forum on new approaches to protracted displacement*, 2016.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

international community to rethink its past approaches and find new creative solutions.<sup>88</sup> However, as we see in Syria, political will must be agreed upon as a stepping-stone towards ending the violence and further displacement.<sup>89</sup> The situation of the Syrian refugee crisis in Europe was able to draw attention to the millions fleeing, but the challenge remains in sustaining the support in order to end the conflict, as well as foster openness for the protection of those in need.<sup>90</sup>

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*This document contains not only the Statute, but also a helpful introductory note on UNHCR's history and membership. Delegates should begin their research by reviewing the Statute, as it contains integral information in regards to the function of the committee. The Statute details the rules of procedure for UNHCR, its mandate and functions, and the structure of the organization. Through this source, delegates will gain a better understanding of why this body was created, as well as the intended work of the body and the constraints within which it must function.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2015). *Executive Committee* [Website]. Retrieved 25 July 2016 from <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c83.html>

*This Website provides a detailed explanation of ExCom, its history, and its role. It also provides links to all major forms of documentation produced by ExCom, including documents that have been submitted by the Standing Committee. In addition, it provides a better understanding for delegates of the process Member States must undergo to become members of ExCom, as well as of the role of observers in the annual meeting. Delegates should use this resource as a means of better understanding the current work being done by ExCom, as well as a source of documentation regarding the topics discussed.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2015). *UNHCR 2015 Global Trends, Forced Displacement* [Report]. Retrieved 19 July 2015 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/latest/2016/6/5763b65a4/global-forced-displacement-hits-record-high.html>

*The 2015 Global Trends report tracks forced displacement each year and will give delegates an updated look at what is currently being done in this field. The report shows 2015 recording the highest number yet, 65.3 million people displaced. It highlights the dire situations in Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia, which remain the three countries that produce half of the world's refugees. Delegates will be able to determine the main priorities that UNHCR will encounter in the coming years and gain a better understanding of the Committee as it gives a broad overview of the work of the body.*

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*The Strategic Framework for 2016-2017 will be a useful resource for delegates in order to determine the main activities UNHCR will be implementing throughout this period. Such activities include: promoting gender equality and ensuring UNHCR collaboration with other UN bodies. The biennial programme plan includes wider goals for international protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees. These goals will be reflected in the activities and guided by UNHCR's GSPs. Delegates should closely study both the Strategic Framework of 2016-2017 together with UNHCR's current GSPs.*

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Executive Committee. (2016). *Proposed Strategic Framework for the Period 2018-2019* [Report]. Standing Committee, 65<sup>th</sup> meeting. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/excom/standcom/56dedef366/unhcrs-programme-united-nations-proposed-strategic-framework-period-2018.html>

*The Strategic Framework outlining the work for UNHCR for 2018-2019 will be complementary to the biennial plan for 2016-2017. In this framework, UNHCR's work will continue to incorporate the larger goals of 'international protection, durable solutions and assistance to refugees' as detailed in the Strategic Framework for 2016-2017. A notable difference from the previous Strategic Framework is that 2018-2019 will be presented to the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC); then the CPC will issue a report with conclusions and recommendations (A/71/6) for approval by the General Assembly. Delegates will also note that this framework will include progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals as well as follow up on relevant recommendations from international conferences and other humanitarian and development organizations.*

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## I. Promoting Livelihoods and Education for Refugees and Displaced Persons

*“We want to ensure that refugee rights are upheld everywhere and that they have access to shelter, food and healthcare. This must continue. But we also want to create opportunities for education and livelihoods. This is what refugees want desperately.”<sup>91</sup>*

### **Introduction**

As 65.3 million forcibly displaced people and 16.1 million out of 21.3 million refugees are currently under the mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), education and livelihoods are core components of UNHCR’s work.<sup>92</sup> According to UNHCR, 10 million stateless people are denied basic human rights such as employment and education, and primary school enrolment is only granted around 50% of refugee children under UNHCR’s care.<sup>93</sup> Access to education and livelihoods is often blocked during conflict or displacement.<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, access to education enables refugees to rebuild lives, show leadership skills, and recover from conflict.<sup>95</sup> Future security for refugees and displaced persons can be built through life skills, knowledge, and sustainability.<sup>96</sup> Promoting livelihoods and education is a crucial tool in times of displacement.<sup>97</sup> Rather than facing a second exile, finding innovative solutions for livelihoods and education programming can foster self-reliance among refugees and enables UNHCR to integrate refugees and displaced persons into hosting states.<sup>98</sup> Livelihoods are integrating people and their capabilities, as well as their assets and activities which are necessary to access sufficient means to make a living.<sup>99</sup> Sustainable livelihoods ensure people’s ability to deal with shocks such as economic difficulties or natural disasters and support the well-being of current and future generations.<sup>100</sup> UNHCR strives for innovative solutions in ameliorating access to quality education in order to secure basic human rights and protection.<sup>101</sup> Effectively integrating refugees and displaced persons into education and livelihood programs requires partnerships between UNHCR, governments, civil society, as well as humanitarian and developmental partnerships.<sup>102</sup> Education and livelihoods play a major role to foster integration and provide a stable and safe environment for generations.<sup>103</sup> UNHCR seeks to ensure that refugees and displaced persons are able to make a living and can enjoy their human rights.<sup>104</sup> Fixed in its global strategic priorities, UNCHR seeks to raise protection and well-being through educating and training refugees and displaced persons, and to assist them to make a living.<sup>105</sup> This Background Guide will firstly analyze key international documents and the role of the international system, followed by a review of UNHCR’s education and livelihood strategies. The Guide will then address which barriers have to be faced when promoting education and livelihoods, and how education and livelihoods can promote protection for vulnerable groups as well as innovation.

### **International and Regional Framework**

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) established elementary and fundamental education as a human right.<sup>106</sup> Article 22 of the 1951 *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* provides the basis for defining education as a basic right for refugees and displaced persons, stating refugees should experience equal treatment to

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<sup>91</sup> Mahecic, Donors pledge more than US\$6 billion for Syrians, *UNHCR*, 2016.

<sup>92</sup> UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, 2016; UNHCR, *Education*, 2016; UNHCR, *Livelihoods*, 2016.

<sup>93</sup> UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, 2016; UNHCR, *Education*, 2016.

<sup>94</sup> UNHCR & Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative, *DAFI 2014: Annual Report*, 2014, p. 4.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> UNHCR, *Education*, 2016.

<sup>98</sup> Aleinikoff, *Ending the Second Exile*, *UNHCR*, 2015.

<sup>99</sup> Cambers & Conway, *Sustainable rural livelihoods: practical concepts for the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, 1991, p. 6.

<sup>100</sup> International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, *What is a livelihood?*, 2016.

<sup>101</sup> UNHCR, *Education Strategy: 2012-2016*, 2012, p. 12; UNHCR, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*, 2014, p. 2.

<sup>102</sup> UNHCR, *Ensuring Access to Education*, 2011, p. 4.

<sup>103</sup> UNHCR, *Education*, 2016.

<sup>104</sup> UNHCR, *Livelihoods*, 2016.

<sup>105</sup> UNHCR, *Education Strategy: 2012-2016*, 2012, p. 7.

<sup>106</sup> UN HRC, *The right to education of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education*, Vernor Muñoz (A/HRC/14/25), 2010, p.7.

locals regarding elementary education as well as getting access to higher education.<sup>107</sup> The 1989 *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) puts special focus on the rights of refugee children and highlights the importance of providing education to all children including refugee and displaced children by stressing that education must be free and compulsory for every child.<sup>108</sup> The right to work is enshrined in Article 23.1 of UDHR and in the *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, which also guarantees the right to work for refugees.<sup>109</sup> Closely linked is the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* adopted by the General Assembly in 1966 that recognizes the right of everyone to choose and accept work freely and, in article six, ensures self-reliance in dignity and freedom from discrimination for all.<sup>110</sup> While the outlined frameworks provide a working basis, refugees and displaced persons in reality often face legal barriers such as from the freedom of residence, the lack of the right to work or access to school education, which are not clearly addressed in the framing documents.<sup>111</sup> The General Assembly recently outlined the importance of education to be more inclusive and resilient in its resolution 70/135 on the “Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees” (2016).<sup>112</sup> The Human Rights Council (HRC) echoed the importance of education with a focus on refugee children in its resolution 8/4 on “The right to education” of 2008.<sup>113</sup> Promoting livelihoods and education for refugees and displaced persons also works towards the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015).<sup>114</sup> Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 aims on achieving equitable education and lifelong learning opportunities through access to free quality education, technological development, teacher training, and the provision of scholarship programs, whereas employment and decent work for all are included in SDG 8.<sup>115</sup>

### **Role of the International System**

UNHCR took over the global mandate for refugee education by the mid-1960s to meet the specific requirements of field-level responsibility and to realize the access to education for refugees, while the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) works on implementing education programs on a national level.<sup>116</sup> Whereas UNHCR’s work initially focused on providing financial assistance as well as self-help initiatives and scholarships for refugees, it has since then transformed from the individual level to the provision of education systems outlined in the *Revised Guidelines for Educational Assistance to Refugees*.<sup>117</sup> UNHCR framed its Education Strategy in accordance with the Education for All Movement (EFA).<sup>118</sup> EFA was launched at the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UNESCO, the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank is a global commitment for quality education.<sup>119</sup> While the EFA focuses on rights and developing human capital, UNHCR’s core strategy components are access to education as well as quality and protection of education.<sup>120</sup> Based on the *Education Strategy 2012 - 2016* and anchored in its Global Strategic Priorities, UNHCR seeks to enable refugees to build skills and knowledge for self-reliance and independent lives through six core objectives and four major strategic approaches.<sup>121</sup> Between 2012 and 2016, UNHCR aims to expand access to primary, secondary, and tertiary education especially for the young.<sup>122</sup> UNHCR’s major goals are: providing safe learning environments, trained teachers, and a focus on non-formal education, as well as increasing

<sup>107</sup> UNHCR, *Education: Field Guidelines*, 2013, p. 61; *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951.

<sup>108</sup> Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 14.

<sup>109</sup> UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948; UNHCR, *Promoting Livelihoods and Self-reliance: Operational Guidance on Refugee Protection and Solution in Urban Areas*, 2011, p. 3.

<sup>110</sup> UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200 (XXI))*, 1966; UNHCR, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*, 2014, p. 15.

<sup>111</sup> De Vriese, *Refugee livelihoods: A review of the evidence*, 2006, p. 7.

<sup>112</sup> UN General Assembly, *Office of The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/RES/70/135)*, 2016.

<sup>113</sup> UN HRC, *The right to education (A/HRC/RES/8/4)*, 2008.

<sup>114</sup> UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

<sup>115</sup> UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015; UN DESA, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform*, 2016.

<sup>116</sup> Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 13.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13-16.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>119</sup> Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 22; UNESCO, *Education: History*, 2016.

<sup>120</sup> Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 22; UNESCO, *Education: History*, 2016.

<sup>121</sup> UNHCR, *Education Strategy: 2012-2016*, 2012.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

the literacy rates among adults while investing in new and innovative technology.<sup>123</sup> With its *Age, Gender and Diversity approach*, UNHCR and its partners are closely working together with ministries of education seeking to raise working capacities.<sup>124</sup>

UNHCR relies on exchange with UNESCO within the framework of the World Education Forum and on UNESCO's assistance regarding information exchange, technical cooperation for school building, development of school material, as well as the recruitment and training of teachers.<sup>125</sup> Next to UNHCR and UNESCO, UNICEF plays a major role in promoting education and livelihoods.<sup>126</sup> In Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey, UNICEF is one of the major supporters of the *No Lost Generation* initiative.<sup>127</sup> The initiative includes the improvement of the quality of education, child protection, and youth/adolescent programming, as well as schooling of life skills and the support of civic engagement and livelihood opportunities.<sup>128</sup> The strategic approaches outlined in the *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018* clarifies UNHCR's livelihoods activities, which rely on building partnerships, capacity building, communication and advocacy, integrated approaches, measurements, and innovation.<sup>129</sup> The global strategy is furthermore reinforced through UNHCR's *Operational Guidelines on the Minimum Criteria for Livelihoods Programming* (UNHCR(OG/2015/4)).<sup>130</sup>

The current refugee situation shows that the strength of civil society should be complementing state measures and other efforts.<sup>131</sup> Tackling refugee education and livelihoods, civil society has created online platforms, assisting in integration and community work.<sup>132</sup> In Berlin, volunteers work for the online university Kiron, offering refugees the possibility to access free higher education with the help of new technologies.<sup>133</sup> The IKEA Foundation is one of the strongest and largest private sector partners of UNHCR, providing funding and support in field operations.<sup>134</sup> Through creating so called circles of prosperity including a safe home, health care, access to education, and an income, the IKEA Foundation empowers refugees and displaced persons, especially children, and makes it possible for them to enter schools and universities, and to set up small businesses.<sup>135</sup> The *Graduation Approach*, an initiative brought up in 2002 by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP), and the Ford Foundation was also implemented with UNHCR in 2013, involving various actors from governments and the private sector.<sup>136</sup> The approach enables refugees and displaced persons to become more resilient and self-sufficient with a personalized step-by-step approach.<sup>137</sup> The *Graduation Approach* first offers the possibility to become an entrepreneur through receiving micro-financing and the capital to open up a business.<sup>138</sup> The integration in the local job market through wage employment is the second possible approach for persons of concern.<sup>139</sup> By partnering with governments, UNHCR conducted the *Graduation Approach* within 15 Member States in South America, Africa, and Asia in 2016.<sup>140</sup>

### ***Promoting Education and Livelihoods***

Access to education and livelihoods is limited and difficult for refugees and displaced persons to achieve.<sup>141</sup> Promoting the right to work, education, and durable self-reliance can help refugees rebuild lives after war or

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Refworld, *Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and UNHCR on Education for Refugees*, 2016.

<sup>126</sup> UNICEF, *Syrian Refugees*, 2016.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> UNHCR, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*, 2014, pp. 4, 19.

<sup>130</sup> UNHCR, *Operational Guidelines on the Minimum Criteria for Livelihoods Programming (UNHCR/OG/2015/4)*, 2015.

<sup>131</sup> Zugasti, *Special Report: Civil Society Responses To Refugee Crisis*, 2016.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Kiron, *Kiron At a Glance*, 2016.

<sup>134</sup> IKEA Foundation, *About Us*, 2016.

<sup>135</sup> IKEA Foundation, *Circles of Prosperity*, 2015.

<sup>136</sup> UNHCR, *Graduation Approach*, 2016.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> UNHCR, *Small and Micro Enterprises*, 2016.

<sup>139</sup> UNHCR, *Wage Employment*, 2016.

<sup>140</sup> UNHCR, *Graduation Approach*, 2016.

<sup>141</sup> UNHCR, *Education*, 2016; UNHCR, *Livelihoods*, 2016.

persecution and can thus ensure the basis for refugees and displaced persons to secure a safe life.<sup>142</sup> Education provides the ground to “foster social cohesion, provide access to life saving information, address psychological needs,” and to empower refugees and displaced persons.<sup>143</sup> Ensuring adequate access to education and livelihood programs can be the basis for refugees to learn new skills and or develop already acquired ones to rebuild their lives.<sup>144</sup> However, as access to education can depend on the socio-economic status, the promotion of education and livelihoods are understood as interdependent.<sup>145</sup>

With the adoption of the *Declaration on the Future of Education* in 2015, UNESCO outlined that education is the major tool to ensure global peace and sustainable development.<sup>146</sup> Education is a key necessity for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to get the chance to integrate themselves into welcoming communities.<sup>147</sup> Yet, Member States’ bureaucracy often exacerbates IDPs’ and refugees’ opportunities to sufficient access to education.<sup>148</sup> UNHCR differentiates between basic education, life-skill education, primary, secondary, tertiary, and non-formal education.<sup>149</sup> To complete the full cycles of education helps to achieve durable achievements and competencies for refugees, minimizes dropouts, and ensures protection and self-reliance.<sup>150</sup> However, refugees face disruptions and limited access to schooling and worldwide enrolment rates for refugee children are very low.<sup>151</sup> Through quality education, non-formal education and training, and the provision of secondary and tertiary education opportunities, UNHCR can provide a protective environment for refugees.<sup>152</sup>

#### *Livelihood Strategies*

Education is not the only core component for refugees and IDPs to rebuild lives, the improvement of livelihoods is a vital approach in enhancing the lives of refugees and IDPs.<sup>153</sup> Skill development and economic self-reliance through safe value chains, wage employment, and small and micro enterprises enable refugees and displaced persons to secure their living and human rights.<sup>154</sup> However, refugees and displaced persons are facing a great number of challenges when striving for access to livelihoods, including lack of financial resources and health assets that are insufficient and not readily accessible for refugees and displaced persons.<sup>155</sup> As refugees and IDPs are excluded from education systems and health services, they are also denied access to the formal labor market and thus not able to reach self-reliance.<sup>156</sup> Consequently, the exclusion from the labor market forces refugees into day labor jobs and sex trafficking.<sup>157</sup> Success of short-term measures related to livelihood programming is already evident: UNHCR uplifted its capacities for regional offices and field operations, developed self-reliance strategies, and built strategic partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).<sup>158</sup> Nonetheless, the current scope of UNHCR’s programs is still only outreaching a minor percentage of refugees.<sup>159</sup>

#### *Data Collection*

While data on refugees and displaced persons, that help to better develop more efficient programs and measures, already exist, there still is a need to collect additional data related to education programs and the economy.<sup>160</sup> Data collection referring to school enrolment of refugees for example is challenging UNHCR’s work as there is a

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<sup>142</sup> UNHCR, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*, 2014, p. 2-4; UNHCR, *Livelihoods*, 2016.

<sup>143</sup> UNHCR, *Education*, 2016; UNHCR, *Livelihoods*, 2016.

<sup>144</sup> UNHCR, *Livelihoods*, 2016.

<sup>145</sup> UNHCR, *Education*, 2016; UNHCR, *Livelihoods*, 2016.

<sup>146</sup> UNICEF, *World Education Forum adopts Declaration on the Future of Education*, 2015.

<sup>147</sup> Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 7.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>149</sup> UNHCR, *Education: Field Guidelines*, 2013, p. 59.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>151</sup> Dryden-Peterson, S, *The Educational Experience of Refugee Children in Countries of First Asylum*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>152</sup> UNHCR, *Education Strategy: 2012-2016*, 2012, p. 8.

<sup>153</sup> UNHCR, *Ensuring Access to Education*, 2011, p. 5.

<sup>154</sup> UNHCR, *Livelihoods*, 2016.

<sup>155</sup> UNHCR, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*, 2014, p. 13.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>160</sup> Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 27; UNHCR, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*, 2014, p. 15.

deficiency regarding data management related to education data, due to a lack of official records or inaccurate population data.<sup>161</sup> Information gaps leading to unreliable data and inaccessibility of archives, exacerbates framing adequate policies and programs.<sup>162</sup> Developing methodologies to efficiently collect and manage data is a strategic approach to implement appropriate programs and to develop innovative ones.<sup>163</sup> Furthermore, by collecting data together with Member States, UNHCR can frame situational approaches for different cases.<sup>164</sup>

#### *Barriers to Access Education and Livelihoods*

Refugees and displaced people are facing various barriers and obstacles accessing education and livelihoods.<sup>165</sup> Barriers faced by refugees and displaced persons are intertwined and multiple barriers need tailored strategies to address their complexity.<sup>166</sup> Barriers hindering refugees to access education can be categorized as hard and soft barriers.<sup>167</sup> Hard barriers such as the lack of awareness for education opportunities, financial obstacles, insufficient income, missing official identification documents, safety constraints, and a general lack of capacity in schools, hinders refugees' school enrolment.<sup>168</sup> Soft barriers such as bullying, discrimination, and language barriers on the other hand often cause dropouts.<sup>169</sup> Thus, UNHCR needs to provide safe learning environments to offer proper primary education in order to counteract the mentioned difficulties for refugees.<sup>170</sup> Moreover, even when refugees have the chance to obtain education in host countries, the education provided is of low quality; moreover, refugees exceed the expected knowledge level.<sup>171</sup> Next to hard and soft barriers legal barriers are a major issue for livelihood opportunities and access to education.<sup>172</sup> Refugees are often not able to freely choose where to live and work and do not have access to valid contracts and property rights due to a lack of resources within host countries; furthermore reservations towards refugees exacerbate integration in education systems.<sup>173</sup>

#### *Promoting Education and Livelihoods for Vulnerable Groups*

According to the aid organizations Handicap International and HelpAge International, one in five of the four million refugees from the Syrian conflict has a "physical, sensory or intellectual impairment."<sup>174</sup> When conceptualizing a multifaceted approach to promote education and livelihoods, certain groups of refugees and displaced person need to be thoroughly considered, especially women, children, and people with disabilities or illnesses.<sup>175</sup> While gender discrimination often excludes women from communities, children are in need of special attention to ensure they can grow up in a peaceful surrounding.<sup>176</sup> Moreover, persons with disabilities are in need for special classes or integrative measures.<sup>177</sup> The most vulnerable groups are least likely to benefit from standardized programs and are in need of special support and assistance to ensure their well-being to ensure measures tending on self-reliance do not lead to further exclusion of vulnerable groups.<sup>178</sup> Participating in education programs can also support vulnerable groups' need to partake an active role in refugee communities.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 27.

<sup>162</sup> Dryden-Peterson, *Refugee Education: A Global Review*, 2011, p. 27.

<sup>163</sup> UNHCR, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*, 2014, p. 5.

<sup>164</sup> UNHCR, *Education: Field Guidelines*, 2013, p. 66.

<sup>165</sup> Educate A Child, *Barriers to education and strategies to address them*, 2016.

<sup>166</sup> Educate A Child, *Barriers to education and strategies to address them*, 2016.

<sup>167</sup> UNHCR & REACH, *Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Lebanon*, 2014, p 12-13.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12-18.

<sup>169</sup> UNHCR & REACH, *Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Lebanon*, 2014, p. 12-13; Dryden-Peterson, S, *The Educational Experience of Refugee Children in Countries of First Asylum*, 2015, p. 1-2.

<sup>170</sup> UNHCR, *Education Strategy: 2012-2016*, 2012, p. 8.

<sup>171</sup> Dryden-Peterson, *The Educational Experience of Refugee Children in Countries of First Asylum*, 2015, p. 1-2.

<sup>172</sup> De Vriese, *Refugee livelihoods: A review of the evidence*, 2006, p. 7.

<sup>173</sup> De Vriese, *Refugee livelihoods: A review of the evidence*, 2006, p. 7; UNHCR, *Promoting Livelihoods and Self-reliance: Operational Guidance on Refugee Protection and Solution in Urban Areas*, p. 7.

<sup>174</sup> HelpAge International & Handicap International, *Hidden victims of the Syrian crisis: disabled, injured and older refugees*, 2014, p. 4; Mateso & Oweyna, *Wounded Syrian refugee inspires others through outreach work*, 2015.

<sup>175</sup> UNHCR, *Caring for the Vulnerable*, 2016.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> UNHCR, *Education: Field Guidelines*, 2013, p. 7.

<sup>178</sup> O'Callaghan, *Linking Protection and Livelihoods: Synthesis Report*, 2009, pp. 14, 16.

<sup>179</sup> Mateso & Oweyna, *Wounded Syrian refugee inspires others through outreach work*, 2015.

### ***Practical and Innovative Concepts for Promoting Education and Livelihoods***

The need for creative and innovative ideas and partnerships is an essential component in ameliorating UNHCR's programs.<sup>180</sup> UNHCR's approach consists of different strategies to promote education and livelihoods in an innovative way: with its Innovation Unit, UNHCR is working together with refugees, academia, and the private sector to improve the life of persons of concern through innovation.<sup>181</sup> UNHCR is using a three-step approach in which it (1) makes use of already present innovation, (2) connects to innovators, and (3) adapts innovation in a broader context for refugee specific contexts.<sup>182</sup> Through micro-financing and wage employment for example, UNHCR sees a chance to integrate persons of concern in local job markets.<sup>183</sup> Micro-financing is recommended as a comprehensive part in livelihood programming.<sup>184</sup> Through offering financial services, start-up grants, and entrepreneurial training, UNHCR and Financial Service Providers (FSPs) offer refugees the possibility to build own businesses.<sup>185</sup> As UNHCR sees wage employment as an opportunity for refugees to enter the job market and strengthen their self-reliance, it is assisting persons of concern with job placement and job training.<sup>186</sup> UNHCR further aims to open livelihoods for refugees in the same manner as for national populations.<sup>187</sup> An innovative idea still under development by UNHCR is the so called Learn Lab, a virtual learning space ensuring refugees' access to learning opportunities.<sup>188</sup>

#### ***Case Study: DAFI Scholarship***

As higher education is one of the priority strategies outlined in the *Education Strategy 2012-2016*, the German-funded, Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) opened up education and employment to 2,242 refugee students in 2014.<sup>189</sup> The DAFI program is an innovative solution developed by UNHCR to make higher education accessible for refugees and displaced persons.<sup>190</sup> It aims to promote self-reliance and qualifications towards employment through five core strategies: the achievement of self-reliance, the development of qualified human resources, the contribution to the refugee community, facilitation of integration, and the building of a role model character which should support Member States in conflict.<sup>191</sup> DAFI has been implemented in 41 Member States involving students from Member States with the highest number of refugee populations.<sup>192</sup> Since its establishment, DAFI has had a stable number of graduates.<sup>193</sup> Nonetheless, increasing displacement forces UNHCR to continuously adapt the DAFI program to new challenges such as expanding access to DAFI, collect and manage data of the program, and review its policy and guidelines.<sup>194</sup>

#### ***Conclusion***

Enshrined in the *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, the UDHR, and UNHCR's mandate, the right to education as well as the possibility to access livelihoods is a necessary component concerning the field operations of UNHCR. With the *Education Strategy* and the *Global Strategy for Livelihoods*, current approaches are enhanced, nonetheless, improvement has to be achieved. Access to education and livelihoods is still uneven and of a low quality for the larger group of refugees and displaced persons. Especially, vulnerable groups need to be integrated into strategic approaches, and guidelines have to be developed for different contexts and Member States. With a rising number of displaced persons and emergency cases, UNHCR has to adapt and further develop current plans to secure a sustainable circle of obtaining life skills, learning, and self-reliance. The need for innovative solutions, stable funding, and securing partnerships, challenges UNHCR's protection and durable solutions mandate.

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<sup>180</sup> UNHCR, *Education Strategy: 2012-2016*, 2012, p 8.

<sup>181</sup> UNHCR, *Innovation: About Us*, 2016.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> UNHCR, *Small and Micro Enterprises*, 2016; UNHCR, *Wage Employment*, 2016.

<sup>184</sup> UNHCR *Operational Guidelines on the Minimum Criteria for Livelihoods Programming (UNHCR/OG/2015/4)*, 2015, p. 9.

<sup>185</sup> UNHCR, *Small and Micro Enterprises*, 2016

<sup>186</sup> UNHCR, *Wage Employment*, 2016.

<sup>187</sup> UNHCR, *Promoting Livelihoods and Self-reliance*, 2011, p. 5.

<sup>188</sup> UNHCR, *Innovation: Learn Lab*, 2016.

<sup>189</sup> UNHCR & Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative, *DAFI 2014: Annual Report*, 2014, p. 10-11.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>191</sup> Morlang & Watson, *Tertiary Refugee Education: Impact and Achievements: 15 Years of DAFI*, 2007, p. 8.

<sup>192</sup> UNHCR & Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative, *DAFI 2014: Annual Report*, 2014, p. 13-14.

<sup>193</sup> Morlang & Watson, *Tertiary Refugee Education: Impact and Achievements: 15 Years of DAFI*, 2007, p. 10.

<sup>194</sup> UNHCR & Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative, *DAFI 2014: Annual Report*, 2014, p. 34.

Promoting education and livelihoods is thus a multifaceted process involving diversified actors under the guidance of UNHCR.

### ***Further Research***

Reflecting on the challenges ahead, delegates should consider the following questions: How can appropriate access to sustainable education and livelihoods be ensured as durable solutions? How can quality in education and livelihood programs be maintained and increased? How can education programs be connected to livelihood programming? Delegates should also consider what creative and innovative ways can be found to promote education and livelihoods. How can the limitations refugees and displaced people face regarding access to education and livelihoods be handled? How can the connection between the promotion of livelihoods and education and the SDGs be ensured? Which partnerships are needed to provide education and livelihoods? Which different education scenarios have to be faced? In what way can new technologies be used more efficiently to improve education and livelihood programming?

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*Issued in 2011, this UNHCR report provides a global review on refugee education. It examines the quality of refugee education and its function in relation to UNHCR's mandate. The report outlines key points which need to be worked on to ensure a high quality education for refugees and further offers important insights into the topic of promoting high quality education. The report will guide delegates to examine priority challenges related to refugee education and to understand the development of refugee education as well as challenges faced concerning refugee education. It ensures a basic understanding of refugee education on a global view.*

Morlang, C., & S. Watson. (2007). *Tertiary Refugee Education: Impact and Achievements: 15 Years of DAFI* [Study]. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Retrieved 24 August 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/operations/47b4083d2/tertiary-refugee-education-impact-achievements-15-years-dafi.html?query=education%20and%20refugees>

*The study examines the German-funded Albert Einstein Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI). Through the provision of scholarships higher education has been opened up to refugees since 1992. The study focuses on the history and impact of DAFI and shows general and regional findings. The study illustrates the success of innovative solutions for education and livelihoods. It is a helpful source for delegates as it shows how programs can be implemented and how they have to be adapted in regional contexts. The study enables delegates to think out of the box by analyzing the DAFI as a case study for the topic.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2011). *Ensuring Access to Education: Operational Guidance on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas* [Report]. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/4ea9552f9.pdf>

*The report illustrates UNHCR guidelines to ensure access to education for refugees with an emphasis on rural areas. It clearly outlines the different roles of actors involved like UNHCR and other stakeholders. Moreover, it enables delegates to critically think about seven outlined principles which should raise access and quality of education for refugees as well as it equips delegates with the principal understanding of the term education. To review this report is essential to understand how UNHCR operates in relation to education and provides a first linkage to livelihood programs.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2011). *Promoting Livelihoods and Self-reliance: Operational Guidance on Refugee Protection and Solution in Urban Areas* [Report]. Retrieved 18 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/4eeb19f49.pdf>

*This report deals with the key principles and operational guidelines to promote livelihoods and self-reliance for refugees focusing on rural areas. Closely linked to the report *Ensuring Access to Education: Operational Guidance on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas* the report*



*helps to understand the interdependence between education and livelihoods. Delegates can compare the different key principles for livelihoods and education and critically examine the current status for both.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2012). *Education Strategy: 2012-2016* [Report]. Retrieved 16 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/5149ba349>

*The Education Strategy Report published in 2012 provides strategic objectives of UNHCR with a special focus on the Member State level. Based on the 1951 Refugee Convention and taking into consideration human rights instruments, the MDGs, and strategic priorities, the report offers the bigger picture on the access to education for refugees and displaced persons. The outlined objectives help to structure the topic of refugee education and to apply it for Member States. The report will be a useful source for delegates to gain a better understanding of the recent Education Strategy and the included global strategic priorities.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2013). *Education: Field Guidelines*. Retrieved 22 August 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/pro-TECT/PROTECTION/40586bd34.pdf>

*The UNHCR Education Field Guidelines provide an operational tool to manage refugee education programs. It includes ten policy statements which can be used by delegates to gain fundamental knowledge of how UNHCR is implementing education programs. Furthermore, this document offers delegates the opportunity to shape the already outlined key principles in order to adapt it to future scenarios as well as current cases.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2014). *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018* [Report]. Retrieved 19 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/530f107b6.pdf>

*The Global Strategy for Livelihoods report contains the latest guiding principles of UNHCR concerning livelihoods. It outlines strategic objectives and a situational analysis of refugees, internally displaced persons, and returners. It deals with the questions of how to reach results and which stakeholders need to be addressed as well as it narrows the scope of implementing livelihood programs. The report is a helpful source for delegates to internalize the vision of UNHCR and evaluate how livelihood program goals are achieved in the near future.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2015). *Operational Guidelines on the Minimum Criteria for Livelihoods Programming (UNHCR/OG/2015/4)*. Retrieved 16 July 2016 from:

<http://www.unhcr.org/publications/operations/54fd6cbe9/operational-guidelines-minimum-criteria-livelihoods-programming.html>

*Closely linked to the Global Strategy for Livelihoods 2014-2018, the Operational Guidelines on the Minimum Criteria for Livelihoods Programming outline the main operational guidelines which should be met when conceptualizing and conducting livelihoods programs. All nine criteria are precisely explained and linked to its requirements. Each section is linked to available support and outlines findings from the Operational Solutions and Transitions section. As the guidelines are intended to maximize the impact of livelihoods programming, delegates will be able to evaluate if potential ideas would be suitable for implementation and meet necessary requirements.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform* [Website]. Retrieved 25 August 2016 from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

*Closely linked to the MDGs, the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform supports delegates to get an in-depth understanding on how to integrate sustainability concepts in their working papers and draft resolutions. Especially Goal 4: Quality Education, Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, and Goal 16: Peace Justice and Strong Institutions are vital to be discussed regarding the promotion of education and livelihoods for refugees and displaced persons. The Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform provides the ground for delegates to gather information on how the SDGs can be linked to the promotion of education and livelihoods for refugees and displaced persons.*

United Nations, Human Rights Council, Fourteenth session. (2010). *The right to education of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Vernor Muñoz (A/HRC/14/25)*.

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*The annual report concentrates on the right to education of migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers. The report of the Special Rapporteur offers delegates the possibility to understand the contextual background of the topic from a historical perspective as well as from a legal and normative one. With its special focus on marginalized and vulnerable groups the report enables delegates to analyze six core components in relation to the promotion of education. Moreover, the report illustrates different recommendations given by the Special Rapporteur, which can be used as basic ideas for delegates to develop innovative solutions for promoting education and livelihoods.*

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## II. Addressing Protracted Displacement

### *Introduction*

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defines protracted displacement situations as: “situations where 25,000 refugees or more have been in exile for 5 years or more after their initial displacement, without immediate prospects for implementation of durable solutions.”<sup>195</sup> This definition is an updated version of UNHCR’s 2004 definition, which articulated how refugees and those living in protracted displacement situations have their basic human rights, economic, social, and psychological needs unfulfilled, and are dependent on external assistance.<sup>196</sup> While all protracted displacement situations are due in part to political impasses or natural or man-made disasters, the exact factors of each situation are unique.<sup>197</sup> However, the criteria for establishing when displacement becomes protracted, such as the 5-year timeframe and the number of refugees that are displaced, is fluid due to a number of factors such as new waves of displacement, the return of displaced populations, and various displacement populations being integrated into host countries.<sup>198</sup>

It should be noted that refugees are not the only displaced population to be considered protracted after a period of time, as internally displaced persons (IDPs), asylum seekers, and stateless persons can also end up in protracted displacement situations.<sup>199</sup> More than 80% of refugee crises develop into protracted displacement situations, and conflict-related displacement has led to protracted displacement situations for IDPs that have lasted over 20 years.<sup>200</sup> Asylum seekers and stateless people are also more likely to end up in protracted displacement situations due to long-waiting times for refugee status or administration processes for nationality applications.<sup>201</sup> At the end of 2015, there were 65.3 million people that were forcibly displaced around the world. This number consisted of 40.8 million IDPs, 21.3 million refugees and 10 million stateless people.<sup>202</sup> Every day, almost 34,000 people are forcibly displaced and after six months, displaced populations face a high probability of being displaced for three years or longer.<sup>203</sup> Persons who experience protracted displacement face a myriad of issues including: denial of human rights, lack of basic needs, lack of economic opportunity, and a dependency on humanitarian assistance.<sup>204</sup> While 59% of all refugees live in urban areas there are persons within protracted displacement situations that are forced to live in isolated camps that lack access to basic needs, such as potable water and medical care.<sup>205</sup> Regions particularly affected by protracted displacement include Syria and Afghanistan in the Middle East and Kenya, Somalia, and South Sudan in Africa where political instability causes populations to flee to host countries where local communities are bearing the brunt for the care of those displaced.<sup>206</sup> To this day, large populations of refugees still reside in host countries, whether in camps or in urban areas.<sup>207</sup> The UNHCR has encouraged the international community to search for diplomatic solutions to prevent and/or solve political impasses and to create partnerships with one another to strengthen already existing solutions or formulate alternative ones.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 11.

<sup>196</sup> UNHCR, *Protracted Refugee Situations*, 2004.

<sup>197</sup> IDMC, *Global Estimates 2015: People Displaced by Disasters (Abstract)*, 2015; Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 1; UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, 2016.

<sup>198</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 1; UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, 2016.

<sup>199</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>200</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 1; UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, 2016.

<sup>201</sup> Hunt, Psychiatrists identify ‘asylum seeker syndrome’, *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, 2012.

<sup>202</sup> UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, 2016.

<sup>203</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 1; UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, 2016.

<sup>204</sup> UNHCR, *Ending Statelessness*, 2016; UNHCR, *Urban Refugees*, 2016; UNHCR, *Global Strategy for Public Health (A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018)*, 2014. UNHCR, *Refugees*, 2016.

<sup>205</sup> Rosen, *Life Inside Somalia’s Refugee Camps*, 2013; IRIN, *IDP/Refugee Camps – Facts and Figures*, 2010; Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 36.

<sup>206</sup> UNHCR, *Asylum and Migration*, 2016.

<sup>207</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 2.

<sup>208</sup> UNHCR, *Alternatives to Camps*, 2016; UNHCR, *UNHCR Global Report: Finding Durable Solutions*, 2013.

### ***International and Regional Framework***

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) is the primary document that outlines the basic human rights that every person is entitled to, including the rights of refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, and stateless persons.<sup>209</sup> The UDHR protects all four of these groups, particularly Article 13, which grants everyone the right to freedom of movement and “the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country” and Article 15 which states that “everyone has the right to a nationality.”<sup>210</sup> The 1951 *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* and 1967 *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* are applied to refugees and asylum seekers, regardless of the amount of time that a person is a refugee and asylum seeker, thus includes persons in protracted displacement situations.<sup>211</sup> Furthermore, the *New York Declaration* adopted 19 September 2016 reaffirms the importance of adhering to these international protection regimes.<sup>212</sup> The Declaration outlines a Comprehensive Refugee Response (CRR) Framework designed to provide durable solutions for large influxes of persons.<sup>213</sup> The results of the CRR Framework will be taken into consideration in the drafting of a Global Compact on Refugees that is scheduled to be presented to the General Assembly in 2018.<sup>214</sup>

The *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* (1998) serves as a guideline for intergovernmental agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other international and national actors on how to effectively aid IDPs, as well as outlining the rights IDPs are entitled to.<sup>215</sup> Under Principle 12, IDPs cannot be confined to a camp unless it is deemed absolutely necessary, and cannot be discriminated or arrested during displacement.<sup>216</sup> Under Principle 18, IDPs have the right to basic needs, such as food, potable water, shelter and access to essential medical services and sanitation.<sup>217</sup> The empowerment of women, access to education, and access to economic opportunities are also within the Guiding Principles, under Principles 18 and 22.<sup>218</sup> In 2009, the African Union (AU) adopted the *AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa* (Kampala Convention) which granted additional protection and assistance to IDPs in Africa that are displaced by natural disasters or armed conflicts.<sup>219</sup>

Stateless populations are part of protracted displacement situations, as they are often displaced in an urban environment with no identification papers, such as a passport or birth certificate, or have no nationality, for long periods of time.<sup>220</sup> The 1954 *Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons* defines a stateless person as “someone who is not recognized as a national by any state under the operations of its law.”<sup>221</sup> These situations occur due to gender discrimination, administrative issues, conflict of law, state succession, or state/regional conflict.<sup>222</sup> States parties to the 1961 *Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness* are required to aid stateless persons in gaining an identity, travel documents, and administrative assistance by having safeguards and processes built into their state laws to ensure every person within their state has an identity, whether it is from birth or later, or in the event of state succession or renunciation.<sup>223</sup>

### ***Role of the International System***

UNHCR seeks to create partnerships with Member States, NGOs, international organizations, and regional organizations to find both long-term and sustainable solutions for protracted displacement situations.<sup>224</sup> UNHCR

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<sup>209</sup> UN General Assembly, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> UNHCR, *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 2010.

<sup>212</sup> UNHCR, *Quick Guide: New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants*, 2016.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> UNHCR, *67<sup>th</sup> session of the ExCom of the High Commissioner’s Programme, Closing Remark by Filippo Grandi*, 2016.

<sup>215</sup> National Economic and Social Rights Initiative, *Summary of UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, 2012.

<sup>216</sup> UN ECOSOC, *Guiding Principles on International Displacement*, 1998.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> AU, *Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa*, 2009.

<sup>220</sup> UNHCR, *Ending Statelessness*, 2016.

<sup>221</sup> UNHCR, *UN Conventions on Statelessness*, 2016.

<sup>222</sup> Costa, *No Country, No Rights: Gender Discrimination and Statelessness*, 2013; UNHCR, *Statelessness*, 2016.

<sup>223</sup> UNHCR, *UN Conventions on Statelessness*, 2016.

<sup>224</sup> UNHCR, *Partnerships*, 2016.

collaborates with host countries and countries of origin, as well as NGOs and other international organizations, in order to help return refugees to their country of origin, provide humanitarian aid, assistance, and protection to displaced populations, and to find more durable solutions in addressing protracted displacement.<sup>225</sup> As such, UNHCR created the #IBelong Campaign to end statelessness by 2024 and has been assisting stateless persons, including those in protracted displacement situations, and Member States in granting nationality to those without one.<sup>226</sup> This campaign has resulted in action across every region including that of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopting a draft Protocol on the Right to Nationality that will go to AU Member States for review in 2017, as well as regional conferences and meetings held in Central Asia and at the League of Arab States.<sup>227</sup>

UN agencies often collaborate with UNHCR on initiatives to protect and assist persons in protracted displacement situations.<sup>228</sup> UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) work together on facilitating the return, resettlement, and reintegration of refugees, asylum seekers, and IDPs.<sup>229</sup> Since 1997, the two organizations have successfully worked separately and jointly on displacement matters, including protracted displacement situations.<sup>230</sup> IOM's closer integration to the UN over the past few years has led to a strengthening of UNHCR's programs, initiatives, and responses to short-term and protracted displacement situations.<sup>231</sup> Furthermore, the collaboration between UNHCR and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has strengthened the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan for Syrian refugees in partnership with host countries.<sup>232</sup>

Entities such as the World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have begun collaborating closer with UNHCR in order to more effectively address displacement.<sup>233</sup> The World Bank has recently launched a new global lending facility designed to extend concessional financing arrangements to middle income countries hosting large refugee populations.<sup>234</sup> This data collaboration between the World Bank and UNHCR was launched by a new study at the Migration Summit in September 2016.<sup>235</sup> This major collaboration has led to the formation of partnerships with the ILO and OECD in producing and adopting guidelines on employment for refugees, as a means of expanding safe and decent economic opportunities.<sup>236</sup>

UNHCR and Member States work in close collaboration with NGOs in a number of areas such as providing assistance in drafting policies regarding protracted displacement situations and providing humanitarian, legal, medical aid, and, resettlement services to refugees, asylum seekers, and IDPs.<sup>237</sup> UNHCR regularly partners with NGOs, such as the Refugee Studies Centre and the Humanitarian Policy Group, to create reports on forced migration and protracted displacement.<sup>238</sup> Additionally, UNHCR and aid agencies work together in developing programs and initiatives to promote self-reliance and livelihoods for populations in protracted displacement situations.<sup>239</sup>

The IKEA Foundation has been UNHCR's largest private sector partner since 2010 by donating \$198 million to UNHCR programs in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.<sup>240</sup> The foundation seeks to provide shelter, care, education, and energy to refugees and host communities in order to promote self-reliance and improve the livelihoods of

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<sup>225</sup> UNHCR, *Governance*, 2016.

<sup>226</sup> UNHCR, *#IBelong*, 2016.

<sup>227</sup> UNHCR, *Oral Update on the Campaign to End Statelessness*, 2016.

<sup>228</sup> UNHCR, *Memorandum of Understanding between UNHCR and IOM*, 1997.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>231</sup> IOM, *IOM Becomes a Related Organization to the UN*, 2016.

<sup>232</sup> UNHCR, *67<sup>th</sup> session of the ExCom of the High Commissioner's Programme, Closing Remark by Filippo Grandi*, 2016.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>234</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR welcomes new finance instrument to aid refugees and hosts*, 2016.

<sup>235</sup> UNHCR, *The New York Declaration: Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to enhance refugee protection*, 2016.

<sup>236</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR's Volker Turk says solidarity 'essential' to refugee protection*, 2016.

<sup>237</sup> UNHCR, *Non-Governmental Organizations*, 2016.

<sup>238</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement*, 2015; Refugee Studies Centre, *Forced Migration Review: Protracted Displacement*, 2009; Refugee Studies Centre, *UNHCR and International Cooperation*, 2016.

<sup>239</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 2.

<sup>240</sup> UNHCR, *The IKEA Foundation*, 2016.



displaced populations, including protracted displaced populations.<sup>241</sup> Although there are challenges with promoting self-reliance within these populations, some civil society actors have combined self-reliance programs with short-term aid in collaboration with local businesses.<sup>242</sup> From 2002 to 2006, Global Communities created a program that combined emergency short-term aid, vocational and training schools, small grants for entrepreneurs, job placements, and psychological services to IDPs in Colombia.<sup>243</sup> The program trained IDPs that lived in urban areas, and assisted IDPs in finding local jobs, aiding in the overall integration of IDPs.<sup>244</sup> IDPs who had business skills, but lacked the necessary materials and money to start their own businesses, were granted funds and technical support to assist in the start-up and early beginnings of their businesses.<sup>245</sup> UNHCR and other NGOs have recognized the success of combining short-term and long-term solutions, and now integrate these methods into policies, programs, and frameworks, such as the *Operational Guidance and Toolkit for Multipurpose Cash Grants*, that can be used in addition to other short-term and long-term solutions.<sup>246</sup>

### ***Displacement by Natural or Man-Made Disasters***

Refugees and IDPs can end up in protracted displacement situations due to natural or man-made disasters. In 2014, 19.3 million people in 100 states were forcibly displaced by natural disasters, and hundreds of thousands of people are still displaced from previous natural disasters.<sup>247</sup> The Global Protection Cluster led by UNHCR acknowledges that sudden or recurrent natural disasters often result in severe and protracted displacement situations, and with the effects of climate change, there is a high probability of an increase in protracted displacement situations.<sup>248</sup> Protracted displacement situations that are caused by natural or man-made disasters occur due to poor governance, lack of coordinated efforts to provide humanitarian aid to refugees and IDPs, lack of disaster risk management and reduction measures, or natural causes that impede the return of displaced populations.<sup>249</sup> The 2004 Sumatra earthquake and tsunami displaced 675,000 people, and as of 2015, 9,100 people remained in protracted displacement situations due to administrative delays, environmental factors, such as rainy season, lack of economic opportunities, and IDPs hesitant to join the relocation program.<sup>250</sup> The 2011 earthquake in Japan and Fukushima crisis is now considered a protracted displacement situation and has entered its fifth year, where 99,000 people remain displaced.<sup>251</sup> Currently the IDPs in Japan live in temporary housing as they wait to return to the Fukushima prefecture, but cannot return due to radiation levels in the area and the lack of social infrastructure.<sup>252</sup> The UNHCR has adopted operational management and protection strategies, as well as advocacy initiatives, into their policies regarding climate change as a means of mitigating similar situations in the future.<sup>253</sup>

### ***Addressing Protracted Displacement with New Approaches: Bridging the Humanitarian-Development Divide***

UNHCR has previously focused on three solutions for protracted displacement: resettlement, reintegration, and repatriation.<sup>254</sup> However, due to the nature of some protracted displacement situations, these solutions are not always effective or sustainable.<sup>255</sup> Thus, UNHCR has shifted towards finding new and durable solutions.<sup>256</sup> This has been reflected with partnerships amongst the private sector and development actors to help bridge the humanitarian-development divide.<sup>257</sup> The Forum on new approaches to protracted forced displacement held on 4 to 6 April 2016 at

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, pp. 31-33.

<sup>243</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement*, 2015, p. 35; Global Communities, *About Us*, 2016.

<sup>244</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 35.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> The Cash Learning Partnership, *Multipurpose Cash Grants (MPGs)*, 2016.

<sup>247</sup> IDMC, *Global Estimates 2015: People Displaced by Disasters*, 2015.

<sup>248</sup> Global Protection Cluster, *Who We Are*, 2016.

<sup>249</sup> IDMC, *Global Estimates 2015: People Displaced by Disasters*, 2015.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>251</sup> Hasegawa, *Five Years on for Fukushima's IDPs: Life with Radiological Risk and Without a Community Safety Net*, 2016.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> UNHCR, *Climate Change and Disasters*, 2016; UNHCR, *Climate Change, Natural Disasters and Human Displacement*, 2009.

<sup>254</sup> Milner, *Solutions for Protracted Refugee Situations*, 2007.

<sup>255</sup> Crawford et al., *Protracted Displacement: Uncertain Paths to Self-Reliance in Exile*, 2015, p. 1.

<sup>256</sup> Wilton Park, [Forum on new approaches to protracted displacement, 2016](#).

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

Wilton Park and co-chaired by the United Kingdom, World Bank and UNHCR brought these issues forward.<sup>258</sup> The discussions produced five agreed upon principles: work through national and local systems; support host communities and build social cohesion; enable economic participation and stimulate growth; provide impactful and innovative financing; and improve the data regarding these situations.<sup>259</sup> The nature of forced displacement requires the modernization of past UNHCR strategies and collaborative efforts with those in the field.<sup>260</sup> The humanitarian-development nexus has often been expressed with first a humanitarian response followed by a development effort when the situation became protracted.<sup>261</sup> In the past, development actors partnered with humanitarian actors by assisting with local integration in host communities and by providing support to returnees and return communities.<sup>262</sup> However, in order to achieve the greatest impact, both actors must work to create synergies that are complementary to one another.<sup>263</sup>

The Wilton Park principle of working through national and local systems is important for refugees and IDPs who rely on local services in host countries such as education and healthcare.<sup>264</sup> The coordination of humanitarian actors with development actors is imperative in strengthening local systems through incorporating their needs into national development plans.<sup>265</sup> However, this requires long-term planning by host governments along with development and humanitarian agencies early in the process.<sup>266</sup> Uganda is one example of how a host country integrates refugees into its local communities.<sup>267</sup> The resettlement policy in Uganda operates with the idea of promoting the self-reliance and integration of refugees by providing land and skills in order to become assets to the state.<sup>268</sup> Refugees are trained to work as well as provided the right to movement and identification allowing them to travel to and from their home countries.<sup>269</sup> The UNHCR encourages Member States to override encampment regulations to allow for the freedom of movement for refugees and IDPs, in order to encourage refugees and IDPs to pursue economic opportunities and their own place of living.<sup>270</sup> In addition, UNHCR has worked alongside Iran in supporting the creation of vocational schools for Afghan refugees in Qom, as well as applauding Iran's work in enrolling 350,000 Afghan refugee children in school.<sup>271</sup>

UNHCR promotes voluntary repatriation by offering refugees a chance to go back to their country of origin through "go-and-see" visits and promoting housing and property restitution while also providing return assistance and legal aid to returnees.<sup>272</sup> Promotion of self-reliance has been an increasingly popular alternative solution for persons returning from protracted displacement situations.<sup>273</sup> For example, since 2002, UNHCR has assisted Pakistan and Iran in returning Afghan refugees, who have been protractedly displaced for 32 years.<sup>274</sup> With UNHCR support, the Government of Pakistan has consulted with Afghanistan and Iran resulting in the adoption of the *Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees* (SSAR).<sup>275</sup> SSAR provides a regional framework in order for humanitarian and development actors to jointly participate in facilitating the repatriation and sustainable reintegration of refugees in Afghanistan.<sup>276</sup> As refugees wait to be voluntarily repatriated, UNHCR also seeks to collaborate with host countries affected by providing continued assistance to host communities in the form of educational initiatives and economic

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> World Bank, *Forcibly Displaced*, 2016.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Wilton Park, [Forum on new approaches to protracted displacement, 2016](#).

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> UN OCHA, *Addressing Protracted Displacement: A Framework for Development-Humanitarian Cooperation*, 2015, pp. 12-13.

<sup>271</sup> UNHCR, *Afghan Refugees in Iran Feels Lucky to Have Done Training Course*, 2016.

<sup>272</sup> UNHCR, *Voluntary Repatriation*, 2016.

<sup>273</sup> UNHCR, *Afghan Solution Strategy*, 2016.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> Wilton Park, [Forum on new approaches to protracted displacement, 2016](#).

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

opportunities.<sup>277</sup> Return and reintegration are not events in themselves, but a process that does not always end after a tragedy.<sup>278</sup> It often signals the beginning of a new process “of social, political and economic inclusion, which can take many years and in some cases may never be completely achieved.”<sup>279</sup>

### ***Case Study: Somali Refugees in Kenya and Ethiopia***

Since the collapse of the Somali government and the civil war in 1991, refugees have fled Somalia and found refuge in Kenya and Ethiopia.<sup>280</sup> Another large wave of Somali refugees occurred in 2011 due to drought, famine, and ongoing instability in Somalia. In order to address the large waves of refugees, Kenya and Ethiopia have set up refugee camps throughout their states, where a large portion of the displaced population currently resides.<sup>281</sup> As of 31 July 2016, Kenya was hosting 338,043 Somali refugees within the Dadaab camps and approximately 158,253 Somali refugees in the Kakuma camp.<sup>282</sup> In 2013, the Kenyan and Somali governments reached an agreement to allow for voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees, in collaboration with UNHCR.<sup>283</sup> UNHCR successfully resettled nearly 4,000 refugees from Kenya in 2014 and seeks to resettle approximately 140,000 refugees over the next few years.<sup>284</sup> Ethiopia has resettled 2,200 Somali refugees through UNHCR processes.<sup>285</sup> In order to circumvent security concerns, resettlement states such as Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia have used video conferencing as a tool for selection interviews during the resettlement process.<sup>286</sup> While awaiting the process for resettlement, Somali refugees in Ethiopia have access to education and vocational training programs that they can utilize for self-reliance.<sup>287</sup> Somali refugees in Kenya have been given the option of voluntarily repatriating back to Somalia or allowed to live in urban areas for protection, education, and economic opportunities.<sup>288</sup>

However, in May 2016, the Kenyan government expressed economic, security, and environmental concerns caused by Somali refugees, and announced that the state will end hosting Somali refugees to address these concerns via forcible repatriation.<sup>289</sup> The UNHCR and the Somalia government collaborated with the Kenya government to instead promote voluntary repatriation and reintegration for Somali refugees to Somalia, and they plan to reduce the Dadaab camp’s population from 343,000 to 150,000 by the end of 2016.<sup>290</sup> UNHCR and the Ethiopian and Kenyan governments continue to work together to provide services, financial assistance, and basic relief items to Somali refugees in Kenya and Ethiopia while UNHCR and international community work towards assisting Somalia in strengthening security, infrastructure, and services within the state.<sup>291</sup> Strengthening these areas allows UNHCR to aid in the reintegration of refugees into their country of origin after spending a protracted period of time away from their home.<sup>292</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

Protracted displacement has been an issue that UNHCR has worked towards resolving for nearly two decades. Addressing protracted displacement requires Member States, NGOs, and UN agencies to review each situation on a case-by-case basis in order to evaluate whether the situations calls for already existing solutions or alternative solutions. While previous solutions, such as resettlement, reintegration, and repatriation work for certain protracted displacement situations, other situations may require local integration. However, all methods for addressing

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<sup>277</sup> UNHCR, *Afghan Solution Strategy*, 2016.

<sup>278</sup> World Bank, *Forcibly Displaced*, 2016.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> United States Institution of Peace, *The Current Situation in Somalia*, 2015.

<sup>281</sup> UNHCR, *Refugees in the Horn of Africa: Somali Displacement Crisis*, 2016.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid..

<sup>283</sup> European Resettlement Network, *Somali Refugees in Kenya and Ethiopia*, 2015; UNHCR, *Voluntary Repatriation of Somali Refugees from Kenya: Operations Strategy 2015-2019*, pp. 16-22.

<sup>284</sup> European Resettlement Network, *Somali Refugees in Kenya and Ethiopia*, 2015.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> UNHCR, *High Commissioner’s Global Initiative on Somali Refugees: Report on the Ministerial Meeting*, 2014, p. 12.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Buchanan, *Kenya Softens its Position on Dadaab Refugee Camp Closures and Refugees Repatriation to Somalia*, 2016.

<sup>290</sup> Gebre, *UN Needs Extra \$115 Million to Return Somali Refugees From Kenya*, 2016.

<sup>291</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR’s Statement on a Report Published by Human Rights Watch*, 2016.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

protracted displacement face a number of obstacles, including a lack of funding mechanisms, political impasses, and lack of sufficient humanitarian assistance. It remains imperative to address these obstacles, as persons within these situations continue to face a myriad of issues as a result.

### ***Further Research***

Prior to beginning research on this topic, delegates should consider the following: What steps should the international community take to address protracted displacement? How can international and national actors improve their efforts in addressing protracted displacement? What methods currently exist to promote the self-reliance and the livelihood of refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, and stateless persons living in camps and urban settings? What can the international community do to prevent future protracted displacement situations? What efforts can international and national actors do in order to help vulnerable displaced populations, such as women and children? How can the international community improve efforts to aid displaced populations from the effects of climate change?

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*This resource is a commissioned report by the Humanitarian Policy Group, in collaboration with UNHCR, Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, and several other groups concerning protracted displacement. The report provides delegates with an in-depth analysis of protracted displacement and the various topics that must be addressed in order to help displaced people and address protracted displacement. It also provides solutions for stakeholders to aid persons within protracted displacement situations. The 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol are key frameworks that the report draws attention to, as well as how some governments avoid the obligations within the convention and protocol.*

Global Protection Cluster Working Group. (2010). *Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons*. Retrieved 16 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/idps/50f94dcc9/handbook-protection-internally-displaced-persons-global-protection-cluster.html>

*UNHCR, the lead agency for the Global Protection Cluster (GPC), commissioned this handbook for GPC, UNHCR, NGOs, and other international and national actors to utilize when training staff working with IDPs. Within the handbook, cultural, gender, religious, and ethnic backgrounds are taken into account for the protection of IDPs, as well as the presentation of durable solutions to allow staff to develop a solution-orientated focus when upholding protection policies and implementing protection activities for IDPs. The handbook is also helpful for delegates to understand how protection for IDP policy is implemented and the principles that are used within the policy.*

Milner, J. (2007). *Towards Solutions for Protracted Refugee Situations: The Role of Resettlement at the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement on 29 June 2007, in Geneva*. Retrieved 23 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/46934d4f2.pdf>

*The co-director of the PRS Project conducted this presentation on the topic of NGOs specialized in analyzing and researching protracted displacement situations, at the 2007 Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement in Geneva. UNHCR holds this annual consultation event for NGOs in order to allow NGOs, UN agencies, and other international actors to exchange ideas and information on the topic of displacement. This presentation gives a brief overview of the concerns and consequences of protracted displacement situations; thus, it gives delegates a good starting point for future research on protracted displacement.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2004). *Protracted Refugee Situations* [Report]. Retrieved 25 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/excom/standcom/40c982172/protracted-refugee-situations.html>

*Within this report, UNHCR clearly defines what the agency considers a protracted refugee situation and the consequences and issues that arise from protracted refugee situations. The report also includes a list of the rights refugees are entitled to in protracted refugee situations.*

*Delegates will be able to view UNHCR's foundational policy regarding protracted displacement and compare it to contemporary policies, reports, and publications about protracted refugee situations and protracted displacement situations.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2009). *UNHCR Policy Paper: Climate Change, Natural Disasters and Human Displacement: A UNHCR Perspective*. Retrieved 20 August 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/environment/4901e81a4/unhcr-policy-paper-climate-change-natural-disasters-human-displacement.html>

*UNHCR acknowledges the effects climate change and natural disasters have on displacement, especially those that lead to protracted displacement situations. UNHCR has outlined within this policy paper their guidelines in terms of what the agency wants the international community to do when it comes to addressing climate change, natural disasters, and human displacement. The UNHCR encourages Member States, NGOs, and other international and national actors to adopt all possible recommendations in this policy paper and to find sustainable solutions for displacement situations caused by the consequences of climate change and natural disasters. Thus, delegates must also understand how climate change can affect protracted displacement and expand their research into this area in order to address protracted displacement.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2009). *UNHCR Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas* [Report]. Retrieved 2 August 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/4ab356ab6.pdf>

*UNHCR has outlined their policy in regards to refugees located in urban areas, as well as outlining solutions for Member States, NGOs, and other international and national actors to consider in order to protect and aid refugees living in these areas. Within the report delegates will find a comprehensive protection strategies section for Member States, NGOs, and other international and national actors to utilize within policy development, practices, and programs to ensure refugees are being helped, are not discriminated against, and human rights are not being violated in the protection of refugees within urban areas.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2010). *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*. Retrieved 5 August 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/basic/3b66c2aa10/convention-protocol-relating-status-refugees.html>

*The UNHCR created one document to house both the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, as well as the UN General Assembly resolution to adopt the convention and protocol and an introductory note from UNHCR. It is imperative for delegates to understand the stipulations and obligations Member States have when they sign and ratify the convention in order to ensure that Member States are following the principles and rules outlined in the convention and protocol. Delegates will be able to understand the principles and rules that their Member State must abide by, if they have signed and ratified the convention.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2013). *UNHCR Global Report: Finding Durable Solutions*. Retrieved 13 August 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/publications/fundraising/539809d8e/unhcr-global-report-2013-finding-durable-solutions.html>

*The 2013 Global Report by UNHCR outlines the work UNHCR, UN agencies, NGOs, Member States, and other international and national actors have achieved in finding durable solutions to protracted displacement situations. Primarily, UNHCR is focused on possible alternative solutions to protracted displacement situations through temporary migration, labor mobility, and alternative forms of legal stay. This offers possible new solutions outside of UNHCR's current four main solutions on addressing displacement that delegates can use to expand their state policy's research into addressing protracted displacement.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2015). *Voluntary Repatriation of Somali Refugees from Kenya: Operations Strategy 2015-2019* [Report]. Retrieved 15 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/5616280b9.pdf>

*This is UNHCR's voluntary repatriation strategy for the years 2015-2019. It outlines what the governments of Kenya and Somalia will need to address in the coming years as Somali refugees are voluntarily repatriated, particularly how governments can enhance already existing*



frameworks in order to ensure a safe and effective repatriation for Somali refugees. This strategy demonstrates to delegates how UNHCR is able to collaborate with NGOs and Member States on addressing protracted displacement situations.

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*The Refugee Studies Centre focuses on the topic of displacement, including protracted refugee situations and protracted displacement situations. This publication offers a wide range of ideas and perspectives from various researchers concerning different protracted displacement situations around the world. Delegates will be able to use this publication to not only learn about the core issues surrounding protracted displacement situations, but also gain an understanding of the unique factors that contributed to these situations.*

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### III. Environmental Migration and the Future of Displacement

*The Earth's climate is changing at a rate that has exceeded most scientific forecasts. Some families and communities have already started to suffer from disasters and the consequences of climate change, forced to leave their homes in search of a new beginning.*<sup>293</sup>

#### **Introduction**

Across the world, environmental changes are affecting human migration and displacement.<sup>294</sup> According to estimates of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 22.5 million people have been displaced due to climate or weather related events since 2008.<sup>295</sup> The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that displacement due to extreme weather events, natural disasters, and shifting weather patterns, causing glacial melt, rising sea levels, and desertification, is likely to increase and could affect as many as between 50 and 200 million people by 2050.<sup>296</sup> UNHCR assumes that as a consequence, poverty and economic shocks, which can result in violent outbreaks of conflict within Member States, will increase, thus leading to a growing number in migration, but also cases of displacement within affected Member States.<sup>297</sup> Whereas migrants voluntarily choose to leave their home country for economic or social reasons, in search for better job or education opportunities or to re-unite with family members, displacement is considered as forced upon a person and can happen both within and across a national border.<sup>298</sup> Consequently, there is a difference regarding a migrant's or a refugee's option to return to their home state.<sup>299</sup> Unlike refugees who cannot safely return home, migrants face no such impediment to return and will continue to receive the protection of their government upon their return.<sup>300</sup> Persons forced to flee across the border into another state due to violent conflict are considered under international refugee law, while those staying within their home countries' borders are considered internally displaced persons (IDPs).<sup>301</sup> While there is a definition for IDPs and refugees caused by violent conflict, there is no universally agreed upon definition for people displaced due to environmental changes.<sup>302</sup> There are certain definitions which exist, but none describes the growing diversity in causes of human movements amidst environmental change.<sup>303</sup> Nevertheless, people are often displaced due to environmental changes and environmental migration can also lead to statelessness.<sup>304</sup>

Migrants and displaced persons "rely on the environment for survival, particularly during emergencies – for food, shelter, energy, fire and warmth, medicine, agriculture, income-generation activities and more."<sup>305</sup> Human rights and security are a major source of concern as national borders can be disrupted with an inflow of migrants and displaced persons.<sup>306</sup> These can occur from statelessness, fighting over land territories, competition for scarce natural resources, and forced migration.<sup>307</sup> Discussing sustainable solutions such as natural resource management programs is fundamental for implementing solutions.<sup>308</sup> Furthermore, as the needs of modern day refugees are evolving, it is

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<sup>293</sup> UNHCR, *Climate Change and Disasters*, 2016.

<sup>294</sup> UNHCR, *Climate Change Induced Displacement*, 2011, p. 17.

<sup>295</sup> UNHCR, *Climate Change and Disasters*, 2016.

<sup>296</sup> IPCC, *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*, 2014, p. 71; UNHCR, *UNHCR, The Environment & Climate Change*, 2015, p. 4; UNHCR, *Climate change, natural disasters and human displacement*, 2009, p. 1; University of Oxford, *Environmentally Displaced People*.

<sup>297</sup> IPCC, *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*, 2014, p. 71; UNHCR, *UNHCR, The Environment & Climate Change*, 2015, p. 4.

<sup>298</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR viewpoint: 'Refugee' or 'migrant' – Which is right?*, 2016.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>300</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR viewpoint: 'Refugee' or 'migrant' – Which is right?*, 2016.

<sup>301</sup> UNHCR, *Internally Displaced People*, 2016.

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>303</sup> UNHCR, *Climate change, natural disasters and human displacement: a UNHCR perspective*, 2009, p. 9.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>305</sup> UNHCR, *Environment, Disasters and Climate Change*, 2016.

<sup>306</sup> Government Office for Science London, *Migration and Global Environmental Change Future Challenges and Opportunities*, 2011, p. 108.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>308</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR, The Environment & Climate Change*, 2015, p. 14.

essential that terms like “environmental refugee” and “climate change refugee” are integrated into international refugee law in order to effectively address this future trend in displacement.<sup>309</sup>

### ***International and Regional Framework***

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) (1948) is a critical milestone which protects human rights and secures “their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.”<sup>310</sup> The *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (Refugee Convention) (1951) and the *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* (Refugee Protocol) (1967) outline the fundamental rights that all refugees deserve.<sup>311</sup> The framework is an important asset in defining the term, “refugee,” however, environmental migration and persons displaced due to the environment currently do not fall under the refugee status of the Refugee Convention.<sup>312</sup> The Refugee Protocol considers the necessity to discuss emerging refugee situations such as environmental migrants and climate refugees which are not considered in previous conventions, protocols, and the human rights law.<sup>313</sup> The *Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons* (1954) argues for the right to nationality so refugees are not left vulnerable because they are not recognized by other state identities.<sup>314</sup> The convention defines a stateless person as, “a person who is not considered as a national by any state under the operation of its law.”<sup>315</sup> During its 71<sup>st</sup> session, the General Assembly adopted the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* (2016) addressing the commitments of refugees, migrants, and those who assist them, as well as their hosting Member States and communities.<sup>316</sup> The declaration outlines the need to support Member States receiving large populations of migrants and refugees as host communities and decreasing xenophobia against migrants.<sup>317</sup>

While the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) of 1992 gained momentum regarding Member States collaboration on the reduction of greenhouse gases, it does not highlight migration and the future of displacement.<sup>318</sup> Member States parties at the ninth plenary meeting of the Climate Change Conference in Cancun, Mexico, in 2010, however, adopted the *Cancun Adaptation Framework*, which addresses human rights policies and adaptation measures to manage the effects of environmental migration and displacement.<sup>319</sup> In relation to environmental migration and the future of displacement, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are interconnected and pivotal in achieving durable solutions.<sup>320</sup> Goal 7, “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all” applies to the situation of roughly 80% of refugees and IDPs who have either no or only limited access to energy in refugee camps.<sup>321</sup> This can correlate to poor health, environmental degradation, and security risks.<sup>322</sup>

### ***Role of the International System***

In course of adopting the *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* Member States agreed upon protecting human rights for all refugees and migrants regardless of their statuses, situated comprehensive refugee response based on Member State responsibilities, and further collaboration between civil society, and other UN organs to

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<sup>309</sup> UNFCC, *Climate Change, Migration and Displacement: Who will be affected?*, 2008; Black, *Environmental refugees: myth or reality?*, 2001, p. 3.

<sup>310</sup> UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217 A (III))*, 1948.

<sup>311</sup> *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1951; UNHCR, *The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol*, 2011.

<sup>312</sup> UNFCC, *Climate Change, Migration and Displacement: Who will be affected?*, 2008.

<sup>313</sup> *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 1967.

<sup>314</sup> UNHCR, *UN Conventions on Statelessness*, 2016.

<sup>315</sup> UNHCR, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, 1954, p. 3.

<sup>316</sup> UN DPI, *Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants*, 2016.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>318</sup> UNFCC, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*, 1992.

<sup>319</sup> UNFCCC, *The Cancun Agreements: Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1)*, 2011.

<sup>320</sup> UN DESA & UNHCR, *High-Level Event on the eve of the UN Summit on Refugees and Migrants*, 2016, p. 1.

<sup>321</sup> UN DESA, *Leaving no one behind*, 2016.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*

address large migration movements and displacements.<sup>323</sup> Furthermore, Member States decided to incorporate the International Organization for Migration (IOM) into the UN system to strengthen the common response to the growing challenge of migration and displacement.<sup>324</sup> UNHCR has issued “Refugee Protection: A Guide to International Refugee Law,” which compiles the current status of refugee law and elaborates on the role of UNHCR.<sup>325</sup> Moreover, UNHCR has joined 110 states in pledging to strengthen steps to protect people displaced across borders by disasters and climate change and launched an overview highlighting its work in the area.<sup>326</sup> Furthermore, UNHCR has partnered with IOM in 1997 to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding that highlights both organizations’ common interests and lays the groundwork for future cooperation in activities related to migration and displacement.<sup>327</sup> IOM has also issued the *Compendium of IOM’s Activities in Migration, Climate Change and the Environment*, together with the UN University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) and the Rockefeller Foundation, analyzing norms and guidelines necessary to address the situation of migrants within and outside of national borders.<sup>328</sup> The Compendium advocates for clear definitions regarding the status of people displaced or migrated due to environmental changes to ensure they receive proper support in hosting communities.<sup>329</sup>

In 2014, the IPCC published the *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report* discussing environmental migration and displacement and how Member States’ poor governance and lack of innovation and investments might hinder effective strategies to address future challenges.<sup>330</sup> IPCC is currently concentrated on furthering the development of “environmentally sound technologies and infrastructure, sustainable livelihoods, behavioral and lifestyle choices” to help adapt, minimize, and mitigate environmental migration.<sup>331</sup> UNHCR is also a member of the Advisory Group on Climate Change and Mobility, which works to catalyze effective action on human mobility in relation to climate change.<sup>332</sup> The Groups main goals are: building resilience, assessing weather conditions that deteriorate from climate change, creating host areas in transit areas for Member States, developing safe disaster preparedness plans, adapting strategies such as ensuring support and counseling for internal and inter-state migration that safeguard basic subsistence needs, decrease risks, and assist policymakers in capacity building approaches.<sup>333</sup>

On a regional level, the EU is developing a planned relocation policy, the Science for Environment Policy, as well as advocating for Member States to develop national relocation guidelines to be well-equipped during natural disasters and to help prepare regions that are especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change.<sup>334</sup> The EU is further advocating for better human rights protections for environmental migrants through the Refugee Convention, expressing concern over the fact that protections are given to war refugees but not to those who are “displaced by floods, droughts and other environmental hazards.”<sup>335</sup> The EU further funded the Environmental Change and Forced Migration Scenarios (EACH-FOR) project, which gathered and analyzed data from six regions and summarized findings on the relation between environmental degradation, climate change, and displacement in 22 case studies.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>323</sup> UN DPI, *Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants*, 2016; UN General Assembly, *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/RES/71/1)*, 2016.

<sup>324</sup> UN DPI, *Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants*, 2016.

<sup>325</sup> Achiron & Jastram, *Refugee Protection: A Guide to International Refugee Law*, 2001, pp. 5-6.

<sup>326</sup> Gaynor, *UNHCR backs increased protection for people fleeing disasters and climate change*, 2015.

<sup>327</sup> UNHCR, *Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration*, 1997, p. 1.

<sup>328</sup> IOM, *Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Assessing the Evidence*, 2009.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>330</sup> IPCC, *Organization*; IPCC, *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*, 2014, p. 94. .

<sup>331</sup> IPCC, *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*, 2014, p. 94.

<sup>332</sup> Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility, *Climate Change and Human Mobility Solution Agenda—Resilience—Paris Cop 21*, 2015.

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>334</sup> European Commission, *Thematic Issue: Migration in response to environmental change*, 2015, p. 4.

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>336</sup> European Commission, *Human migration as a result of climate change: how should governments respond?*, 2015, p. 1.

## *Effects of Climate Change & Natural Disasters on Migration and Displacement*

### *Conflict and Displacement*

There is a correlation between conflict zones that are prone to experiencing higher levels of climate change effects and displacement thus disaster-prone areas are considered to drive displacement.<sup>337</sup> UNHCR estimates that 59.5 million people inhabit ‘climate change hotspots’ throughout various regions.<sup>338</sup> Forced migration caused by the immediate effects of environmental changes on the livestock and crops of farmers is leading to humanitarian emergencies affecting millions especially in developing states.<sup>339</sup> While many people are internally displaced due to natural disasters, some have to completely flee across borders as the impacts of droughts, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, flooding, windstorms, or hurricanes make life unsustainable.<sup>340</sup> Furthermore, the economic and social effects of natural disasters, including competition for scarce natural resources like water and land, often lead to armed conflicts causing further displacement.<sup>341</sup> As this often happens in regions with already poorly designed adaptation/mitigation strategies and lack of resources, displacement and migration exacerbate existing conflicts and lead to secondary displacement.<sup>342</sup> Violent conflicts are more likely when Member States are less prepared to implement adaptation strategies that mitigate the effects of climate change.<sup>343</sup> In order to do so however, Member States have to be well-equipped in assessing quantitative and qualitative data in predicting displacements associated with climate change.<sup>344</sup> UNHCR is persistent to understanding the scientific processes of climate change to enhance Member States’ preparedness and resilience to avoid secondary displacement.<sup>345</sup>

### *Internal & Cross-Border Displacements*

While the majority of people stay within their own country in the event of a natural disaster, there is also a considerable number of persons who flee across borders thus becoming cross-border displaced.<sup>346</sup> As displacements occur sporadically, it is difficult to calculate the exact amount of people displaced internally or cross-border.<sup>347</sup> There are two forms of cross-border displacement: either a person voluntarily decides to seek refuge in another country upon a disaster, or a person is already residing in another country when a disaster strikes and is allowed to stay longer in the host country.<sup>348</sup> Independent of how persons became cross-border displaced, their status is often unclear and there are no provisions as to what rights persons have during their stay in the host state or under what conditions they might be allowed to stay permanently.<sup>349</sup> Since there is not concrete legal basis for displacement due to an environmental disaster, cross-border displaced persons face great uncertainties regarding their future, as they can be either considered under the international legal provisions for refugees or under the individual immigration laws of their temporary host state.<sup>350</sup> Moreover, there are neither concrete guidelines to organize the return of cross-border displaced persons to their home state nor how to find durable solutions for them and IDPs in cases where a return home is not possible due to the destruction or environmental uninhabitability.<sup>351</sup> Additionally, lack of resources, economic, and financial shocks make it difficult for Member States to reintegrate individuals into host communities or other Member States.<sup>352</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR, The Environment & Climate Change*, 2015, p. 5.

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>339</sup> Park, *Environmental Migrants: More than Numbers*, 2011.

<sup>340</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR, The Environment & Climate Change*, 2015, p. 5.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>342</sup> UNHCR, *Climate change, natural disasters and human displacement: a UNHCR perspective*, 2009, p. 5; Edwards, *UNHCR chief Guterres warns of security, displacement threats from climate change*, 2011.

<sup>343</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR, The Environment & Climate Change*, 2015, p. 5.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>345</sup> UNHCR, *Climate change, natural disasters and human displacement: a UNHCR perspective*, 2009, p. 2.

<sup>346</sup> McAdam & Limon, *Human Rights, Climate Change, and Cross-Border Displacement*, 2015, p. 13.

<sup>347</sup> iDMC, *Global Estimates 2015 People displaced by disasters*, 2015, p. 17.

<sup>348</sup> The Nansen Initiative, *Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change*, 2015, p. 7.

<sup>349</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>351</sup> McAdam & Limon, *Human Rights, Climate Change, and Cross-Border Displacement*, 2015, p. 15.

<sup>352</sup> iDMC, *Global Estimates 2015 People displaced by disasters*, 2015, p. 17.

## ***Adaptation Strategies***

### *Environmental Awareness*

Raising awareness about the linkages between the environment and human mobility can unify policy measures and encourage cooperation at the local, regional, national, and global level.<sup>353</sup> UNHCR is increasing environmental awareness by providing learning workshops which can educate their partners and governments on environmental management and energy to strengthen sustainable capacities.<sup>354</sup> UNHCR is also promoting Community Environmental Management Plans which are designed to work with people in the field such as refugees, IDPs, and host communities.<sup>355</sup> UNHCR aims to reintegrate migrants and displaced persons back into their communities by increasing their awareness on environmental issues.<sup>356</sup> Assessing environmental challenges on a regional and local level also helps to anticipate possible future needs for populations regarding potentially necessary relocations and the need for resources to maintain livelihoods.<sup>357</sup>

### *Natural Resource Management Programs and Ecosystem Management*

In 2005, UNHCR developed its *Environmental Guidelines* which outline environmental factors into its programs.<sup>358</sup> The guidelines promote sustainable consumption and operations that Member States can follow to ensure a more “green” procurement behavior.<sup>359</sup> The purpose of these guidelines are to: incorporate environmental factors into UNHCR’s guidance, maintain consistent environmental policy, increase awareness for any refugee response agency, evaluate environmental impacts related to refugees, take action on environmental interventions, and focus on those environmental interventions which benefit refugees.<sup>360</sup> Supporting ecosystem management involves four principles which help increase the livelihoods of migrants and displaced persons.<sup>361</sup> The first one involves the integration of energy and the environment in programs related to better site planning, education, and sanitation.<sup>362</sup> The second regards minimizing irreversible effects of environmental degradation.<sup>363</sup> Third, since financial resources are limited, UNHCR is eager to use them as efficiently as possible.<sup>364</sup> Lastly, local participation is exercised by the involvement of IDPs, local communities, and refugees so they can learn to operate and manage natural resources to form sustainable livelihoods.<sup>365</sup>

As Member States are challenged with deforestation through environmental changes such as droughts and flash floods, UNHCR is partnering with Member States to direct reforestation, particularly in “refugee-hosting areas.”<sup>366</sup> Reforestation has led to rehabilitation, sustainable land usage, and the establishment of Community Environmental Action Plans which harmonize the coexistence between displaced persons and their host communities.<sup>367</sup>

### ***Sustainable Solutions to the Future Trends of Displacement***

In order to move forward in the discussion of the future of displacement, legal protections have to be put in place.<sup>368</sup> However, as there is still no comprehensively agreed upon legal definition for persons displaced due to environmental changes, all current references to ‘climate refugees’ or ‘environmental refugees’ lack a basis in international law.<sup>369</sup> Thus, generating consensus on the relation between population movements and the environment

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<sup>353</sup> IOM, *Migration, Environment and Climate Change*, 2009, p. 14.

<sup>354</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR, The Environment & Climate Change*, 2015, p. 15.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>360</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR Environmental Guidelines*, 2005, pp. 5-6.

<sup>361</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR, The Environment & Climate Change*, 2015, p. 14.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid.

<sup>368</sup> European Commission, *Thematic Issue: Migration in response to environmental change*, 2015, p. 8.

<sup>369</sup> UNHCR, *Climate change, natural disasters and human displacement: a UNHCR perspective*, 2009, p. 8.



would be a first step into a durable solution.<sup>370</sup> Due to the controversy that climate change still raises, even among scientist, however, current strategies only aim to address the immediate impact of environmental migration and to prepare for and possibly prevent increased displacement.<sup>371</sup> While adaptation strategies are encouraged, sustainable solutions require a shift from merely reacting to emergencies to anticipating future trends in migration and displacement and towards strengthening national capacities to handle these challenges.<sup>372</sup>

### *Building Resilient Communities*

Migration does not have to be the first option when dealing with the adverse effects of environmental change.<sup>373</sup> There are many resilience measures that can be taken as part of a preventive strategy.<sup>374</sup> Resilience measures can protect eco-systems and reduce environmental degradation through positive development impacts.<sup>375</sup> IOM has outlined guidelines to help migrants throughout the process of moving.<sup>376</sup> Furthermore, UNHCR is working with Member States to discuss disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies and explores alternative housing solutions for refugees to ensure a life in safety and dignity in hosting communities.<sup>377</sup>

### *Effective and Safe Managed Relocations*

Among the many capacity building measures discussed, relocation strategies are considered as means to support human mobility in an orderly and safe manner.<sup>378</sup> The Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility classifies planned relocation as “ordinarily instigated, supervised and carried out by the state with the consent or upon the request of the community.”<sup>379</sup> Relocated areas are contingent and differ based on Member States willingness and their capacity to set up required areas.<sup>380</sup> Thus, consultations and communications need to occur between affected communities, relocating communities, and the relocated areas.<sup>381</sup> UNHCR has partnered with Brookings Institution and Georgetown Oxford University to draft recommendations for relocations that address the physical, legal, economic, and social provisions that must be given to ensure a successful relocation.<sup>382</sup> To this end UNHCR also provides technical assistance to national governments to identify relocation areas that are least prone to natural disasters thus ensuring relocation becomes a durable solution and does not lead to secondary displacement upon another disaster.<sup>383</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Environmental degradation has led many individuals to migrate and become displaced across regions.<sup>384</sup> UNHCR is already taking into account the vulnerability to climate change as a factor when assessing the situation of populations of concerns, IDPs, migrants, and refugees.<sup>385</sup> The *New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* is a recent consensus of world leaders to save the lives of refugees and migrants, highlighting the shared responsibility of all Member States to host and support migrants and refugees. As the impact of climate change increases, UNHCR will need to support Member States in implementing DRR strategies, and promote adaptation strategies to address the needs of a growing number of environmental migrants and people displaced due to environmental degradation.<sup>386</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> Fernández, *Refugees, climate change and international law*, 2015, p. 43.

<sup>371</sup> The Nansen Initiative, *Climate change, cross-border displacement and human rights*, 2015.

<sup>372</sup> UNHCR, *Migration, Displacement and Planned Relocation*, 2012.

<sup>373</sup> Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility, *Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change*, p. 5.

<sup>374</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>375</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>376</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>377</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR, Displacement, and Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2011.

<sup>378</sup> UNHCR, *Climate Change Induced Displacement*, 2011, p. 18.

<sup>379</sup> Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility, *Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change*, p. 3.

<sup>380</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>381</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>383</sup> UNHCR, *UNHCR, Displacement, and Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2011.

<sup>384</sup> UNHCR, *Environment, Disasters and Climate Change*, 2016.

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>386</sup> UNHCR, *Climate change, natural disasters and human displacement: a UNHCR perspective*, 2009, p. 14.

## Further Research

As delegates continue researching, they should consider the following questions: How will the protections needed for migrants and the displaced affect national governments?<sup>387</sup> How can UNHCR create a stronger connection between development and humanitarian assistance for refugees in the SDGs? How can UNHCR better assess and mitigate populations that are cross-border displaced by environmental disasters? What can UNHCR do to improve and build resilience of affected regions?

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[http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Environmentally\\_displaces\\_people.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Environmentally_displaces_people.pdf)

*This policy briefing by the Refugees Studies Centre (RSC) provides field-based findings of forced migrations and humanitarian studies that can help policy makers. This resource briefs delegates through an overview of the topic and understanding the complexities of law and rights. Delegates can gain a better understanding of how the term, “environmental refugee” is considered by the RSC and what measures UNHCR could potentially adopt in the future.*

Edwards, A. (2011, November 23). *UNHCR chief Guterres warns of security, displacement threats from climate change*. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [News Article]. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/latest/2011/11/4ecd17536/unhcr-chief-guterres-warns-security-displacement-threats-climate-change.html>

*This article provides an overview on the importance of the topic of environmental migration and the future of displacement. In his statement to the UN Security Council, UNHCR chief Guterres warns about how likely security issues such as conflict and displacement can relate to rising sea levels that can escalate in the coming years. The insight of subtopics mentioned by Guterres such as sustainable solutions can help mitigate future displacements and migrations. Guterres message can help equip delegates with an idea to better prepare for environmental changes and natural disasters.*

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2014). *Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report*. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: [http://ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/SYR\\_AR5\\_FINAL\\_full\\_wcover.pdf](http://ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/SYR_AR5_FINAL_full_wcover.pdf)

*This synthesized report includes all aspects that entail climate change. Delegates can find linkages between climate change and environmental degradation. This report also includes migration and adaptation options. Delegates can understand how magnitudes and persistence of weather patterns can lead to a complexity of migrations and displacements that cannot be predicted.*

International Organization for Migration. (2009). *Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Assessing the Evidence*. Retrieved 18 July 2016 from: [http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migration\\_and\\_environment.pdf](http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migration_and_environment.pdf)

*The IOM report provides a comprehensive overview on the relation between the environment, climate change, and migration. It contains eight chapters that address understanding, management, data research, and challenges associated with migration and the role of the legal system for displaced persons. While delegates can access UNHCR’s frameworks, the source also provides a basis for delegates to gain an understanding of the major role an organization plays in the international system.*

The Nansen Initiative. (n.d.). *Disaster-Induced Cross-Border Displacement* [Website]. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: <https://www.nanseninitiative.org/>

*This resource can help delegates explore the challenges of displacement caused by disasters such as floods, windstorms, earthquakes or droughts. At an international level the initiative helps Member States as they have listed consultations around the world. This resource can help delegates assess how different regions address various effects of climate change and what forms*

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<sup>387</sup> IOM, *Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Assessing the Evidence*, 2009, p. 426.

*of environmental degradation currently exist. That information can better equip delegates with how to address the displacements that are caused by different environmental changes by region and natural disasters.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2005). *UNHCR Environmental Guidelines* [Report]. Retrieved 11 October 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/environment/3b03b2a04/unhcr-environmental-guidelines.html>

*This resource allows delegates to fully understand UNHCR's approach by acknowledging the environmental considerations that shape every aspect of UNHCR's work such as the provision of safe access to clean drinking water; the selection of refugee camps or settlements' emplacement, or the provision of food assistance. This report outlines key principals and operational guidelines that UNHCR would undertake during environmental hazards. This helps delegates to clearly identify UNHCR's mandate and also understand how these principles and guidelines can affect different Member States in their approaches towards environmental policies.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2015). *UNHCR, The Environment & Climate Change* [Report]. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/540854f49>

*This recent report highlights the challenges of climate change and displacement. It narrates the importance of this topic to UNHCR and what challenges it faces in addressing the different challenges in the context of disasters and environmental changes. The report also includes examples of different Member States which are implementing Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) which is sustainable and reduces emissions. This report serves as a guide for delegates to find sustainable solutions in relation to refugees and the increasing concern(s) for UNHCR.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2016). *Environment, Disasters and Climate Change* [Website]. Retrieved 17 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/environment-disasters-and-climate-change.html?query=climate%20displacement>

*This resource addresses the issue of providing safe haven for refugees but also the means to meet their needs. Examples of Member States are provided which are currently experiencing impacts of climate change. This resource also serves as a gateway into other topics such as COP 21: climate change, refugees, and couture. This resource can help delegates to develop an understanding of the drastic changes people face when they have to either forcibly leave their home or make the decision to migrate.*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2016). *UN Conventions on Statelessness*. Retrieved 20 July 2016 from: <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/un-conventions-on-statelessness.html>

*This website compiles the key conventions and provisions to address statelessness. In addition to seeking to prevent populations from becoming stateless, this resource highlights the importance of recognized nationality, identity, and administrative assistance. Providing the explanation of the UN Convention on Statelessness can help delegates assess the definition and how statelessness occurs. Delegates can use this source to assess how concerns of statelessness can further complicate responses for environmental migrants.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2016). *Leaving no one behind: Energy for humanitarian response and sustainable development* [Website]. Retrieved 11 October 2016 from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?page=view&nr=2016&type=13&menu=1634>

*The Secretary-General's priority report highlights the importance of the SDGs; therefore this resource is a direct correlation between SDG Goal 7 and humanitarian assistance for refugees. UN DESA and UNHCR have partnered together to focus on development and the refugee crisis. The environmental facet is tied to providing clean energy for migrants and displaced persons. This resource explains the correlation between clean access to energy and environmental footprints on the long-term that can reduce the possibilities of displacement and migrations.*

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