



Distribution of food to Sudanese refugees in Treguine camp, Chad.

# Working in Partnership

**P**ARTNER AGENCIES make significant contributions to UNHCR's work to protect and assist refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). They help implement UNHCR projects, bringing local knowledge and expertise to bear in various sectors. This chapter provides an overview of different aspects of UNHCR's work in collaboration with partner organizations and entities, and previews anticipated developments in 2013. The chapter opens with information on current reform efforts within the international humanitarian system and takes a new look at how key partner agencies work with UNHCR in complex emergencies. Looking ahead to 2013, the solid partnerships between UNHCR and its humanitarian partners are expected to contribute positively to the lives of refugees and IDPs.

## **INTER-AGENCY**

### **TRANSFORMATIVE AGENDA**

UNHCR'S EFFORTS TO IMPROVE ITS partnership profile and performance have been given new impetus by the inter-agency Transformative Agenda, which aims to strengthen coordination in emergencies and provide increased accountability for results. The agenda focuses primarily on major natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies which go beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency. These

situations, which are categorized as level-3 emergencies, are coordinated through the inter-agency Cluster Leadership Approach (see *Glossary*) – unlike the responses to refugee emergencies, which are led and coordinated by UNHCR.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which has developed the Transformative Agenda, has agreed that core elements of this approach, namely, enhanced coordination and leadership, are also relevant in non-level 3 emergency situations. UNHCR has been closely involved in shaping the Transformative Agenda, and the High Commissioner is committed to contributing UNHCR's expertise in emergency situations to this initiative in the following ways.

As a key operational agency and active member of humanitarian country teams, as well as cluster lead agency in three key sectors, UNHCR will perform the functions outlined in the Transformative Agenda for level-3 emergencies and, where appropriate and when agreed with other IASC members, in other emergency situations.

In IDP and complex emergencies, where a Humanitarian Coordinator has been appointed and a humanitarian country team established, UNHCR will play a meaningful role in planning, priority-setting and the coordination of collective results, and will be part of a mutual accountability framework.

UNHCR will ensure that its leadership capacity is adequate to the task in any system-wide response to a level-3 emergency, both in discharging cluster lead responsibilities and in the overall management of its own operation as a key player in the humanitarian response.

## **HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION**

UNHCR has nominated members of its staff for inclusion in the new senior Humanitarian Coordinator roster for level-3 emergencies. Within UNHCR, the Office has established a senior corporate emergency roster of experienced staff, all of whom have undergone emergency-leadership and coordination training, to strengthen its operations in major emergencies. These initiatives will help UNHCR meet its commitment to have rapidly deployable, experienced and trained personnel available for both IDP and refugee emergencies.

Within the IASC there is recognition of UNHCR's mandate to lead and coordinate any emergency response to refugee situations. To ensure that the Office continues to fulfil this mandate effectively, the High Commissioner has called for an internal review of the organization's mechanisms for accountability in leadership and coordination in refugee situations, where the cluster approach and the Transformative Agenda do not apply.

At the same time, there is a need for effective linkages between coordination of refugee operations and the humanitarian coordinator system. A successful coordination approach has been made in both the Syria operation and the Mali situation. For the Syria situation, the establishment of a Regional Humanitarian Coordinator by the Emergency Relief Coordinator was complemented by the appointment of a Regional Refugee Coordinator appointed by the High Commissioner. For the Mali situation, where the humanitarian response is extensive, UNHCR appointed a Regional Refugee Coordinator to work with regional inter-agency mechanisms. UNHCR will continue to build upon these collaborative experiences in the coming year, and lessons learned have been incorporated in internal guidelines on inter-agency coordination for UNHCR staff working in complex emergencies.

## THE DIALOGUE... IS EXPECTED TO REORIENT UNHCR'S PARTNERSHIPS TO HELP THEM IMPROVE STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

### COORDINATION AT UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS IN NEW YORK

IN 2013, UNHCR WILL CONTINUE to work through its Liaison Office in New York to engage with various entities such as: the Security Council; relevant committees of the General Assembly; the UN Secretariat, in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO); and human rights bodies. UNHCR will advocate for support from these entities and work to ensure that the issue of forced displacement is high on the UN agenda.

All efforts will be made to ensure that the mandates of political and peacekeeping missions reflect humanitarian and protection principles for refugees and displaced persons. Collaboration with the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office will help garner support for obtaining durable solutions for refugees.

UNHCR will continue to lobby for the inclusion of forced displacement and statelessness issues in relevant intergovernmental and inter-agency decisions taken at UN Headquarters. Cooperation will be strengthened in every way possible at all levels of the UN system, and with the diplomatic community, the UN press corps and NGOs, while public outreach in the New York area will also be expanded.

### COLLABORATION IN THEMATIC AREAS

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO do justice in one chapter to the full extent of UNHCR's partnerships with different entities and individuals across the world. However, the contributions and support of a multitude of partners working in diverse situations and circumstances are mentioned throughout this Appeal, particularly in the country chapters. Information on UNHCR's partnerships in emergencies is provided in the chapter, *Responding to Emergencies*. Strategic cooperation with regional entities is reported in the respective regional summaries. The examples provided below illustrate other partnerships in thematic areas.

UNHCR and the IFRC co-lead the Global **Shelter** Cluster, in partnership with UN-HABITAT, IOM, the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), Catholic Relief Services and other organizations. An update of the *Shelter Projects* publication, to be produced with UN-HABITAT and the IFRC, will compile good practices and lessons learned from recent emergencies. UNHCR, the IFRC and ICRC are collaborating to improve the design and quality of the current models of family tents and tarpaulins through research on lightweight materials and fire-retardant treatments. Innovative ways of improving emergency shelter and settlement response mechanisms will be explored with Stanford University and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), and technical collaboration with the Swedish Industrial Design Foundation and IKEA will aim at developing new shelter solutions.

At the start of the UN humanitarian reform process in late 2005, there were



**A health clinic run by an implementing partner in the Dominican Republic.**

few agencies and organizations working in the field of **camp coordination and camp management (CCCM)**, and agreement on common standards and policies relating to the sector was limited. Since then, UNHCR has provided guidance and technical support to its CCCM<sup>12</sup> partners. For 2013, the Global CCCM Cluster aims to increase the participation of agencies with relevant expertise at both the global and country levels.

UNHCR and UNICEF are strengthening cooperation in several refugee emergencies. Close collaboration exists in a number of emergencies, including in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Niger, in the areas of education, maternal and child health, nutrition, child protection, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). UNICEF is implementing a new UNHCR education strategy by running capacity-building workshops at the global and regional levels, sharing expertise on girls' education and helping to develop

joint strategies for education.

Cash-based **food and nutrition** assistance programmes are being increasingly explored by UNHCR. WFP continues to be UNHCR's main partner in food-related assistance (see box). New partnerships with institutions specializing in this area are planned for 2013. Private-sector partnerships, including with banks, will help make cash-based assistance more efficient. UNHCR will also build ties with the Feinstein Famine Centre at Tufts University to devise guidelines on data collection in urban settings.

UNHCR will continue to advocate and collaborate with health ministries, donors and other UN agencies to integrate persons of concern into national **public health** and disease-control programmes. Partnerships with agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States of America, the Danish and Norwegian Refugee Councils and Irish Aid, will enhance UNHCR's expertise in public health. Cooperation in various

technical areas will continue with WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and other UN agencies, as well as with academic institutions, including Johns Hopkins and Yale Universities. UNHCR will pursue its collaboration with the Australian disaster-relief agency RedR to develop emergency training for water and sanitation (**WASH**) standby partners.

UNHCR will continue to lead efforts to address **HIV and AIDS in humanitarian emergencies**, working closely with UNAIDS and the Inter-Agency Task Force on HIV and AIDS, and will remain an active member of the steering committee of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crises. In 2013, UNHCR will continue to advocate with Governments, as well as with donors, civil society and NGOs, for the right of people of concern to have access to reproductive health and HIV services and to be included in national health plans.

Collaboration with partners has become increasingly crucial in UNHCR's **environmental programmes**, particularly with regard to domestic energy needs, where technical expertise is required. In 2013, UNHCR will work with the Swiss environmental NGO ProAct Network on a domestic-energy assessment and will develop a strategy and guidelines

for work in this area. Partnerships with WFP, UNICEF, the UN Foundation (through its "Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves" initiative), and a number of NGOs, will also be crucial for humanitarian activities related to domestic energy and capacity building. UNHCR will work closely with the Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit to incorporate environmental considerations into all humanitarian responses.

As part of its engagement in global and regional processes on **asylum and migration**, UNHCR will continue to support the initiatives of the Global Migration Group and the Global Fund for Migration and Development. Intensified collaboration between UNHCR and IOM over the past year – including during the Libya crisis and in response to the Sudanese refugee emergency – are expected to bring about new opportunities for cooperation. The Office is also closely monitoring the Nansen Initiative on Climate Change, launched by the Governments of Norway and Switzerland, which will explore protection for people displaced across international borders as a result of natural disasters, including those caused by climate change.

UNHCR cooperates closely with the UN **human rights** mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council,

the human rights treaty monitoring bodies, and the special procedures mandate holders which advise and report on thematic and country-specific human rights issues. Outcomes of human rights sessions can often form complementary protection tools for UNHCR operations across the world. In 2013, UNHCR will evaluate the impact of its engagement with the UN human rights mechanisms on its operations.

To help develop **international legal standards** for the protection of refugees, stateless persons and others of concern, UNHCR will stay engaged with the judiciary. This includes liaison and involvement with court processes across the world as well as cooperation with the International Association of Refugee Law Judges (IARLJ).

Collaboration with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has intensified over the last few years in view of the need for States to issue machine-readable **convention travel documents** (MRCTDs). A jointly elaborated MRCTD Guide will be available before the end of 2012 (see the *Ensuring protection for people of concern* chapter).

**PARTNERSHIPS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**  
IN 2011, UNHCR SIGNED WELL OVER 1,000 AGREEMENTS WITH MORE THAN

## Working together with the World Food Programme



In 2011, joint UNHCR-WFP operations helped get **food** to some 3.4 million refugees and returnees in 36 countries across the world.

UNHCR and WFP have an established understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities in food assistance for refugee operations, and undertake joint assessment missions (JAMs) to gauge needs. WFP provides access to basic food for refugees, IDPs and returnees in operations involving more than 5,000 beneficiaries. Depending on the dietary needs of

the population, UNHCR provides complementary items, such as vegetables. In some operations, WFP supplies special food products to prevent malnutrition. UNHCR is in charge of the treatment of acute malnutrition.

The two agencies will work together in the year ahead to develop new approaches to delivering food aid by means of cash and vouchers in both camps and urban settings. The results of joint research on the potential protection and gender implications of such cash-based interventions will be published in 2013. □

# A child's right to an identity starts at birth

**B**irth registration is very important for the protection of children. It is a first step towards ensuring that an individual is recognized before the law and can obtain a nationality. It is also a way to prevent statelessness (see *Addressing Statelessness* chapter).

UNHCR is working in partnership with **Plan International**, recognized globally for its work to secure birth registration for every child. Together, UNHCR and Plan International aim to ensure that the right of displaced children to be registered

at birth is upheld. The two organizations have agreed to coordinate their work in advocacy, information exchange and technical cooperation; to encourage universal birth registration at the country, regional and global levels; and to map civil-society capacity to prevent statelessness amongst children. Recent joint efforts include the publication of a brochure on child statelessness and advocacy efforts which highlight the importance of birth registration as a child protection tool, particularly in situations of forced displacement. ■

760 NGOs from around the world. Funds channelled through NGOs in the last decade have more than tripled – from USD 187 million in 2001 to USD 674 million in 2011.

UNHCR's Annual Consultations with NGOs have become an important platform for exchanging opinions on global and regional topics of concern, and discussing ways to strengthen cooperation. In 2012 the High Commissioner launched a "structured dialogue" with NGOs with the broad objective of building more strategic, transparent, results-oriented and trust-based relationships. The dialogue represents a key opportunity to identify priority areas where UNHCR-NGO partnerships should be adapted and enriched, especially at the field level. The dialogue involves NGOs (both national and international) and the IFRC. It is expected to improve the strategic and operational effectiveness of UNHCR's partnerships.

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT

THE GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER has a number of collaborative arrangements with NGOs, including **technical deployments** and strategic agreements with partners such as the Danish Refugee Council, HelpAge, Handicap International, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre,

InterAction, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, Save the Children and World Vision.

UNHCR-led protection clusters in the Field will continue to conclude **leadership chairing arrangements** with NGOs, building on the experience gained from existing arrangements with the Danish Refugee Council in the Central African Republic and Somalia, and with the Norwegian Refugee Council in Afghanistan, Colombia and South Sudan.

International NGOs known for their technical expertise in learning achievement, literacy, technology for education, monitoring and evaluation, and youth programming will support the roll-out of UNHCR's **education strategy** for refugees in 20 countries. These partners will mainly focus on quality education and building the capacity of local partners to ensure the sustainability of education programmes.

Efforts to increase access to tertiary education through distance learning will continue through partnerships with NGOs supporting academic programmes and a network of universities. Collaboration with York University in Toronto and Kenyatta University in Nairobi, with the aim of establishing a university degree study programme in the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, will be enhanced.

Partnership with the group, Jesuit Commons: Higher Education at the Margins, will be expanded to increase access to certified distance education programmes.

NGO partners will also play a crucial role in the newly launched Framework for the Protection of Children through deployments and by implementing child protection programmes in the Field. In this regard UNHCR will also count on standby partners such as Save the Children Sweden and Norway, IRC-SURGE, RedR Australia, the Norwegian Refugee Council and Danish Refugee Council.

NGOs play an important role in helping UNHCR fulfil its responsibilities and assure **accountability to populations of concern**. In turn, UNHCR will continue to provide financial assistance and technical support to its NGO partners, especially those working in the deep Field, with due attention paid to ensuring that national and local organizations receive adequate support. The guiding framework for UNHCR's relationships with all partners is set out in its Principles of Partnership. The principles include: equality, transparency, a results-oriented approach, responsibility and complementarity. ■