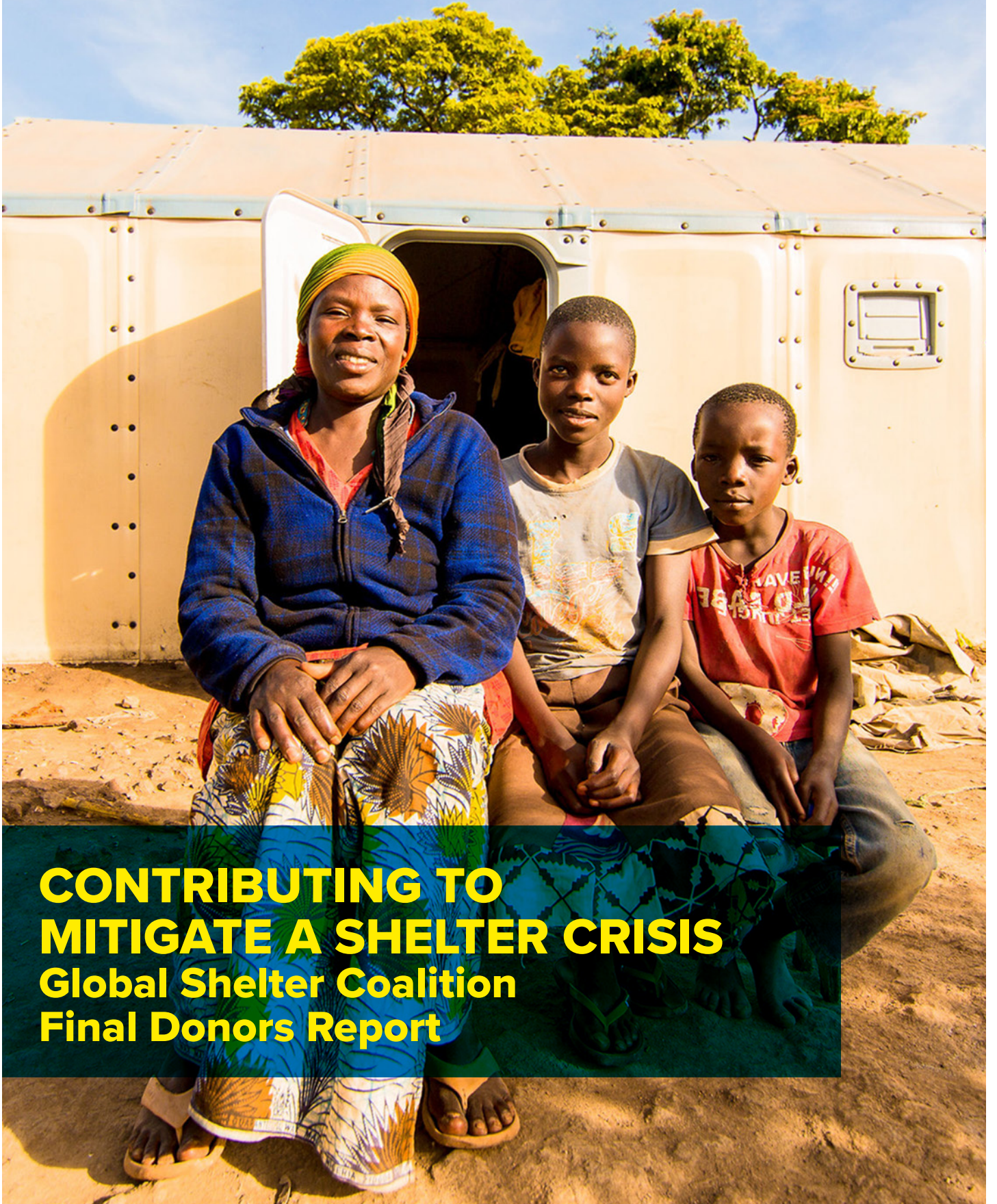




# NOBODY LEFT OUTSIDE



**CONTRIBUTING TO  
MITIGATE A SHELTER CRISIS**  
Global Shelter Coalition  
Final Donors Report



## UNHCR, a mandate to protect

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is the only humanitarian agency mandated by the United Nations to lead and coordinate international action for the worldwide protection of refugees and the resolution of refugee problems. Since our creation in 1951, UNHCR has enabled more than 60 million people to rebuild their lives and has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize twice for this work.

[www.unhcr.org/nobody-left-outside](http://www.unhcr.org/nobody-left-outside)

## A heartfelt thank you from the Deputy High Commissioner

Thank you most sincerely for supporting the “Nobody Left Outside” campaign to provide shelter solutions to refugees. We appreciate your commitment together with other philanthropists and companies from all over the world to support UNHCR’s shelter strategies.

Shelter is protection, safety, a basic human right and a core component of UNHCR’s protection mandate. Unfortunately, shelter is also one of our most underfunded activities.

Since the launch of the Nobody Left Outside campaign three years ago, \$25 million have been raised in support of shelter. Without the funds you have so generously donated, delivering sustainable shelter solutions that pave the way for the social inclusion and self-reliance of millions of refugees would have been even more challenging.

The number of people of concern to UNHCR around the world – asylum-seekers, refugees, returnees, the internally displaced and stateless – has reached 74.8 million people, more than ever before. Thousands of people continue to flee their homes in search of protection, arriving in remote border communities around the world or in sprawling cities with limited shelter options, often joining refugee communities already uprooted by earlier waves of conflict or persecution. Providing wide-ranging and sustainable housing to them is urgent.

It is with your support, that UNHCR – the UN Refugee Agency - can achieve its full potential to deliver shelter and protection at scale. As we look to 2020 and beyond, we count on your continued commitment and partnership.



Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly T. Clements". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelly T. Clements  
**Deputy High Commissioner**  
**The UN Refugee Agency**



## GLOBAL SHELTER COALITION

The Global Shelter Coalition has been a fundamental part of the Nobody Left Outside campaign. The generous support of its members has contributed to fund UNHCR's shelter work in fourteen countries across the world. Together, we have ensured that life-saving emergency shelter reached those most in need and contributed to provide more durable, sustainable shelter solutions to those trapped in the growing number of protracted humanitarian crises across the world. For those returning home, your support has helped us to find more permanent solutions for them.

**We sincerely thank you for being part of the Global Shelter Coalition and joining other global leaders in support of people forced to flee.**

### Champion

Dato' Sri Prof. Dr. Tahir

### Leaders

Autodesk Foundation  
Ms. Cate Blanchett 'Home' Event

### Members

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With gratitude for your support.

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*Displaced Iraqi girls smile at the camera as the sun sets at Hasansham camp, Iraq, which opened at the beginning of November 2016.*



## NOBODY LEFT OUTSIDE INTRODUCTION

Everyone has the right to adequate housing. This includes the right to live in security, peace and dignity, with security of tenure, as well as protection from forced eviction.

Shelter provides displaced people with a fundamental starting point from which life can continue. It offers protection, vital warmth or shade, and a space where families can be together in order to cope with the trauma of displacement, with dignity and in privacy. It provides not only protection, but hope for the future.

UNHCR recognized that the efforts of the international community were failing to keep pace with the impacts of rapidly escalating numbers of people being forcibly displaced from their homes by war, armed conflict or persecution – and being left without the most basic support, including shelter. Millions of the most vulnerable people were struggling to survive in desperate living conditions that left them exposed to both physical and emotional risks, and with little prospect of rebuilding their lives.

That is why UNHCR decided to launch the Nobody Left Outside campaign in 2016, and call upon individuals, corporations, foundations and philanthropists to join us to tackle this critical and growing need.

**Three years on, through your generosity and commitment to the Global Shelter Coalition, you have helped us secure USD 25 million to bring more and better shelter solutions to millions of forcibly displaced people around the world. This has improved and saved the lives of thousands of families.**





## SAVING LIVES, SUPPORTING FUTURES: WHAT YOUR DONATIONS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO IN THE LAST THREE YEARS

A shelter should provide privacy, security and protection from the elements, create a safe space for physical and emotional wellbeing, and a space to live in a dignified manner. But most importantly, a shelter should be a safe place to start life again.

Today, the majority of the world's refugees live in urban settings outside of camps, largely due to the global trend of increasing urbanization. In urban areas, many refugees share accommodation, live in non-functional public buildings, collective centres, in slums and informal types of settlements; often their living conditions are poor, cramped and unsafe. In rural settings, however, delivering protection and humanitarian assistance through refugee camps continues to be a key focus of UNHCR. **UNHCR recognizes and responds to this diversity of need.**

**In recent years we have adapted our programming to better respond to the needs of people in urban areas and target the most vulnerable** – including women, children, and the elderly and disabled. UNHCR's cash assistance programme in **Jordan** ensures that those who are struggling can meet their rental payments and avoid homelessness. In **Lebanon**, we repair unfinished buildings to function as collective shelters - a valuable lifeline for refugee families living in urban areas.

**We have also perfected existing shelter solutions and devised new ones.** The innovative Refugee Housing Unit (RHU) provides safe and durable housing to refugee families in emergency situations, or when they return to their homeland and start to rebuild their lives. Thousands have been set up in **Tanzania, Iraq, Chad, Uganda, and Niger** – some in the middle of an emergency situation, and others as a transitional shelter solution for returnees.

**Our shelter solutions are never designed in isolation.** We respond to the needs of people affected by displacement, but we also look at the needs of the host communities. In **Lebanon** for example, we upgraded privately owned buildings and in exchange the building owners offered free accommodation to refugees for a whole year.

**We strive to be sustainable.** Building materials used include hydro-formed or compressed mud bricks such as the ones we have used to build land-saving back-to-back 'dual shelters' in **Rwanda**. These can be made locally using simple equipment. Reforestation programmes, sustainable water source conservation and solar power for pumping water from wells complement our shelter programmes.

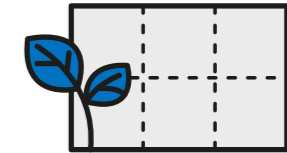
**We work to protect the most vulnerable.** Among the people forced to flee some groups are more vulnerable than others. Disabled and elderly people on the run are particularly at risk of suffering, as they simply do not have the ability to look after themselves in a situation of displacement. In **Ukraine** we have supported elderly or otherwise vulnerable returnees to rebuild or repair their homes. In **Kenya** we have built shelters to support displaced people with special needs.

Lastly, we deliver **multi-faceted and diverse emergency responses** to support those in need – wherever they are. In **Guatemala** and **Mexico** we supported transit shelters for families fleeing violence in Central America; in Tanzania we delivered over 6,000 tents during the 2016 flight of Burundian refugees into the country; in **Bangladesh** we delivered thousands of shelter kits to the almost 1 million Rohingya that fled violence and persecution in Myanmar, and in **Greece** we funded hotel accommodation for thousands of refugees who survived the horrific journeys across the Mediterranean sea.

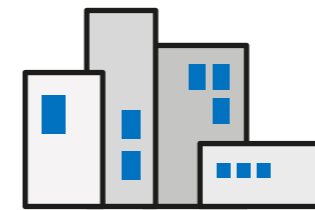
**These are examples of the shelter solutions that have been supported by NLO campaign funds in the last three years.**



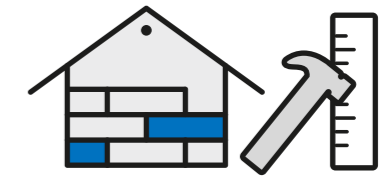
**More than 21,950 Refugee Housing Units (RHUs) have been distributed to 8 campaign countries**



**More than 54,400 land plots have been made available to empower over 282,000 refugees to re-build their life and future**



**Over 8,000 housing units have been rehabilitated in Lebanon in exchange of a rent agreement for a year for more than 40,000 people**



**More than 38,500 damaged homes have been repaired so internally displaced people (IDPs) can restart their lives in Ukraine**



**Over 509,000 Shelter kits have been distributed to provide protection from extreme weather conditions**



## EMERGENCY SHELTER SAVING LIVES WITH TENTS, TARPAULINS AND TRANSIT SHELTERS

In the immediate aftermath of a displacement crisis, tents and tarpaulins are often the lightest, cheapest and fastest thing for UNHCR to use to protect people from the elements, provide privacy and dignity, and save lives. But as many migrant crises show, different emergency settings require different solutions. The support of the Nobody Left Outside campaign over the last three years has significantly supported UNHCR's capacity to provide emergency shelter for displaced people, whatever their circumstances.

*Shelter is a vital provision that saves lives in times of forced displacement. It is also key to restoring personal security, self-sufficiency and dignity.*

Between May 2016 and May 2019, UNHCR has provided humanitarian assistance in new emergencies that took place in Bangladesh, Iraq (Mosul) and Uganda, and continued to support emergency relief in Greece and Chad, as well as Mexico and Guatemala in the so-called 'Northern Triangle of Central America'.

### BANGLADESH

Since the end of August 2017, more than 743,700 Rohingya refugees have arrived in the Cox's Bazar region of Bangladesh, escaping brutal violence and persecution in Myanmar's Rakhine state. They arrived exhausted, traumatized and in desperate need of aid and a safe place to rest, having undertaken perilous journeys through jungles, over mountain passes and across. The majority of refugee families now live in self-built bamboo shelters in the congested settings of the vast Kutupalong settlement – now home to over 631,000 refugees. It is the world's largest refugee camp. Many of these bamboo shelters are now worn or degraded, and the impacts of 2018's heavy monsoon season. Many families still

urgently require new materials to build viable living spaces and targeted support is therefore currently being provided to help vulnerable families upgrade their shelters, so that they can stay safe. UNHCR has supplied over 87,540 households with shelter kits since the crisis started in 2017, benefiting some 437,700 people. In addition, more than 80,000 families have received padlocks to increase the security of their shelter. The donations given to the NLO campaign have contributed towards these fantastic results.

### CHAD

Chad currently hosts over 440,000 refugees who have fled violence, challenging political situations and socio-economic problems in neighbouring countries, such as Nigeria, the Central African Republic and Sudan. Just under 130,000 more people are internally displaced, with food insecurity arising from unpredictable rains and failed harvests making their circumstances desperate.

Since the NLO campaign started, over 6,000 mud-brick houses with thatched roofs have been built benefiting approximately 30,000 people. UNHCR has also provided approximately 14,400 tarpaulins to add to timber-framed buildings benefiting about 72,000 people. In addition to supplies, refugees are provided with technical support and training on techniques for constructing shelters and mud-plastering to enhance their protection and stability. Every refugee location in Chad has a shelter focus group or person who works with UNHCR and its local partners to manage the shelter kits and equipment supplied to refugee communities, and to oversee the community construction of durable zinc-roofed shelters for those with specific needs.

## Supporting women heads of households

Fatema Khatun, 35, is having her shelter repaired at Kutupalong camp, where she lives with her daughter, Nur Jahan, and granddaughter, Asma Bibi. As a single mother she receives counselling and access to services through volunteers organized by UNHCR.

Around 80 per cent of Rohingya refugees are women and children, and at least 26,000 Rohingya women are the sole head of household for their families at Kutupalong camp in Cox's Bazar, south-east Bangladesh. Many of them are widows, their husbands murdered or missing in Myanmar as a result of the brutal violence that forced them from their homes and country. They face huge challenges in maintaining their shelters, accessing food and fuel to cook meals, ensuring their children can attend school, keeping their families healthy in an overcrowded settlement with sanitation risks and dealing with the aftermath of traumatic violence and sexual assault. UNHCR and its partners are supporting single mothers by providing access to healthcare, counselling, women and child friendly spaces, and skills training workshops.





In 2014, Abdullah (33) was forced to flee with his wife and seven children when extremist groups invaded their village in Iraq. After several years in displacement the family was able to return, only to find their home destroyed. For two years they shared space with other returned families in the village school. In 2018, UNHCR was able to provide Abdullah and a number of other families in similar situations with Refugee Housing units (RHUs). The family is now living on their own land, working to rebuild their old home. Abdullah says that all the families that have received RHUs are really grateful for the support, and that they hope to receive further support to be able to rebuild their house.



Abdullah (33) and his son, stands in the rubble of their destroyed home. Their temporary home, a Refugee Housing Unit, is visible in the background.

## UGANDA

Uganda has some of the most progressive policies towards refugees in the world, with a plot of land and support services being allocated to each family on arrival. This means that from day one refugees can start to cultivate food for the family table, and have space to build a home. In recent years, Uganda has welcomed large numbers of refugees from South Sudan, Burundi and elsewhere. UNHCR has helped newly arrived families to stay safe by providing them with a shelter kit to help them set up a rapid emergency shelter on their plot of land until they are able to construct a more durable temporary home.

For the more vulnerable refugees – those who are elderly or ill and cannot build their own shelter - UNHCR and partners contract workers to build emergency shelters for them. Families have also been assisted to move to transitional shelters, made in the same way as local huts using mud bricks and straw roofs. Over the last three years, we have distributed almost 303,500 shelter kits, helping over 246,900 people settle on over 49,380 plots of land.

## GREECE

Over the last three years, we have supported some 81,600 asylum seekers and refugees with accommodation in hotels and apartments, providing a safer alternative to the often desperately overcrowded camps. The host communities also benefit economically from the rental income, helping to ease tensions. In addition to shelter, asylum seekers in Greece also receive food, hygiene items, basic social support, interpretation and transportation services; and medical, legal and psycho-social support as needed. With more than 41,000 new arrivals in Greece in the first nine months of 2019, needs remain high and UNHCR continues to provide support on the ground.

## NORTHERN CENTRAL AMERICAN TRIANGLE

Worsening crime and violence fuelled by drug cartels and gangs, coupled with fragile institutions, corruption, poverty and exclusion, is driving increasing forced displacement from and within the so-called 'Northern Triangle of Central America' countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. By mid-2018 almost 310,000 refugees and asylum-seekers from these countries were registered, an increase of 54 per cent compared to the previous year and a ten-fold increase over the past five years.

The NLO campaign has enabled UNHCR to make available transit shelters that provide protection and access to basic services, including for many

unaccompanied children who have fled in fear of violence. To respond to growing needs, UNHCR increased the number of these transit shelters from seven to ten in 2018, providing shelter, services and information to often traumatized migrants. Over the last three years, UNHCR-supported transit centres have helped some **61,700 people in Mexico**, and **52,800 people in Guatemala**. In a first of their kind in the region, these transit centres have specific spaces for those persecuted for their sexual orientation or gender. Needs in the region remain high, with the recent crises in Venezuela and Nicaragua putting additional pressure on national asylum systems in neighbouring countries, including those that had historically been viewed as transit countries, like Guatemala.

## IRAQ

The situation in Iraq is complex. Since the start of the campaign, UNHCR has worked hard to create safe living spaces for families displaced inside Iraq, after being forced from their homes by the bitter conflicts in Mosul and elsewhere. Many families have been displaced more than once. Throughout our response, we have provided emergency shelter for those newly displaced, including 7,542 tents and 21,690 emergency shelter kits. We have also converted unfinished buildings into 'collective shelters' that provide safe living spaces for families who had fled.

As families have started to move back to neighbourhoods devastated by intense bombardment and conflict, UNHCR has helped to repair or rehabilitate homes for over 6,000 returning families and 785 families have received cash grants that allow them to rehabilitate damaged houses on their own. Refugee Housing Units (RHUs) equipped with a mobile toilet, a 500 litre water tank and an air cooler have also proved a lifeline for 5,200 families, providing a temporary home while they work to rebuild their house or find a new one.

Other internally displaced people (IDPs) remain living in camps and shared shelters throughout Iraq. UNHCR continues to provide shelter assistance and core relief items to them, and coordinates with other humanitarian organisations to support the work of local authorities to improve the living conditions of vulnerable IDPs.





*Young Syrian boy flies a homemade kite made from a piece of insulation, in Azraq Camp, Jordan.*



## TRANSITIONAL HOUSING SOLUTIONS PROTECTING PEOPLE AFTER THE EMERGENCY

*Exile is rarely short. Some 78 per cent of refugees are in protracted refugee situations, where mass displacement has affected a country for 5 years or more. UNHCR is there for refugees every step of the way and once the immediate emergency is over, we help provide more durable, semi-permanent shelter solutions. Providing proper shelter and housing during all stages of displacement helps restore self-confidence, reduce trauma and protection risks, and provide a space to rebuild family unity and livelihoods.*

UNHCR replaces tents with fixed structure shelters or basic houses. We have 19 models of transitional shelters and work with communities to build those that best meet local conditions and needs, using locally available supplies and skills. In urban areas UNHCR offers cash grants to contribute towards rent or to support the household expenses of families who host refugees in their homes. We also weatherproof and repair informal accommodation and unfinished buildings.

### JORDAN

As one of the countries most affected by the Syria crisis, Jordan hosts the second highest share of refugees per capita in the world. More than 80 per cent of refugees live in urban areas in privately rented accommodation or with host families. But with legal work hard to secure, and savings exhausted after

years of displacement, most refugee families struggle to pay for very basic life essentials including rent, food and healthcare. Humanitarian assistance continues to provide a crucial lifeline for many, especially those from the most vulnerable populations such as female-headed households, the elderly, or those with disabilities.

Each year, UNHCR has provided over 32,500 vulnerable refugee households with vital regular cash assistance (around \$185 per month for a typical family of 5), enabling them to stay in their homes and care for their families. This cash assistance puts dignity and choice back in the hands of refugees who have lost everything, particularly those who are at high-risk of exploitation and abuse. In total, over 65,300 refugee families have been supported between 2016 and 2019.

Although not everybody in need has been reached yet - there are ca. 7,000 families on the waiting list for cash assistance - the impact on families that have benefitted from this life-changing help is significant. In a 2018 review, beneficiaries reported “significantly” better psychosocial wellbeing, thanks to reduced stress, improved living conditions and a reduced financial burden on the household. Cash assistance helps social integration too: eight in ten respondents reported that their relationships with the local community were either “good” or “very good”.

Entesar (40) and her five children were forced to flee from Syria to Jordan in 2013, to escape deadly airstrikes near their home close to the city of Homs. Her youngest child, Kholud, was just a baby at the time. Entesar’s husband stayed behind to put matters in order and made it to Turkey to fly to Jordan, but he was killed in a bombing before he could reunite with his family. Today, Entesar and her four youngest children live in a small apartment in Amman, Jordan’s capital, with her parents Abu Ziad (72) and Om Ziad (67), who currently receive monthly cash assistance from UNHCR.

*“As a mother and a daughter, the biggest challenge for me is taking care of our expenses, to be able to meet my family’s needs and help them live with contentment... I rely on cash assistance. It is so important”*



### UNHCR’S CASH ASSISTANCE TO URBAN REFUGEES IN JORDAN

At UNHCR, we strive to make the best use of the latest available technologies, such as cash delivery through ATMs, iris scans and the EyeCloud in Jordan.

Through biometric technology, UNHCR has been able to ensure that direct cash assistance and vouchers are delivered to the most vulnerable families - often women headed households, and those who are chronically ill - so that they can meet their rental payments and avoid homelessness.

#### What is UNHCR cash assistance?

It is a means tested cash allowance paid monthly to families who are particularly vulnerable, to allow them to meet their basic expenses for accommodation, food and access to school. It is there to prevent families from becoming homeless, to protect vulnerable refugees from resorting to exploitative work, and to **provide an alternative to child labour, allowing children to attend school instead. It is therefore also a safety net to protect every child’s right to go to school.**

#### Why is cash assistance more useful in urban settings than delivering direct supplies and services?



**1. Cash offers true flexibility** as families can use it to help bolster whatever arrangements they have managed to make for themselves. **It helps return a little dignity to refugees** – enabling them to take charge of their lives again.



**2. It prevents refugees from resorting to negative coping mechanisms:** by reducing the financial burden on households, families are less likely to rely on harmful strategies like child labour or the selling of possessions and core relief items in order to afford food and rent.



**3. Technology makes it possible to get cash securely to places to where we simply can’t get supplies.** By bolstering everyday technology like ATM networks with extra iris recognition security, we provide an instant, highly cost effective way to get support regularly through to very vulnerable families. In fact, it costs just 2 cents for every dollar we put directly into the hands of refugee families.



**4. It helps the local economy** by driving new customers to local small businesses. Cash assistance has a positive effect beyond the immediate families it is helping - it is a great multiplier in terms of the effects it can have on those who make up the whole support network for refugees, including host communities.

#### How is cash assistance being delivered to urban refugees?

The process of identification, assessment of each individual situation, selection and monitoring is put in place during a 30 day period, with the cash grant arriving to the beneficiaries within 4 days of eligibility being confirmed. It starts with a call to our 24 hr ‘Helpline’, followed by a home visit to fully document the family’s situation and data transference to UNHCR’s database.

An assessment of each family’s complete situation is prepared and submitted to the ‘Cash Review Committee’, a decision making body made up of 30 community representatives and leaders who make recommendations as to who should be included in the scheme.

These recommendations are then reviewed and actioned appropriately by UNHCR protection experts. If successfully selected for support, the beneficiary will receive a mobile telephone text message inviting them to visit the bank where their iris will be scanned and registered with the ATM software. Our programme is card-less.

Iris scanning is not only innovative but fraud-free, as only the registered beneficiaries are able to withdraw cash at the ATMs.

**Cash assistance is highly cost effective: extremely low overhead costs mean that 98 per cent of the funds donated go directly to refugees, making the most of the generous support of UNHCR’s donors.**



## HOW UNHCR SHELTER SOLUTIONS ARE TRANSFORMING LIVES AND BUILDING ASSETS IN REFUGEE AND HOST COMMUNITIES IN LEBANON

*More than 1 million Syrians are now living in Lebanon, the country with the highest per capita concentration of refugees in the world (1 in every 4 people). 60 per cent of them are children and 20 per cent are women.*

In Lebanon, 41 per cent of registered Syrian refugees live in substandard and overcrowded dwellings in cities and towns, without security of tenure. Given that urban environments need to be able to deal with rapid population influxes and outflows, it is important to create flexible tools that not only make new housing stock available promptly but also allow this new housing stock to be put to other use if the displaced population leaves. Refugees also receive multi-purpose cash grants that help them address their immediate housing needs.

### How does this solution impact in the lives of refugee families and host communities?

At the end of the 12-month period, there is an **additional unit in the local rental stock** which mitigates against rent inflation. In the longer term, rehabilitating the housing units helps **increase housing options** in refugee hosting areas, benefiting both refugees and the host community, contributing to stabilize rental prices and reducing the gap between supply and demand.

This investment approach **helps local people feel the benefit of their refugee neighbours**, contributing to harmonious relations between both communities, and **reducing the risk of large-scale evictions, leading to homelessness**. This innovative scheme also **helps protect refugee families from descending into poverty**, and from the risks of resorting to desperate measures— such as unsafe or exploitative work and child labour, returning to war-torn Syria or risking their lives at sea en route to third countries. **The rental free period allows families to build their resilience** and to prioritize other urgent needs, giving them freedom to allocate their resources. It also provides security of tenure for an entire year, helping these families to feel safe.

**UNHCR's shelter solution in Lebanon is opening up housing that wasn't previously available, while ensuring that refugees have financial breathing space for a year, to help them work out their options for the future, backed by a legal tenancy agreement.**

## LEBANON

When people are forced to flee, they are often faced with limited options for shelter. In Lebanon, families have been forced to rent space in unfinished and overcrowded buildings that offer little protection, privacy, safety, or access to basics such as water and sanitation.

Over the past three years in Lebanon, UNHCR has helped to upgrade, repair and complete over 8,000 partially constructed buildings, which have been the only option for shelter for many refugee men, women and children. In exchange for this investment, landlords offer refugee families a rent-free year, meaning that refugees benefit from an important financial relief as well as better living conditions. In total, some 40,000 refugees have benefited from these rent agreements in the last three years. UNHCR has also distributed much needed weatherproofing and shelter kits to over 82,000 families

living in informal settlements to help them better survive the harsh winter months. These kits help make life more bearable in difficult conditions, keeping people protected and healthier while UNHCR and partners are working to find a more durable solution.

## TANZANIA

Since April 2015 Burundians have been fleeing violence, conflict and insecurity in their country, with more than half of the 343,200 displaced seeking refuge in neighbouring Tanzania. Needs are high but the Burundi crisis is one of the most underfunded refugee emergencies in the world, leaving more than 60 per cent of refugee and asylum seekers in Tanzania living in worn-out, dilapidated emergency shelters and tents. The support of the Nobody Left Outside campaign has been vital in helping us bring shelter to both new and existing refugees: during the last three years, over 20,110 semi-permanent transitional shelters have been constructed, giving

better protection, greater comfort and dignity to around 100,550 people. We have also supplied 25,850 tents to new arrivals to shelter over 129,240 refugees.

## KENYA

In Kenya, with its large and long-established camps at Dadaab and Kakuma, UNHCR has concentrated its efforts on providing better shelter for refugees with disabilities. Becoming a refugee is a difficult experience at best, and those with disabilities and other additional needs often face many additional

challenges. During the last three years, over 2,200 shelters for refugee men, women and children with disabilities have been built with support from refugee and host communities as part of a community-based approach to supporting people with additional needs. This has given around 11,100 people safe, accessible and appropriate shelter. We have also provided 14,570 transitional shelters with secure metal doors, benefiting around 72,800 people; and provided shelter repair kits so that families can reinforce and mend their homes themselves.

Since its inception in 2018, UNHCR has provided refugees in Kalobeyei settlement in Kenya with cash for constructing durable and permanent shelters – part of the UN Refugee Agency's Cash for Shelter initiative. The process aims to ensure safe and dignified housing while reducing dependency on humanitarian assistance, addressing protection concerns and aiding integration with the host community. The project also provides value for money as refugees build permanent shelters at up to 14 per cent lower costs than implementing partners. Refugees can build a compound of 12 or more shelters in an average of 22 days. This efficient use of funds allows refugees to spend the remaining money on home improvements or other basic needs, benefiting the local economy and improving social coexistence.

Twenty-five-year-old refugee, Florence Idiongo, from Lotuko in South Sudan, stands outside her newly-constructed homes in Kalobeyei settlement just outside the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya. Florence came to Kakuma in 2016 and lived in a tent for two years before building her permanent home for her extended family through the Cash for Shelter project.

*"This system where UNHCR is helping us build houses and sending us the money is good. Every neighbourhood is built and village 1 is almost complete."*



*Florence Idiongo, from Lotuko in South Sudan, stands outside her newly-constructed homes in Kalobeyei settlement, Kenya.*



## THE REFUGEE HOUSING UNIT (RHU)

For families who must stay in refugee camps for years, there is an urgent need to provide them with safe and durable shelter. A shelter that will last, that protects from the elements and ill health, and that offers a dignified and safe way of living for those forced from home.

The RHU is a self-standing, sustainable and durable shelter, designed through an innovative collaboration between UNHCR, the social enterprise Better Shelter and the IKEA Foundation, and with input from refugees.

The life expectancy of the RHU is three years, depending on weather conditions and maintenance. The units can be set up in an average of four hours and can house up to six people, have windows and partitions, and are equipped with renewable solar energy and a lockable door. Made of a lightweight, modular structure the RHU guarantees basic needs of shelter, privacy, and security — fundamental aspects of making it possible to re-establish a feeling of peace and dignity.

*“The partners that we worked with to make RHU come alive were talking to refugees from day one in order to ensure that what we did was aligned with their needs and the preferences ... so that’s what you normally do in the private sector, you talk to your customers and you have your customers help you develop the best possible solutions”*

Per Heggnes, CEO IKEA Foundation

The RHU project initiated in 2010 and was rolled out on a large scale in 2015. Since its inception, UNHCR has set-up more than 30,000 RHU shelters in refugee camps, transit sites, and through emergency response programmes in 40 countries in Europe, Africa, South America, the Middle East, and Asia.

**Tanzania is one of the countries where the largest number of RHUs have been set-up. Velarie Ntahonicaye and her family live in Kigoma Refugee Camp in Tanzania.** She and her family were forced to pay bribes to armed groups in Burundi to avoid violence. When their money ran out, they were forced to flee, and were helped by UNHCR when they reached Tanzania. Since arriving in Tanzania, the family has lived in an emergency shelter, but received a sturdy, safe Refugee Housing Unit in early 2019.



Velarie Ntahonicaye and her family with their Refugee Housing Unit (RHU) in Kigoma Refugee Camp.



## Starting Over Again

When conflict broke out in Ramadi, Iraq, in 2014, Hind, her husband Saffa and their four children had to flee their home, finally finding safety at Al Jamea'a camp in Baghdad.

*"We were threatened by armed groups because our home was close to military bases," says Hind. "Snipers took to the roofs of our houses and there were checkpoints everywhere. The fighting was so fierce that we decided to go to Baghdad and never return to Ramadi until things were stable again."*

*"The first night in Baghdad, we stayed in a sister's house with three other families. My husband had to sleep in the garden because there was not enough space. It was very difficult. We had to dress and cook outside and my husband would accompany us to the bathroom and other places to protect us. We really missed the privacy we had back home, especially the wash facilities. I have four daughters and it's important to have privacy when I dress them."*

The family moved from tent to tent, looking for somewhere to settle. They suffered health problems as a result of extreme heat in the summer and flooding during Iraq's rainy season.

Then, in October 2015, the family received one of the 98 Refugee Housing Units installed by UNHCR at Al Jamea'a camp – a move that has dramatically improved their lives. They decorated the walls with brightly coloured fabrics, separated sleeping areas

with curtains and now even have a small outside kitchen. They also received a jerry can, three mattresses, blankets and a water cooler for their new house. Crucially, they have gained the privacy they once lacked.

*"When the rains came, the water was about one foot high – but this shelter is more protected," says Hind. "We have a door that we can close and lock. I feel it's safer. It's cleaner and more protected."*

Still, even the RHU is just a temporary solution for the family. *"My dream is for us to return, to get back to our lives again,"* Hind explains. *"My daughters are beautiful and I hope they can have a better life, a better future, when they go back to Ramadi."*

Hind is one of the 3 million Iraqis who were forced to abandon their homes in 2014, when armed groups began seizing control of large swathes of Iraq. Over 2.1 million people were displaced across the country, approximately 260,000 of whom sought refuge in neighbouring countries, including Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt. Another 875,000 had to flee areas like Mosul, when they were hit by new waves of violence in October 2016. As the winter closed in, they needed urgent humanitarian relief to survive.

While many people were expected to go back to their own regions of Iraq in 2018, it is still difficult and risky for people to return home and live safely.



Families living in UNHCR's Refugee Housing Units in Al Jamea'a camp, Iraq.



Hind, 30, with her daughter Malik, 5 inside their Refugee Housing Unit in Al Jamea'a camp, Iraq.



## LONG-TERM SHELTER SOLUTIONS HELPING FAMILIES REBUILD THEIR LIVES

After months, years or even decades of life in exile, many of the millions of people forced to flee are able to return home. But although welcome, their return may not be easy – returning to homes and communities devastated by conflict, or land that has since been taken over by others. UNHCR helps returning families repair damaged homes, build new ones, or find temporary accommodation. Our assistance ranges from construction supplies, expertise, and help with essential repairs, to the provision of cash grants for rent, and legal assistance to help reclaim houses or land. For other refugees with little prospect of returning home in the coming years, we make sure they have durable, comfortable shelters to call home.

### UKRAINE

More than three years of conflict has left more than 2 million Ukrainians displaced from their homes. One million Ukrainians have sought asylum in neighbouring countries. Many fled with barely anything in search of safety. The conflict between Ukrainian armed forces and Russian-backed separatists impacted some of the most vulnerable populations—including single parents, the elderly and people with disabilities or chronic illnesses. Despite a ceasefire in place since 2014, Ukrainian civilians continue to pay a very high price. Still people in small towns and villages face dire conditions – many of those returning home have found their homes badly damaged by bombing, but lacked the means or ability to tackle essential repairs. But thanks to NLO campaign support, UNHCR have undertaken major repairs on 1,300 homes for elderly or vulnerable returnees and internally displaced families; and built 57 new homes for returnees whose homes had been totally destroyed. We have also carried out lighter repairs to damaged houses that have helped more than 37,260 people make sure their homes are warm, dry and safe.

### RWANDA

With continuing conflict and instability in Burundi and DRC, Rwanda's 145,000 refugees have little immediate prospect of returning home. UNHCR has been working hard to support vulnerable families with mudbrick shelters, including land-saving back-to-back 'dual shelters'. Constructed with innovative hydra-formed or compressed mud bricks, these shelters provide families with solid homes includ-

ing good access to water and sanitation, which will last around 5-7 years. The shelters are also more environmentally friendly, avoiding the use of wooden poles which place pressure on scarce natural resources. We have also been providing refugees with vocational training including carpentry, masonry and welding, so that they can support the construction of new shelters, carry out repairs, and build new livelihoods. During 2016-2019, some 46,100 people received shelter support, including through the construction of more than 9,200 new, sustainable mudbrick shelters.

### NIGER

In Niger, UNHCR used its convening power to help find an innovative solution to land shortages for housing that affected both refugees and people in the host communities. Recognising that many landowners had poor quality agricultural land of little value to them, UNHCR helped broker negotiations with local host communities to create 'Refugee Hosting Zones' where refugees and local people alike benefit from new plots of land to create a new shared community. Since the first successful pilot, over 5,000 refugee families have now received their own parcel of land, and construction of social and sustainable long-term housing has begun, meaning that some 35,100 refugees are well on their way to a family home that is theirs to keep. This land sharing mechanism works by ensuring that the largest proportion of the plots is available for sale, helping the municipalities to fund the infrastructure needed to supply safe water and other services for the entire community of the area, creating a 'win-win' scenario for all.



UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Helena Christensen shares a cup of fruit tea with Vera, an 80-year old former schoolteacher. Vera lives alone in the home she bought with her husband in 1969. He died 5 years ago. He was the love of her life and she has happy memories of their life together in the house with their two sons. "All life with him was full of happiness and hope," said Vera. When her house was shelled during fighting in 2014, she had an extremely lucky escape as her bedroom was completely destroyed moments after she got up from bed. "It was incredible. I remember the sound of glass smashing and so much damage far and wide." She is extremely grateful to UNHCR for repairing her home – she couldn't imagine what she would have done otherwise. When she saw the damage the shelling caused she cried for a long time. But to be able to live here again is one of the happiest times in her life – this home means everything to her. "I'm very happy to be living in my home. Thank you so much for helping me. I had no other options. This is the greatest help I have ever had. This home is everything to me. It is the best of my life."



## Going back home

Lina was just down the street from her home when everything around her began to shake. In that moment, filled with fear, she didn't know whether her husband, Prokofiy, was dead or alive. She hurried back to find him standing by a home now in ruins – two more lives torn apart by Ukraine's war.

They were forced to leave their home and move in with relatives. Many people had long since fled the region in east Ukraine after violence between government forces and pro-Russian separatists erupted four years ago. But older people, like 78-year-old Lina and 86-year-old Prokofiy, could not.

In spite of everything they have been through, they still find reasons to be grateful. "It was good to have each other through this," Lina says. "I am so glad he was not in the room where the ceiling collapsed." Lina describes her marriage to Prokofiy as the happiest moment of her life. Prokofiy considers himself a lucky man to have found Lina. "I think maybe God decided to give me a good wife."

With the support of UNHCR, the couple was able to repair their home and they have now moved back in together with their daughter Vera, chickens and a dog. "We would have had to save every penny to fix the house but even then it would not have been enough," Lina reflects, "The most important thing is that peace comes."



*78-year-old Lina and her husband Prokofiy, 86, photographed by Helena Christensen outside their home in Sloviansk, Ukraine.*



## GLOBAL SHELTER COALITION ACTIVITIES

Over the last three years we have been delighted to work with the members of the Global Shelter Coalition to raise awareness and funding to provide better shelter for refugees. We are indebted to the Coalition members' commitment and generosity.

### DATO' SRI PROF. DR. TAHIR UNHCR Eminent Advocate, Champion of The Global Shelter Coalition

Dr. Tahir has been committed to raise public awareness about global refugee issues and engaging other business leaders to support refugees. Dr. Tahir sponsored the TV concert and charity gala, Voice of Refugees, to raise funds and awareness in his homeland of Indonesia. Dr. Tahir was named Champion of the Global Shelter Coalition as recognition to his efforts.

Dr. Tahir has travelled to UNHCR field operations on numerous occasions to see first-hand how UNHCR delivers its humanitarian activities, including visits to Jordan together with a group of his peers, as well as to Lebanon and other countries.

In September 2016, UNHCR appointed the Indonesian businessman Dato' Sri Prof. Dr. Tahir as an UNHCR Eminent Advocate. UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi praised Dr. Tahir for his generosity and commitment to the refugee cause. "I am very pleased to welcome Dato Sri Tahir as an Eminent Advocate for UNHCR; his real commitment to ensure the well-being of refugees around the world," before handing over a certificate to mark the Indonesian's appointment.

### VENERABLE V. VAJIRAMEDHI, UNHCR PATRON

*"Despite religion, we are human beings who can connect with each other either with joy or misery which makes us indivisible. As a member of the global family, we are bound to make better and sustainable living conditions. Loving kindness and compassion are the paths to bring about peace to the world."*

Venerable V. Vajiramedhi

On 15 November 2018, Deputy High Commissioner Kelly Clements appointed Venerable Vudhijaya Vajiramedhi as a UNHCR Patron of Peace and Compassion. Since 2018, the honorary title of UNHCR Patron has been bestowed upon individuals who have used their standing and influence to



High Commissioner Filippo Grandi and Dr. Dato Sri Tahir during the Eminent Advocate title bestowal.



Eminent Advocate Dr. Dato Sri Tahir visits Azraq Refugee Camp, Jordan.



Venerable together with Head of Service, Private Sector Partnerships, Christian Schaaqe and UNHCR Deputy High Commissioner, Kelly Clements.

change attitudes towards refugees, and raise awareness of the refugee crises and the work of UNHCR. Our patrons are people who have worked tirelessly over many years to shed light on UNHCR's vital interventions and their impact on refugees around the world.

### "HOME" SALON EVENT HOSTED BY CATE BLANCHETT

On May 2016, actor Cate Blanchett organized a private salon event in benefit of refugees. The event was part of the announcement of her naming as Goodwill Ambassador of UNHCR.

*"There has never been a more crucial time to stand with refugees and show solidarity. We are living through an unprecedented crisis, and there must be shared responsibility worldwide. It feels like we're at a fork in the road, do we go down the compassionate path or do we go down the path of intolerance? As a mother, I want my children to go down the compassionate path. There's much more opportunity, there's much more optimism and there is a solution down that path."*

### GLOBAL SHELTER COALITION PRIVATE DINNER IN HONG KONG

*"We all have a responsibility to step forward and aid the victims of persecution; to ignore the plight of refugees now would be a reversal of basic decency. I am fully committed to working with UNHCR to provide and improve shelter solutions for refugees around the world."*

Evgenii Tugolukov

In November 2017, to celebrate the positive results of the campaign and show appreciation for the commitment of our donors in the region, the UNHCR Private Sector and Partnerships Section organized a private dinner which gathered 30 people from Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand and Brazil in the home of UNHCR's Head of Sub-Office in Hong Kong. UNHCR Chief Spokesperson Melissa Fleming, Goodwill Ambassador Kristin Davis and High Profile Supporter Mariela Shaker, together with other UNHCR representatives attended the dinner.



UNHCR supporters at the private dinner event in Hong Kong.



Bianca Lam, PSP Head of Fundraising, HK and Melissa Flemming, former Head of Communication, UNHCR together with guests at the UNHCR private dinner.





UNHCR Site planner and Shelter Officer, Phoebe Goodwin shares stories from the field at the Refugee Film Festival.

### 10TH REFUGEE FILM FESTIVAL IN HONG KONG

Phoebe Goodwin, one of UNHCR's shelter experts, travelled to Hong Kong to meet UNHCR's most committed supporters. Phoebe is an architect by training and a humanitarian by choice. This opportunity enabled all present to talk to Phoebe about her experiences of helping to make sure that those who are displaced aren't left without somewhere safe to live, and allowed Phoebe and other UNHCR representatives to meet and share views and experiences with some of the donors whose generosity makes our work possible.



Phoebe Goodwin and the film festival audience.

### NLO GLOBAL SHELTER COALITION FIELD MISSION TO BANGLADESH

In November 2017, supporters of the Global Shelter Coalition had the opportunity to visit Kutupalong-Balukhali Expansion Site in Bangladesh, which hosts over 63,100 Rohingya refugees. Donors had the opportunity to visit the world's largest refugee site and get a better sense and understanding of the scale, depth and extent of UNHCR's work, particularly in the area of shelter.



Donors of the Global Shelter Coalition discussing with local UNHCR staff in Bangladesh.

### REFUGEE HOUSING UNIT SHOWCASE

*"It is so important to invest in shelter, not just because it is a basic need, but because it is a first and basic element of protection. Everything starts with shelter. If there is not shelter – How I would be able to get an education? How I would be able to sit with you today to talk about shelter?"*

Safia Ibrahimkhel  
Afghan refugee, living in Pakistan and member of UNHCR Global Youth Advisory Council.

On December 17, 2018 UNHCR hosted an event for donors at the UNHCR headquarter in Geneva. At the event, our partners Autodesk Foundation and Better Shelter, together with former refugee Safia Ibrahimkhel, shared their experiences and ideas to innovate and advance in the delivery of shelter solutions. The participants also met with senior UNHCR staff and explored the RHU first-hand.



Johan Karlsson; Managing Director of Better Shelter, Safia Ibrahimkhel; former refugee, Andrew Harper; UNHCR, Director of the Division of Programme Support & Management, Joe Speicher; Executive Director Autodesk Foundation, Geneva 2018.



UNHCR Shelter Officer Tom Corcoran helps Burundi refugees build a shelter in Nduta refugee camp.



### *Our vision*

*UNHCR's vision is a world where all refugees and forcibly displaced people are able to live with greater dignity and independence, in a safe and sustainable manner, as members of the communities that host them, be it in urban or rural settings.*

Global displacement is at unprecedented levels. Over the past two decades, the number of people forced to flee has doubled. Worldwide, counting the internally displaced, the stateless, refugees, asylum seekers and returnees, there are now 74.8 million people of concern to UNHCR.

Our presence in 134 countries is just another measure of the global nature of forced displacement. With large-scale conflicts remaining unresolved and new ones forcing more people to flee, there is little sign today of the tide of displacement ebbing.

With your support, commitment and voice, the Nobody Left Outside campaign and the Global Shelter Coalition have helped to bring better shelter to millions of men, women and children, and raise awareness of our collective responsibility to ensure that no one who has been forcibly displaced is left outside.

UNHCR will continue providing first-line emergency shelter as needed, while funding the construction and maintenance of emergency locations, together with road access to keep the supply channels open. We will also continue providing temporary cash-assistance to help refugees pay their rent and avoid homelessness, we will continue investing in Research & Development and innovation, and in modernizing our working methods to sustainably respond to forcibly displaced settlement and shelter needs.

Despite the challenges, as High Commissioner Filippo Grandi stated “...it is possible to generate positive dynamism around the refugee issue and to leverage greater support for those affected by conflict, persecution and statelessness. This is a watershed moment for the refugee cause, and an opportunity to take collective action to address forced displacement.”

UNHCR stands ready, with your support, to achieve these goals.



Christian Schaake  
**Head of Service, Private Sector Partnerships**  
**UNHCR**





## Credits

*Front and back cover: Velarie Ntahonicaye and her family with their Refugee Housing Unit (RHU) in Kigoma Refugee Camp, Tanzania.*

*Page 33: NHCR Kutupalong extension site in Bangladesh, as seen from the air.*

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