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Update on global programmes**A. Introduction**

1. This paper reviews UNHCR's efforts to improve the quality of its programmes in the areas of public and reproductive health; food security and nutrition; water and sanitation; shelter and settlements; site management, education; and livelihoods, self-reliance and economic inclusion, as well as in the use of cash-based interventions to strengthen protection and assistance. It also provides an overview of progress made in terms of identity and information management, and in efforts to improve data and evidence.

B. Strengthening technical quality, capacity and impact

2. UNHCR's global programmes are managed from Headquarters in support of field operations and in close collaboration with partners. With a strong protection and solutions orientation, the programmes¹ seek to strengthen delivery and ensure equity, access and community empowerment through the utilization of the age, gender and diversity approach. The technical interventions range from life-saving responses and measures to mitigate sexual and gender-based violence to strengthening the attainment of durable solutions for refugees and other persons of concern in both urban and camp settings. In line with the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the comprehensive refugee response framework (CRRF), the programmes encourage linkages between humanitarian interventions and development efforts to support both refugees and host communities.

C. Updates on technical sectors

3. Establishing a solid technical response capacity, coupled with efficient coordination mechanisms, is vital in addressing the immediate needs of people in crisis settings. Between January and July 2018, support in the form of technical expertise was provided to UNHCR's operations through the deployment of experts from Headquarters. The total deployment amounted to over 1,860 mission days, of which some 430 took place in emergencies.

Public and reproductive health

4. Emergency interventions remained a strong focus of UNHCR's public health response. Additional support was deployed to Bangladesh, Cameroon, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria and Peru, and also included related reproductive health, nutrition and water, sanitation and health (WASH) interventions, as well as targeted cash and food assistance measures, in collaboration with the World Food

¹ Interventions are guided by five-year (2014-2018) strategies in the areas of public health, HIV/AIDS, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); education; settlement and shelter; energy; and livelihoods.

Programme (WFP). UNHCR's partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO) was expanded to accelerate the inclusion of refugees into national health systems and health financing mechanisms, focusing on urban refugees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa), Mauritania (Nouakchott), Rwanda (Kigali) and Sudan (Khartoum). Assessments of the health financing mechanisms will inform multi-year integration plans and sustainable ways of including refugees in planning related to meeting the SDG #3 on health. Working with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UNHCR conducted baseline assessments of health facilities in Cameroon, Chad and Niger to improve family planning, and maternal and newborn health services. In partnership with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, UNHCR is working to include refugee needs for HIV, tuberculosis and malaria care into national health programmes.

5. In 2018, UNHCR has focused on ensuring that refugee populations have access to quality-assured medicines and medical supplies, working closely with other United Nations agencies. Increasingly, factors impacting quality, availability and cost-effectiveness – such as restrictive importation regulations, insufficiently regulated pharmaceutical markets and difficult emergency contexts – have become potential threats to the health of refugees. In collaboration with experts, UNHCR is also developing operational guidance and clinical tools to better address non-communicable diseases in health care services in humanitarian settings.

Food security and nutrition

6. Food security and nutrition remain concerns in several operations, including in Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Mauritania, where levels of acute malnutrition remain critical. As a result of food insecurity, serious protection concerns have been documented. In Chad specifically, the decrease in assistance in several camps highlights increase in commercial sex work (including minors), increase in levels of domestic violence and divorce, men leaving the camps on the Libya route, women leaving the camps for weeks at a time with the youngest children to engage in agricultural activities far away from the camps, either in Sudan/CAR or much further away from the camps. UNHCR is collaborating closely with WFP to prioritize available assistance to those most in need, while advocating for additional resources.

Water and sanitation

7. UNHCR sustained support for water and sanitation network designs in emergencies and reduced the cost of water supply through improved solar water pumping systems in Bangladesh, Kenya, Mauritania, Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania. As of the end of August, refugee access to safe water supply was being maintained at the global average of 20 liters per person per day, with increased levels of water supply in 14 refugee situations. Sixty-eight per cent of the sites where UNHCR delivers WASH services attained a water supply of 20 liters or more per person,² while water provision in many emergencies remains problematic.

Shelter and settlements

8. UNHCR continued to support access to dignified and secure settlement and shelter solutions for persons of concern in 47 operations. In Bangladesh, ahead of the monsoon and cyclone season, an assessment by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UNHCR, found that approximately 200,000 people were living in areas at high risk of flooding and landslides, of whom some 42,000 people were in highly vulnerable areas, requiring their relocation. By the end of August, 25,000 individuals had been relocated, 63,000 shelters upgraded and 80,000 households provided with pre-monsoon shelter tie-down kits to

² This is the UNHCR standard for post emergency situations.

reinforce family shelters in preparation for heavy rain and strong winds. Community infrastructure was reinforced for use as temporary emergency shelter, while 38,000 households received locks for enhanced security.

9. In Nigeria, three settlements are being developed for the new arrivals from Cameroon. However, the vast majority of newly-arrived Cameroonian refugees are accommodated in the host community, and shelter kits are being distributed to support absorption. In Brazil, and across the Americas, transit and urban shelter responses were scaled-up to respond to the needs emanating from the Venezuelan situation, with a transit facility using Refugee Housing Units for 1,740 individuals established in Boa Vista. The provision of cash for shelter is also being scaled up across the region.

10. In the first half of 2018, UNHCR led 12 and co-led one out of the 26 country-level shelter clusters in internal displacement settings, coordinating more than 300 partners and providing shelter and non-food items (NFIs) to over 4 million people. In June, the global shelter cluster finalized its strategy for 2018-2022, which is aimed at ensuring coordinated, effective, evidence-based and accountable shelter and settlements responses.

Site management

11. UNHCR co-led the camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) clusters for the internal displacement responses in the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. In partnership with NORCAP, a standby roster operated by the Norwegian Refugee Council and funded by the Norwegian Government, UNHCR strengthened site management capacity in support of local authorities responding to displacement in south-west Ethiopia, and supported strategy development and the set-up of camp management activities in Brazil.

Education

12. As part of its commitment to SDG #4 on quality education, UNHCR is working to create opportunities for refugee children and youth to access inclusive and equitable education opportunities. UNHCR's education programme focuses on accredited education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, through the inclusion of refugee children and youth in national education systems, in line with the CRRF.

13. By July 2018, in partnership with Educate A Child (EAC), 1 million formerly out-of-school refugee children were enrolled in primary education in 12 countries. A wide range of private sector partners supported activities such as building and renovating schools, providing transportation grants and facilitating information campaigns for refugee communities. UNHCR supported teacher recruitment, inclusive classroom practices for children with disabilities and the provision of teaching and learning materials. With the aim of expanding flexible, certified education options for over-age, out-of-school refugee children and youth, UNHCR and partners of the Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG)³ assisted the Ministry of Education in Uganda with capacity-building and the development of national guidelines. Workshops in Kenya and Pakistan promoted the standardization of accelerated education and facilitated the dissemination of guidance among key stakeholders and partners.

14. Through the Instant Network Schools programme, UNHCR and the Vodafone Foundation have established 36 digital classrooms, benefiting 62,500 students and 850 teachers across seven refugee and host communities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, South Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania. Access to higher

³ The AEWG is led by UNHCR with representation from UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID, Norwegian Refugee Council, Plan, International Rescue Committee, Save the Children, Education and Conflict Crisis Network (ECCN) and War Child Holland.

education was further supported through UNHCR's co-leadership in the Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium, with 16 academic institutions supporting over 7,000 refugee and host community students in 12 countries to engage in accredited blended courses. UNHCR enrolled more refugees than ever before in the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) scholarship programme; over 6,700 young refugees studied in 720 universities across 50 countries. In collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Department for International Development DFID of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, partner staff and community workers were trained in six countries⁴ on monitoring and evaluation to enhance the production of quality educational data.

Livelihoods, self-reliance and economic inclusion

15. UNHCR sustained and increased engagement with host governments, development actors, private sector partners and specialized institutions to foster the development of inclusive market systems and enhance access to economic opportunities for refugees. Financial service providers, such as Al Majmoua and Microfund for Women in Jordan, are now serving more than 12,000 refugee clients with individual and group loans, while the microfinance institution Enda Tamweel in Tunisia is introducing a pilot lending scheme for refugee entrepreneurs. In Rwanda, Uganda and Zambia, and together with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), Financial Sector Deepening Africa (FSDA) and partners from various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UNHCR worked with mobile networks and digital payment providers⁵ to facilitate access of refugees to mobile money and mobile-based financial and remittance services, while at the same time allowing the digitization of cash-based interventions at a lower cost. UNHCR and the UNCDF recently made available a remittance toolkit, which helps identify and address the unique barriers and needs of refugees in accessing affordable remittance channels.

16. UNHCR continued to promote the “graduation model” as an effective tool for economic empowerment and inclusion of refugees. A group of development organizations, including the Partnership for Economic Inclusion, will be convened to establish a multi-year global fund to scale up implementation of the graduation approach in an increased number of refugee host countries. In collaboration with local social enterprises and other private sector partners, UNHCR is also expanding the global, multi-partner initiative, MADE51⁶, through which over 1,000 refugee artisans have been linked with national and international markets.

17. Recognizing the important contributions of the private sector, UNHCR and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) developed a 10-point action plan to encourage and guide businesses that wish to employ refugees. Together with IOM and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNHCR is developing a policy guide on entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees, which provides recommendations on policies and programmes that can be adopted by governments and stakeholders to support entrepreneurial activities that benefit both refugees and migrants. Together with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNHCR aims to increase the inclusion of refugees and host communities in agriculture-based activities in countries where both agencies are present. Building on ILO's “Guiding principles on the access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons to the labour market” and recommendation 205 on employment and decent work for peace and resilience, UNHCR and ILO worked with a variety of actors to expand refugee and host community access to decent work.

⁴ There countries were as follows: Burundi, Kenya, Jordan, Lebanon, Rwanda and Uganda.

⁵ In Rwanda, Mobile Financial Solutions Africa Ltd, a fintech company, created an online portal that allows cross-border money transfers and facilitates access to bank services for refugees. Airtel-Tigo (a telecommunications company) and Umutanguha Finance Company (a microfinance organization) are also developing digital financial products for refugees.

⁶ See <https://www.made51.org/>.

Cash-based interventions

18. UNHCR provided assistance through cash-based interventions (CBIs) to support refugees in fulfilling their basic needs and to respond to numerous protection risks, while also supporting local economies. By the end of July 2018, UNHCR had delivered over \$220 million in cash, reaching over 1.8 million persons of concern in 98 operations. Altogether 18 country operations had received dedicated support for implementing CBIs, including Bangladesh and the countries responding to the Venezuela situation. Eight global, regional and country capacity-building learning programmes had also been carried out.

19. UNHCR worked on evidence-based research to strengthen the linkages between the use of cash and the technical sectors in support of positive protection outcomes. Key findings of a review on multi-purpose cash and sectoral outcomes showed the critical importance of complementarity in this regard. UNHCR and WFP also initiated a joint 18-month project which aims to mitigate the risks of abuse of power by financial service providers at cash distribution points.

20. In Bangladesh, UNHCR – in coordination with the Government, BRAC and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society – piloted cash assistance to reach over 9,000 families and cover their basic household needs. A post-delivery monitoring survey showed that the cash provided was used to address urgent needs such as food, health, clothing, debt repayment and fuel. The cash programme was appreciated by local tradesmen, and refugees reported no difficulties in finding the items and services required in the local market. In Kalobeyei, Kenya, 83 households received cash grants to cover specific phases of the construction of their permanent shelters. The project provided significant income generating opportunities for both refugees and the host community. It also further demonstrated the value of providing technical training to stakeholders and conducting regular construction monitoring when providing cash for shelter.

Energy and environment

21. UNHCR continues to promote access to clean energy and responsible environmental management through innovative approaches and partnerships with development and private sector actors. In Rwanda, the Renewable Energy for Refugees (RE4R) project, funded by the IKEA Foundation and co-implemented with Practical Action is a new type of multi-partner project designed in line with the CRRF approach. In Kakuma, Kenya, UNHCR partnered with the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), WFP, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and FAO, among others, for a peer review of environmental performance at the refugee camp and UNHCR compounds to help identify challenges with solid waste management. The review informed a further partnership with Norwegian Engineers without Borders, which completed a full plastic waste audit and developed an on-site plastic waste recycling in Kenya and Ethiopia, which UNHCR and UN Environment will implement in 2019.

22. In Bangladesh, significant progress was made to roll out liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for cooking in refugee settlements across the Teknaf peninsula. The programme will target 220,000 households, 20 per cent of which are host community households. This intervention will improve health and security outcomes for refugees and reduce the substantial pressure on the peninsula's forest resources. UNHCR also partnered with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Bangladesh to prevent short-term human-wildlife conflict and to design and implement a mid-term intervention for coexistence with wildlife and forest protection.

D. Improving data for evidence-based decision-making

23. UNHCR continued to enhance its capacity to make available quality and real-time data on displaced populations, stateless persons and host communities, including with respect to their protection situations and living conditions.

Registration and identity management

24. By the end of July 2018, 6.3 million refugees and asylum-seekers had been biometrically registered in 52 operations, using either PRIMES⁷ UNHCR's Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS) or IrisGuard. UNHCR was able to monitor distributions in real-time in five operations. UNHCR's global distribution tool (GDT) was used in places like Uganda to verify identities at food-distribution points, ensuring a faster and more secure distribution process, with real-time distribution reports available. Through the use of the PRIMES tool, including digital distribution processes and biometric identity verification, incidents of recycling and multiple distribution have been mitigated, leading to overall savings in assistance and assurance that assistance is channelled and provided to legitimate beneficiaries.

25. The verification exercise in Uganda continued, with over 700,000 refugees verified and 590,000 biometrically enrolled in BIMS. By the end of July, UNHCR's population registry and case management system, PRIMES, had been rolled out to 51 operations and regional offices. Its offline component, called RApp (for rapid application) had been used in six operations, including Brazil. Another 22 countries are planned for the roll-out of PRIMES in the first quarter of 2019.

26. UNHCR Headquarters supported transition planning, the interoperability of systems and data-sharing negotiations, in addition to 17 verification exercises with real-time verification portals available in Bangladesh, Rwanda and Uganda. It also trained and deployed 17 emergency registration specialists to provide emergency registration support to field operations, including in Bangladesh, Brazil, Chad, Peru and Uganda.

27. UNHCR continued to explore with relevant partners the establishment of digital identities for the benefit of persons of concern, with the strategic aims of empowering individuals, building the capacity of national population registries and strengthening service delivery. Promoting the inclusion of persons of concern, including stateless populations, in national digital identification management systems is a key part of the partnership with the World Bank's "identity for development" (ID4D) programme to meet SDG target 16.9 on providing legal identity for all.

E. Information management and statistics

28. The International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics (IRRS) were adopted by United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2018. The IRRS includes recommendations on statistical definitions for categories of refugees and asylum-seekers and coordination practices to support national statistical institutions and systems. Several States⁸ are using the recommendations to support refugee and asylum-seeker practices. Similar work for internally displaced persons (IDPs) is underway with the Expert Group on Refugee Statistics (EGRIS).

⁷ PRIMES, or the Population Registration Identity Management EcoSystem, is UNHCR's suite of interoperable registration, identity and case management tools. The core applications of PRIMES include proGres v4, the biometrics system BIMS, the offline registration tool RApp and the Data Port.

⁸ This includes Colombia, Germany, Morocco and the United States of America.

29. In order to bridge the gap between the official UNHCR population figures, published twice per year, the Office is maximizing existing information sources, including registration information, and statistical techniques to estimate global refugee populations on a more regular basis. Together with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNHCR is also leading the data and evidence stream in support of the United Nations-wide strategy for preventing and reducing statelessness, seeking to improve the estimates of stateless populations in conjunction with other agencies, technical experts and national statistical experts. In August 2018, an ambitious data collection exercise was jointly launched by UNHCR, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the Ivorian National Institute of Statistics to map and improve data on statelessness in the country. To increase the availability of data for additional analysis, internal data libraries are being established with data collected by UNHCR and its partners. This will be made available for the Joint World Bank-UNHCR Data Center, donors, academia, governments and the public, in line with UNHCR's commitment to open and transparent data.

30. UNHCR finalized and piloted its strategy for population data management in IDP situations, which builds on best practices in both IDP and refugee situations. Simultaneously, UNHCR is testing a monitoring and progress tracking tool, which ties project expenditure data to project results, in four operations. The ongoing deployment of an improved health information system will allow UNHCR to collect and analyse real-time health data in the majority of refugee operations by the end of 2018.

31. UNHCR aims to be able to share relevant data to all stakeholders in order to optimize the quality of responses to persons of concern, and inform humanitarian and development responses on a wider scale. In September, UNHCR and WFP signed a data-sharing addendum to their 2011 memorandum of understanding. The addendum provides a basis for joint operational responses, including joint targeting and assessments, interoperable systems and joint engagement on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. In the meantime, a review of the current data management systems in UNHCR was launched to inform the next steps. This review is being supported by a centralized evaluation on UNHCR's use of information management and data.
