

A Global Review

UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth

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Gratefully,
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Executive Summary

UNHCR aims to be a fully age, gender and diversity inclusive organisation within the next four years. Yet the 2011 global analysis of UNHCR's accountability frameworks for Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) revealed that only 14% of its managers worldwide reported full achievement of targeted actions for adolescents. This stands as one of the top four gaps in implementing the AGD policy.

This review explores UNHCR's engagement with displaced youth, refugees and IDPs, by analysing the agency's mandate in relation to youth through its policies, guidelines and strategies, institutional infrastructure, approaches to identifying and responding to the needs of displaced youth, current funding, programmes and monitoring and evaluation processes. As general guidance this review uses the UN definition of youth, that is, the age group of 15-24 years; yet it recognises 'youth' as a social construct reflecting local understandings.

As age-disaggregated data is not currently collected for young people in the age group of 15-24 years, this report draws heavily on primary data collected as part of this review. The methodology includes a survey of selected UNHCR staff, interviews with field-based staff and implementing partners, and focus group discussions with youth in different displacement settings giving fascinating insight into current views, perceptions, programmes and operations from UNHCR itself as well as young displaced people.

Displaced Youth: Roles and Needs

Little data exists within UNHCR on the global displaced population aged 15-24 years and yet evidence suggests that youth form a majority of UNHCR's 'Persons of Concern'. With limited access to post-primary education and livelihoods opportunities, without the right to work and with no certainty of a durable solution, young people are often unable to plan a future life for themselves and have described their lives as 'living in a state of limbo'. Although they can be perceived as a threat to stability and security (particularly males), or as vulnerable victims (females), displacement may force young people to take on new roles and responsibilities to ensure their own and their families' basic needs, often endangering their lives. Girls are doubly at risk of harmful coping strategies, such as survival sex or early marriage. Yet young people often show resilience in the face of such difficult situations and demonstrate enormous agency and ability to adapt. They self-organise, form groups, offer peer-to-peer and wider community support and may even assist international organisations at times of heightened security concerns. Beyond meeting their material needs, such as food or clothing, displaced young people aim to transition to adulthood by continuing their education and ensuring safe and dignified livelihoods while hoping for a stable and durable solution.

Despite the important roles many young people play in contributing to their own and others' wellbeing, too often their present-day capacities are not recognised, and their perspectives are not heard by community leaders or relief agencies. The findings of this review show that despite the compelling evidence for displaced youth's needs and the constraints they face in improving their present-day situation, and their hopes for long-term solutions, they represent an invisible majority within the population of concern of UNHCR and partners.

- ◀ Ecuador / Mariuxi Jinet, 15, and beneficiary of a UNHCR scholarship has been boarding at Colegio San Miguel for the past 12 months. She attended the school for 2 years previously, supported by her step father, but due to her father's alcoholism she decided to leave home and was the grateful beneficiary of a scholarship enabling her to board at the school where she has access to a safe, secure environment, a uniform and toiletries. ©UNHCR / J. Tanner / May 2012

UNHCR Institutional Set-up

This review finds that UNHCR needs to clarify its definition of ‘youth’ and to strengthen its institutional and operational set-up to adequately respond to the needs of displaced youth.

Conceptual

UNHCR lacks an official definition of youth. While this flexibility may be helpful at the field level, as it allows recognition of youth as a cultural construct, this conceptual gap hinders the organisation in identifying who falls within this group and who to target. Despite the fact that UNHCR collects age-disaggregated data for children (up to 18 years) and older people (18-59 years and over 60 years), no quantitative data is currently collected for young people, even for the age group of 15-24 years old. Qualitative data on Persons of Concern are collected through various participatory methods, which include discussions with groups of female and male youth. However, this important amount of information tends to be aggregated within data about UNHCR’s all Persons of Concern and not identified as a distinctive group. UNHCR needs to define the age parameters for ‘youth’ and to capture disaggregated data accordingly.

Institutional

UNHCR does not have policies, strategies or guidance notes specific to youth. Other strategic frameworks exist to address the needs of children and adults, for example, in terms of Education, Child Protection, Sexual and Gender Based Violence. These policies implicitly cover youth groups without focusing on them as a specific group with particular needs. Importantly, the Age, Gender and Diversity Policy requires that all Persons of Concern participate in decision-making affecting their lives and those of their families and communities, and places emphasis on understanding where people are in their life cycles.

UNHCR does not have a specific youth section or appointed youth focal point at the HQ level. Young people’s needs are addressed within the Division of International Protection and the Division of Programme Support Management across different sectors, e.g. Education, Gender Based Violence, Health, and Livelihoods. At field level, this review revealed the presence of only one youth specific position, the “Inter-Community Youth Relationships Officer” (in Dadaab, Kenya),

The lack of youth specific positions is out of sync with the results of the review’s field based survey wherein 70% of the respondents reported that they worked directly or indirectly with youth across various sectors. The survey also revealed that the majority of respondents working with youth are national staff members (87%) who spend 0-5% of their time on youth programming (43%) and have worked in UNHCR for an average length of 1-4 years (38%). This short average length of employment may suggest that these staff members are more likely to be junior, hence with a lower level of decision-making power, and/or that youth related activities are delegated to junior level staff. The lack of dedicated senior staff to engage with displaced youth, and limited guidance from HQ, are considered major obstacles in responding to the needs of this target group.

The same survey indicated that UNHCR’s primary implementing partners for youth targeted programming are national NGOs (64%) and international NGOs (57%). Community based organisations, in particular self-initiated youth groups represent another important partner for UNHCR, demonstrating the potential of capitalising on and developing youth capacities and leadership skills. Partnership with implementing partners is deemed by UNHCR survey respondents as ‘good’; although general dissatisfaction with partners also emerges, mainly due to the lack of availability of qualified personnel (49% of respondents).

Progress on UNHCR’s global strategic priorities is measured through a number of indicators, some of which are relevant to youth. However, no youth specific indicators or basket of indicators is utilised to measure the well-being of youth and the realisation of their rights. At the central level, UNHCR’s

results-based management software, Focus, does not collect specific information on youth beyond data on two indicators concerning adolescents (12-17 year olds) accessing education or services in urban areas and two child protection indicators that may be relevant to youth. Disaggregated data on youth is available in the ProGres database in a limited number of countries yet ProGres data is not amalgamated.

Operational

Since UNHCR does not offer stand-alone youth programming, young people's needs are addressed as part of the wider population of concern and across segmented sectors of UNHCR operational units. Interviews with key informants disclosed that programmes targeting youth are offered to both sexes and there are comparatively more programmes for girls than for boys (for both young people under and over 18 years); yet there is not enough data on the actual utilization and impact of these programs. Youth programming may be characterized as ad hoc, minimal and dependent on the lead programme staff, existing in-country expertise, interest and funding. The main youth programming is vocational training, followed by HIV/AIDS prevention and sexual and reproductive health.

This review reveals that lack of funding is deemed to be the biggest barrier to working with youth. Dedicated funding for youth programming is relatively small. The overwhelming majority of respondents reported that this funding amounted to less than 5% or between 5-10% of their Operational Plan (45% and 23% of respondents). A similar percentage of staff reported that their country operation spent less than \$50,000 annually for youth programming (61%). A total of 23% respondents reported spending less than \$5,000.

Key Recommendations

UNHCR could establish a **Youth Steering Group** to promote the visibility of youth within the agency's programmes and make recommendations to strengthen the response to young people's protection and wellbeing. The Steering Group should be under the direction of a high-ranking and senior manager in order to ensure organisation-wide participation and the elevated profile for youth. The Steering Group would be responsible for creating a Youth Action Plan to enable UNHCR to respond to the specific needs of young people in displacement situations. The Youth Steering Group would select pilot countries for the implementation of the Youth Action Plan. Elements of the Youth Action Plan are as follows:

-
- 1 Recognise youth as a social group/life stage with particular needs that are distinct from those of younger children and adults, while also acknowledging the diversity within the vast category of youth (including differences between young men and women, younger and older youth, those in and out of school, married and unmarried, disabled, LGBTI young people and UASC). This will enable better knowledge and understanding of the various perspectives and experiences of different groups of young people and will ensure that the needs of certain groups are adequately covered in UNHCR's programmes.
-
- 2 Recognise and build on young people's present capacities and the valuable contributions they are already making to their family and community's wellbeing. This includes engaging with youth as community leaders and activists of today by developing stronger partnerships with youth-initiated organisations. Publish guidelines for UNHCR and partners on how to effectively engage youth groups as partners in community support, protection and advocacy activities. Methods and implementation models can be shared amongst UNHCR operations and partners.

-
- 3 UNHCR should gather more information on young people's self-initiated groups to find out how they are working with other community members and how UNHCR could support their development. UNHCR should develop a field manual and other tools written expressly for the organizational capacity building of youth groups. It could include chapters on basic governance, refugee and human rights, community building, and basic business skills for small organizations.

 - 4 Promote direct engagement with youth to align protection with their ongoing transitions and concerns. Recognise and listen to youth voices and respond to their challenges and priorities. In addition to engaging with youth groups and leaders, communicate frequently with young people who may not be affiliated with a youth group and verify that they are accounted for in UNHCR's core protection activities.

 - 5 Formalize and agree upon a definition of youth and start collecting baseline data from Progress and modified population statistics in UNHCR on this demographic group.

 - 6 However, at the operational level allow staff flexibility in age ranges and gendered definitions to be included in programming. This will enable country offices to engage with youth in a way that respects local definitions and social understandings of this group.

 - 7 To better engage with and meet the needs of displaced youth, disseminate guidelines and provide training for UNHCR staff. Include the many culture and context driven definitions of youth and emerging prominence of youth in both numbers and agents for political and social change in this guidance.

 - 8 Transition beyond single issue programming for youth, e.g. HIV/AIDS awareness for youth, and offer a more comprehensive youth strategy for country operations all the while, ensuring that the current policies on Child Protection, Education, and Gender Based Violence are clearly referenced. Provide holistic guidelines and training materials on the needs pertaining to young people. Through renewed data collection improve monitoring and evaluation of programmatic responses targeting youth using already existing tools such as the AGDM or revised indicators measuring youth's wellbeing;

 - 9 Based on the findings from focus groups, UNHCR should respond to the following needs:
 - Safe and dignified livelihoods, including training and advocacy with host governments for employment rights and freedom of movement
 - Secure access to post-primary education for young people
 - Assist young people to develop better relationships with host community members through joint programmes and initiatives
 - Work with young people to find long-term solutions to their situation.

 - 10 Youth is an important transitional stage that lasts beyond the one year budget cycle. UNHCR operations, under the monitoring of the Youth Steering Group, should strive to ensure that youth programming endures despite budgetary constraints. In the face of severe budgetary restrictions, youth should be prioritized as auxiliary implementers or community supporters of remaining programmes be they Feeding, WASH or Shelter programmes.

1. Background

UNHCR commissioned Social Development Direct to conduct a review of its engagement with displaced youth worldwide. The review was originally aimed at refugee youth on the basis of the following objectives identified in the Terms of Reference:

-
- analyze the origins and evolution of the concept of ‘youth’, focusing particularly on the way that this notion has been used by entities within the United Nations system;
-
- provide a review of the existing literature on refugee youth in developing and middle-income countries, identifying the principal issues affecting their protection, well-being and ability to find durable solutions;
-
- examine UNHCR’s existing policies, programmes and guidance materials so as to assess the extent to which they are sufficiently oriented towards the issues examined above;
-
- identify examples of effective practice in relation to refugee youth by UNHCR, its partners and other humanitarian organizations; and,
-
- make recommendations to UNHCR with respect to the way that it engages with and exercises its mandate in relation to refugee youth in developing countries.

After an inception meeting in Geneva with the Evaluation Manager, MaryBeth Morand, the consultants were requested to broaden the scope of the review to IDP youth. The review was carried out by Dr Rosalind Evans and Claudia Lo Forte, with the support of Dr Erika McAslan Fraser and Dr Allyson Thirkell, who also provided Quality Assurance for the full report. Quality Assurance for the desk review was provided by Sarah Maguire. In addition to the Evaluation Manager, Steering Committee of UNHCR staff who have global portfolios for youth related programmes such as Education, Child Protection, Livelihoods, have reviewed all the documentation associated with this review. Dale Buscher, Senior Director of Programs, and Rachael Reilly, Senior Advocacy Officer, of the Women’s Refugee Commission, along with Anna Skeels of the Centre for Migration Policy Research, were the independent reviewers of the final draft of this report.



2. Introduction

In the world's many protracted displacement situations thousands of children and young people grow up in seemingly unending exile. While all displaced people experience concerns for their future and wonder when, and if, they will be able to return home, such uncertainty affects youth in particular ways.

Living in a state of 'limbo' – often with no access to post-primary education, without opportunities to exercise their choice of livelihood, or even the rights to work as is the case in many countries, and with no immediate durable solution to their situation, impacts on young people's abilities to envision a future or create a life plan for themselves. Since displaced young people may be compelled to take on additional social and economic responsibilities to ensure their own and their families' survival, it can be impossible to think beyond meeting their daily basic needs.

“As youth, we often have to ignore our own future plans and dreams, since we become responsible toward our family for income earning and these pressures often kill our specific needs and desires as a youth.”

Young Afghan male in Iran (Focus group, 2012)

- ◀ Niger / Malian refugees / Malian refugee boys gather under a tent in Tabareybarey camp, Niger. They were part of one of the groups organized by UNHCR by age and sex in October to listen to the refugee concerns and better respond to their needs. The boys are looking forward to attending school classes in the camp, as well as the girls, in order to continue their education which has been interrupted because of the Mali crisis. They also raised their concerns on the security situation in their country and the uncertainty about the time they will spend away from their homes. This participative approach gives refugees the opportunity to raise their voices and be actors of their lives in the camp, and not only beneficiaries from foreign assistance. © UNHCR / H. Caux / 18 October 2012

Young people often assume vital social and economic responsibilities within their families, and many self-organise as members of youth groups offering peer-to-peer and wider community support to others with particular vulnerabilities including the sick, elderly or disabled. They are willing and keen to contribute to growth and peace building and often have extra time to offer. Despite the important roles many young people play in their own and others' wellbeing, too often their voices go unheard by community leaders or relief agencies.

According to UNHCR's surveyed staff, engaging directly with displaced youth is vital. Providing effective protection and assistance for displaced youth involves responding to both their current and future needs and aspirations. It involves recognising and building their capacities to contribute to their own and their community's development in the present and to finding viable solutions to their situation for the future. Conversely, youth exclusion can be a factor in leading a minority of youth to engage in violence or becoming disruptive. Young people need special protection, as they are at high risk of exploitation or abuse, trafficking, and forced recruitment into gangs. Young people (especially adolescent girls) have specific reproductive and sexual health needs, such as unplanned pregnancies, early marriages, HIV/AIDS, and sexually transmitted infections, all of which have long-term consequences, not only for individuals' own futures, but for the wider community. Investment in formal and informal education for youth, including relevant and market-linked vocational and skills training, coupled with specific youth employment creation programmes can build young people's confidence and provide them with the necessary skills and experience to gain employment, become self-reliant and enhance their protection.

“ Through the [Youth] Network [Without Borders], refugee youth become a source of information for the community. But we are also able to change and transform the stigma around the idea of 'youth'. We can show that we are productive for society, we still have parties and like to have fun, but we are also productive for society.

Young Colombian refugee in Costa Rica (Focus group, 2012)

Yet despite such compelling grounds for effectively engaging with youth, the findings from this review demonstrate that this majority population have become **invisible**. This invisibility negatively impacts on efforts to support and work with displaced young people around the world. Youth invisibility is not specific to UNHCR, as there is no universally agreed definition of youth, and both age and social categories vary across different organisations, regions and countries.

The invisibility is complex and is notable as UNHCR policy remains silent on youth, and this lack of definition and focus leaves youth poorly serviced in programme design. Variations in concepts of youth may also contribute to a lack of specific policies or guidance on or human resources with responsibility for working with this group. Consequently, this leaves some UNHCR staff in a policy vacuum: *'it can be hard to distinguish the needs of this particular group'*, so most programmes are *'targeted to easily visible categories and often the specific needs of this invisible category of youths is missed out.'* (UNHCR staff member from Sudan).

Where youth is visible, there may be a tendency to apply stereotyped views on the youth: males are typically considered as potentially disruptive, and females as particularly vulnerable. These homogenizing views fail to take account of the actual needs and capacities of this population, as well as of the fact that the youth are a very heterogeneous group, including: married young women and men together with singles; young mothers and fathers, and youth-head households; in and out of school youth; youth with disabilities; LGBTI youth; unaccompanied and separated youth; children soldiers; etc. Programming needs to address the multiple and specific needs of this population in a realistic manner, and not be based on homogenizing assumptions.

Although nearly all the UNHCR staff members consulted as part of this review believe that protecting, assisting and finding durable solutions for youth are an important part of the organisation's mandate and offered convincing reasons for doing so, almost a third of these respondents feel that UNHCR does a poor job of providing appropriate programmes for youth. The main reasons for this seem to be insufficient institutional capacity and a lack of funding. This review offers insights into why and how displaced youth remain a neglected category within UNHCR's protection policies and assistance activities. Along with many UNHCR staff who contributed their valuable perspectives, this review argues the need to make 'youth emerge as a respected entity requiring vigilance for the organisation'.

The review begins by outlining the methods used to research UNHCR's engagement with displaced youth in Section 3. Section 4 provides a summary of the varied concepts and definitions of youth and how youth has been incorporated into the language of international development. We present the key opportunities and constraints identified in the literature and, with the consultancy of academic experts and senior practitioners, we highlight some gaps and challenges in support of displaced young people. Section 5 offers an account of displaced young people's constraints, opportunities, needs and aspirations as expressed in focus groups conducted by UNHCR staff in five countries. Section 6 presents key findings on UNHCR's engagement with displaced youth drawing on a range of primary data sources: a survey of selected UNHCR staff, interviews conducted with UNHCR and implementing partners' staff in six and five countries respectively, and focus groups conducted by UNHCR staff with displaced youth in five countries. Section 7 looks at UNHCR youth programming – who do the programmes target, what are the main types of programming and are youth falling through the cracks of humanitarian assistance for displaced people? The report concludes by summarising how UNHCR's institutional and operational arrangements have resulted in youth having diminished stature despite their numbers and potential as agents of change. It offers recommendations for how to improve engagement with displaced young people by making this population visible and meeting their needs more fully.

3. Methodology

This review was commissioned by UNHCR’s Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES) to map out the current global engagement of UNHCR with displaced youth including both refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) in developing and middle income countries. It is not an evaluation of UNHCR programming with displaced youth, but a more general review which attempts to identify current gaps and provide a set of recommendations for better engagement with this particular population. The study was designed and carried out in close collaboration with MaryBeth Morand, Senior Policy and Evaluation Officer who chaired the review’s steering committee. The review benefitted at all stages from their input in identifying key stakeholders and survey recipients, aligning research tools with UNHCR’s institutional requirements, and providing internal documentation and other resources.

As general guidance this review uses the UN definition of youth, that is, the age group of 15-24 years; yet it recognises youth as a social construct. It is based on secondary data collected through a number of research tools but relies more heavily on primary data gathered through interviews, a survey and focus groups with young people up to 35 years. The researchers reviewed the most relevant academic and grey literature on young people in transition to adulthood and in situations of displacement. The literature review is supported by interviews with five academic experts from the UK and the USA and nine senior officials in key international agencies, which work with displaced young people (see list in Annex 4). Detailed Research Instruments are explained below (detailed research tools in Annex 2):

Primary Data Sources

- ***A quantitative survey in English and French of 501 UNHCR staff*** who had the words ‘community’, ‘education’, ‘youth’, ‘health’, ‘programme’, ‘protection’, ‘head of office’, ‘representative’ and ‘desk officers’ in their titles in the UNHCR e-mail system. It was emailed to 3244 staff of which 501 responded (a response rate of 15.4%). The survey aimed at gauging existing youth programming in country operations as well as staff’s experiences and views on youth programming and specific target groups, funding, partnerships, barriers to working with youth, monitoring and evaluation tools and identifying good practices.
- ***Interviews with 12 staff from selected UNHCR Country Offices and nominated partner organisations in*** Nepal, Costa Rica, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Iran to gather more details on the key issues affecting displaced youth in different situations (including urban and camp locations, emergency and protracted situations, including protracted with a large resettlement operation). Given the sensitivity of certain topics, we have decided to not identify UNHCR staff members with names or job titles.
- ***Focus groups involving young refugees conducted by UNHCR Community Services staff in*** Bangladesh (Cox’s Bazaar), Ethiopia (Dollo Ado), Kenya (Dadaab and Alinjugar), Jordan (Amman) and Iran (Tehran), involving a total of 471 young refugees (268 male and 203 female) of different ages based on local understanding of who constitutes a youth. Refugees originated from Somalia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, and Myanmar. One interview with a Colombian refugee girl aged 20 years old was also carried out. The groups explored five key themes: youth identity and roles; youth opportunities and constraints; existing support networks (family, community and peers); participation in UNHCR and partners’ programmes; youth aspirations, dreams, and their recommendations to UNHCR.

Secondary Data Sources

- **Review of 35 internal UNHCR and partner organisations' documents**, including country programme proposals and reports, country AGDM Assessments, country Participatory Assessments, Country Operation Plans for 2012 and partners' project documents (where available) in order to develop a deeper understanding of the type of field-level programming which target youth.
- **Analysis of 18 Focus reports** (Problem Narratives and Objective Narratives for 2012) covering nine countries (Chad, Colombia, DRC, Ecuador, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Tanzania) selected by the PDES Senior Policy & Evaluation Officer as a sample of internal documentation from UNHCR's results based management system. The consultant searched for information on programming pertaining children, adolescents, youth and girls as specific key words on UNHCR's external website, www.unhcr.org.

Limitations to the Review

While the study has a global focus and has attempted to review different displacement situations, below we highlight a number of limitations.

Since UNHCR was carrying out a Child Protection review at the same time as this review, the study is limited in its programmatic focus, with no child protection information.

The case studies do not represent the full picture of displaced youth worldwide and are limited to refugee situations. The selection of the country case studies was based on recommendations of the Steering Committee members, who had personal knowledge of quality staff and good facilitators for the staff facilitated focus groups. The consultants could not engage with staff in the IDP situations that were selected by the Steering Group, due to office impediments as well as budget, time and language constraints. Therefore case studies cover only refugee youth in camp and urban settings in emergency and protracted situations.

An attempt was made to provide good geographical coverage with countries from Asia, Africa, MENA and Latin America included in the review. We were unable to research countries from Eastern Europe and the CIS.

An element of caution should be exercised when interpreting some of the survey responses from UNHCR staff: due to the survey being self-selecting, UNHCR staff who consider youth to be important were more likely to fill out the survey.

4. Literature Review

Concepts of youth

There is no universally agreed concept of youth, and not all societies have a concept of youth as a life phase between childhood and adulthood. For some communities, youth may coincide with a stage of adolescence occurring during the second decade of life, and associated with both the physical changes of puberty and transformations in young people's social roles and responsibilities as they move towards adulthood. Although some governments, United Nations (UN) organisations and international development organisations rely on age criteria to define youth and differentiate this group from children and adults, these vary between countries and regions. The UN defines youth as those aged 15-24 years, but this is mainly for statistical purposes since 'the meaning of the term youth varies in different societies around the world'¹ and 'definitions of youth have changed continuously in response to fluctuating political, economic and socio-cultural circumstances'.² Other age-based classifications used by international organisations engaged in relief and development work with children and youth include children (0-18 years), adolescents (10-19 years) and young people (10-24 years). Like adulthood and childhood, youth is a social construction, which varies across different places, time periods and cultures. With this in mind, some agencies use both age and social categories in their work with youth.

The UN definition of youth as those aged 15-24 years cuts across the international legal definitions of children and adults, which affects young people's rights at different ages. Although in some contexts young people aged 15-17 years may have attained the social status of youth or adults, all those under 18 are considered children under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and there is a specific UN agency to promote their rights, UNICEF. Young people over 18 are covered by the same international legal and human rights treaties as other adults, and there is no specific UN agency for youth, although there is a Youth Unit within the UN Division for Social Policy and Development. The UNCRC, which has been ratified by almost all countries, focuses on protecting children from different types of harm including exploitative work, military engagement and sexual abuse. The Convention also recognises children's right to participation in decisions affecting them according to their 'evolving capacities' and acknowledges the 'importance of the traditions and cultures of each people'³ for the development and protection of children. Chronological age is less relevant to understandings of childhood, youth and adulthood in many communities than 'cultural classifications'⁴ and young people's social experience, capability and maturity. Additionally, concepts and experiences of youth vary across contexts, and between different class, gender and social groups.

Population demographics currently include a high proportion of youth, which 'at over 1 billion worldwide...constitutes the largest cohort ever to enter the transition into adulthood.'⁵ Almost half the world's population are young people under the age of 25 years,⁶ and 12.6% of these young people are unemployed.⁷ The World Bank notes the prospective human capital and economic dividends that investment in such a large youth population may bring, while simultaneously drawing on 'youth bulge'⁸ theories suggesting that developing countries with a high proportion of youth and problems of unem-

¹ Adopted by the General Assembly (1996) World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond <http://goo.gl/Y8y2N>

² Resolution adopted by the General Assembly (1996) World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond <http://goo.gl/oQP2U>

³ UNCRC, art. 12, retrievable at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

⁴ Sommers M., (2011)

⁵ World Bank Website – Why Invest in Children and Youth <http://goo.gl/hgTb2>

⁶ World Bank Website – Why Invest in Children and Youth <http://goo.gl/vffnc>

⁷ United Nations (2012).World Youth Report.English Factsheet. <http://goo.gl/oOs8v>

⁸ Urdal (2004) defines youth bulges as 'extraordinarily large youth cohorts relative to the adult population' (p. 1)

ployment are more than twice as likely to experience civil conflict than others.⁹ Such theories present young people (particularly males) as a security and destabilisation threat, fuelled by factors such as unemployment, lack of livelihood opportunities, acute urbanisation, desire for self-assertiveness and social status in the face of poverty, particularly material deprivation.¹⁰ Although there is a statistical relationship between the risk of internal armed conflict and countries with a high youth population, this correlation is not grounded in research, which elicits young people's own perspectives on the causal processes that lead some to engage in violence.¹¹ Nor do these theories explain why a great majority of countries 'with youth bulge populations have not experienced recent civil conflicts'¹².

This ambivalent view of young people as 'both promise and threat'¹³ pervades the international discourse. In some cases stereotypes of (particularly male) youth as a threat, are employed to justify interventions designed to 'manage and contain youth frustrations.'¹⁴ Such lines of reasoning explain the need to 'give special attention to the youth as a group' as a way of avoiding 'vices caused by idleness such as recruitment into militia groups, drug abuse and criminal activities' or to tackle 'juvenile delinquency', thereby directly associating (male) youth with dangerous or disruptive behaviour.¹⁵ In order to prevent such stereotypes about young people driving policies and programmes, it is crucial to 'pay attention to young people's needs, priorities and challenges'¹⁶ and to 'move away from preconceived ideas of what youth want.'¹⁷

Experiences of displaced youth: challenges and opportunities

Internal and international displacement may be a consequence of armed conflict, widespread violations of human rights and man-made and natural disaster. According to UNHCR's Global Trends report, at the end of 2011 there were 42.5 million people forcibly displaced due to conflict and persecution. Of these, a total of 25.9 million were receiving assistance from UNHCR including 10.4 million refugees and 15.5 million internally displaced people (IDPs).¹⁸

Since most organisations do not collect statistics on a 'youth' age group, there is a lack of accurate data on the numbers of displaced young people. Using statistics of young people in Africa from the Population Reference Bureau, the Women's Refugee Commission estimates that young people aged 10-24 make up over 33% of the world's displaced population and that at least 8 million young people aged 15-24 years have been forced to flee armed conflict and human rights abuses.¹⁹ UNHCR data shows that in 2011 on average 47% of all Persons of Concern were children under the age of 18, including 13% under the age of five. Adults between the ages of 18 and 59 years accounted for 48% of Persons of Concern, and a further 5% were people over 60 years of age.²⁰ In 2011 UNHCR recorded 17,700 asylum applications made by unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in 69 different countries, three quarters of which were made in Europe.²¹ Despite their high numbers, international humanitarian interventions rarely target youth, who are perhaps the most under-served amongst the displaced.²² Among these, adolescent girls within the ages of 14-19 are particularly invisible.²³

⁹ Boyden J in Hart J (2008) and The World Bank website – Why Invest in Children and Youth?

¹⁰ See for example Cincotta R, P., Engelman R. Anastasion D. (2003). *The Security Demographic: Population and Civil Conflict after the Cold War.*, Washington: Population Action International; Urdal H., (2004). *The Devil in the Demographics. The Effect of Youth Bulges on Domestic Armed Conflict 1950-2000.* Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Paper 14. Washington: The World Bank

¹¹ Sommers (2011), p. 296

¹² Sommers (2011), p. 296

¹³ Ansell (2005), p. 32

¹⁴ Interview with Norwegian Refugee Council (2012)

¹⁵ Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2011), policy briefing, p. 23

¹⁶ Interview with Jo Boyden (2012)

¹⁷ Interview with Mark Sommers (2012)

¹⁸ UNHCR (2011), Global Trends Report (p. 2)

¹⁹ Women's Refugee Commission youth factsheet

²⁰ UNHCR (2011), Global Trends Report (p. 34)

²¹ UNHCR (2011), Global Trends Report (p. 27)

²² Ibid, p.2

²³ See: the extensive research carried out by the Women's Refugee Commission (2009), *Refugee Girls. The Invisible Faces of War.* NY: Women's Refugee Commission, retrievable at: <http://goo.gl/RtOAZ>

An increasing number of the world's displacement situations are protracted, where refugees and IDPs remain for 'five years or more after their initial displacement without immediate prospects for implementation of durable solutions.'²⁴ As of December 2011, UNHCR statistics show that almost three quarters of the refugee population (7.1 million people)²⁵ under the agency's mandate was in a situation of protracted displacement and such situations are lasting on average longer now than in the 1990s.²⁶ UNHCR recognises the detrimental impacts of long-term and intractable displacement on people's social, physical, mental, cultural and economic wellbeing,²⁷ including on the generations of children and youth who are born and grow up as refugees or IDPs.

The legal status of displaced young people and whether they have the right to access national education systems and health services, or the right to work affects their social and livelihood opportunities, especially in urban areas. Additionally, certain young people find themselves vulnerable to particular risks in situations of displacement, which may be affected by factors such as being separated from their parents or usual caregivers, being disabled or, for both males and females, becoming the victims of sexual and gender based violence. Among the categories of young people who may need special attention from agencies are unaccompanied and separated children including children and youth-headed households, disabled children and youth, children engaged in armed groups, adolescent girls, trafficked young people, and LGBT young people. Displaced youth's priorities, experiences and needs are impacted by their personal circumstances as well as the specific economic, political and institutional context in which they live. However, the literature and our interviews with academic experts and practitioners points to some commonalities in the opportunities and challenges they face.

Transformations in social relations, youth identity and transitions to adulthood

Research demonstrates that the experience of displacement in both camp and urban contexts may accelerate processes of social change, challenging traditional gender and generational roles and power dynamics, and affecting how and when young people transition to adulthood. In camps, restrictions on refugees' movement and employment often forces displaced populations to depend on aid rather than being able to rely on their own labour to provide for their basic needs. Consequently, 'delays in transitions to adulthood are common' amongst young people in camp settings since the 'state of dependency' reduces their possibilities 'to arrive at the roles of youth or adulthood.'²⁹ Such delays are not necessarily negative and may relate to the increased educational opportunities (in comparison with previous generations) which are often available in camps, and can result in young people marrying at a later age.

However, disruptions to 'institutions and practices that would conventionally service as a framework for the transition to adulthood'³⁰ may present obstacles for young people in performing the cultural, political or socio-economic roles signifying progression to adulthood. In situations where conflict and displacement mean 'traditional ways of securing adulthood cannot be done,'³¹ young people may experience acute humiliation and frustration. Conversely, in some contexts, young refugees and IDPs are required to take on adult roles and responsibilities at an earlier age or level of maturity than is usual in their society, particularly if they have self-settled in urban areas and may not be receiving protection and assistance, and/or or if their parents have died or families have become separated in flight.

²⁴ ExCom Conclusion on Protracted Refugee Situations 109 (2009) <http://www.unhcr.org/4b332bca9.html>

²⁵ UNHCR (2011), Global Trends Report (p. 2)

²⁶ Loescher and Milner, p. 3 and Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and Brookings Bern (2011). IDPs in protracted displacement: Is local integration a solution? Report from the Second Expert Seminar on Protracted Internal Displacement, 19-20 January 2011, Geneva, p. 1

²⁷ ExCom Conclusion on Protracted Refugee Situations 109 (2009) <http://www.unhcr.org/4b332bca9.html>

²⁸ T. Turner (1999), Interviews with Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Jo Boyden

²⁹ Interview with Jo Boyden

³⁰ Tefferi (2008), p.26

³¹ Interview with Marc Sommers

Lack of educational, livelihood and political opportunities: living ‘in limbo’

Research demonstrates that ‘education is one of the highest priorities of refugee communities.’³² Young people consulted by youth researchers trained by the Women’s Refugee Commission ‘named lack of quality education one of their top concerns’ and their ‘top solution to the problems they face across all conflicts’³³, apart from peace and an end to violence in their lives. Despite its key importance in their lives, displaced youth have more problems accessing education than younger children, and refugee enrolment in secondary school globally drops to 36% compared to 76% in primary school.³⁴ Since situations of displacement often last many years, young people are likely to experience ‘developmental gaps’ as a result of interrupted education, lack of opportunities to learn appropriate and safe livelihood skills, and to develop important social and cognitive skills.³⁵

Young people’s access to education ‘is generally more difficult in urban areas.’³⁶ Where young people are able to access educational opportunities, there may be difficulties in ‘the extent to which refugee/returnee qualifications are recognised.’³⁷ For other young people with domestic, child care and income-generation responsibilities, opportunities for schooling may not be flexible enough to accommodate their needs, particularly when classes are held during the day when young people may be working to support themselves and their families³⁸ or girls may be busy with household chores.

The length of time that many young people spend in situations of displacement with limited access to education and livelihood opportunities means that ‘the years youth spend in displacement are often wasted, which impedes their future development and productivity.’³⁹ Across displacement locations, youth face limited access to adequate, safe, and dignified employment opportunities, and must often work in exploitative and risky situations to provide for their basic needs.⁴⁰ Although all displaced groups experience concerns about the future and wonder whether they will be able to return home, be compelled to remain in exile, or access the few opportunities for resettlement in western countries, this sense of limbo and uncertainty may particularly impact on youth. Protracted displacement presents obstacles for young people in ‘being able to map out a future’ or ‘develop a life plan or strategy for themselves.’⁴¹ This is qualitatively different from being an older person,⁴² who has already achieved adult status.

Displaced youth often experience a sense of political marginalisation and deep social exclusion, both as a result of the causes of displacement, their political, ethnic and religious identity and the lack of rights that many face in their host country. Young people may also be excluded from social and political decision-making by elders and international agencies, and practitioners have found that ‘a concrete issue on the ground is the lack of respect and acknowledgement on the part of local authorities and elders that youth is a group with rights.’⁴³ The Women’s Refugee Commission found that ‘young people said adults did not take their opinions into account consistently in decision-making’ and did not involve them ‘in program action regularly.’ This left young people with ‘limited opportunities to develop their skills and improve their lives’ and they saw these factors as ‘major constraints to peace and security.’⁴⁴

³² Dryden Peterson, 2011, p. 6

³³ Youth Speak Out Report, 2005, p. 9

³⁴ Dryden-Peterson, 2011, p.6

³⁵ Women’s Refugee Commission (2000), p. 4

³⁶ Dryden-Peterson, 2011, p. 26

³⁷ Dryden-Peterson (2011), p. 31

³⁸ Dawn Chatty, Women’s Refugee Commission (2005), p. 9

³⁹ Women’s Refugee Commission (Untapped Potential 2011), p. 2

⁴⁰ Women’s Refugee Commission (Untapped Potential 2011), p. 8-9

⁴¹ Interview with Jason Hart (2012)

⁴² Interview with Jason Hart (2012)

⁴³ Interview with Danish Refugee Council (2012)

⁴⁴ Women’s Refugee Commission (Youth Speak Out Report), p. 2

Gaps and Challenges

A number of gaps and challenges were identified in the literature review and in interviews with academic experts and senior practitioners. Below, we highlight some of the conceptual, institutional and operational issues, which create barriers in supporting displaced youth.

Some experts expressed concerns that stereotyped views of youth – presenting young women as ‘at risk from society’ and young men as ‘a risk to others in society’⁴⁵ – negatively impact on both the type of programmes offered and on securing funding for such programmes targeting this group. Programmes seeking to mitigate male youth’s potentially disruptive impact on their communities may ‘reinforce young men’s feelings of displacement and marginalisation.’⁴⁶ Similarly widespread perceptions of girls and young women as passive victims may conceal their agency, capacities and resilience. These gendered assumptions can obscure the particular challenges that the youth may actually face. For instance, male youth who are compelled to work in public spaces in locations where refugees or displaced groups are unpopular with host communities are extremely vulnerable to violence, discrimination and exploitation.⁴⁷

Overall, such gender-based homogenisation detracts from the recognition of young people as ‘a diverse population with unique needs.’⁴⁸ This means that the needs of certain young people who may require additional attention may be overlooked. Also, gender-bias can be found in some areas of programming, such as youth centres being dominated by boys and male youth, recreational programs favouring male sports, or market-linked vocational training programs favouring traditional male occupations, such as mechanics, electricians, welding, etc.

Across most organisations supporting displaced people, there is a lack of institutional focus on identifying and responding to the specific needs of youth. This includes both a dearth of statistical data and a lack of specific policies and guidance. Amongst the agencies contacted for the literature review, only UNFPA has developed a specific strategy for youth – a Framework for Action on Youth and Adolescents⁴⁹, which outlines their policies on adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health. In addition, the Women’s Refugee Commission has a youth programme, which includes action research with young people in various countries and displacement settings. Despite the lack of explicit attention to youth within most organisations, there is agreement that directing time and resources to support young people’s present and future wellbeing is crucial to provide effective protection and enable young people to achieve their potential and positively contribute to their communities, and that this should be a major focus of any policy.⁵⁰

The literature and interviews highlighted operational concerns about the segmentation of interventions for displaced youth. Youth programmes and opportunities for participation in decision-making are often separated from other sections of the population, and youth programming is divided into single issues or areas of concern such as sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, military recruitment, or livelihoods training.⁵¹ Such segmented responses for youth may be irrelevant to their ‘priorities and realities.’⁵² Questions of how young people manage to achieve a recognised adult status in their communities in the context of displacement may be more pressing. This means that UNHCR and agencies need to ‘find out what youth must do to [...] achieve adulthood in a particular context’, ‘support them in becoming adults,’⁵³ while taking a ‘whole person approach that includes social and cultural concerns.’⁵⁴

Finally, a lack of resources and short-term funding cycles were all mentioned as barriers to effective engagement with displaced youth. This creates difficulties in responding to the evolving needs of young people living in situations of displacement, since this requires sustained and long-term relationships and support.⁵⁵

⁴⁵ Interview with Jo Boyden (2012)

⁴⁶ Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2011), p. 23

⁴⁷ Jo Boyden, interview (2012)

⁴⁸ 53 Interview with Marc Sommers (2012)

⁴⁹ UNFPA (2007). *A Framework for Action on Adolescents and Youth. Opening Doors with Young People: 4 Keys.*

⁵⁰ 55 Interview with Jason Hart (2012)

⁵¹ Interviews with Jo Boyden and Marc Sommers (2012)

⁵² Interview with Marc Sommers (2012)

⁵³ Interview with Marc Sommers (2012)

⁵⁴ Interview with Jo Boyden (2012)

⁵⁵ Interview with Jason Hart (2012)



5. Refugee Youth Voices

As part of this review focus groups were conducted in Bangladesh (Cox's Bazaar), Ethiopia (Dollo Ado), Kenya (Dadaab and Alinjugar), Jordan (Amman) and Iran (Tehran), involving a total of 471 young refugees (268 male and 203 female) of different ages based on local understanding of 'youth'. These displaced youth have spent varying amounts of time living in a range of different settings, including camps and urban areas⁵⁶. This section draws heavily from quotes and reported speech (voices) of the refugee youth themselves. It paints a rich picture of their life with the constraints, frustrations as well as opportunities they face, and the aspirations that they hold. As refugees, many youth face huge pressures to make money for their families, but often without the necessary qualifications or vocational skills. Often their physical movement is restricted limiting their ability to find work, and they face discrimination from teachers, the police and potential employers. Family poverty and vulnerability is often disproportionately pushed onto the youth, and girls are doubly affected as their opportunities for education, training and mobility are even lower than male youth. This can result in girls forced into prostitution or early marriage as a survival strategy. Education and vocational training, mobility and

⁵⁶ The Somali young people living in camps in Ethiopia fled fighting in their villages and arrived in Dollo Ado approximately one year previously. In Dadaab and Alinjugar, Somali refugees make up the vast majority of the refugees living in camps in north-eastern Kenya, with some refugees having been displaced since 1991 and a further 300,000 new arrivals over the last three years. This creates challenges for UNHCR in meeting the diverse needs of refugees in this protracted and emergency setting. In Jordan, the young refugees consulted live in the urban location of Amman, and come from Iraq, Sudan or Syria. Their perspectives and experiences in Jordan vary depending on the country they come from and the length of their displacement. Many of the young Afghans who contributed their views and experiences of displacement in Tehran have grown up as refugees in Iran, often struggling to both support their families and pursue their own ambitions. In Bangladesh, the young Rohingya refugees who participated in this research live in two camps in the south-eastern district of Cox's Bazaar, where they and their families have been living since 1991.

- ◀ South Sudan / Alboun, a 17-year-old refugee stands in front her tent in Gendrassa refugee camp, Maban county, South Sudan. She makes cooking stoves from mud and donkey dung mixed with water. She sells them at the market in Yusuf Batil refugee camp to supplement the family income. But the competition is tough and she sometimes waits for hours under the sun for customers.
 © UNHCR / C. Pouilly / October 2012

having a voice on the decisions that affect their lives are key indicators of empowerment, and without these youth can become disenfranchised and sometimes resentful. Although the young people consulted live in such different contexts, there are a number of similarities in their roles, experiences, the challenges they face, the opportunities they have, and their future aspirations.

Roles and experiences

Where possible, most of the youth consulted combine studying or accessing other learning and skill-development opportunities with supporting their families and communities. Providing support for their families involves young people, especially females, performing domestic tasks including collecting rations, water, and firewood, cooking, washing clothes, and assuming caring roles for elderly or sick family members and young children. This can result in young females having less time to focus on educational activities. Young males are often required to become breadwinners, and ‘support their families by trying to have a work in the host community.’⁵⁷ In Bangladesh, for example, ‘male youth (around 16-18 years) are now responsible for earning money to support their families’ and some ‘families force them to go outside the camps in search of work’,⁵⁸ which is a ‘risky income outside the camps’⁵⁹ since ‘we are punished by the authority if [we] go outside [our] community.’⁶⁰

“ It is difficult for a girl to get scholarship while being told to do domestic household at home.

Young Somali girl living in Kenya

Young people in both Kenya and Bangladesh mentioned the important roles played by youth in supporting others and being the ‘backbone of any community’.⁶¹ In Kenya, the ways youth contribute include ‘promoting peace and socio-economic development of the community’, ‘working with agencies’ and ‘supporting community initiatives on social issues such as the prevention of HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and crime.’⁶² In Bangladesh, young males are involved in ‘community services activities such as taking old people to hospital and creating awareness within the community about health and hygienic issues.’⁶³ However, despite assisting others, young Rohingya refugees feel that ‘youth are not allowed to give opinions in community decisions’ and that ‘other leaders do not listen to youth leaders’ or do not ‘listen to them seriously.’⁶⁴ Such barriers to involvement in community decision-making processes are heightened for certain young people including females who may ‘not be allowed to take [part] in community initiatives’⁶⁵ and disabled young people who feel they are ‘discriminated in the community.’⁶⁶

⁵⁷ Young male refugees, Focus Group, Jordan (2012)

⁵⁸ Interview with UNHCR staff, Bangladesh (2012)

⁵⁹ Young male Rohingya refugee, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

⁶⁰ Young male Rohingya refugee, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

⁶¹ Young Somali female, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

⁶² Young Somali male, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

⁶³ Young Rohingya refugees, Focus group, Bangladesh (2012)

⁶⁴ Young Rohingya refugees, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

⁶⁵ Young Rohingya refugee, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

⁶⁶ Young disabled Somali male, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

Youth Identity

In focus groups, displaced youth shared a range of definitions involving various age categories (including up to 60 years amongst young refugees in Jordan ‘as long as he works and has energy’⁶⁷) in addition to social and physical markers associated with different life stages in their location (see Annex 1). A number of young people felt that a period of youth as distinct from childhood and adulthood begins with the physical changes associated with puberty including the growth of pubic hair, and menarche for girls: ‘a girl is regarded as matured as soon as she menstruates.’⁶⁸ Social practices signifying the life stage of youth include sleeping separately from parents, getting married (which often occurs earlier for girls than boys), being able and expected to work and/or care for others such as elderly relatives or younger siblings, and being able to form opinions or ‘think by themselves.’⁶⁹ For example, for Somali refugees in Ethiopia, ‘youth are matured person, not married, [without] a house of their own and still lives with the parents, but does not sleep with the parents.’⁷⁰ Amongst Afghans in Iran, ‘youth are transformed [into] adults through marriage, followed by having children, often at early age.’⁷¹ In Bangladesh, Rohingya refugees believe that young people’s transition towards adulthood is a process of ‘taking on more work and responsibilities,’ and (mainly for boys) increased ‘involvement in social work.’⁷²

“Community leaders don’t listen to us.

Young disabled Somali male, Ethiopia

In some displacement settings, young refugees may be required to take on responsibilities associated with adulthood at an earlier age or level of maturity than was previously the norm in their society. According to a young Afghan, ‘as refugee youth in Iran, we don’t experience ‘youth’, neither have we experienced ‘childhood’ in its real sense. Afghan children and

youth are often pre-matured and forced to live and work as adults since early age.’ For these young Afghans, it is not a ‘certain age or life stage’ that defines their roles, ‘but responsibilities’ and ‘as youth we become breadwinners (boys) and care takers (girls) of the family’ from a young age ‘sometimes starting from seven years.’⁷³ Similarly, in Jordan, amongst Iraqi refugees, ‘instead of being children’, young people have become ‘responsible’ and ‘support families even psychologically, because families are exhausted.’ In terms of youth, this means that ‘families now look at shabaab (male youth) as *rijal* (men)’, while girls have also taken on new roles since women are now required to go to work, rather than staying at home as they would have done previously.⁷⁴ These new responsibilities following displacement include young women increasingly pursuing educational studies in order to be ‘able to earn a degree and later on work to support their families financially.’ Young people also take on more decision making responsibilities within their families.⁷⁵

These observations demonstrate how both a community’s concepts of youth, and lived experiences of young people shift over time in response to the social, economic, and political situation of the moment. In fact, some young Somalis highlighted displacement as a factor in recognising themselves as youth, as a young Somali woman expressed ‘I did not know whether I belonged to child, or youth or any other category’ before coming to Kenya in 2010 and meeting other people ‘who knew about this age category.’⁷⁶ A UNHCR staff member working in Kenya believes that this new awareness and self-identification as youth might be because such young people ‘are affected by involvement in or observing activities of youth groups in the camp and gradually understand their new role as youth.’⁷⁷

⁶⁷ Young male refugees, Focus Group, Jordan (2012)

⁶⁸ Young Somali women, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

⁶⁹ Young Rohingya refugee, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

⁷⁰ Young male Somali refugees, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

⁷¹ Young Afghan, Focus group, Iran, (2012)

⁷² Young Rohingya refugees, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

⁷³ Young Afghan refugee, Focus Group, Iran (2012)

⁷⁴ Interview with UNHCR staff, Jordan (2012)

⁷⁵ Focus group report, Jordan (2012)

⁷⁶ Young Somali woman, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

⁷⁷ Interview with UNHCR staff, Bangladesh (2012)



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Amongst Somalis recently displaced to Dollo Ado in Ethiopia, displacement has resulted in a lengthening of the period of youth for unmarried males since a lack of livelihood opportunities has created problems for young men in being able to marry. A number of Somali focus group participants in Ethiopia linked transitions to adulthood with the experience of getting married. For some, ‘men are adult when they go to ask a woman hand to marry’,⁷⁸ and for females, ‘whenever man comes to ask my family to marry me, then I know that I am adult.’⁷⁹ However, post-displacement, ‘for young men who are now unmarried, it is not possible to find a wife since they have no means of income to arrange a first marriage so they are now in limbo.’⁸⁰ This situation also impacts on young women since their ‘parents will not agree to give their hand to any man with no money and no animals, so this means that young women are more likely to get married (often as a second or third wife) to an older man who has money and animals.’⁸¹

It is crucial to acknowledge the particular barriers some male youth face in securing the status of men. The reduction in livelihood options following displacement and the lack of employment opportunities in Ethiopia has resulted in unmarried males experiencing profound difficulties in becoming adult men. This may negatively impact on their self-esteem and it may result in some of them seeking alternative strategies to realize their transition to adulthood. These alternative strategies might be self-endangering and anti-social, from taking on illegal economic activities to an increased risk of joining militia groups. This suggests that it is vital to support young men achieve adulthood by securing the learning and work opportunities necessary to successfully make this transition, which is likely to positively impact both on young men and the wider community, potentially reducing SGBV and recruitment of young men to militia groups.

⁷⁸ Young married Somali females, Focus Group Ethiopia (2012)

⁷⁹ Young married Somali females, Focus Group Ethiopia (2012)

⁸⁰ Interview with UNHCR staff, Ethiopia (2012)

⁸¹ Interview with UNHCR staff, Ethiopia (2012)

Youth constraints

Lack of safe and dignified livelihood opportunities for young people. As a result of restrictions on refugees' employment and income generation activities in all the countries of asylum, despite trying to earn money to support themselves and their families, young people often experience poverty and heightened protection risks. For example, in Jordan, many Iraqi families have often spent all their savings, yet still have to pay high rents in urban areas despite lacking work opportunities. In Kenya, young females explained that families' economic situations can result in young people engaging in unsafe means of earning money including survival sex: 'poverty from the parents leads girls to engage in bad habits such as prostitution to get financial support.'⁸² Since young men may be more likely to be expected to earn money for their families, an 'extra burden is faced by young men as family breadwinners, accordingly more discrimination, exploitation, disrespect and insult is faced by male youth in public,'⁸³ particularly in contexts where governments place restrictions on both refugees' mobility and employment in the country of asylum. Due to their lack of employment rights, young refugees must often engage in casual, day labour where they face a higher risk of exploitation including not being paid for their work or being paid very low wages. This means that 'for those of us who are educated, depression and frustration is even more intense, since we are only employed and treated as 'potters' and 'unskilled labourers.'⁸⁴

Some displaced youth feel that 'there are no opportunities for vocational skills training and employment' and that those programmes that do exist cater for a range of ages, so only a 'very small number' of youth are able to benefit.⁸⁵ For young people who have participated in vocational training programmes, some shared difficulties in being unable to use their skills 'due to lack of a legal work permit or due to lack of job opportunities.'⁸⁶ Although some young people 'who completed secondary schools may get chances to work with agencies,' others (even those who have graduated from secondary school) 'get no opportunity,' remain 'idle' and 'feel empty.'⁸⁷

Discrimination, racism and hostility from host community members. As their own words show below, this impacts on all areas of young people's lives including their educational achievement, interactions with peers, self-esteem, personal identity, security and safety.

"In school, instead of using my name, my colleagues call me "Iraqi" or "Abu Iraq", I get questions about my religion and sect from them. My teachers give me low marks only because of my nationality and religion." – Young Iraqi male, Jordan

"Females are very insecure, they are harassed or teased or kidnapped by community people when they come out." - Young Rohingya female, Bangladesh

Restricted mobility. In addition to facing hostility and racism from host community members, young people also shared problems resulting from harassment by host community police including arbitrary arrests, and the issues caused by restricted mobility in the country of asylum. Although this is an issue affecting the whole refugee population, it is one of the main problems mentioned by the youth as handicapping their access to learning and working opportunities to realise their potential. In a survey⁸⁸ of 1,211 youth (aged 18-35 years) conducted in 2011 by UNHCR's Community Services team in Dadaab Refugee Camp Kenya in partnership with youth from the camps, the highest number of participants (39%) felt that restricted movement was the biggest problem they faced. This lack of mobility is due to the Kenyan Government's encampment policy that limits refugees' mobility outside the camps and requires them to apply for travel documents to leave the camps for the purposes of study or health treatment and these 'can be difficult to get even for medical reasons.'⁸⁹ Youth expressed frustration that 'there is discrimination against refugees – we are not even allowed to go to Garissa' [a city in north Kenya].⁹⁰ A fragile security situation has further limited refugees' movement within as well

⁸² Young Somali female, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

⁸³ Young Afghan male, Focus Group, Iran (2012)

⁸⁴ Young Afghan male, Focus Group, Iran (2012)

⁸⁵ Young Somali male, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

⁸⁶ Young refugee, Focus Group, Jordan (2012)

⁸⁷ Young Somali male, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

⁸⁸ UNHCR Kenya Community Services, Dadaab Refugee Camp. Youth Survey. (2011)

⁸⁹ Young Somali male, Focus Group, Kenya (June 2012)

⁹⁰ Young Somali male, Focus Group, Kenya (June 2012)

as outside the camps and ‘you can easily get arrested by the police at night and you can’t walk around freely or go to watch football on television.’⁹¹ Similarly, in Bangladesh, young Rohingya refugees repeatedly mentioned lack of mobility as a problem for all youth, who have ‘no freedom of movement (not even in camps)’ and ‘cannot move freely because of restrictions,’⁹² which puts youth who leave the camps in search of work at risk of punishment by the authorities.

Differential treatment within their own communities or camps, due to factors such as their gender, nationality, ethnicity, and (dis)ability. Female youth are more likely to drop out of school than males, since in certain communities ‘after puberty, females are stuck at home.’⁹³ Somali females in Kenya reported pressure to marry early or being forced by their families ‘to get married to rich men so as to get lot of dowry,’ which can be ‘problematic’ because ‘it may lead to secret marriages.’⁹⁴ Girls also report pressure to undergo female genital mutilation (FGM), as those who have ‘not undergone female genital cutting are considered by some community members as “loose prostitutes”’ and may not be married.⁹⁵ Amongst married female Somali youth in Ethiopia, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) appears to be a common experience with young women sharing ‘problems with our friends’ including ‘when our husbands beat us’ or ‘when we face problems while collecting firewood.’⁹⁶

Disabled Somali youth in Ethiopia endure difficulties accessing latrines, water points, collecting rations (since the doors are not wide enough for wheelchairs)⁹⁷ as well as feeling that family and community members ‘do not listen to us as we are disabled.’⁹⁸ In Kenya, since the vast majority of refugees living in Dadaab are from Somalia, those from other national groups have become ‘minorities’ within the camps. As a result some feel insecure in the ‘blocks in the camps’ and even children face ‘harassment from other community members’ on their way to school.⁹⁹ Further, as a result of their young age, many youth across the different displacement settings feel that community leaders do not listen to them and ‘do not take our issues forward even if we inform them.’¹⁰⁰

Limited access to quality education, including a lack of secondary and higher education opportunities. In Bangladesh, there is no secondary education provided in the camps so ‘there is no scope for higher education.’¹⁰¹ In Dadaab, young refugees are worried about ‘the quality of education for children in the camps’ as the ‘teachers are ‘little educated.’¹⁰² Young Somali refugees in Ethiopia reported that ‘some of the parents are selling the food to be able to pay for their youth to attend private schools’¹⁰³ because they believe they offer better educational opportunities.¹⁰⁴ Although Afghan refugees in Iran have been able to access secondary and higher education opportunities, the students explained that ‘the limited subjects available to refugees at tertiary level’ often do not match ‘our interests’, creating ‘another obstacle for us pursuing our dreams in Iran.’¹⁰⁵

Young females reported additional challenges for girls in accessing and achieving in education. In Bangladesh, for example, young females ‘are not allowed to go to school after puberty.’¹⁰⁶ In Iran, Afghan refugees find that financial difficulties can result in young male’s education being prioritised over their sisters: ‘a considerable number of university students among us, especially girls, are forced to resign due to the huge financial burden on families.’¹⁰⁷ Young Somali women in Kenya feel that ‘boys get more education opportunities,’¹⁰⁸ and highlighted the difficulties female students face since girls ‘are given more household chores hence less time to study’.¹⁰⁹

91 Young Somali male, Focus Group, Kenya (June 2012)

92 Young Rohingya refugees, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

93 Young Rohingya refugee, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

94 Young Somali female, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

95 Young Somali female, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

96 Young Somali females, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

97 Young Somali disabled males and females, Focus Groups, Ethiopia (2012)

98 Young Somali disabled male, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

99 Young Ethiopian male, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

100 Young Somali male, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

101 Young Rohingya refugee, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

102 Young Somali female, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

103 In Ethiopia, Kenya and Iran young people and/or UNHCR staff shared information on a number of private schools, which are run by members of the refugee community (often youth), who charge a small fee for attendance.

104 Young disabled Somali male, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

105 Young Afghan refugee, Focus Group, Iran (2012)

106 Young Rohingya female, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

107 Young Afghan female, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

108 Young Somali female, Focus Group, Kenya (June 2012)

109 Young Somali female, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

Youth opportunities

Despite the difficulties outlined above, most young people feel there are also opportunities for learning and community development in their place of asylum, the majority of which are provided by UNHCR and partner agencies.

Opportunities for education, learning and vocational training in their country of asylum. For many displaced youth, the availability and the standard of education in their country of asylum are higher than in their place of origin: ‘living and growing up in Iran, we are accustomed to better standards of education, living and goals.’¹¹⁰ Another young man in Kenya pointed out that ‘free education in the camp is an opportunity while you may need to pay perhaps 100 Kenya shillings to go to school in Somalia.’¹¹¹ For some, being ‘raised in Iran’ has made the new generation more ‘supportive [of] girls/women rights and education.’¹¹²

A young Somali woman pointed out that ‘education is not only about primary and secondary schools but also about vocational training’ and she had ‘benefited from tailoring school’ where ‘she learnt a means of earning income.’¹¹³ Others also welcomed the chance to learn vocational and income generation skills: ‘I completed a course in cosmetics and thanks to that I sporadically worked in beautifying women or providing them with beauty tips, in exchange of moderate amounts of money which has helped me a lot.’¹¹⁴ In Kenya, some young people who have completed primary, but not secondary education have ‘a big opportunity to be able to learn at the Youth Education Pack (YEP) centre and get vocational skills.’¹¹⁵ A number of young people have also appreciated computer, leadership, disability rights and journalism and filmmaking training courses.

Opportunities for integration and community development. Some of these skills workshops have taken place in community centres, and a further ten young people mentioned the opportunity to access such women’s, men’s, and youth centres, where they can also play sports, and use libraries. Additionally, displaced Somali youth in Ethiopia highlighted the support they have received from the host community in Dollo Ado, where ‘we have peace’¹¹⁶ and ‘our brothers have welcomed us.’¹¹⁷ One young man, for example, ‘was given a donkey cart by the host community to deliver water to the shops.’¹¹⁸ However, for other young people, ‘active coexistence among the host community’¹¹⁹ remains a dream.

Youth aspirations and hopes

After requests for continued and/or additional material and financial support including food, clothing, and school materials, displaced youth’s most frequently mentioned aspirations were to continue their education, which many hoped would lead to opportunities for work in the future: ‘I hope to accomplish my education and work for refugees and become UNHCR staff’.¹²⁰ Other young people would welcome more assistance from UNHCR to develop livelihood and income generation activities, such as provision of a ‘sewing machine,’¹²¹ and ‘courses on medical and pharmaceutical skills.’¹²² However, it is important ‘to have travel documents to do business outside the camp’¹²³ and to have ‘freedom of movement’¹²⁴ to enable work outside the camp. Others prioritise improvements to health services, including psychosocial support for displaced youth.

¹¹⁰ Young Afghan refugee, Focus Group, Iran (2012)

¹¹¹ Young Somali male, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

¹¹² Young Afghan refugee, Focus Group, Iran (2012)

¹¹³ Young Somali female, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

¹¹⁴ Young female, Focus Group, Jordan (2012)

¹¹⁵ Young Somali female, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

¹¹⁶ Young Somali man, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

¹¹⁷ Young Somali man, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

¹¹⁸ Young Somali male, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

¹¹⁹ Young refugee males, Focus Group, Jordan (2012)

¹²⁰ Young Somali female, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

¹²¹ Young Rohingya refugee, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

¹²² Young Rohingya refugee, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

¹²³ Young Somali male, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

¹²⁴ Young Rohingya refugee, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

Many youth would like more support from UNHCR to develop their own community organisations and schools since they believe they should ‘organise themselves so they can improve their own and their community’s lives.’¹²⁵ Those youth who are running private schools for other refugee children hope for ‘support from UNHCR with stationery and teaching materials, and even shelters.’¹²⁶ Other young people feel that ‘youth voices should be integrated into projects’ and that ‘they should be given opportunity and training as community leaders.’¹²⁷ Such initiatives should also be made available for young women and the community should be ‘sensitised on female needs for education and inclusion’ so there can be ‘more female participation.’¹²⁸ A young Iraqi refugee girl in Jordan also suggested that parents should be invited to group discussions ‘to raise their awareness on the significance of youth and their roles.’¹²⁹

Displaced youth shared their dreams for a durable solution to the refugee situation and their hopes of acquiring citizenship. Some young people view the period spent in displacement as a time for learning skills that might help them develop their country of origin: ‘I wish to reach a point where I can contribute to next generation of Afghan refugees, return to Afghanistan and serve my country’¹³⁰ and the ‘majority of the youth dreamed to go to abroad for study and to return to Afghanistan and serve their country as engineers, doctors, artists, social scientists, and [in] education upon completion of their degree.’¹³¹

Amongst young Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, many hope for ‘safe repatriation’ and would like their families not to feel ‘forced to go to Malaysia or migrate illegally anymore.’¹³² For Somali youth in Ethiopia and Kenya, some ‘wish’ to return home if ‘I could live there in peace, but because of what happened I cannot return,’¹³³ while others still ‘pray for peace and unity’¹³⁴ so they could repatriate there. Other Somalis in Kenya feel disappointed, particularly those who have spent ‘20 years since they came to camp’ as it is ‘impossible’¹³⁵ to go back to Somalia, but there is ‘no progress in the life here.’¹³⁶ These young people want ‘UNHCR to increase the number of resettlement opportunities.’¹³⁷

“ I want to become a doctor, which requires a scholarship to proceed to further study even up to PhD degree.

Young Somali female, Kenya

Conclusion

While young refugees articulate their needs and life aspirations so powerfully, they remain powerless to change the difficult everyday realities of refugee life. The perspectives of youth expressed in these focus groups call for urgent action to enable young people to develop greater self-reliance in meeting their present day-to-day survival needs by accessing work and livelihoods opportunities, and to pursue their future dreams of continuing their studies and finding a long-term solution to their displacement (education and durable solutions). The young people also shared information about their contributions to family and community wellbeing including through their engagement with youth organizations, self-initiated groups and running private schools for children. However, despite their proven capacities to assist others, young people often feel that community leaders and agencies do not listen and respond to their views and suggestions, or provide the training and support they need to develop their own initiatives further. The next section of the review will analyze how UNHCR responds to refugee youth in its policies and programmes.

¹²⁵ Young male refugee, Focus Group, Jordan (2012)

¹²⁶ Young Somali male, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

¹²⁷ Young Afghan refugee, Focus Group, Iran (2012)

¹²⁸ Young Rohingya refugee, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

¹²⁹ Young refugee, Focus Group, Jordan (2012)

¹³⁰ Young Afghan refugee, Focus Group, Iran (2012)

¹³¹ Young Afghan refugee, Focus Group, Iran (2012)

¹³² Young Rohingya refugees, Focus Group, Bangladesh (2012)

¹³³ Young Somali male refugee, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

¹³⁴ Young Somali male refugee, Focus Group, Ethiopia (2012)

¹³⁵ Young Somali male refugee, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

¹³⁶ Young Somali male refugee, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)

¹³⁷ Young Somali male refugee, Focus Group, Kenya (2012)



6. UNHCR's Engagement with Displaced Youth

This section will look at whether UNHCR's conceptualisation of youth, institutional set up and programmatic responses adequately respond to the gaps and challenges indicated by experts in the literature review and, most of all, to the constraints and opportunities, aspirations and hopes expressed by displaced young people in the focus groups. It will mostly draw from the direct experiences and suggestions of UNHCR and Implementing Partners staff through responses given in the survey and the individual interviews.

UNHCR Mandate

Although UNHCR's mandate does not explicitly refer to 'youth' (or any other specific age group or social category of refugees), the majority of UNHCR staff members who completed the survey believe that youth are important to UNHCR's mandate, with only 1% saying that they are not important or are primarily the responsibility of other agencies, or the state. A total of 22% of respondents feel that youth are extremely important, and central to UNHCR's mandate, 52% think that youth are a very important part of UNHCR's mandate, and 45% believe youth are important, but not central to UNHCR's mandate.

- ◀ Somalia/Internally displaced people (IDPs)/ IDPs find very difficult to to engage in regular economic activities that could provide a stable income for them and their families. Most of them do casual labour such as collecting garbage and washing clothes for the host community. Girls from IDPs settlements in Galkayo get trained at the Galkayo Education Center for Peace and Development on sewing skills. Ayan Adbi Ali, 16, from Mogadishu, she fled four years ago because of fighting. Ayan would like to teach other IDP girls from poor families skills that she has learnt so they can provide for their families. So far 60 girls have been trained at the center not only on sewing skills but also on sanitary wear production. © UNHCR/R. Gangale/May 2011

Concepts and definitions

The most common age category for youth used by 42% of UNHCR staff is the UN definition of 15-24 years. However, almost a quarter (25% of respondents) use the age range 18-25 years and a further 23% rely on other definitions. Some UNHCR offices follow the definitions of youth adhered to by governments in their country of operation, such as the Kenyan government definition of youth as all those aged between 15 and 35 years.¹³⁸ In other country operations, such as Nepal where staff use a definition of youth as 18 -25 years, their understandings have been agreed upon through discussions with UNHCR, partners and the refugee community. In Costa Rica, although ‘the law states that youth are the people between the age groups 12-35 years old,’ the UNHCR office has made an ‘internal decision’ to define youth as those [aged] 16-30 years.¹³⁹ This is because ‘we believe the Costa Rican law definition is too extended’, but ‘the UN definition of youth as 15-24 years is limiting.’¹⁴⁰ Indeed, some focus groups participants used definitions of youth extending well beyond the UN definition of 24 years including up to 50 years in Syria, 40 years in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, 39 years in Ghana, and 35 years in Uganda, Iran, Liberia, Sierra Leone and South Africa.

The numerous definitions employed by different UNHCR offices partly results from the fact that ‘we have no specific guidelines to define youth.’¹⁴¹ As another UNHCR staff member explained, ‘the problem is that youth and their needs are not well defined’ and ‘they are either included in groups of adults or in children or adolescents’, but the ‘youth group is not very specifically defined or mentioned in any document.’¹⁴²

This lack of clarity results in staff making assumptions or context specific judgements about who is considered youth and, as the survey findings show, some respondents reported that ‘although definitions of youth had not been discussed explicitly, they ‘assumed’ it was a certain age range.’¹⁴³ The lack of official youth definition within UNHCR has allowed different offices and staff to decide independently how to categorise youth in their location. While this flexibility may be helpful in allowing UNHCR’s field staff to recognise that ‘youth is a cultural construct,’¹⁴⁴ and that chronological age may not be the most important factor in considering a young person to be ‘youth’ in a particular culture and context, it also contributes to the invisibility of youth. Without an agreed youth definition, youth get ‘lost in the system’ and ‘this age group has been made invisible.’¹⁴⁵ As a result, some UNHCR staff feel that the organisation does not do enough to support youth post-18, when they no longer come under children’s programmes and protection initiatives, yet ‘their vulnerability doesn’t end the day they turn 18.’¹⁴⁶ There is recognition that young people may require additional support to successfully move towards adulthood, although ‘we are weak in the ‘crossover’ zone where youth are 18 or over, but still have not transitioned fully to adulthood.’¹⁴⁷

¹³⁸ Interview with UNHCR staff, Kenya (2012)

¹³⁹ Interview with UNHCR staff, Nepal (2012)

¹⁴⁰ Interview with UNHCR staff, Costa Rica (2012)

¹⁴¹ Interview with UNHCR staff, Bangladesh (2012)

¹⁴² Interview with UNHCR staff, Iran, (2012)

¹⁴³ Survey Analysis Report (2012), p. 9

¹⁴⁴ Interview with UNHCR staff, Costa Rica (2012)

¹⁴⁵ Survey Respondent, Colombia (2012)

¹⁴⁶ Survey Analysis Report (2012), p. 9

¹⁴⁷ Survey Analysis Report (2012), p. 9

UNHCR Policy, Guidelines and Strategic Frameworks

While UNHCR has policies, guidelines and strategies for working with other age and social groups including refugee children,¹⁴⁸ refugee women,¹⁴⁹ older refugees¹⁵⁰ and disabled people,¹⁵¹ it does not have any specific policies on refugee or IDP youth, although the particular needs of adolescents (under 18) are addressed in various policies, guidelines and frameworks related to children.

UNHCR's Framework for the Protection of Children (2012) represents 'a renewed commitment to the protection of children' since 'children's rights are enshrined in international law, including in the UN-CRC, and are at the heart of UNHCR's protection mandate.'¹⁵² The Framework marks 'an evolution in UNHCR's policy and practice' recognising the centrality of children's protection to UNHCR's work' and articulating six goals 'that encapsulate UNHCR's commitment to protect and realise the rights of children of concern to the office' and practical guidance on how to achieve these goals.¹⁵³ Whereas previous guidance, for example, the Executive Committee Conclusion on Children at Risk (2007)¹⁵⁴ focused on identifying and targeting children at 'heightened risk' and with special vulnerabilities, the new Framework 'marks an institutional shift from mainly targeting categories of children at risk towards a systems approach to protecting children.'¹⁵⁵ The new Protection Framework for Children is 'complemented by two recent UNHCR strategic frameworks, namely UNHCR's Education Strategy (2012-2016) and UNHCR's Action against Sexual and Gender Based Violence: An Updated Strategy (2011).'¹⁵⁶

“ In terms of the protracted refugee situation, at the strategic level, there needs to be a development strategy for the camp, but this does not happen when UNHCR's ultimate goal is to close the camp. For the young people who have grown up in the camp, we need some kind of development strategy. There are so many other protracted situations around the world, we need a high level, institutional development strategy for such situations so that we have more guidance to know how to plan and respond at the local country level.

UNHCR Staff, Kenya

UNHCR's Education Strategy recognises that 'ensuring the provision of education is a core component of UNHCR's international protection and durable solutions mandate' since 'refugees value education' and it builds 'relevant skills and knowledge' enabling 'refugees to live healthy, productive lives.'¹⁵⁷ The Education Strategy will offer more learning opportunities for displaced youth by expanding 'secondary schools to one million young people,' providing 'non-formal education and training opportunities for 40% of young people, male and female,' increasing 'by 100% the number of students attending tertiary education,' and increasing 'literacy rates among refugee adults by 50%.¹⁵⁸

¹⁴⁸ UNHCR's Framework for the Protection of Children (2012); Strategy and Activities Concerning Refugee Children (2005); Protecting children of concern through a systems approach. Guidance for field offices; UNHCR Refugee Children: guidelines on Protection and Care of Children (1994)

¹⁴⁹ UNHCR Policy on Refugee Women (1990), Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women (1991), UNHCR's 5 Commitments to Refugee Women (2001), and the Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls (2008).

¹⁵⁰ UNHCR Policy on Older Refugees (2000)

¹⁵¹ UNHCR's Working with Persons with Disabilities in Forced Displacement (2011); ExCom Conclusions on Refugees with Disabilities and Other Persons with Disabilities Protected and Assisted by UNHCR (2010)

¹⁵² UNHCR Framework for the Protection of Children (2012), p. 7

¹⁵³ The six goals are girls and boys are safe where they live, learn and play; children's participation and capacity are integral to their protection; girls and boys have access to child-friendly procedures; girls and boys obtain legal documentation; girls and boys with specific needs received targeted support; and girls and boys achieve durable solutions in their best interests (UNHCR 2012, p. 9).

¹⁵⁴ UNHCR The Executive Committee Conclusion on Children at Risk (2007)

¹⁵⁵ UNHCR Framework for the Protection of Children (2012), p. 12

¹⁵⁶ UNHCR Framework for the Protection of Children (2012), p. 9

¹⁵⁷ UNHCR Education Strategy Summary 2012-2016, p. 3

¹⁵⁸ UNHCR Education Strategy Summary 2012-2016, p. 3

UNHCR's Action against Sexual and Gender Based Violence strategy (2011), 'reaffirms that sexual and gender based violence is an urgent, core protection issue and emphasises gender equality as the cornerstone principle in addressing SGBV'¹⁵⁹ It focuses on six areas, which are often 'inadequately addressed' including 'groups at heightened risk of SGBV (children, persons with disabilities, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transsexual/intersex LGBTI persons), greater engagement of boys and men in SGBV strategies, safer environments and safer access to domestic energy, and mitigation of risk factors related to survival sex.'¹⁶⁰ The strategy recommends exploring partnerships with 'male community groups, youth and children's clubs'¹⁶¹ amongst other organisations in order to prevent incidents of SGBV against children of concern to UNHCR.

UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) Policy (2011), aims to ensure that 'all Persons of Concern enjoy their rights on an equal footing and are able to participate fully in the decisions that affect their lives and the lives of their family members and communities.'¹⁶² It emphasises the importance of 'the different stages in one's life cycle' and of being aware of 'where people are in the life cycle as their capacities and needs change over time.'¹⁶³ The AGD policy sets out a definition of diversity for 'one community, many people', and draws attention to the roles and needs of women and girls, men and boys, children (including adolescents), people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, or intersex (LGBTI), older men and women, disabled people, and those belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities or indigenous groups. However, 'youth' as a particular social group does not feature in this guidance and 54% of survey respondents reported needing more guidance on how to apply age, gender and diversity mainstreaming to youth. In fact, as one survey respondent commented, '*we tend to focus on persons with specific needs – women, children (especially girls), the elderly, the disabled etc. Effectively, while we mainstream everyone else, we put aside the youth in programming.*'¹⁶⁴

The main areas where UNHCR staff members who completed the survey require more written guidance and policies related to their engagement with displaced youth included appropriate livelihood opportunities (73% of respondents); education programmes (62%); psychosocial and mental health (56%); sports programs (54%); applying protection policies to youth (54%), and SGBV issues (50%). However, not all survey respondents feel that more written guidance is necessary and some felt that funding, training and formal institutional commitment toward youth is more important: '*guidelines are dead words if there is not sufficient funding, formal commitment and clear accountability*' and '*I honestly don't think it's a lack of policy; it is a lack of priority given to youth*'.¹⁶⁵

In interviews with UNHCR and implementing partner staff, the need for an institutional development strategy for camps and protracted displacement situations was suggested, which would require 'high level discussions and should include advocacy with governments on the lack of work permits and employment opportunities.'¹⁶⁶ Although this would address the rights and needs of other age groups, the issue of considering young people's futures makes it particularly pressing for displaced youth.

¹⁵⁹ UNHCR Action against Sexual and Gender Based Violence: an updated strategy (2011), p. 7

¹⁶⁰ UNHCR Action against Sexual and Gender Based Violence: an updated strategy (2011), p. 7

¹⁶¹ UNHCR Action against Sexual and Gender Based Violence: an updated strategy (2011), p. 17

¹⁶² UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Policy: working with people and communities for equality and protection (2011)

¹⁶³ UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Policy: working with people and communities for equality and protection (2011)

¹⁶⁴ Survey Analysis Report (2012), p. 6 (Appendix)

¹⁶⁵ Survey Analysis Report (2012), p. 7

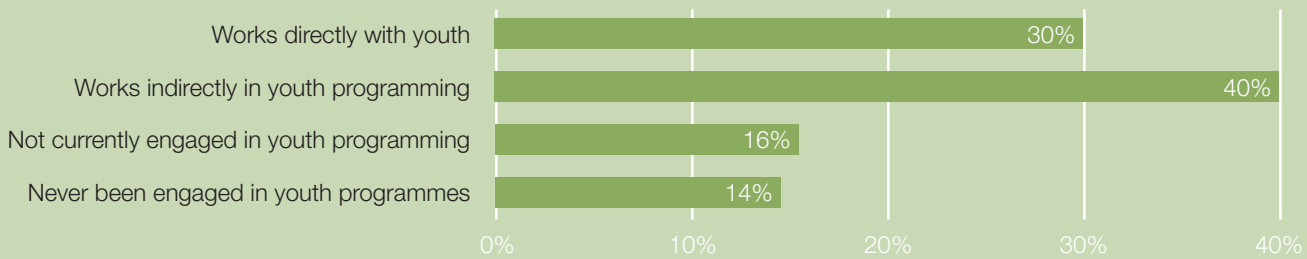
¹⁶⁶ Interview with UNHCR staff, Kenya (2012)

UNHCR’s Institutional Infrastructure

During our review, no specific youth section or youth specialist was found at UNHCR HQ focusing on youth as a target group in a holistic way. Within the organization’s architecture, young people’s needs, as those of any other Person of Concern, are currently addressed across pillars within the Division of International Protection and the Division of Programme Support Management. Based on the survey and the interviews conducted on the field, youth issues seem to fall particularly within the tasks of Pillar II (Protection – Operational Support) and Pillar III (Comprehensive Solutions).¹⁶⁷ Within these pillars, operational sections deal with specific issues, such as Child Protection for children and adolescents up to 18 years old and Education, Gender, Community Services and Comprehensive Solutions for youth 15-24 years. It is unclear whether other sections may deal with other specific issues.

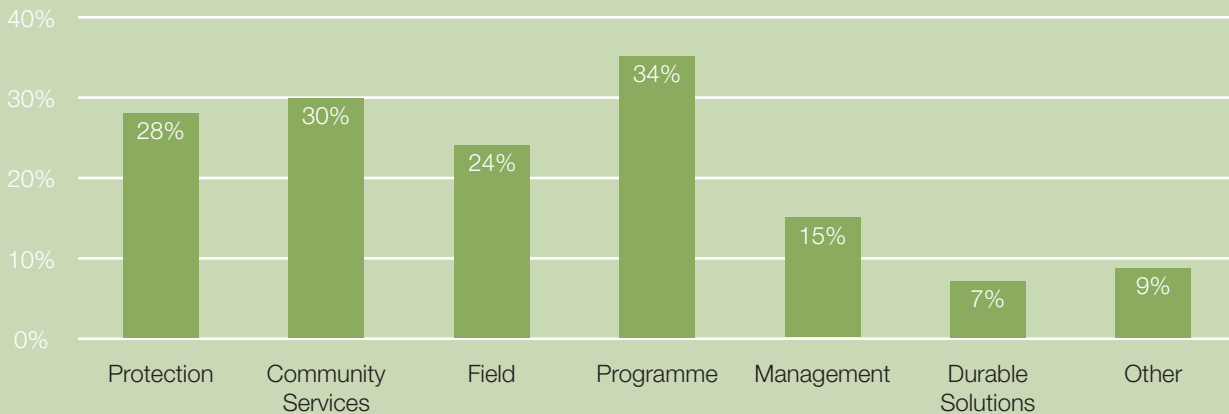
This structure is mirrored at the field level: while this review revealed only one specific Inter-Community Youth Relationships Officer, based in the UNHCR Office in Dadaab, 70% of field respondents work with youth across different sections. Of them 30% work directly with youth as part and parcel of their current tasks, whereas 40% are indirectly engaged in youth programmes as part of a wider group of beneficiaries. 34% of staff work in Programmes, 30% in Community Services and 28% are part of the Protection category.

Figure 1: Percentage of respondents who work with youth



Source: UNHCR staff survey based on 477 respondents.

Figure 2: Respondents’ job sector



Source: UNHCR staff survey. Note: the question had a multiple answer, so percentages must be read individually (each respondent may have answered positively or not to each category).

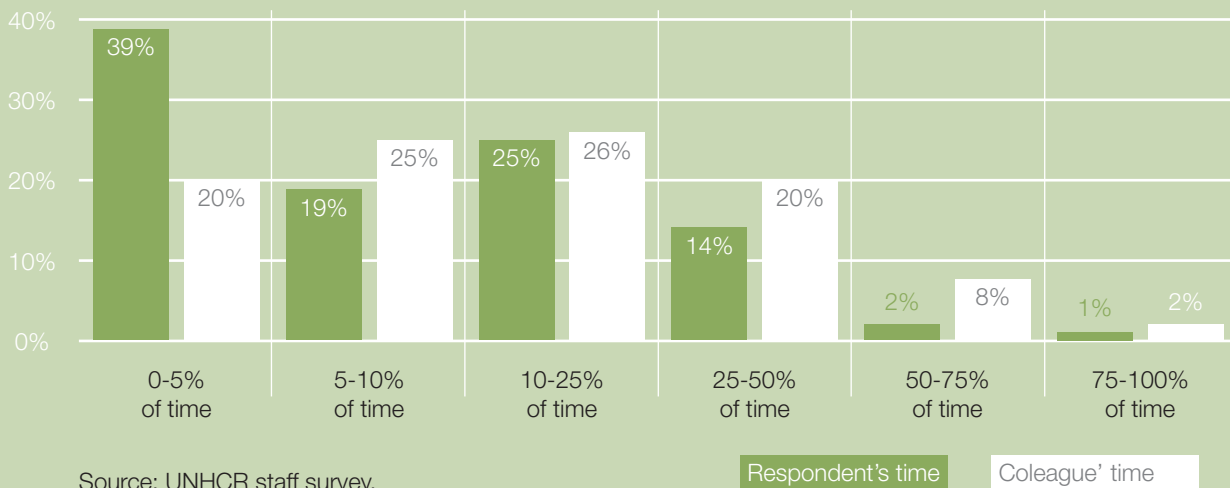
¹⁶⁷ For a full picture of UNHCR’s organisational charts, please visit: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c98.html> and <http://www.unhcr.org/4bffd2e09.html> for the Division of International Protection.



- ▲ Rwanda / Congolese refugees / Young refugee boys play basket on the camp pitch during their daily session, in Kiziba. In the camp, main protection issues are the consumption and sell of drugs, violence including sexual and Gender Base Violence due to the fact that refugees are bored stiff, specially the youth. In order to make busy youths and divert them from criminal activities, recreation activities are carried out with boys and girls. Basket ball involve 65 boys and 35 girls.
 © UNHCR / Frederic NOY / October 2012

Actual time spent by staff on youth activities is relatively small. Only 8% of respondents spend more than half of their time on youth related programmes for people under the age of 18 years, and 9% for people 18-24 years old. Conversely, 39% of staff dedicate only 0-5% of their time to youth programmes. The diagram below shows a comparison of the time spent by respondents and the perceived time other colleagues spend on youth programming. This table reveals that the level of attention specifically dedicated to this target group at field level is very low.

Figure 3: Percentage of time spent on youth-targeted programming



Respondents assert that work with youth is primarily led by national staff and UNVs (mentioned by 87% and 42% of the respondents). A much smaller proportion of respondents were aware of international staff colleagues that were working on dedicated youth programs (47%). Taking into account the level of decision-making responsibility that these staff members tend to have is important to understand how much influence they can exert over the design of the Country Operation Plan or allocation of resources.

While this review has no evidence on staffing levels and special qualifications or training received, 38% of respondents expressed that a key obstacle to working with youth is the lack of qualified staff, alongside a lack of training and technical know-how to draw from: ‘the problem is, practical knowledge on how to implement the policies is lacking as there is no appropriate trainings for staff. And there is shortage of technical staff’, said a survey respondent from Kenya. This was mirrored by a respondent from Chad who affirmed that ‘there is a lack of appropriate training for staff working with youth’ and by Costa Rica: ‘I also believe it’s important that UNHCR builds capacity of its own staff: it is important to understand that the work with youth, the methodology and the implementation of work are different than work with adults or children. So it is important to have staff able to work with youth, and it’s not easy to find people who enjoy working with youth and understand their potential’.

It is evident from responses to various questions in the survey that UNHCR staff would welcome a ‘dedicated’¹⁶⁸ youth team, which could provide advice on implementing youth programme and developing partnerships with other organisations to support young people. For example, a staff member from Darfur suggests that ‘in UNHCR there should be a section for youth’; this is echoed by staff from Chad: ‘We need guidance from HQ on how to coordinate different youth-related indicators among sectors/objectives’ and Ethiopia: ‘more guidance is necessary’.

¹⁶⁸ Survey respondent, Uganda (2012)

UNHCR Processes and Approaches: identifying and responding to young people's needs

UNHCR believes that 'refugees, internally displaced people and returnees must be at the centre of decision-making concerning their protection and wellbeing' and that 'it is essential to consult them directly and listen to them.'¹⁶⁹ In order to do so, UNHCR relies on a number of different tools to identify, plan and respond to the protection and assistance needs of displaced populations, including youth. These are specific community-based, participatory approaches that help UNHCR identify specific vulnerabilities and key issues among Persons of Concern.

UNHCR defines participatory assessment as 'a process of building partnerships with refugee women and men of all ages by promoting meaningful participation through structured dialogue.'¹⁷⁰ This process entails 'holding separate discussions with women, girls, boys and men, including adolescents, in order to gather information on the specific protection risks they face and the underlying causes, to understand their capacities and to hear their proposed solutions.'¹⁷¹

Participatory assessment 'forms the basis for the implementation of a rights and community based approach.'¹⁷² This involves 'working in partnership with Persons of Concern during all stages of UNHCR's programme cycle.' It 'recognises the resilience, capacities, skills and resources of Persons of Concern, builds on these to deliver protection and solutions, and supports the community's own goals.'¹⁷³ Since each displacement situation is unique, there is 'no single blueprint for a community-based approach' so 'UNHCR and partners will always need to conduct an in-depth analysis of each situation, with all community members participating, in order to agree on the best strategies.'¹⁷⁴

Survey respondents and interviewees reported using a combination of Age Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) assessments, participatory assessments, and needs assessment to identify young people's needs, and decide what programmes to deliver and who to target. These tools help UNHCR understand displaced young people's 'needs and perspectives' and 'to gather the interests and suggestions of the youth'.¹⁷⁶ UNHCR staff explained that decisions are also based on lessons learned from previous programmes and gap analysis. In line with the values underpinning UNHCR's community-based approach, some emphasised the importance of working with youth in assessing their needs and engaging them in all aspects of programme planning, delivery and evaluation: 'We can promote youth leadership through proper assessments which will define programmes that meet their needs. We can do activities that give them the feeling of ownership, including them from the beginning, from design to monitoring and evaluation. This means doing activities with them not over them, it is not imposed...not donor based projects but youth based projects.'¹⁷⁷

Some country operations shared effective examples of taking a community-based approach in working with youth and, for example, work directly with youth committees/organisations in camps by involving youth in the identification of vulnerable people or protection cases. In Nepal, UNHCR has been working with young people to identify and 'analyse protection risks', and respond to these by building on 'social networks and community resources'.¹⁷⁸ In partnership with community-based children's and youth organisations (Youth Friendly Centres), UNHCR has been able to 'get additional and updated information on certain population groups' such as working with 'Bhutanese Refugee Children Forum members on a survey on school drop outs'.¹⁷⁹ Additionally, 'refugee youth are contribut-

¹⁶⁹ UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations (2006), p. 1

¹⁷⁰ UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations (2006), p. 1

¹⁷¹ UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations (2006), p. 1-2

¹⁷² UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations (2006), p. 2

¹⁷³ A Community Based Approach in UNHCR Operations (2008), p. 14

¹⁷⁴ A Community Based Approach in UNHCR Operations (2008), p. 7

¹⁷⁵ Interview with UNHCR staff, Ethiopia (2012)

¹⁷⁶ Survey respondent, Burundi (2012)

¹⁷⁷ Interview with UNHCR staff, Jordan (2012)

¹⁷⁸ A Community Based Approach in UNHCR Operations (2008), p. 25

¹⁷⁹ Interview with UNHCR staff, Nepal (2012)

ing to community and protection activities' through involvement in Child Protection Working Groups and SGBV committees, by reporting cases to UNHCR, and leading emergency response activities in the case of fires.¹⁸⁰ Similarly, in the Dadaab camps in Kenya, UNHCR has established youth coordination committees – the Youth Umbrella – with elected youth representatives who are able to share young people's perspectives with agencies and work with UNHCR on identifying and responding to community protection concerns (see box 1 below).

Box 1: UNHCR's Engagement with Youth Groups in Kenya

According to UNHCR staff in Dadaab¹⁸¹ 'community ownership is the key. *The camps have been here for more than twenty years and we work closely with the community. When we are able to transfer some responsibility to the people in the camp that is when programmes and activities work best.*' The Youth Umbrella is a network of all the different youth groups, which can choose to register and benefit from information sharing and coordination through this network. There are currently over 184 youth groups registered with the Youth Umbrella (and more that are unregistered), and a further 350 sport clubs. In each of the five refugee camps in Dadaab, there is a Youth Umbrella with its own constitution and election process for selecting a chairman and chairwoman and executive committee. These representatives hold regular meetings at the camp level, and also attend inter-camp meeting with UNHCR and other agencies.

A youth survey found that 29% of those consulted were members of youth groups, of which 81% were registered with youth umbrella, and 61% of respondents were aware of the youth umbrella's role. Our focus groups revealed that the *'youth umbrella plays a big role in society.'* Youth groups are useful for information sharing, discussion of community issues and problem solving, since *'youths get together to share ideas and discuss how youths in the community can work together'* and *'meetings with youth group members are venues where they can express and solve their own problems.'* The youth groups offer important means of peer support: *'we collect financial contributions in case of a member becoming sick'* or *'group members make monthly financial contributions to sustain small kiosk and private schools.'* Other groups provide additional support to the community working on *'prevention of gender based violence and support for vulnerable people in block.'* During the emergency period in late 2011 when UNHCR staff members were unable to visit the camps, youth groups were involved in protection and monitoring activities. The youth groups monitored cases of domestic violence or gender based violence, met with victims and reported to UNHCR on these cases for follow up action by protection officers. The important role played by youth during this time of crisis highlights their capacities for supporting other community members.

Some UNHCR staff suggested that the organisation could improve the way it works with displaced youth by enhancing data collection on self-initiated youth groups and their activities. However, 'our system overlooks data on grassroots initiatives' since in Kenya we 'record the number of schools set up by UNHCR but not the number of private schools set up by youth groups' so we 'need a tool for researching these initiatives.'¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ Interview with UNHCR staff, Nepal (2012)

¹⁸¹ As of June 2012, there were 465,000 refugees living in five camps in Dadaab in north-eastern Kenya. The vast majority of the refugees (95%) are from Somalia, with others coming from Ethiopia, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. There have been refugees living in Dadaab since 1991, and the camps were originally established to accommodate 90,000 people. Over the last three years there have been almost 300,000 new refugee arrivals into Kenya including 152, 512 in 2011 alone who have fled insecurity, drought and famine in Somalia. With the deterioration of the security situation in Dadaab in 2011, UNHCR experienced limited access to the camps causing difficulties in providing relief services and monitoring protection concerns. UNHCR and its partners implemented an operational continuity plan (OCP) which enabled 'the maintenance of critical life-saving services during the crisis' including the provision of shelter, health, food, education and protection. The focus of the OCP was on 'capacitating refugees to take responsibility for their own welfare' through creating partnerships among refugees, host communities and national partners.

¹⁸² Interview with UNHCR staff, Kenya (2012)

Despite the potential of participatory assessment and the community-based approach to effectively engage with displaced youth as partners, a number of UNHCR staff members raised the challenge of managing young people's expectations, particularly after conducting rigorous participatory assessments and consultations. For example, one staff member from Malawi described this tension: *'We conduct participatory/AGDM assessments where different age groups are involved including youth groups. Sometimes the Persons of Concern (PoC) expect too much from UNHCR; they do not know that the budget is limited.'* Although doing the participatory assessments provides information on 'what the youth and the community need', 'It is a slow process getting money for programmes' and 'we do not yet have anything tangible to tell them or offer them.'¹⁸³ Although the vast majority of survey respondents are committed to making needs-based decisions (particularly based on protection concerns), a significant proportion of respondents felt that in reality, staff often have to make resource-based decisions, in terms of staffing, funds available and partners' capacity. This situation impacts on the capacity to respond to the needs identified in the participatory tools.

Funding for youth

As suggested by comments from staff on the challenges of responding to participatory assessments with youth, the survey found that the amount spent on combined youth programming is relatively small, with 61% of those who were able to answer this question (i.e. those who knew how much the budget for youth was) reporting that their country operation's total spend on youth is less than \$50,000 US dollars per year, and 23% reporting their operation spent less than \$5000 US.¹⁸⁴ Of those who responded to this question, 45% said that programs which target youth are under 5% of the total Operational Plan and 23% said they amount to 5-10% of the plan.

Four out of five (80%) of survey respondents report that the biggest barrier to working with youth is a lack of funding, and this concern was also raised by UNHCR staff in interviews with country offices. Throughout the survey, 174 comments were made by respondents about the problem of providing appropriate youth programming without allocated funding. Survey respondents raised a number of concerns related to the lack of funding for youth programmes including the lack of prioritisation of youth with activities for this group 'if existing' being 'terribly underfunded',¹⁸⁵ being 'the first projects to be cut for budget constraints',¹⁸⁶ and consequently 'as funding declines, the quality of the programme changes.'¹⁸⁷

These competing priorities and resource constraints make it difficult to 'develop and sustain targeted programs for displaced youth.'¹⁸⁸ As a staff member puts it: *'When we come up with youth programmes, we have to fit them under something else – e.g. education or livelihoods or child protection,'* which means that *'youth programmes tend to be ad hoc and unsustainable.'*¹⁸⁹ For this reason programmes tend to be segmented, rather than holistic. And staff responsible for youth programming must *'talk to colleagues in child protection, community mobilisation, education, livelihood, information/communication to see if I can squeeze youth into their programmes,'* which is both *'ineffective and inappropriate.'*¹⁹⁰ This is compounded by the fact that *'youth activities are not considered an essential activity'* which contributes to the *'low status given to youth programmes.'*¹⁹¹

¹⁸³ Interview with UNHCR staff, Ethiopia (2012)

¹⁸⁴ Survey Analysis Report (2012) , p.11 (in Appendix?)

¹⁸⁵ Survey respondent, Chad (2012)

¹⁸⁶ Survey respondent, Kenya (2012)

¹⁸⁷ Survey respondent, Ghana (2012)

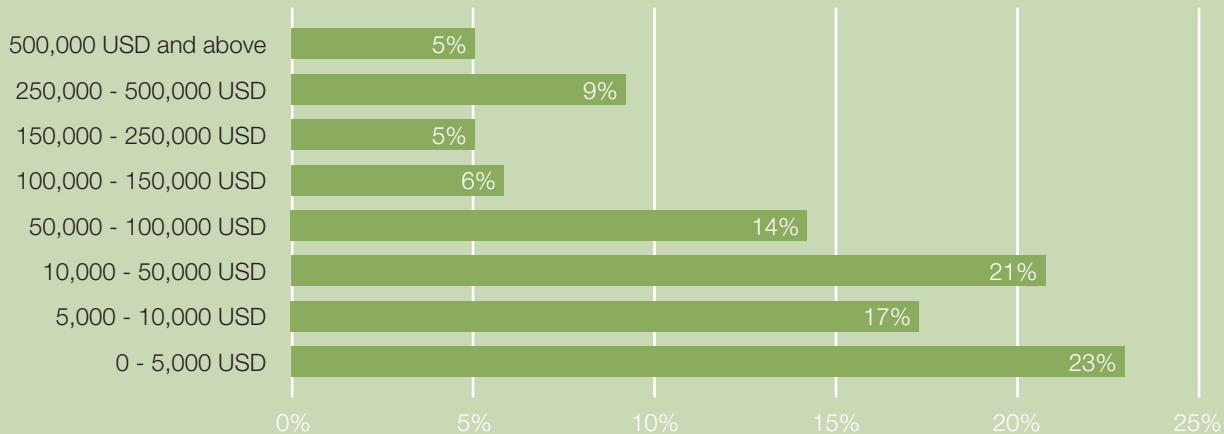
¹⁸⁸ Survey respondent, HQ (2012)

¹⁸⁹ Interview with UNHCR staff member, Kenya (2012)

¹⁹⁰ Interview with UNHCR staff member, Kenya (2012)

¹⁹¹ Interview with UNHCR partner, Kenya (2012)

Figure 4: Country operations' total spend on combined youth programming



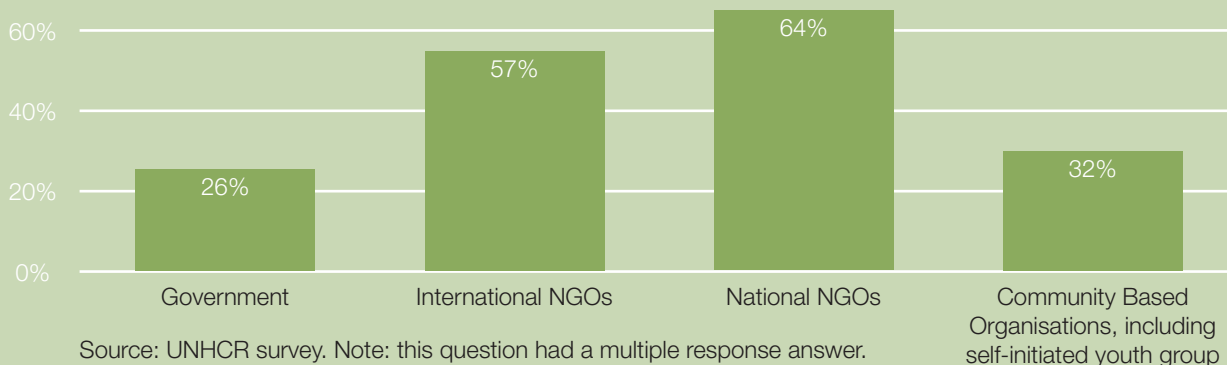
Source: UNHCR staff survey based on 276 respondents.

Partnerships

UNHCR's primary implementing partners for youth targeted programming are national and international NGOs (these were mentioned by 64% and 57% of respondents, respectively). A crucial finding from the survey is that community-based organisations, including self-initiated youth groups (32%), represent another important partner for UNHCR, demonstrating the potential of capitalising on and developing youth capacities and leadership skills. Other UN agencies (particularly UNICEF), IOM and the local government were mentioned as partners less frequently. Among donors, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), which works extensively in youth programming, was mentioned as one of the few bilateral donors staffed with youth advisors.

Primary implementing partners for youth-targeted programming In general, collaboration with partners on youth programming is considered good (44%), very good (20%), or excellent (4%). Several survey respondents mentioned the existence of a regular collaboration with displaced communities, the government and implementing partners, with these latter two often within the framework of the Cluster system, to decide programmatic priorities, identify vulnerabilities and target groups. Moreover the availability or not of implementing partners has been mentioned as a factor in the success of programmes targeting youth.

Figure 5: Primary Implementing Partners



Source: UNHCR survey. Note: this question had a multiple response answer. Percentages should be read individually (i.e. percentage of respondents that mentioned each actor as a primary implementing partner).



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However, a substantial minority (24%) thought collaboration with partners is only fair, and 8% said it is poor. While the survey did not gauge the reasons behind poor partnership perceptions, 49% of respondents mentioned that the biggest barrier to working with youth is the availability of qualified partners. Responses from other questions mention the need for advice on how best to implement youth programming, including developing and maintaining partnership. One respondent noted that *'the biggest missing element for UNHCR is the absence of an organisational commitment to engage youth and the absence of any guidance / expertise on this within the organisation, leading to an absence of appropriate partnerships'*, while another said: *'Any specific policy that can guide operations to target youth programming, or build capacity of implementing partners to guide them on youth intervention will be an added value'*.

Interviews with a number of implementing partners have revealed a variety of opinions on the comparative advantage in fostering a fruitful partnership with UNHCR. For all IPs interviewed for this research, the added value they can offer to UNHCR lies in their nature as direct implementers, and the direct access to young Persons of Concern. This is well summarised by Ilia and Kiana, two Iranian NGOs working with Afghani refugee children and youth in Tehran: *'We can see immediate needs of youth, the challenges of their everyday life and we can hear them and get inspired by new ways of seeing and doing things in our programs with youth'*.

Similarly, IPs express common opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of UNHCR: they all view the lack of funding and specific focus on youth programming as a key weakness.¹⁹² Some partners consider UNHCR's linkages with host governments as an important tool, *'as policy maker and advocate in negotiating with government at macro level'*¹⁹³ or to try to mobilise the government to increase young people's mobility, particularly outside the camps.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹² Interview with staff members, Care International-Kenya, IRD-Jordan, Ilia and Kiana- Iran, Caritas Nepal (2012)

¹⁹³ Interview with NGOs Ilia and Kiana (Iran) (2012)

¹⁹⁴ Interview with staff member, Technical Assistance Incorporated, Bangladesh (2012)

Engaging with self-initiated youth groups. Partnership with self-initiated youth groups was mentioned numerous times across the board in our research as a key area for partnership development. Recognising the potential and the value of working with displaced young people, particularly in camp settings, UNHCR staff stress that displaced youth are an integral part of protection activities, as they act as the eyes and ears of the community, they detect vulnerabilities, engage in camp maintenance and construction, respond to emergency situations, are eager to contribute and be productive, support the youngest and can be encouraged as ‘agents of change.’¹⁹⁵ There is already a great deal of engagement with youth groups, particularly at the Camp Coordination/Camp Management level, whereby UNHCR sets priorities and activities with the Youth Committees in camps. These latter are often very active and participate in camp coordination meetings with UNHCR and other agencies. Youth engagement goes beyond coordination and often extends to protection activities. Similarly UNHCR Costa Rica regularly engages with the Youth Network without Borders, a network of Costa Rican youth, Colombian and other refugee youth working together to promote integration and raise awareness against xenophobia and racism against refugees.

Box 2: Costa Rica – Lazos Sin Fronteras (Bonds without Borders)

A study conducted by the *Asociación de Consultores y Asesores Internacionales (ACAI)* and UNHCR on attitudes of Costa Ricans towards refugees revealed that Costa Rican youth showed more discrimination against refugees than adults. There are 12,371 refugees in Costa Rica, 80-85% of them originating from Colombia and other Central and Latin American countries often fleeing gang-related persecution. Refugees have settled in the urban and peri-urban areas around the capital San Jose and other centres, where competition for scarce resources is high. The war on drug trafficking and organised crime, which engages the whole region, has heightened the national security agenda and tightened asylum mechanisms. Racism, discrimination and xenophobia, lack of employment opportunities and housing shortage, legal impediments and lack of understanding of the Costa Rican government of the plight of refugees are the biggest challenges for local integration, which is deemed the main durable solution to promote refugee self-reliance.

In order to promote integration and mutual understanding with the host community, UNHCR, with funds from the Dutch government, launched a youth project in June 2010 called *Lazos Sin Fronteras*. The project engaged 170 youth aged 16-30 years old from Costa Rica and other 13 different nationalities and representatives of government, national and international agencies and other concerned stakeholders in a conference to discuss the six key obstacles faced by refugee youth in Costa Rica: social integration, access to education and intercultural education, access to fair documentation processes, access to health including reproductive health, mental health and access to appropriate health services, access to decent and productive work and access to loans/grants and economic stability. As a result of the conference, a Network of Youth Without Borders was formed with Costa Rican and refugee youth. The Network drafted the Declaration ‘Bonds without Borders’, which represents a form of action plan to address the six areas.

The Network is now tasked with following up on the implementation of the commitments laid out in the Declaration. The Network meets regularly and tries to engage other young people to promote its activities. It has now become a regular partner of UNHCR, other agencies and the government when it comes to refugee youth issues; youth members are consulted regularly in national fora and participation groups as they represent a key outreach tool, a rich source of ideas to promote equality and that show that integration is the only way. In the words of UNHCR staff, ‘the fact that refugees, migrants and Costa Rican youth are working together in the Network raises the attention of the authorities. This is a good example of how human beings can integrate in a peaceful way when they are trying to reach a common goal’. In its Country Operational Plan for 2012, UNHCR hopes to continue to work with the Network, which is now deemed a key partner.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with UNHCR staff, Nepal (2012)

UNHCR Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

UNHCR employs a results based framework, which is linked to a number of global strategic priorities, each of which has an indicator to measure progress from the current situation to a target with a quantifiable change. The indicators and targets most relevant to displaced youth include:

- the percentage of out-of-school adolescents (aged 12-17 years) accessing targeted programmes in camps and urban areas;
- the percentage of unaccompanied and separated children for whom a best interests determination has been conducted;
- the extent to which children are being recruited by armed groups; and
- the percentage of the refugee population aged 12-17 years who are attending secondary school.¹⁹⁶

These are the indicators which currently exist that are applicable to the 15 to 24 year old youth category.

UNHCR has set in place a global database, Focus, which is 'software [that] supports the results based framework and tracks budget' (AGDM strategy). For the purpose of this review, we analysed 18 Focus reports (Problem Narratives and Objective Narratives for 2012) covering nine countries (Chad, Colombia, DRC, Ecuador, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Tanzania) as a sample of internal data gathering systems. The Problem Narratives provide a background situation analysis on each country. Information is divided by region, programmatic areas and broad groups of persons of UNHCR concern (e.g. of text: IDP children in North Sudan are vulnerable to various child protection risks). Across all documents reviewed, very little specific information on youth or adolescents is offered and the majority of the information covers broader groups, for example children or women. The documents sporadically report age and gender as disaggregated information. The Objectives Narratives show how each country office intends to respond to the information in the Problem Narrative and seem to be dependent on funding not yet approved at the time of writing. In short, the documents provide information on what is planned, should full funding come through.

¹⁹⁶ UNHCR (2009) Global Strategic Priorities



7. UNHCR's Youth Programming

Focus of UNHCR youth programmes

UNHCR divides its programmes on the basis of its operational mandate, underpinned by a rights-based approach and identification of vulnerability criteria. The AGD approach and participatory needs assessments help staff in identifying the key vulnerabilities across groups on the basis of age, gender and diversity criteria, as interlinked personal characteristics.¹⁹⁷ According to the survey conducted for this research, and in line with UNHCR's mandate, refugees represent the primary focus of UNHCR interventions (79% of respondents), followed by IDPs (37%), returnees (28%) and stateless people (14%). UNHCR's work seems to reflect also the growing urban displacement trend, as 62% of the responding staff in country operations work with refugees in urban areas, followed by 59% working in camps.

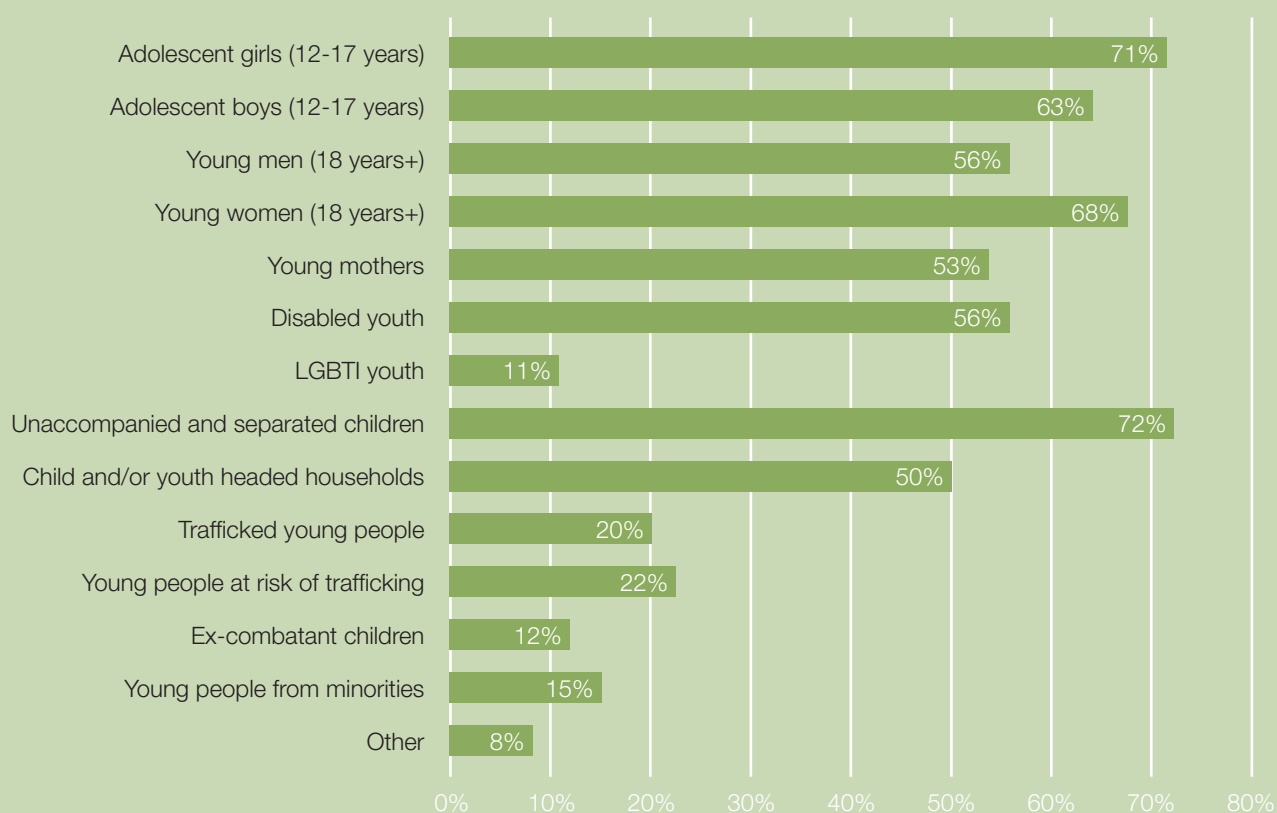
In terms of target groups, survey results suggest that 48% of UNHCR youth programmes target adolescents 12-17 years and 46% target youth over 18 years. Within these, particularly vulnerable groups who are most frequently targeted include: unaccompanied and separated children (72%); adolescent girls aged 12-17 years (71%); and young women over 18 years (68%). Groups of young people mentioned in the 'other category' include young people at risk of being recruited or exposed to gang violence, and out-of-school youth.

¹⁹⁷ UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Policy: Working with People and Communities for Equality and Protection. 1 June 2011, <http://www.unhcr.org/4e7757449.html>

◀ Ecuador / Carlos Andres, 16, and beneficiary of a UNHCR scholarship has been boarding at Colegio San Miguel for the past 2 years. He is from the community of Buen Samaritano. Both his parents are Colombian. His mother, a member of the Kitchwa ethnic group died 8 months ago, and his father has since returned to Colombia. His 5 brothers and sisters also live in Colombia, he is on his own in Puerto El Carmen. Carlos doesn't miss life in the community, says he has made good friends at school. When the school year has finished he will go visit his family in Colombia. Carlos says his favourite class is Natural Sciences and although he has another 3 years of study at the college, he hopes to graduate and move on to college and study to become a Nurse. He says he received no financial support for attending school from his father, therefore without the support of the UNHCR scholarship programme he would not be able to attend school. The programme provides 34 scholarships to students who would otherwise not be able to attend school. Scholarships cover tuition and boarding fees, procurement of beds, bedding and hygiene kits. UNHCR also supports the Mision Scalabriniana organisation, an Implementing Partner tasked with providing workshops to students at the school on weekends. © UNHCR / J. Tanner / May 2012

The survey also reveals that the majority of youth programmes are directed at both sexes: *'We don't offer separate programmes for male and female youth. Sometimes for other issues like SGBV of course we do separate discussions, but we can hold mixed programmes here'*.¹⁹⁸ However for both adolescents and over 18s, there are comparatively more programmes for girls than for boys (19% and 20% of respondents reported programs targeting adolescent girls and girls over 18, for only 14% and 12% of respondents reporting programs for boys and young males). Males over 18 could be overlooked, yet there are competing narratives whereby they profit far more than females from livelihood programs.

Figure 6: Targeted youth groups



Source: UNHCR staff survey based on 258 respondents.

¹⁹⁸ Interview with staff member, UNHCR Costa Rica, 13 June 2012

What are the key characteristics of UNHCR youth programming?

In general, youth programmes are minimal, short-lived and ad hoc, vary across countries ‘depending on the lead programme staff’¹⁹⁹ and the existing in-house expertise and interest. They are offered in sectors, depending on the priorities identified during the AGDM and participatory assessments, but heavily dependent on funding, staff capacity and presence of implementing partners.

While the survey asked about programmes specifically for youth, a few commented that youth are included in these programmes as part of the wider population, not as a primary target and that it is mostly Implementing Partners who are responsible for youth. All interviews conducted with UNHCR country offices confirmed this finding: *‘This office doesn’t have stand alone programmes [for youth]. Many programmes involve this category of people.’*²⁰⁰

What are the main types of youth programmes?

A list of programmes in the staff survey shows the most frequently mentioned types of youth programmes UNHCR country operations are delivering. Listed in order of frequency, the main programmes offered to youth cited by respondents are:

- vocational education
- HIV and AIDS prevention
- sexual and reproductive health
- rape counselling
- early marriage
- sports activities
- formal education at secondary level
- technical training for employment maternal child health care
- survival sex prevention
- cultural/arts activities
- life-skills training.

See Figure 7 for the complete figures.

Education programmes

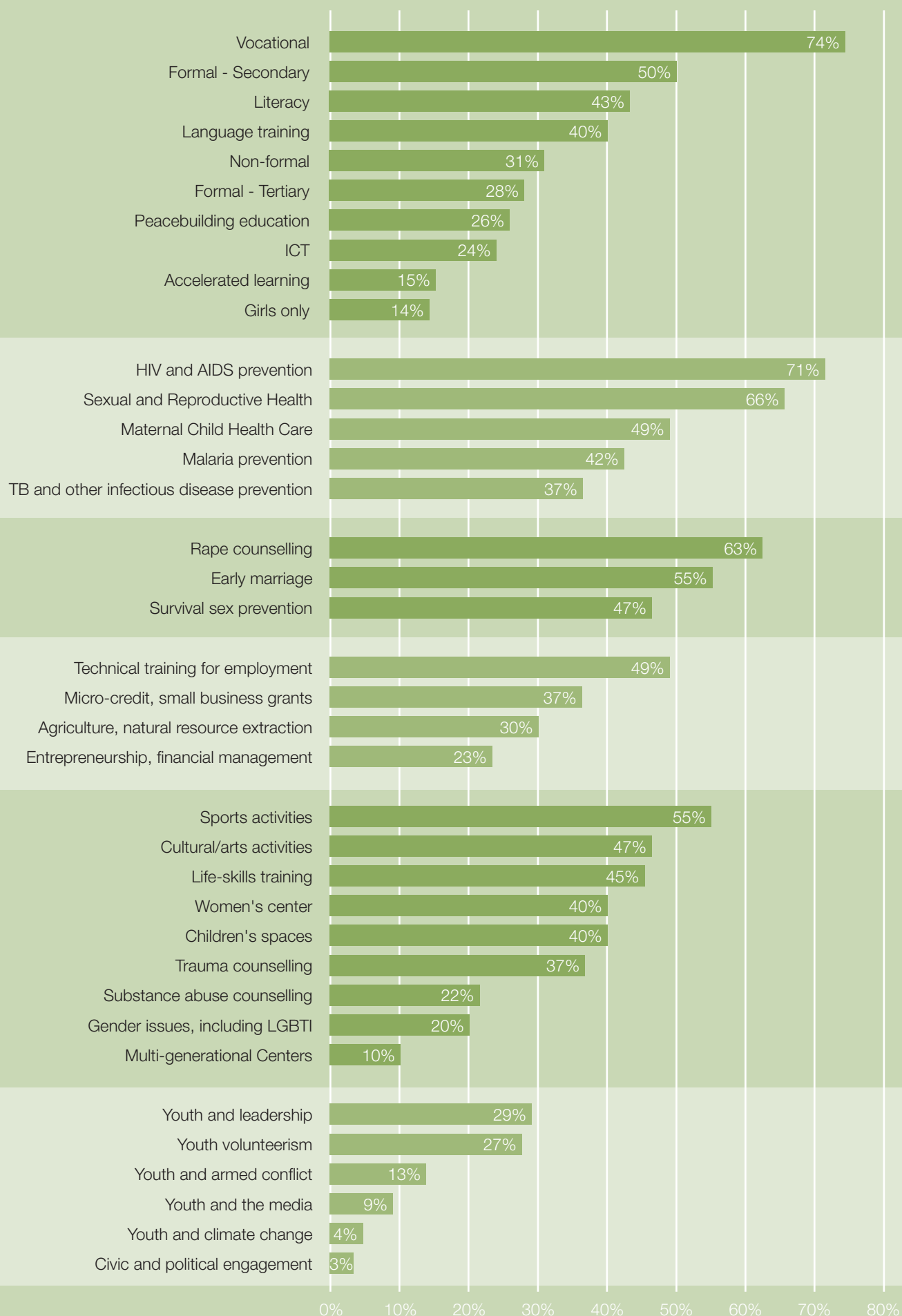
There are many reasons why youth cannot access secondary or tertiary education: lack of post-primary education opportunities, financial obstacles that prevent their families from providing school materials and transportation, and host governments’ restrictions in either accessing state schools or pursuing the desired higher education. Moreover, obstacles to working legally in the country of asylum encourages high levels of school drop-out and entry into the illegal workforce or the pursuit of alternative means of livelihoods such as recruitment into armed groups or survival sex. For example, in the Rohingya camps in Bangladesh, refugee youth can only enjoy education up to the 5th grade and they “question how this education will help them later and help them earn money, so this is a big challenge and there are a high number of school drop outs”²⁰¹. In Iran, Afghani refugee youth are allowed to enter state schools and universities but are not allowed to work afterwards: “statistics show that there are about 270,000 children in primary and secondary school and 3400 university students registered in Iranian universities. Iran limits the type of subjects they can study and the employment opportunities afterwards”²⁰².

¹⁹⁹ Survey respondent, Iraq (2012)

²⁰⁰ Interview with staff member, UNHCR Jordan, 12 June 2012

²⁰¹ Interview with staff members, UNHCR Bangladesh (2012)

²⁰² Interview with staff members, UNHCR Iran, 20 June 2012

Figure 7: Youth programmes


Source: UNHCR staff survey. Survey respondents were asked to select categories of programs they have implemented.

Continuing education is a particularly big challenge for displaced female youth, who are often relegated to household chores, are prevented from leaving the house when reaching puberty and are married off early, while boys' education is favoured in times of financial constraints. For example, recent UNHCR statistics from nine country operations in the East and Horn of Africa show that the average enrolment rate in grade 1 to 6 for refugee girls aged 6 to 11 years old is 62.7% and the average enrolment rate for girls aged 12 to 17 years old is 19.4%.²⁰³ This means that one in every three refugee girls in primary school in the region will continue to secondary education and that only one in every five refugee girls aged 12 to 17 is attending school.²⁰⁴

“ Until recently, UNHCR only systematized primary education, which is regarded as a basic right of children. Most children cannot further their education beyond primary level owing to budget constraints. In rare occasions, secondary education may be available, but the youth will still face lack of means for tertiary education. The attitude that prevails in UNHCR is to only consider the so called ‘lifesaving sector’, while education is key to preparing youths for their future and preventing recruitment into gangs and antisocial behaviours.

However displacement may also provide an opportunity for girls who never had education in the past. In Dollo Ado, Ethiopia, UNHCR staff mentioned that “Many of the youth have not been to school, especially girls, so they are starting from zero and are eager to learn”.²⁰⁵ As an example of an effort to enhance girls' enrolment and retention rate, UNHCR Ethiopia and partners, with the contribution of the UN Foundation, has launched in 2011 a three-year Girls Education programme, targeting a total of 4,348 Somali refugee girls (by year three) coming from the most deprived families. The project aims at increasing girls' enrolment in schools in three refugee camps in the eastern part of Ethiopia's Somali Region at the beginning of the academic year, by providing livelihoods opportunities to their families as well as school materials and scholarships and by retaining them through awards for good performance or attendance.²⁰⁶ Several respondents emphasized the need for ongoing investments in secondary and tertiary education.

As a durable solution, local integration is promoted also through educating youth about peace and cohabitation. In Costa Rica, the government's lack of understanding of refugee issues and the high levels of racism and xenophobia against refugees have pushed UNHCR to engage with the Ministry of Public Education through activities in schools trying to sensitise teachers on who is a refugee and what are his/her problems. The Ministry has recently set up a new programme called *Convivir* (Cohabitate), which promotes integration of all people, independent of their ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation etc. and UNHCR is trying to participate and promote refugee youth rights.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Onam O., Refugee Girls Education Achievements. UNHCR Regional Support Hub, Nairobi. Presented for International Women's Day, 8 March 2011, pg. 1

²⁰⁴ Ibid

²⁰⁵ Interview with staff member, UNHCR Dollo Ado, Ethiopia, 15 June 2012

²⁰⁶ UNHCR Ethiopia, Advancing The Education Of Somali Refugee Girls In Ethiopia – Project Proposal

²⁰⁷ Interview with staff member, UNHCR Costa Rica, 13 June 2012

Vocational training and livelihood programmes

The exclusion of young people from mainstream secondary and tertiary education means that often “the only possibility is vocational training”, also the most widespread type of youth programming at 74%. With education, youth widely mention livelihoods and vocational training opportunities as key priorities to their development and as a tool to independence and transition to adulthood. At the country level, current livelihoods programming is provided also through technical training for employment (39% of respondents), micro-credit and small business grants (37%), agriculture and natural resource extraction (30%) and entrepreneurship and financial management (23%).²⁰⁸

Vocational training and education can also be included in one package. For example, UNHCR in Dadaab, Kenya, offers training within the “YEP Centre – Youth Education Pack Programme which offers a year-long vocational and life skills training course to 250 youth each year”.²⁰⁹ Similarly, in Jordan, UNHCR offers a combination of vocational training and technical training for employment through IPs and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) (sewing, PC maintenance, English language, hairdressing).²¹⁰ In camp settings youth can also be employed to do general camp maintenance: UNHCR Bangladesh employs young refugee males “in camp maintenance opportunities including day labour for any type of work, such as shelter repairing or sanitation work, which gives them the chance to earn a little money”.²¹¹ Several respondents requested more funding for livelihoods programmes, specifically those which are tailored to opportunities available in the labour market. These programmes “should realistically help young people in the future”.²¹² This was mentioned several times by respondents, one noting that there was often an “interests vs. opportunities mismatch - IT skills vs. soap making skills for example”.²¹³ This mismatch between skills, job opportunities, and expectations can lead to false hope, breeding immense frustration among refugee young people, and may be a factor in young people deciding to join armies and armed militia when that is seen as the more secure livelihood option.²¹⁴ Vocational training therefore has its critics, if not followed by realistic employment opportunities: “We hardly have direct programming beyond normal education programs, and what we do have is superficial and unaccountable - e.g. livelihoods programs that are rarely evaluated for their effectiveness”.²¹⁵

“The youths have been able to make choices in their best interest and have championed voluntary community mobilization for the benefit of their communities, promoting peaceful coexistence, justice and development through self-help efforts. The livelihood initiatives for youth and women have contributed to establishment of self-reliance through crop farming and the birth of small rural-industries, like GARI production from Cassava, and are hoped to lead to sustainable development in these communities.

Survey Respondent, Sierra Leone

The importance of livelihoods opportunities is fully recognised by UNHCR: “livelihood interventions aim to protect the skills and productive assets that displaced people carry with them, to build the capacities they might need in a new environment, and to broaden opportunities in this new environment”.²¹⁶ Livelihoods are part and parcel of protection and self-sustainability so as to decrease dependence on external assistance and protect from exploitation.²¹⁷ In 2012 UNHCR will increase its livelihoods budget by 75% compared to 2010 and 14 country operations will receive \$4 to \$24 million for livelihood activities (although only 30% is expected to be funded). According to this new approach, primary targets will be women and youth, whose specific livelihoods and micro-entrepreneurial skills will contribute to community development, challenging traditional gender roles and support youth and women to move away from dangerous coping strategies.²¹⁸

²⁰⁸ Survey Analysis Report (2012)

²⁰⁹ Interview with staff member, Dadaab, 6 June 2012

²¹⁰ Interview with staff member, UNHCR Jordan, 12 June 2012

²¹¹ Interview with staff member, UNHCR Bangladesh (2012)

²¹² Interview with staff members, UNHCR Dollo Ado, Ethiopia, 15 June 2012

²¹³ Survey respondent, East and Horn of Africa (2012)

²¹⁴ (Brown 2010, Sommers 2006)

²¹⁵ Survey respondent, Afghanistan (2012)

²¹⁶ UNHCR, Refugees Mean Business: A Global Livelihood Initiative to Promote Entrepreneurship, July 2011

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

Protection programmes

For displaced people, protection means physical security, realisation of rights, rebuilding social structures and finding durable solutions.²¹⁹ Very few protection programmes are directly aimed at youth's specific needs and vulnerabilities. As for other programmes, youth are incorporated within the wider protection assistance targeting vulnerable groups, as described below.

Mental health and psycho-social support programmes. Currently, sports activities represent the most popular type of psychosocial programme offered to youth (55% of respondents), followed by arts and cultural activities (47%). In line with the perception of youth as a 'threat', sports programmes are often justified as a way "to keep the youths busy and away from bad social vices".²²⁰ Sports were also mentioned numerous times as an example of promotion of coexistence and social integration and friendship development between refugees and the host community. For example, a survey respondent from Kenya states: *"One of the best youth programs is sports. The sports have been designed in a way that it integrates all youth in the camp and those in the host community. These programmes are always there all time even when the schools are on holiday. The students have mobilized themselves in more than 500 team groups. The most motivating thing is that best teams are awarded. This programme has both refugee and host community youth to live harmoniously and are relating very well"*.

Sport is also perceived to enhance positive behaviour: *"I believe, and it has been proven in different contexts that sport is a key catalyst for development, civic behaviour and education. Investing in sport in our camps, urban settlements or other areas will be easy, fruitful and especially highly appreciated by the PoC"*.²²¹ UNHCR has run sports programmes for many years through various donors, such as the Nike Foundation and Microsoft which funded the Ninemillion Campaign in 2006, in order 'to provide more than nine million refugee children better access to quality education, sport and technology'.²²² Other sports donors mentioned by UNHCR Country Offices and IPs are the International Olympic Committee, and Barcelona FC, which has funded sports activities with Bhutanese youth in the refugee camps in Nepal.²²³

However sports activities have also their detractors and their sustainability is challenged. One respondent, for example, mentioned: *"Regarding sports, I think it's an activity that 'dies of natural causes'. It's so expensive and not so much sustainable in our situation. We have to build a team, find a coach, buy the gear, find a pitch and then after a while, someone leaves and the team changes...so it's a good programme for the kids, but it's difficult to make it sustainable. For us, it's more expensive than training! We did very nice activities with both boys and girls on football, volleyball etc., it went very well in the area of Jabal Al Hussein (Amman) through a very successful CBO which attracted lots of young people, but many left and the 2nd year the programme ended"*.²²⁴

In general, the survey and interviews with Country Offices identified gaps in the provision of specific mental health and psychosocial programmes for young people. Respondents observed how displaced youth often face several challenges, for example loss of opportunities and support networks, traumatic experiences, and 'displacement-cultural shock', which can in turn affect how they react to the environment they find themselves in. Support to youth-specific resilience mechanisms through mental health and psychosocial support can be very important. In Iran, for example, UNHCR officers who held discussions with young female and male Afghani refugees noticed that *'It sounds that they have no perspective for the future, yet, it's amazing how they fight to get as much as possible from the minimum they have despite their situation and the responsibilities that they have to take on now'*.²²⁵

²¹⁹ UNHCR (2008). A Community Based Approach in UNHCR Operations. Geneva: UNHCR

²²⁰ Survey respondent, Zambia (2012)

²²¹ Survey respondent from Iraq

²²² UNHCR, Ninemillion.org Campaign Progress Report, 2008-9, p. 1

²²³ Interview with staff member, Caritas Nepal,

²²⁴ Interview respondent, Amman

²²⁵ Interview with staff members, UNHCR Iran, 20 June 2012

Other examples of psychosocial programmes that combine sports and recreational activities offered as part of a wider package of life-skills and recreational services come from Malaysia and Kenya:

- UNHCR in Malaysia is offering a number of comprehensive programmes targeting youth, which include sports and other themes;
- the Mara Youth Centre Project offering English class, music and sports targeting more than 200 youths age 10-31 years;
- the Shan Youth Development Project offering culinary, sports and informal educational for about 50 youths below 18;
- the Kilawmtana Youth Project offering Music, IT and sports program to about 25 youths, below 18 years of age; and
- the Dai Youth Centre Project offering IT, English, counselling, sports & workshop session on selected topics to about 30 youths, age 14-22;
- the Somali Youth Development Project offers tailoring class for girls, photography for boys and girls, entrepreneurship lessons and leadership program targeting about 30 youths below 22 years old.²²⁶

“ We have a programme of street soccer in a difficult area in the country. Where youth refugees have been involved, the positive impact that this project has with the refugee population as well as with local community has decreased discriminatory attitudes towards refugee population in the country.

Survey Respondent, Ecuador

Similarly in Kakuma camp there are four youth centres where youth 15-24 years old can participate in cultural, recreational and indoors games, social activities and benefit from counselling on substance abuse and trauma. The centres provide group counselling including teenage mothers. Moreover 10,720 youth (9,597 male and 1,123 female) are engaged in sport clubs. These clubs also offer capacity building in leadership skills, peer counselling, coaching and refereeing and socialization skills as integral part of these activities. In another project 2,731 youth (2,020 male and 711 female) participate in the cultural clubs engaged in drama, music, dance, and poetry.²²⁷

Sexual and gender based violence programmes. The elimination of SGBV and women’s empowerment are an important component of UNHCR’s protection activities in response to the recognition that equality is a basic human right.²²⁸ UNHCR work includes legal and psychosocial counselling, medical assistance, awareness raising activities as well as the inclusion of men and boys in combating SGBV.²²⁹ Among survey respondents, 63% are currently running rape counselling activities, 55% focus on early marriage and 47% on survival sex prevention. Many respondents mentioned how SGBV programmes in their country operations targeted youth (or vulnerable groups of youth) if identified as a vulnerable group through the AGDM assessments or participatory assessments. It is relevant to note that recent statistics have indicated that 50% to 90% of SGBV survivors are 16 or under, and that accessing services for this group is particularly challenging due to stigma and cultural and social norms, which is compounded by the lack of SGBV response particularly targeting this group.

²²⁶ Examples from the survey respondent from Malaysia and Kenya

²²⁷ Email from staff member UNHCR Sub-Office Kakuma, Kenya

²²⁸ UNHCR: Division of International Protection, Action against Gender based Violence. UNHCR: Geneva, June 2011, <http://goo.gl/SNT75>

²²⁹ Ibid.

However, a few examples of good practice were offered:

- pre-marriage counselling to avoid inter-family marriage, prevent early marriage and promote reproductive health in Iran²³⁰;
- working with local organisations in the urban context during the 16 Days of Activism in Kenya;
- engaging boys and men in the fight against SGBV in Kenya and in Thailand: and,
- the existence of 239 male youth support group members in Kakuma camp in Kenya, who identify and refer survivors of SGBV for support, conduct awareness on human rights and SGBV, and engage other youth in the community.²³¹

UNHCR country offices are tasked to set up mechanisms to ensure the monitoring, reporting, adequate response and staff capacity building around, *inter alia*, SGBV issues. This is done through a number of activities such as collecting data and trends on SGBV or setting in place and regularly monitoring Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).²³² AGDM Country Assessments show whether country offices have met, or not, their accountability results and must provide examples of success and impact.

The Country Assessments reviewed for this research (Nepal, Iran, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, and Jordan) are not explicit in whether specific SGBV issues of youth are met. This is due to the fact that youth needs are incorporated in other sub-categories, such as ‘enhanced protection of women’, ‘enhanced protection of children’ and ‘enhanced protection of other Persons of Concern’.²³³ As a survey respondent from Colombia demonstrates: *“Our operation does not have specific [SGBV] programmes for youth. This age group is targeted for SGBV program as a prioritised group among other age groups”*.

Sexual and reproductive health including HIV/AIDS programmes. After vocational training, health-care programmes (in particular HIV/AIDS prevention, sexual and reproductive health and maternal and child healthcare) were mentioned as key areas that also target youth (respectively 71%, 66% and 49% of respondents).²³⁴ During this study, we have come across few examples of youth-specific health programmes. Box 3 provides an example from Kakuma camp, where activities include information on contagious diseases, including HIV/AIDS and adolescent SRH.

Staff participating in this research have remarked explicitly on the importance of focusing on male and female displaced youth’s specific health, especially sexual and reproductive health needs. For example, a respondent from Namibia stated: *“Mainly the youth in our operation are affected by early sexual activities resulting in teenage pregnancy. This behaviour results in school drop-out especially for the girl child. Therefore specific sexual and reproductive health programmes targeting the girl-child and the youth in general has been set in place to address this situation. The programme is jointly funded by UNHCR and UNFPA”*. Also, accessing SRH services can be particularly challenging – it might even be prohibited – for unmarried young women due to cultural and social norms. Ensuring access to these services may require very sensitive, targeted programming, for instance through the use of youth-only hours. As for other themes, youth are generally targeted as part of the wider healthcare programming rather than a specific target group.

“ Involving youths in HIV and AIDS, SGBV prevention and response has helped in creating awareness on the issue in the community and prioritising support to clients and survivors. This also helped create a youth centre that is multi-functional in one of the refugee settlements.

Survey Respondent, Uganda

²³⁰ Survey respondent from Iran

²³¹ Email from staff member UNHCR Sub-Office Kakuma, Kenya

²³² AGDM Country Assessments were kindly forwarded by UNHCR’s Community Services Section

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Survey Analysis Report (2012)

In many different contexts, national healthcare systems may be inaccessible to displaced populations. Therefore UNHCR has been working with national governments to ensure that basic health needs of displaced populations are met. For example, UNHCR Iran has partnered with the Iranian Ministry of Health to provide access to comprehensive Primary Health Care (PHC) to refugees, at the same level of services for nationals, through health houses in urban and settlement areas.²³⁵ It has also started “a new programme in pre-marriage consultations. In Afghan society there are many inter-family marriages and lots of genetic diseases. So we started these consultations with the pretext to encourage people to do blood tests but also to talk about SRH, etc., so this is a small project targeting youth/teenagers. I am very proud of this project”.²³⁶

A few UNHCR staff commented that good programming includes free access to health services, including adolescent sexual and reproductive health and information on HIV/AIDS in a way that is accessible, acceptable and appropriate, for example, through drama or music groups that disseminate useful information.²³⁷

Box 3: Sexual and Reproductive Health Programmes for Youth in Kakuma Camp, Kenya

As at 24 May 2012, the youth population 15 to 24 years old in Kakuma camp is 27,202 individuals (9,468 female and 16,176 male. They make up 28.2% of the total population (96,359). Youth have access to all health services provided in the camp. Some of the adolescent and youth targeted services include:

- Adolescence sexual and reproductive health services (information on family planning to avoid unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion or poor pregnancy outcome);
- HIV/AIDS prevention and control programs targeting the youth in school and out of school (promotion of abstinence from sex until marriage or condom use). Condom dispenses are installed in various parts of the camp for free access. Youth are also encouraged to know their status with regards to HIV and HIV counselling and testing at community as well as at the health facilities levels are provided; provision of treatment, care for sexually transmitted infections and supplementary feeding for all HIV infected individuals, including the youth;
- Provisions of health education to youths in schools on various health aspects, such as personal hygiene, community hygiene and prevention of diseases of epidemic potential, such as malaria, bloody and watery diarrhoea.

Youth empowerment programmes

Youth leadership and youth volunteerism were the two most frequently mentioned types of youth empowerment programming (29% and 27% of respondents respectively), but in general youth empowerment programmes were the least selected among all different types of programming targeting youth. Few specific programs directed at youth empowerment arose from the data collected for this research, although several examples of good practice were provided, including inter-ethnic or inter-cultural integration programmes, boy scouts / girl guides, youth committees, youth centres, and engagement in Y-Peer activities. Among activities identified in our research, participation of youth in the programming cycle emerges as good practice.

²³⁵ UNHCR Iran, Health Interventions Achievements. 2011

²³⁷ Survey respondent from HQ

²³⁶ Interview with staff members, UNHCR Iran, 20 June 2012

In Kakuma Camp, youth are engaged in empowerment activities including civic and leadership training and participation in decision making. Youth are involved in needs assessment, programme design and planning, implementation, mid-year review of the operation and also attend monthly leaders' meetings with partners from government, IPs and UNHCR.²³⁸ In DRC, girls are included in empowerment and capacity building programmes targeting women.²³⁹ In Egypt, Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA) holds a youth group which was originally intended for Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASCs). Youth are encouraged to express their opinions on the improvement of programmes and various stakeholders are invited to listen to presentations of needs. According to a UNHCR staff member, *"This programming is positive insofar as it gave youth a means of self-expression and enabled them to create change in the services available to them (and facilitate their own), and created a useful channel of communication between them and service-providing organizations"*.²⁴⁰ In response to a question on how they can contribute to their communities, two 14 years old Afghani girls, who eagerly wanted to participate in the consultations, stated that 'first I should empower myself and then by doing this, I contribute to the community'.²⁴¹

Box 4: Youth Friendly Centre Members Mentoring Children at Risk in Nepal

In the Bhutanese refugee camps in eastern Nepal, youth have their own organisations in each camp. Established in 2006, the Youth Friendly Centre (YFC) is a 'platform where youth can engage in positive initiatives, fostering an environment for personal growth and community development through volunteering and becoming active agents in their communities.' It is open to all Bhutanese refugee youth between the age of 18 and 25 years and activities are 'for educational, social and recreational purposes.'

Since 2011, YFC members have been contributing to social protection interventions in the camps by supporting vulnerable children. Children 'at risk' face reduced coping skills and are 'more likely to engage in negative behaviours thus needing external assistance to build their capacity to manage their problems. The Mentor-Mentee programme targets those 'children at risk', who 'without further support will be unable to reach their potential.' Youth from the camp, mainly selected through the YFCs, act as mentors to children at risk aged 10 -16 years. With support from school counsellors and permission from mentees' guardians, the youth mentors spend an average of four hours per week with their mentee over a period of at least six months. The mentees are children at risk, 'who have attendance problems in school, have dropped out or are at risk of dropping out of school, children with substance abuse problems or those displaying 'delinquent' behaviours.'

The aim of the Mentor-Mentee programme is to increase 'resilience towards protection concerns for vulnerable children residing in the Bhutanese refugee camps' and 'to increase vulnerable children's self-esteem and sense of well-being and to reduce the risk of vulnerable children engaging in negative behaviours.' The Mentor is 'like a big brother or a big sister who accompanies and supports a child at risk.' The 2011 evaluation of the Mentor-Mentee programme, which included 57 pairs, found that pairs engaged in sports and play activities, mentees shared problems and sought guidance, and mentors provided one-to-one academic tuition. The mentees reported a number of personal improvements following their participation in the programme including socialising with friends and family, enrolment in or improvement in school attendance, and avoiding damaging substances (e.g. cigarettes and gutkha – betel nut). UNHCR staff report that although 'the programme is to address issues in children/youth, the engagement of older youth as positive role models also presents a learning opportunity' for them.

Sources: UNHCR Nepal staff and Caritas Nepal staff and programmes documents – evaluation and proposal.

²³⁸ Email from staff member UNHCR Sub-Office Kakuma, Kenya

²⁴⁰ Survey respondent from Egypt

²³⁹ Survey respondent from DRC

²⁴¹ Ibid

Conclusion: Youth Falling Through the Cracks?

The section above has provided a summary of the current UNHCR's engagement with displaced youth in different settings. There are many examples of good practice to draw from. However, some experts suggest that the segmentation of interventions to support youth into different sectors is less helpful than taking a more holistic approach.²⁴² This was confirmed in several comments from survey respondents observing that *'In theory, [at] highlighting the plight of youth, UNHCR is good. However, prioritising youth programmes and implementing them is a challenge. The youth fall within the cracks, especially looking at how the budget / sectors are structured'*.²⁴³

This may be due to varying concepts of childhood and youth and a lack of an agreed youth definition, assumptions adopted by staff about youth needs, and the automatic compartmentalisation of young people into operational categories. One survey respondent, for example, commented that 'the concept of 'youth' in UNHCR is misunderstood and 'automatically translated' into refugee children issues and (primary) educational issues'. Another suggested that "More guidance is necessary for implementation of Youth Programmes. The definition of youth (age group) is necessary. Currently some youth are covered under children's programmes, vocational skills training programmes with other adult refugees, under health programmes etc". This may also be the reason why 60% of survey respondents thought that UNHCR does a fair job at providing appropriate programmes for youth, with education, particularly primary education and vocational training, being the most mentioned. One third of the survey respondents (29%), think that UNHCR does a poor job of providing appropriate programmes for youth, particularly beyond education, and only 11% thought that UNHCR does an excellent job.

In the case of IDP youth, the operationalisation of the humanitarian response in Clusters, and the fact that IDP protection is primarily the responsibility of the state, means that 'While the needs of most of the IDP and returnee youths do not fall under UNHCR's mandate, they are left out of the UNHCR programmes".

In general, a key element of most of the respondent's comments about examples of good practice is the need to develop comprehensive youth programming, which balances psychosocial well-being through both sports or cultural activities where coping, leadership or other impacts are measured and the traditional sectors of health, livelihoods, education, etc.

Box 5: What makes a good youth programme?

Staff members identified good youth programming as:

- Based on assessment of youth needs
- Targeted
- Budget allocations meet youth needs and expectations
- Sustainable
- Has clear, measurable and time-bound objectives and indicators
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place
- High levels of youth participation at all stages of the programme
- Youth have a sense of ownership, as do the wider community
- Youth recognize the benefits of the program
- Involves youth from different backgrounds (using AGDM)
- Young people are able to use the skills acquired to be self-reliant
- Supports and recognises youth abilities, strengths and capacities to contribute to community protection and support activities
- It has a 'multiplier effect'
- Involves displaced and host community youth
- Links displaced youth to host country national fora and youth participation structures
- Involves multi-sectoral actors

²⁴² Interviews with Jo Boyden and Marc Sommers (2012)

²⁴³ Survey respondent, Ethiopia (2012)



8. Conclusions: Why are Youth Invisible?

Displaced youth may well constitute a majority within the population of concern to UNHCR, but because of the lack of clarity of concept, limited policy focus, little dedicated funding and limited comprehensive youth programming, this segment of displaced populations has become largely invisible within UNHCR. We conclude by summarising the conceptual, institutional and operational reasons behind this invisibility of youth, and offering recommendations on how to better serve displaced young people by making their needs, capacities and aspirations visible.

Conceptual

As highlighted in the literature review, there is no universally agreed definition of youth. Where age criteria exist, these vary across organisations, regions and countries. Although 42% of survey respondents report using the UN definition of youth as those aged 15-24 years, there are various age categories adhered to in different UNHCR country offices, which take account of host country government practices, as well as displaced communities' own understandings of this group. While it is important to be aware of cultural variations in concepts of youth and their social roles, **the lack of organisational clarity within UNHCR of who youth are contributes to the invisibility of this social category amongst populations of concern.**

In the absence of a shared definition of youth as a particular age or social group, **youth are counted in statistics as either children or adults**. Age-disaggregated data is an important tool used by UNHCR to plan, implement and monitor protection and assistance activities for populations of concern, and in the absence of statistics on youth, they are being incorporated into either children's or adults programmes and services. This diverts attention from the support young people may need as they transition to adulthood, particularly when situations of displacement have disrupted such processes.

In addition to the lack of agreed upon social and age criteria for defining youth, misperceptions of young people tend to homogenise this very diverse group. The international discourse on youth is pervaded by **stereotypes of youth as representing both a threat and a promise for the future**. The widespread influence of 'youth bulge' theories suggesting that countries with large youth populations, and high levels of youth unemployment are more likely to experience civil conflict than others, fuels perceptions of (particularly male) youth as potentially violent, dangerous and disruptive. And it overlooks the fact that, when appropriately engaged and provided with opportunities, youth can be a driver of economic development.

Nonetheless, these stereotypes are often presented as reasons for why organisations should engage with youth. Although most of UNHCR's public documents avoid such justifications for offering support for displaced adolescents and youth, some country level UNHCR and partner programme reports and proposals rely on this argument. This suggests that stereotyped ideas about youth may underpin local policy and programmes towards this group. Adherence to these stereotypes, results in a lack of attention to the diverse needs of different groups of youth from different gender, ethnic, national, ability and age groups, and focuses on the minority of young people who may engage in violent or criminal actions.

These stereotypes and the emphasis on young people's current position, rather than actual potential, may also obscure recognition of the valuable contributions that many displaced young people are currently making towards ensuring their family and community's wellbeing. Consequently, **young people's huge potential in identifying needs, finding solutions, and offering peer and community support is rendered invisible**. However, the young people consulted as part of this review expressed their strong desires to share their views, develop their own organisations to help their communities, and to be listened to by adults and agencies supporting them.

Institutional

Evidence from the literature, young people, the survey of UNHCR staff, and interviews with UNHCR and implementing partners suggest that although certain young people face particular risks of harm, **as a group youth are not perceived to be vulnerable and so they are not prioritised by agencies** supporting large populations of concern with limited resources. For male youth, risks include harassment from host community members and police while working illegally to provide for their families. Many girls and young women are expected to perform a high level of household tasks, and may experience pressure to marry early. The literature documents that male and female's needed contributions to household income and work frequently lead to a disruption of schooling, limiting their longer term potential.²⁴⁴

²⁴⁴ Women's Refugee Commission (2012), *Arrested Development: Colombian Youth in Panama*. NY: Women's Refugee Commission; Women's Refugee Commission (2011), *Bright Lights, Big City. Urban Refugees Struggle to Make a Living in New Delhi*. NY: Women's Refugee Commission; Women's Refugee Commission (2011), *Dawn in the City. Guidance for Achieving Urban Refugee Self-Reliance*. NY: Women's Refugee Commission.

These issues specifically have an impact on young people as they transition to adulthood, limiting their participation in social, educational and learning opportunities. Although some young people, who are categorised as belonging to vulnerable or at risk groups, such as adolescent girls, UASC, disabled young people or former child soldiers may be targeted with specific services and support, in general youth are not viewed as a priority group within UNHCR, and there are no youth-specific indicators within UNHCR's results based framework system. The low priority accorded by UNHCR to youth is also evidenced by the lack of data, indicators, policies and strategies for this group.

The constraints shared by youth consulted in focus groups show that due to the employment restrictions and containment policies of governments in countries of asylum, young people suffer limitations on their current education and livelihood opportunities, which in turn impacts on their abilities to prepare for and imagine a future for themselves. Despite the particular challenges these barriers create for young people, **within UNHCR there are no institutional policies, strategies or guidelines that address engagement with youth** in order to enable staff to engage in strategic and long-term planning for displaced youth.

A number of UNHCR staff raised the issue of a **lack of qualified personnel within the agency and amongst partner organizations**, who have the experience and skills necessary to both effectively meet youth's specific protection and wellbeing needs, and to explore innovative ways of building on young people's resources and capacities through working with youth organizations.

Operational

There are few programmes targeting youth, who are mostly incorporated in programmes targeting children or adults. Four of five survey respondents feel that this is due to the **lack of funding allocated for youth programmes**. The few UNHCR staff members whose roles are focused specifically on displaced youth must work alongside other sectors (e.g. child protection, education, or community mobilisation) in order to 'squeeze' programmes for youth into these budget headings. Since youth-focused staff must advocate for the specific needs of youth to be addressed through other sectors' initiatives and budgets, it seems likely that in operations without a youth focal point their views may be rendered less visible. The survey data and our interviews suggest that most operations do not have staff members who are solely dedicated to working with youth, although some have youth focal points with additional areas of responsibility. Even when UNHCR are able to draw on AGDM tools, such as participatory assessments to identify youth concerns, the lack of allocated funding renders it difficult to offer effective responses.

A further impact of the lack of funding allocated to youth programmes is the **segmentation of youth programmes across different sectors**. One third (29%) of survey respondents believes that UNHCR does a poor job in providing appropriate programmes for youth. This may be partly because 40% of respondents reported working 'indirectly' with youth, since youth are incorporated into programmes for adults and children, across various other sectors. Although interviews and focus groups revealed that both UNHCR staff and young people themselves believe that displaced youth have specific needs and priorities, which may be different from those of children and adults, **there are few sustainable and holistic programmes targeting youth which respond to their concerns, build their capacities and help them secure their future aspirations**.

9. Recommendations

UNHCR could establish a Youth Steering Group to promote the visibility of youth within the agency's programmes, and make recommendations to strengthen the response to young people's protection and wellbeing. The Steering Group should be under the direction of a high-ranking and senior manager in order to ensure organization-wide participation and the elevated profile for youth. The Steering Group would be responsible for creating a Youth Action Plan to enable UNHCR to respond to the specific needs of young people in displacement situations. The Youth Steering Group would select pilot countries for the implementation of the Youth Action Plan. Elements of the Youth Action Plan are as follows:

- 1 Recognise youth as a social group/life stage with particular needs that are distinct from those of younger children and adults, while also acknowledging the diversity within the vast category of youth (including differences between young men and women, younger and older youth, those in and out of school, married and unmarried, disabled, LGBTI young people and UASC). This will enable better knowledge and understanding of the various perspectives and experiences of different groups of young people and will ensure that the needs of certain groups are adequately covered in UNHCR's programmes.
- 2 Recognise and build on young people's present capacities and the valuable contributions they are already making to their family and community's wellbeing. This includes engaging with youth as community leaders and activists of today by developing stronger partnerships with youth-initiated organisations. Publish guidelines for UNHCR and partners on how to effectively engage youth groups as partners in community support, protection and advocacy activities. Methods and implementation models can be shared amongst UNHCR operations and partners.
- 3 UNHCR should gather more information on young people's self-initiated groups to find out how they are working with other community members and how UNHCR could support their development. UNHCR should develop a field manual and other tools written expressly for the organizational capacity building of youth groups. It could include chapters on basic governance, refugee and human rights, community building, and basic business skills for small organizations.
- 4 Promote direct engagement with youth to align protection with their ongoing transitions and concerns. Recognise and listen to youth voices and respond to their challenges and priorities. In addition to engaging with youth groups and leaders, communicate frequently with young people who may not be affiliated with a youth group and verify that they are accounted for in UNHCR's core protection activities.
- 5 Formalise and agree upon a definition of youth and start collecting baseline data from Pro-Gres and modified population statistics in UNHCR on this demographic group.
- 6 However, at the operational level allow staff flexibility in age ranges and gendered definitions to be included in programming. This will enable country offices to engage with youth in a way that respects local definitions and social understandings of this group.

-
- 7 To better engage with and meet the needs of displaced youth, disseminate guidelines and provide training for UNHCR staff. Include the many culture and context driven definitions of youth and emerging prominence of youth in both numbers and agents for political and social change in this guidance.
-
- 8 Transition beyond single issue programming for youth, e.g., HIV/AIDs awareness for youth, and offer a more comprehensive youth strategy for country operations all the while ensuring that the current policies on Child Protection, Education, and Gender Based Violence are clearly referenced. Provide holistic guidelines and training materials on the needs pertaining to young people. Through renewed data collection improve monitoring and evaluation of programmatic responses targeting youth using already existing tools such as the AGDM or revised indicators measuring youth's well-being;
-
- 9 Based on the findings from focus groups, UNHCR should respond to the following needs:
- Safe and dignified livelihoods, including training and advocacy with host governments for employment rights and freedom of movement.
 - Secure access to post-primary education for young people.
 - Assist young people to develop better relationships with host community members through joint programmes and initiatives.
 - Work with young people to find long-term solutions to their situation.
-
- 10 Youth is an important transitional stage that lasts beyond the one year budget cycle. UNHCR operations, under the monitoring of the Youth Steering Group, should strive to ensure that youth programming endures despite budgetary constraints. In the face of severe budgetary restrictions, youth should be prioritized as auxiliary implementers or community supporters of remaining programmes be they Feeding, WASH or Shelter programmes.

Annex 1:

Local Definitions of Youth

Where	Who	Language definition	Age	Roles/Responsibilities
Jordan	Iraqi, Syrian male refugees	Shaab (male); pl: Shabaab Rijaal: men	17-18, and up to 60 years	A person who has an opinion or a certain role; youth study and work; anyone is youth, as long as he works and has energy
	Iraqi, Syrian female refugees	Not given	18-years-old and above 15-years-old and above	This definition for females living in urban communities where early marriage is common
Iran	Afghani refugee boys	Not given		Youth is not necessarily related to certain age or life stage, it is rather responsibilities that define our role. As youth, we become breadwinners (boys) and care takers (girls) of the family since early age (sometimes starting from 7; youth are transformed to adults through marriage, followed by having children, often at early age
	Afghani refugee girls	Not given		
Bangladesh	Rohingya refugee youth from Myanmar/ Burma	Khashya poya, Zabok/Zaboti, Jobok, Juyan Maya paa, Kuchuya Maya poa	13-30 years old	Capable to work; are called to do laborious/ hard work; think by themselves, do social activities; involvement in social work; automatically responsible; getting responsibilities: considering marital status/ having child and family responsibilities
Kenya	Somali refugee youth	Dallinyeero Dalagago Danieyaro	12-25 years old	Active person; growing person Someone new and growing Strong and energetic people
			18 to 35 years old	In general: youth show guidance to other young people; to encourage young students to go to schools and learn; promoting peace and socio-economic development of the community; contributing income to their families;
	Ethiopian refugee youth	Woppe		A person who can do anything
	Sudanese refugee youth	Lia		Someone who is grown or who has a capacity
Ethiopia	Somali male refugee youth	Iskabla, Iskabol	18-40 years 18-25 years	Bachelor; matured persons, not married, do not have a house of their own and still lives with the parents. He/ she however does not sleep with the parents
		Dhalanyara	below 30 years	A young male who shave his hair in a particular way; girls who wear certain types of clothes
		Iskoris	12 - 30 years	Youth also work for the family and bring bread at home; take care of our young or old sisters;
	Somali female refugee youth		around 20 years 14 to 24	A girls is a youth as soon as she menstruates and some starts at 12 years For men start thinking and wanting to sleep with women

Annex 2:

English & French Final Survey

EAST & HORN OF AFRICA part 1/2	Formal - Secondary	Formal - Tertiary	Non-formal	Vocational	Accelerated learning	ICT	Language training	Literacy	Girls only	Peacebuilding education	Multi-generational Centers	Life-skills training	Sports activities	Cultural/arts activities	Gender issues, including LGBTI	Children's spaces	Women's center	Substance abuse counseling	Trauma counseling
	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial								
Country Office	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial								
Chad	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Djibouti				x	x				x				x	x					
Eritrea	x	x											x	x		x	x		
Ethiopia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Kenya	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Somalia	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x
South Sudan			x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sudan	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Uganda	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

	Livelihoods				SGBV			Health Care					Youth Empowerment						Other Youth Activities
	Agriculture, natural resource extraction	Entrepreneurship, financial management	Micro-credit, small business grants	Technical training for employment	Survival sex prevention	Rape counselling	Early marriage	HIV and AIDS prevention	Malaria prevention	TB and other infectious disease prevention	Maternal Child Health Care	Sexual and Reproductive Health	Civic and political engagement	Youth volunteerism	Youth and leadership	Youth and the media	Youth and armed conflict	Youth and climate change	
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Academic scholarship for college students (DAFI). RAS.
		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x						
							x	x			x	x							
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Girl Guides
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x		x			
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x					
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x			Youth Committees in the camps
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				Action for Rights of Child: Sensitisation to create awareness Sanitary Materials for the Girls and Women:

Table continue on next page

EAST & HORN OF AFRICA part 2/2	
Country Office	Partners
Chad	Refugee Children and Vulnerable Citizens, Consortium Initiatives, HIAS, CORD, SECADEV, CARE, JRS, ADESK, CNAAR, UNICEF, AFRICARE, ASTBEF/IPPF, ACRA, FLM/ACT
Djibouti	APEF, CARE international, LWF, UNFD (Union National des Femme Djiboutiennes)
Eritrea	
Ethiopia	JRS, IRC, Save the Children, African Humanitarian Action (AHA), Lutheran World Federation, DRC, Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA), Mother & Child Development Organisation (MCDO), Ethiopian Orthodox Church Aid (DICAC)
Kenya	Lutheran World Federation (LWF), National Council Of churches of Kenya (NCCK), Windle Trust Kenya (WTK), Don Bosco Vocational Training Centre-Kakuma, Jesuit Refugee Service, IRC, Don Bosco, CARE, GIZ, Youth associations in camps, Film Aid, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Danish Refugee Council, Africa Development and Emmergency Organization (ADEO), CDTD for Urban Refugees
Somalia	GRT, WAWA, Havoyoco Youth Development, Intersos, Save the Children, GECPD
South Sudan	UNICEF, WVI, Save the children, INTERSOS, Denis Refugee Council (DRC), GOAL, Kajo Keji AIDS Programme
Sudan	Government counter part, Ministries of Youth and Social Welfare, Commissioner for Refugees, Save the Children Sweden, Windle Trust International, Human Appeal International - Sudan, Ministry of Social Welfare, NMIAD, UNHCR DI, InterSoS, SCRS, TDO, TGH, TdH foundation, War Child Canada, Child Development Foundation.
Uganda	Danish Refugee Council (DRC), American Refugee Council, Finnish Refugee Council, ASAM, HRDF, District Local Governments (Community Services Department), Office of the Prime Minister-Refugee Desk, Right to Play, GIZ, Aktion Africa Hilfe International, SCF UK, Nsamizi Training Institute for Social Development (NTISD) Inter Aid Uganda

	Refugees in camps	Urban refugees	IDPs in camps	IDPs in urban centers	Returnees	Adolescent girls (12-17 years)	Adolescent boys (12-17 years)	Young men (18 years+)	Young women (18 years+)	Young mothers	Disabled youth	LGBT youth	Unaccompanied and separated children	Child and/or youth headed households	Trafficked young people	Young people at risk of trafficking	Ex-combatant children	Young people from minorities	
	Wider Target Group					Specific Target Group													Other Target Groups
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
	x	x		x		x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	
	x	x				x	x		x		x		x	x					
	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	The annual program covers youth in a general way, we also fund specific education programmes for girls and activities connected with prevention and response to problems of sexual violence against women and girls.
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x		
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	

CENTRAL AFRICA & THE GREAT LAKES part 1/2	Formal - Secondary	Formal - Tertiary	Non-formal	Vocational	Accelerated learning	ICT	Language training	Literacy	Girls only	Peacebuilding education	Multi-generational Centers	Life-skills training	Sports activities	Cultural/arts activities	Gender issues, including LGBTI	Children's spaces	Women's center	Substance abuse counselling	Trauma counselling
	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial								
Country Office	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial								
Burundi	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Cameroon	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Central African Republic	x			x						x	x		x	x			x	x	x
DRC	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Rwanda	x	x		x		x			x			x	x	x	x				
Tanzania	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

	Livelihoods				SGBV			Health Care					Youth Empowerment						Other Youth Activities
	Agriculture, natural resource extraction	Entrepreneurship, financial management	Micro-credit, small business grants	Technical training for employment	Survival sex prevention	Rape counselling	Early marriage	HIV and AIDS prevention	Malaria prevention	TB and other infectious disease prevention	Maternal Child Health Care	Sexual and Reproductive Health	Civic and political engagement	Youth volunteerism	Youth and leadership	Youth and the media	Youth and armed conflict	Youth and climate change	
	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x							
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x				Youth and the respect for the environment. Youth and morality. Youth and apprenticeship to small trades (out of school youth).
	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x						No empowerment programmes are in place
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x		
			x	x	x	x		x	x		x								
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x				

Table continue on next page

CENTRAL AFRICA & THE GREAT LAKES

part 2/2

Country Office

Partners

Burundi

International Rescue Committee, RET, AHA, comité des jeunes, clubs des jeunes, GIZ, Federation Handicap International (FHI)

Cameroon

Ministère de la Promotion Feminine Ministère de la Jeunesse, ADRA, PLAN, Youth Business, Cameroon Association de Lutte contre les Violences faites aux Femmes, Public Concern, ALVF, FICR/CRC les comités de jeunes au sein des comité représentatifs des réfugiés

Central African Republic

COOPI, CSSI, IMC, TRIANGE GH, Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés, MERLIN, Comité des jeunes réfugiés, Communauté des Soeurs

DRC

GIZ, CAMPS and Community Networks, Women for Women International, PLD, Ministère de la Justice, Ministère des Affaires Sociales, Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire Secondaire et Professionnel, ERUKIN (Equipe d'encadrement des Réfugiés urbains de Kinshasa, AIDES (Action pour l'Intervention et l'Encadrement Social), Les organisations communautaires et les les cellules de base (familles respectives) pour chaque individu, CEMIR International, Medecins d'Afrique, La Federation internationale de la Croix Rouge (FICR) qui travaille en collaboration avec la Croix Rouge Congolaise (CRC)

Rwanda

Africa Humanitarian Action, American Refugee Committee, AVSI, JRS, ADRA,

Tanzania

SARC, PU, IECD, GOPA, DRC

	Refugees in camps	Urban refugees	IDPs in camps	IDPs in urban centers	Returnees	Adolescent girls (12-17 years)	Adolescent boys (12-17 years)	Young men (18 years+)	Young women (18 years+)	Young mothers	Disabled youth	LGBT youth	Unaccompanied and separated children	Child and/or youth headed households	Trafficked young people	Young people at risk of trafficking	Ex-combatant children	Young people from minorities	
	Wider Target Group					Specific Target Group													Other Target Groups
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x			
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	Youth victims of the LRA, youth who finished secondary school; out-of-school youth
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x					Women 15-45
	x	x			x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x					
		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	

WEST AFRICA part 1/2	Formal - Secondary	Formal - Tertiary	Non-formal	Vocational	Accelerated learning	ICT	Language training	Literacy	Girls only	Peacebuilding education	Multi-generational Centers	Life-skills training	Sports activities	Cultural/arts activities	Gender issues, including LGBTI	Children's spaces	Women's center	Substance abuse counseling	Trauma counseling	
	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial									
Country Office	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial									
Ghana	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Guinea	x	x		x	x	x	x			x			x	x					x	x
Liberia	x	x	x	x	x			x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x			x
Senegal																				
Sierra Leone		x	x	x		x				x		x	x		x					
Togo	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x			x	x		x				x

	Livelihoods				SGBV			Health Care					Youth Empowerment					Other Youth Activities	
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x				
		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x						x	
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x	
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x	Vocational training in various skills, agro-based industry, environmental protection through tree planting and solid waste management and rural crop production through subsistence farming.
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x	

Table continue on next page

WEST AFRICA part 2/2

Country Office

Partners

Ghana

National Catholic Secretariat, Christian Council of Ghana, UNICEF, Ghana Education Service, Life Relief Foundation, Assemblies of God and Relief Dev. Services (AGREDS),

Guinea

CIDR, CNISR/BRISR, Accord

Liberia

Danish Refugee Council, Right to Play, Visions in Action (Contracted by UNICEF), IRC, Save the Children and NRC (operational partner)

Senegal

Sierra Leone

Movement Opposed to Exclusion in Sierra Leone, National Commission for Social Action (Government NGO); youth groups initiatives in respective Settlements.

Togo

L'Association Togolaise pour le Bien Etre Familiale (ATBE), Adventist Development Relief Agency (ADRA), la Coordination Nationale d'Assistance aux Réfugiés (CNAR qui est gouvernemental)

	Refugees in camps	Urban refugees	IDPs in camps	IDPs in urban centers	Returnees	Adolescent girls (12-17 years)	Adolescent boys (12-17 years)	Young men (18 years+)	Young women (18 years+)	Young mothers	Disabled youth	LGBT youth	Unaccompanied and separated children	Child and/or youth headed households	Trafficked young people	Young people at risk of trafficking	Ex-combatant children	Young people from minorities	
	Wider Target Group					Specific Target Group													Other Target Groups
	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x		x						
	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
					x	x					x						x		
	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x				x	
	x		x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		

SOUTHERN AFRICA part 1/2	Formal - Secondary	Formal - Tertiary	Non-formal	Vocational	Accelerated learning	ICT	Language training	Literacy	Girls only	Peacebuilding education	Multi-generational Centers	Life-skills training	Sports activities	Cultural/arts activities	Gender issues, including LGBTI	Children's spaces	Women's center	Substance abuse counselling	Trauma counselling	
	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial									
Country Office	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial									
Malawi	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x		x		x	
Mozambique	x	x		x			x	x			x	x	x	x			x	x	x	
Namibia	x	x		x			x	x		x		x	x		x		x	x	x	
South Africa			x	x			x	x		x		x	x	x					x	
Zambia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Zimbabwe	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	

	Agriculture, natural resource extraction	Entrepreneurship, financial management	Micro-credit, small business grants	Technical training for employment	Survival sex prevention	Rape counselling	Early marriage	HIV and AIDS prevention	Malaria prevention	TB and other infectious disease prevention	Maternal Child Health Care	Sexual and Reproductive Health	Civic and political engagement	Youth volunteerism	Youth and leadership	Youth and the media	Youth and armed conflict	Youth and climate change			
	Livelihoods				SGBV			Health Care					Youth Empowerment					Other Youth Activities			
			x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x			Boy/Girl Scouts		
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		Youth Centre - a central venue for young people to meet and engage in dialogue, watch movies and play various indoor games		
			x	x		x		x			x	x									
			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		FGM, QIPs		
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			

Table continue on next page

SOUTHERN AFRICA
part 2/2

Country Office

Partners

Malawi

Malawi Red Cross Society, Jesuit Refugee Services,

Mozambique

Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth

Namibia

Africa Humanitarian Action Ministry of Health and Social Services Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture

South Africa

Department of Social Development, Child Welfare South Africa, Unicef, Save the Children (UK), ARESTA, Cape Town Refugee Centre, SONKE Gender Justice

Zambia

ADRA (INGO) Intersos (INGO) Attadamon (NNGO) Save children (INGO) CSSW (NNGO), Government counterpart for vocational training, IRY

Zimbabwe

CSSW, Africa Help International AAH-I, Ministry of Community Development Mother and Child Health (MCDMCH), Christian Care, Caritas Zimbabwe

Continue from previous page

	Refugees in camps	Urban refugees	IDPs in camps	IDPs in urban centers	Returnees	Adolescent girls (12-17 years)	Adolescent boys (12-17 years)	Young men (18 years+)	Young women (18 years+)	Young mothers	Disabled youth	LGBT youth	Unaccompanied and separated children	Child and/or youth headed households	Trafficked young people	Young people at risk of trafficking	Ex-combatant children	Young people from minorities	
	Wider Target Group					Specific Target Group													Other Target Groups
	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x					
	x	x				x	x	x	x		x		x	x			x		
	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	
		x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x			
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x				

AMERICAS part 1/2	Formal - Secondary	Formal - Tertiary	Non-formal	Vocational	Accelerated learning	ICT	Language training	Literacy	Girls only	Peacebuilding education	Multi-generational Centers	Life-skills training	Sports activities	Cultural/arts activities	Gender issues, including LGBTI	Children's spaces	Women's center	Substance abuse counseling	Trauma counseling
Country Office	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial								
Argentina (Regional Office)	x	x		x			x					x		x					
Chile	x																		
Colombia	x						x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Costa Rica			x											x					x
Dominican Republic																			
Ecuador	x		x	x	x			x		x			x	x	x	x			
Haiti	x													x	x	x	x		x
Mexico	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Panama																			
Venezuela				x									x	x					x

	Livelihoods				SGBV			Health Care					Youth Empowerment						Other Youth Activities
	Agriculture, natural resource extraction	Entrepreneurship, financial management	Micro-credit, small business grants	Technical training for employment	Survival sex prevention	Rape counselling	Early marriage	HIV and AIDS prevention	Malaria prevention	TB and other infectious disease prevention	Maternal Child Health Care	Sexual and Reproductive Health	Civic and political engagement	Youth volunteerism	Youth and leadership	Youth and the media	Youth and armed conflict	Youth and climate change	
					x			x											
	x	x			x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Recreational and Leisure activities with boys and girls
												x	x						
		x	x		x	x		x			x		x				x		Adolescent empowerment for unaccompanied youth
			x	x	x	x		x			x								
			x	x			x	x											Inter-cultural integration
								x				x							Recreational activities, other than sports are also included in our Programme

Table continue on next page

AMERICAS part 2/2	
Country Office	Partners
Argentina (Regional Office)	
Chile	
Colombia	Sistema Nacional de Pastoral Social Colombia 'SNPS', Corporación CIDEMOS.
Costa Rica	Asociación de Consultores y Asesores Internacionales (ACAI), Youth Affairs Viceministry and the Youth National Council, Refugee Education Trust - International Organizations: IOM
Dominican Republic	Plan, Save the Children, Entrena
Ecuador	Ministry of economic and social integration, CONFIE, Nacion de Paz, Manos amigas, HIAS, SERPAJ, FEDARPON, Las Casas Metro de las Juventudes, Municipio de Quito La Fundación Ambiente y Sociedad Refugee Education Trust, Asociación Solidaridad y Acción, Grupos de hip hop y organizaciones barriales, Misión Scalabriniana, Municipalité de Lago Agrio
Haiti	
Mexico	Sin Fronteras, Casa-Espacio Refugiados, DRC, SARC, WDC
Panama	
Venezuela	Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, Caritas, Servicio Jesuita a Refugiados, Sociedad Wills Wilde

	Refugees in camps	Urban refugees	IDPs in camps	IDPs in urban centers	Returnees	Adolescent girls (12-17 years)	Adolescent boys (12-17 years)	Young men (18 years+)	Young women (18 years+)	Young mothers	Disabled youth	LGBT youth	Unaccompanied and separated children	Child and/or youth headed households	Trafficked young people	Young people at risk of trafficking	Ex-combatant children	Young people from minorities	
	Wider Target Group					Specific Target Group													Other Target Groups
		x									x		x						
		x																	
		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x								x	children at risk of forced recruitment
		x				x	x	x	x										
		x																	
	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
			x			x				x				x					
	x	x																	
						x	x	x	x				x			x			
		x				x	x	x	x	x			x						

ASIA & THE PACIFIC part 1/2	Formal - Secondary	Formal - Tertiary	Non-formal	Vocational	Accelerated learning	ICT	Language training	Literacy	Girls only	Peacebuilding education	Multi-generational Centers	Life-skills training	Sports activities	Cultural/arts activities	Gender issues, including LGBTI	Children's spaces	Women's center	Substance abuse counselling	Trauma counselling	
	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial									
Country Office	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial									
Afghanistan	x	x		x		x		x	x	x		x	x	x			x			
Bangladesh				x		x		x				x	x	x	x	x	x			
China				x			x													
Indonesia	x	x	x	x		x	x					x	x	x						
Iran	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x			x	x	x					x	x
Kazakhstan	x	x		x		x	x					x			x		x	x	x	
Kyrgyzstan				x	x	x	x			x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Malaysia	x		x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Myanmar	x		x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Nepal	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Pakistan	x	x	x	x			x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Philippines				x																
Sri Lanka	x		x	x		x	x			x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	
Tajikistan	x	x		x		x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x			
Thailand	x	x	x	x									x	x			x			x
Uzbekistan	x	x	x	x			x													

	Agriculture, natural resource extraction	Entrepreneurship, financial management	Micro-credit, small business grants	Technical training for employment	Survival sex prevention	Rape counselling	Early marriage	HIV and AIDS prevention	Malaria prevention	TB and other infectious disease prevention	Maternal Child Health Care	Sexual and Reproductive Health	Civic and political engagement	Youth volunteerism	Youth and leadership	Youth and the media	Youth and armed conflict	Youth and climate change	
	Livelihoods				SGBV			Health Care					Youth Empowerment					Other Youth Activities	
	x			x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
				x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x				
						x													
	x			x		x		x				x					x		Team-building events for youth
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x					
			x	x				x		x		x							Higher education support
		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x			x		x	x	Life skills, leadership, vocational trainings such as electrical, baking, computer, language, beading, music and other short courses.
		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x				Journalism, Easy writing, Debate, Leadership programme
		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x		Skill trainings for Women; Only confined the youth to youth committees on self help basis.
				x															
	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	x				
			x				x					x							
			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x		

Table continue on next page

ASIA & THE PACIFIC part 2/2

Country Office

Partners

Afghanistan

Local NGOs

Bangladesh

Save the Children International (US), Technical Assistance Inc. (TAI), Research Training and management International (RTMI), Research Initiatives Bangladesh (RIB)

China

Indonesia

Church World Service

Iran

Technical and Vocational Training Organization (TVTO), Ministry of Education, a very limited number of national NGOs, one int NGO Assitance International

Kazakhstan

Kyrgyzstan

Foundation of Tolerance International/Mercy Corps, Community based organization - Dusti, Crisis center - Sezim

Malaysia

CBOs, Tune Skills, Hartford Academy, HELP College of Arts and Technology, Science of Life

Myanmar

Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), CFSI, Community Social Services and Education Programme (CSSEP) under UNHCR, Faith based organizations and social/humanitarian organizations like Karuna, Baptist Convention Kachin

Nepal

Youth Friendly Centre (YFC) Programme - CBO, CARITAS-Nepal - INGO

Pakistan

CAR (Commissionarate for Afghan Refuges - Community Development Unit & Education Cell), SACH, SHARP, WESS, Soecity, DANESH, SCF, BEFARe, ARC, SCF, IRC

Philippines

United Youth of the Philippines-Women

Sri Lanka

Sewlanka, The Refugees Rehabilitaion Organisation, Jaffna Social action center, Muslim Aid, Office of social services, woman development, counselling assistance office, child care and probation and local CBOs.

Tajikistan

Danish Refugee Center Syrian Arab Red Crescent

Thailand

REDESO, WVI, IRC

Uzbekistan

InterAid, GIZ, OPM

Continue from previous page

	Refugees in camps	Urban refugees	IDPs in camps	IDPs in urban centers	Returnees	Adolescent girls (12-17 years)	Adolescent boys (12-17 years)	Young men (18 years+)	Young women (18 years+)	Young mothers	Disabled youth	LGBT youth	Unaccompanied and separated children	Child and/or youth headed households	Trafficked young people	Young people at risk of trafficking	Ex-combatant children	Young people from minorities	
	Wider Target Group					Specific Target Group													Other Target Groups
		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	x					
	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x			
		x				x	x	x	x				x						
		x				x	x						x			x			
	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	
		x				x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
		x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
		x				x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
		x				x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
		x				x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
		x				x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
	x	x																	

EUROPE part 1/2	Formal - Secondary	Formal - Tertiary	Non-formal	Vocational	Accelerated learning	ICT	Language training	Literacy	Girls only	Peacebuilding education	Multi-generational Centers	Life-skills training	Sports activities	Cultural/arts activities	Gender issues, including LGBTI	Children's spaces	Women's center	Substance abuse counselling	Trauma counselling	
	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial									
Country Office	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial									
Azerbaijan	x	x	x	x		x	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Belgium																				
Bosnia and Herzegovina				x											x					
Central Europe (Hungary, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Slovakia & Slovenia)																				
Croatia							x							x						
Georgia		x		x		x												x		
Greece														x						x
Kosovo				x			x			x	x	x	x		x		x		x	
Macedonia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Moldova		x		x			x							x			x			
Montenegro				x								x								
Serbia				x			x					x		x		x	x			
Turkey			x	x		x	x						x			x		x		

	Agriculture, natural resource extraction	Entrepreneurship, financial management	Micro-credit, small business grants	Technical training for employment	Survival sex prevention	Rape counselling	Early marriage	HIV and AIDS prevention	Malaria prevention	TB and other infectious disease prevention	Maternal Child Health Care	Sexual and Reproductive Health	Civic and political engagement	Youth volunteerism	Youth and leadership	Youth and the media	Youth and armed conflict	Youth and climate change		
	Livelihoods				SGBV			Health Care					Youth Empowerment				Other Youth Activities			
	x	x	x	x			x	x		x		x		x	x					
	x				x	x	x													
		x				x														
		x		x																
													x	x						Health care General Counselling Legal advise Information
	x		x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x					
		x	x	x			x	x		x	x	x		x	x					Extra curricular activities
				x								x								
			x	x	x	x	x													Catch up classes for Roma IDP youth at some locations within the scope of the program for pre-school classes for Roma IDP children
	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x			

Table continue on next page

EUROPE part 2/2

Country Office

Partners

Azerbaijan

Belgium

Bosnia and
Herzegovina

Central Europe
(Hungary, Bulgaria,
Czech Republic,
Poland, Romania,
Slovakia & Slovenia)

Croatia

Center for Peace Studies, Croatia Red Cross, Centar za mirovne studije, Centar za nove inicijative

Georgia

ACF, ATINATI, CHCA, WWI

Greece

NGO PRAKSIS General Secretariat for Youth

Kosovo

Civil Rights Programme, Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims, Agency for Advocacy and Development

Macedonia

City Red Cross of Skopje, Regional Enterprise Support Center Skopje, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

Moldova

Charity Center for Refugees

Montenegro

German NGO HELP

Serbia

Association for Development of Children and Youth - OPEN CLUB, DRC, Association for Childer and Youth, Amity

Turkey

HIACE, Catholic Organization for Emergency Relief and Refugees (COERR), Right to Play (RTP), Shanti Volunteer Association (SVA)

Continue from previous page

	Refugees in camps	Urban refugees	IDPs in camps	IDPs in urban centers	Returnees	Adolescent girls (12-17 years)	Adolescent boys (12-17 years)	Young men (18 years+)	Young women (18 years+)	Young mothers	Disabled youth	LGBT youth	Unaccompanied and separated children	Child and/or youth headed households	Trafficked young people	Young people at risk of trafficking	Ex-combatant children	Young people from minorities	
	Wider Target Group					Specific Target Group													Other Target Groups
		x	x	x		x	x		x		x		x						
						x	x	x	x										
	x	x	x	x	x														
													x		x	x			
		x			x	x							x						
			x	x	x	x	x	x	x										
		x																	
	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x				x						
	x	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	
		x				x	x						x						
		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	
	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x		Vulnerable youth - Urban

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA part 1/2	Formal - Secondary	Formal - Tertiary	Non-formal	Vocational	Accelerated learning	ICT	Language training	Literacy	Girls only	Peacebuilding education	Multi-generational Centers	Life-skills training	Sports activities	Cultural/arts activities	Gender issues, including LGBTI	Children's spaces	Women's center	Substance abuse counselling	Trauma counselling	
Country Office	Education										Mental Health / Psychosocial									
Algeria	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x	x		x				x
Egypt	x		x	x			x					x								
Iraq	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Jordan	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Lebanon	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Libya																				
Mauritania		x		x	x		x	x					x	x				x		
Morocco	x	x	x	x		x	x	x					x	x	x	x				
Syria												x		x				x		x
Tunisia	x																			
Western Sahara			x	x		x	x													x
Yemen	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x

	Agriculture, natural resource extraction	Entrepreneurship, financial management	Micro-credit, small business grants	Technical training for employment	Survival sex prevention	Rape counselling	Early marriage	HIV and AIDS prevention	Malaria prevention	TB and other infectious disease prevention	Maternal Child Health Care	Sexual and Reproductive Health	Civic and political engagement	Youth volunteerism	Youth and leadership	Youth and the media	Youth and armed conflict	Youth and climate change		
	Livelihoods				SGBV			Health Care					Youth Empowerment					Other Youth Activities		
					x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x							
				x		x		x		x		x								
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		
	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x			Engagement in Y-Peer activities Youth committees linked to community centers	
																			We do not have any programme targeting young boys or girls.	
				x	x	x	x	x						x						
			x																	
					x	x	x	x	x	x										
								x												
				x			x	x		x										
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x		

Table continue on next page

Continue from previous page

MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA part 2/2	
Country Office	Partners
Algeria	ARC, AFAD, Crescent Rouge Algerien (CRA), Réseau Algérien pour la Défense des Droits de l'Enfant, Triangle Génération Humanitaire, Conseil Italien pour les Réfugiés
Egypt	Egyptian Fedration for Scouts
Iraq	Association of cultural development for civil society (ACD), Women development and support organization (WDSO), NRC, RIPC, REACH, QANDIL, CDO, NGOs working under umbralla of DRC and our National NGO empowerment program
Jordan	Noor Hussein Foundation, NHF, JRF, IRD, JHAS, LA, Caritas, MC, ZENID
Lebanon	Amel Association (local) Caritas Lebanon Migrants Center (local) Makhzoumi Foundation (local) Save the Children,
Libya	
Mauritania	InterSOS, FLM, ALPD, Association Mauritanienne pour la Defense des Droits Humains(AMDH)
Morocco	La Fondation Orient-Occident (FOO), Amappe
Syria	UNICEF,SARC
Tunisia	Mexican Commission for Refugees
Western Sahara	
Yemen	ADRA organization, Save the children, Care, Islamic Relief Yemen, NGOs - CSSW Chiratable Social Slah,

	Refugees in camps	Urban refugees	IDPs in camps	IDPs in urban centers	Returnees	Adolescent girls (12-17 years)	Adolescent boys (12-17 years)	Young men (18 years+)	Young women (18 years+)	Young mothers	Disabled youth	LGBT youth	Unaccompanied and separated children	Child and/or youth headed households	Trafficked young people	Young people at risk of trafficking	Ex-combatant children	Young people from minorities	
	Wider Target Group					Specific Target Group												Other Target Groups	
	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x			Adolescent boys and girls 16-17, young men and women 18-26
						x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x			
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x			
		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	
			x			x	x	x	x	x			x	x					
	x	x		x		x	x	x	x			x	x		x	x		x	
		x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	
		x				x		x	x	x		x	x		x	x			Young people at risk of being recruited by gangs
		x																	
	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x		

Annex 3:

Survey Results

1. Methodology

This report presents the findings of a global survey of UNHCR staff's experiences and views on youth programming. The survey was developed in consultation with MaryBeth Morand (Senior Policy Officer in the Policy Development and Evaluation Service) and tested with a sample of UNHCR staff. In May 2012, 3,244 UNHCR staff members who had the words community, youth, education, health, program, protection, head of office, representative, or desk officer in their titles in the e-mail system were invited by email to complete the survey. In total, **501 staff** responded to the survey (a response rate of 15.44%).

The survey was anonymous and administered by an independent consulting firm, Social Development Direct, using the online survey tool SurveyMonkey. 440 surveys were completed in English and 61 in French, with both data sets compiled together before analysis begun. The survey questions were cross-referenced with various aspects of respondents' profile to see if certain types of respondent were more likely to give particular answers. Significant differences by respondent profile are mentioned in the report, where they exist.

UNHCR staff members were invited to provide additional comments for several questions and a selection of these are presented throughout the report or as direct quotations in text boxes. These quotations have been taken directly from the completed online surveys and, while providing a general overview, they do not necessarily reflect the views of all UNHCR staff. One should be reminded that this survey was voluntary and in that sense self-selecting, which may well mean, for instance, that those choosing to respond are UNHCR staff who consider youth to be important or who have had a larger exposure to this issue.

2. Profile of Respondents

Most respondents are based in country offices (38% of respondents), field offices (36%), or sub-offices (21%). A smaller proportion of respondents were based in HQ (4%), Regional Hubs (4%) or elsewhere (4%). (See Survey Annex 1 for graphs illustrating respondents' profile).

Respondents work in a wide variety of roles: programme (34%); community services (30%); protection (28%); field (24%); management (15%); durable solutions (7%); and other positions (9%).

“ We have talented youth and I am sure if the opportunity is given to them, we will have positive outputs.

Refugees are the primary focus of 79% of respondents' current positions, followed by IDPs (37%), returnees (28%), and the stateless (14%). Of those who work in country operations (either at country, field, or sub-offices), 62% work with urban refugees, 59% with refugees in camps, 36% with returnees, 29% with IDPs in camps, and 26% with IDPs in urban centres.

70% of respondents work with youth. 30% work directly with youth as part of the roles and responsibilities of their current position. A further 40% are indirectly engaged in youth programming (although respondents' comments seem to suggest that definitions of youth programming are fairly loose and it could be the case that some of these respondents work indirectly with youth as part of a wider group of beneficiaries). 16% are not currently engaged in youth programming, but have been in the past, and 14% have never been engaged in youth programmes (see Figure 1).

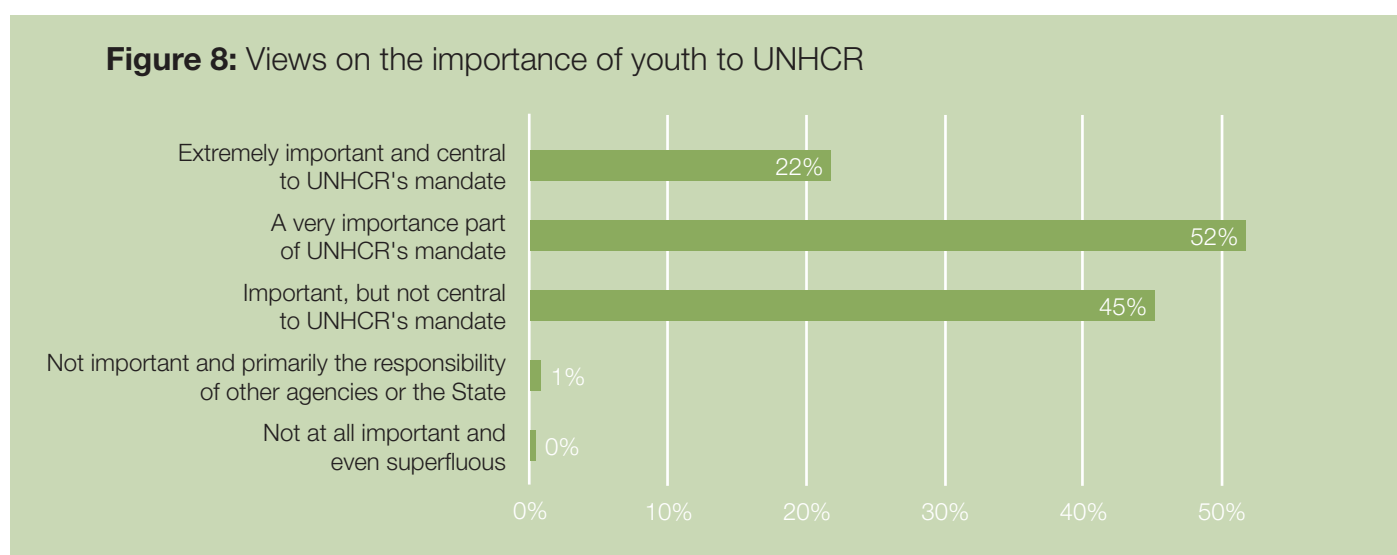
However, actual **time spent on youth related programmes is relatively small**, with only 8% of respondents spending more than half their time working on youth related programmes for people under the age of 18, and 9% on programmes for 18-24 year olds.

Respondents' **length of time working with UNHCR varies**, with the largest proportion (38%) working for 1-4 years for UNHCR. Over half of respondents (52%) have worked for only one country operation, suggesting a high response from national staff, as well as possibly reflecting the short time respondents have been with UNCHR.

3. UNHCR and Youth – Views

3.1 Youth: an important part of UNHCR's mandate?

The vast majority of respondents believe that youth are important, with only 1% saying they are not important or primarily the responsibility of other agencies or the State. More concretely, 22% of respondents said youth are extremely important and central to UNHCR's mandate, 52% thought that youth are a very important part of UNHCR's mandate, and 45% believe youth are important, but not central to UNHCR's mandate.



Respondents offered a variety of reasons why youth should be an important part of UNHCR's mandate, for example:

- Young people are willing and keen to contribute to growth and peace building, and often have extra time to offer;
- Conversely, youth exclusion can be a factor in leading a minority of youth to engage in violence or becoming disruptive;
- Young people represent a high proportion of displaced populations;
- Investment in formal and informal education for youth, including relevant and market-linked vocational and skills training, coupled with specific youth employment creation programs can build young people's confidence and provide them with the necessary skills and experience to gain employment and become self-resilient;

“ In general, UNHCR youth programmes are good intentioned and usually meet their objective.

- Young people (especially adolescent girls) have specific reproductive and sexual health needs, such as unplanned pregnancies, early marriages, HIV/AIDS, and sexually transmitted infections, which have long-term catalytic consequences not only for individuals' own futures, but for the wider community; and
- Young people need special protection, as they are at high risk of exploitation/abuse, trafficking, and forced recruitment into gangs.

Respondents who work directly with youth are more likely to say UNHCR does an excellent job of providing appropriate programs for youth and that UNHCR ensures the protection and well-being of target groups.

However, an element of caution should be exercised when interpreting this question - the extremely low proportion of respondents (1%) saying that youth are not important could be due to the survey being self-selecting with UNHCR staff who consider youth to be important more likely to fill out the survey in the first place.

3.2 Provision of appropriate programs for youth

Only 11% of respondents said UNHCR does an excellent job of providing appropriate programmes for youth, while 60% thought it does a fair job. Respondents frequently commented that staff had the best intentions and did a good job, given the limited resources available for youth. As one respondent noted, 'I believe UNHCR is undertaking a good job, however more could be done.'

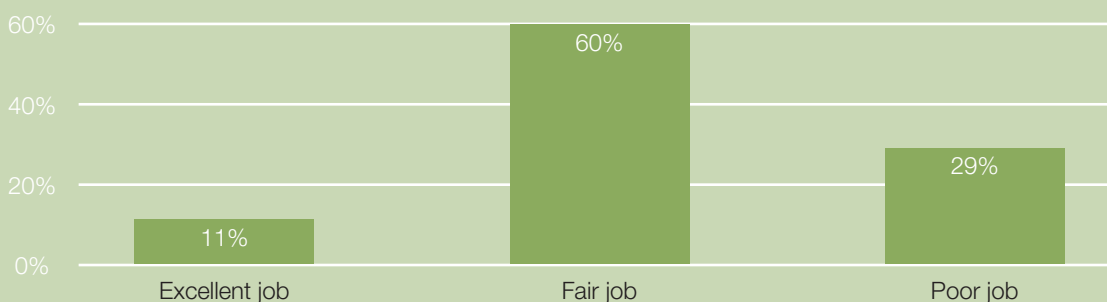
However, **almost 1 in 3 respondents (29%) thought UNHCR does a poor job of providing appropriate programs for youth.** Most comments about 'poor' performance focused on the problem of implementing programmes for youth without earmarked funds. For example, one respondent observed that 'More needs to be done and in-house capacity for working with youths needs strengthening'. Another recommended that 'Youth programmes have to be prioritized and well-represented, budget wise'.

“ The youth today are the nations tomorrow. ”

UNHCR's provision of appropriate youth programming is also largely **context-specific**: 'It varies from country to country **depending on the lead programme staff**'. Several respondents thought that UNHCR often does a good job of providing education for youth, particularly primary education and vocational training, although there were observations that children/youth were a muddled concept - 'the concept of 'youth' in UNHCR is misunderstood and 'automatically translated' into refugee children issues and (primary) educational issues'.

Beyond education programmes, respondents are less impressed with youth programming: 'excluding the provision of education, I would say a poor job'. Another noted that 'We hardly have direct programming beyond normal education programs, and what we do have is superficial and unaccountable - e.g. livelihoods programs that are rarely evaluated for their effectiveness.'

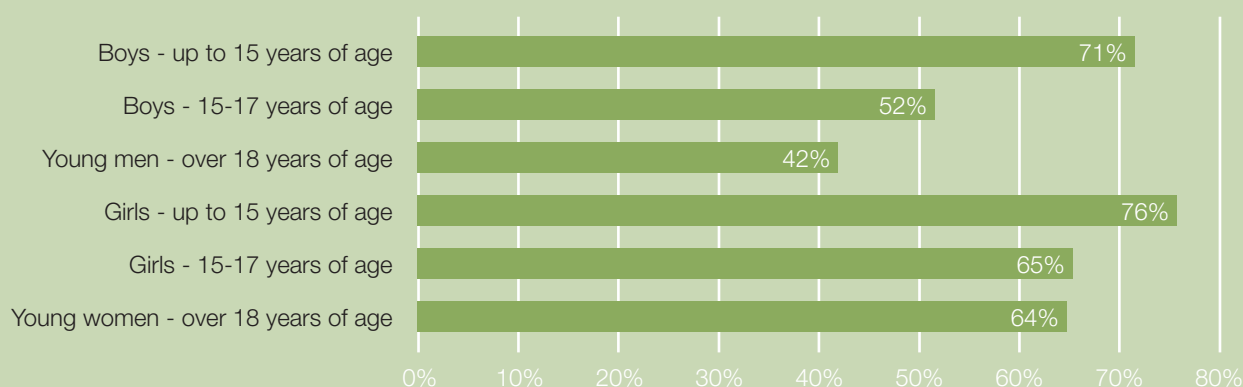
Figure 9: Perceptions of UNHCR's provision of appropriate programmes for youth



3.3 Protecting and ensuring the well-being of different target youth groups

Approximately two-thirds of respondents thought UNHCR does a very good job of ensuring the protection and well-being of most target groups, particularly children up to 15 years of age, and girls/young women of all ages (see Figure 10). However, **young men and older boys appear to be a low priority and are in danger of falling between the cracks** - less than half (42%) thought UNHCR ensures the protection and well-being of young men over 18 years of age and only just over half (52%) thought that boys (15-17 years of age) are well protected and assisted.

Figure 10: UNHCR does a very good job to ensure the protection and well-being of...
 (% of respondents who agree that UNHCR protects different groups of youth)



As one respondent noted, ‘We tend to focus on persons with specific needs - women, children (especially girls), the elderly, the disabled etc. Effectively, while we mainstream everyone else, we put aside the youth in programming. In cases of post conflict/conflict, they are the ones often that are most affected, especially in a demobilisation process.’

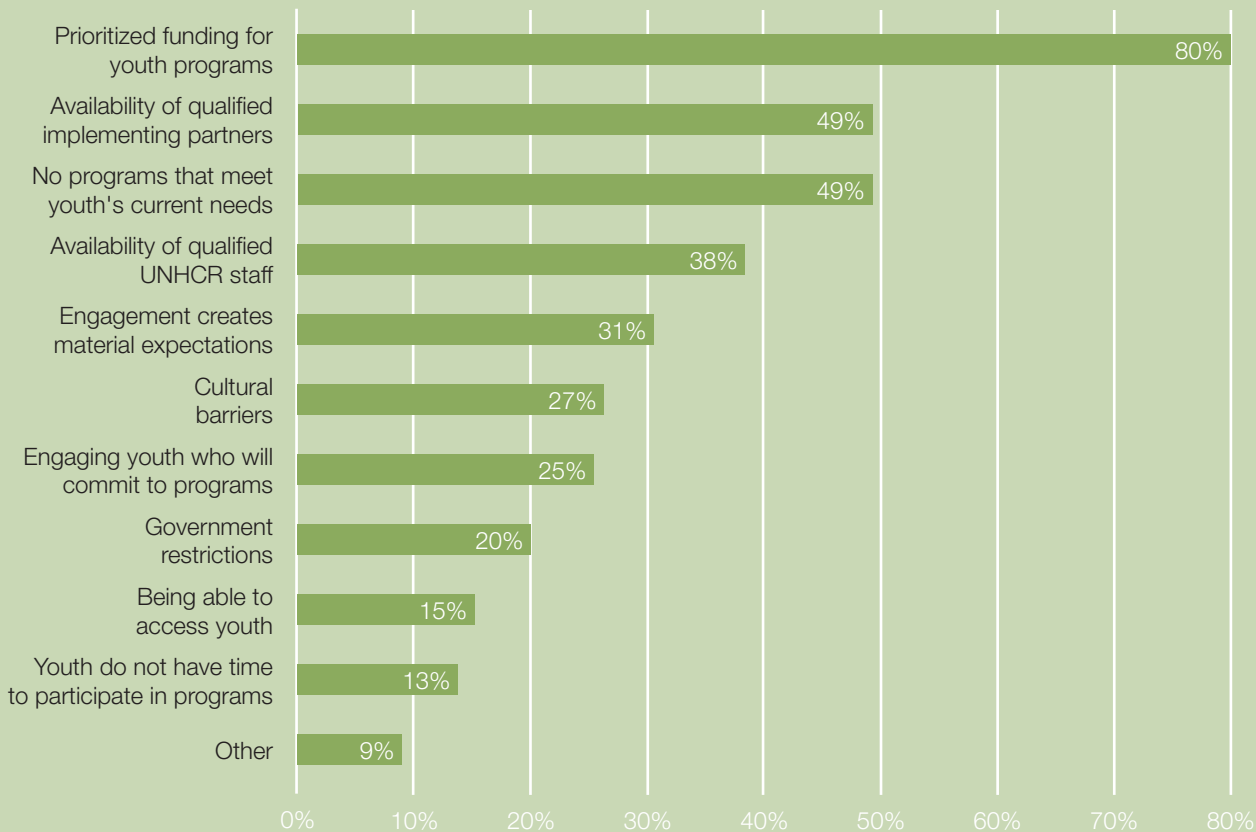
Groups of youth that are most frequently targeted include: unaccompanied and separated children (72%); adolescent girls aged 12-17 years (71%); and young women over 18 years (68%). Groups of young people not mentioned in Figure 6, but frequently mentioned in the ‘other category’, include young people at risk of being recruited or exposed to gang violence, and out-of-school youth.

“ Youth also serve as the eyes and ears from a protection point of view. If you want to find out what protection risks there are in a camp, the youth will let you know if you have created a good relationship with them.

3.4 Barriers to working with youth

The **biggest barrier to working with youth is a lack of dedicated funding**, with 4 out of 5 respondents (80%) mentioning this barrier (see Figure 11). Throughout the survey, 174 comments were made by respondents about the problems of providing appropriate youth programming without prioritised funding. Other frequently mentioned barriers include the availability of qualified implementing partners (49%), no programs that meet youth’s current needs (49%), availability of qualified UNHCR staff (38%), concern that engagement creates expectations for material assistance (31%), and cultural barriers, especially for working with girls (27%).

Figure 11: Barriers to working with youth



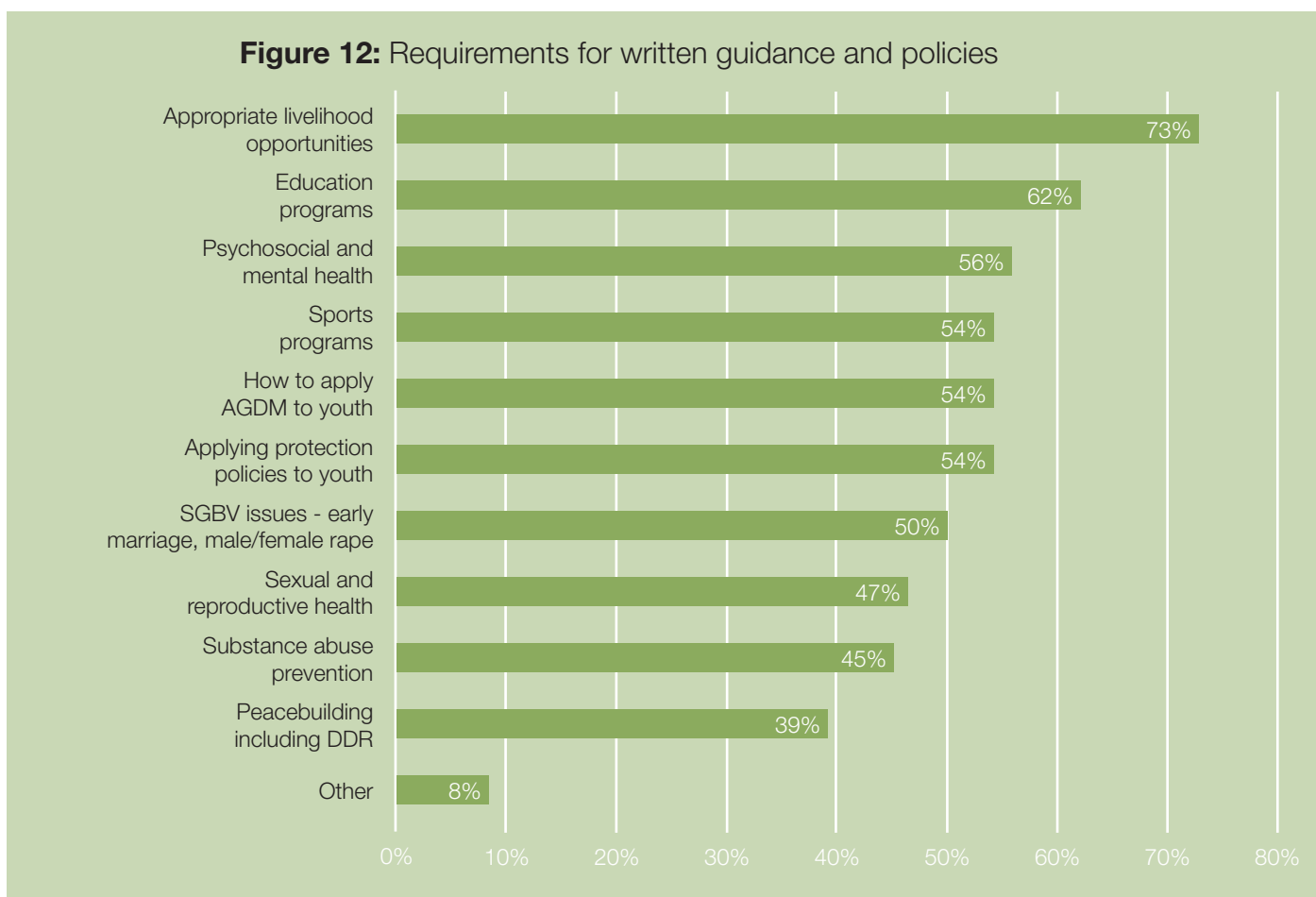
Several of these barriers are linked; **funding constraints for youth programming impact on a range of other barriers**, such as the availability of qualified staffing, ability to form partnerships and concerns that engagement creates material expectations that cannot be fulfilled without dedicated youth funding.

Several respondents also mentioned **difficulties created by the cluster system**. For example, one respondent from Iraq commented that, ‘The cluster system is a major barrier these days. Since the needs of most of the IDP and returnee youths do not fall under UNHCR mandate, they are left out of the UNHCR programmes’. Similarly, a respondent from the Central African Republic said, ‘it is necessary that UNHCR reflects seriously on this type of activities. But often the big problem is funding. Efforts are visible for refugees but the case of IDPs leaves much to be desired. Under the cluster interventions often nothing gets done, this is the case where I work (13,073 IDPs) with no programme in favour of this age group which represents 40% of the population. UNHCR must react and take mandate of IDPs just like for the refugees. Thank you’.

Other barriers identified include security constraints, lack of data about what works, and lack of governmental infrastructures necessary to refer youth.

3.5 Requirements for written guidance and policies

When it comes to working with youth, to improve the quality and effectiveness of work, **respondents need more written guidance and policies** on the following areas: appropriate livelihood opportunities (73% of respondents); education programs (62%); psychosocial and mental health (56%); sports programs (54%); how to apply AGDM to youth (54%); applying protection policies to youth (54%); and SGBV issues (50%).



However, it should be noted that while several respondents highlighted a need for written guidance, others noted that **‘the problem is not policies’, but practical knowledge about how to implement policies, appropriate staff training, shortages of technical staff, and lack of time to read the relevant information.** Several respondents requested that any **guidance should be practical (not academic or legal) and include examples of good practice**, focusing on a wide range of geographic and cultural contexts: ‘Keep lawyers and academic theorists out of it! We need common sense and professionalism.’

“ In theory, [at] highlighting the plight of youth, UNHCR is good. However, prioritising youth programmes and implementing them is a challenge. The youth fall within the cracks, especially looking at how the budget / sectors are structured.

A small, but significant, minority of respondents commented that staff do not need any more written guidance on youth; they need **funding, training and formal commitment towards youth as a priority group**. One respondent observed that ‘Guidelines are dead words if there is not sufficient funding, formal commitment and clear accountability.’ Another said, ‘Sorry – there is more than enough written guidance. Staff and partners should focus on community needs and listen to this age group, who are often articulate and able to express their educational, social and recreational needs. Too often there is insufficient funding or just lack of will / interest’.

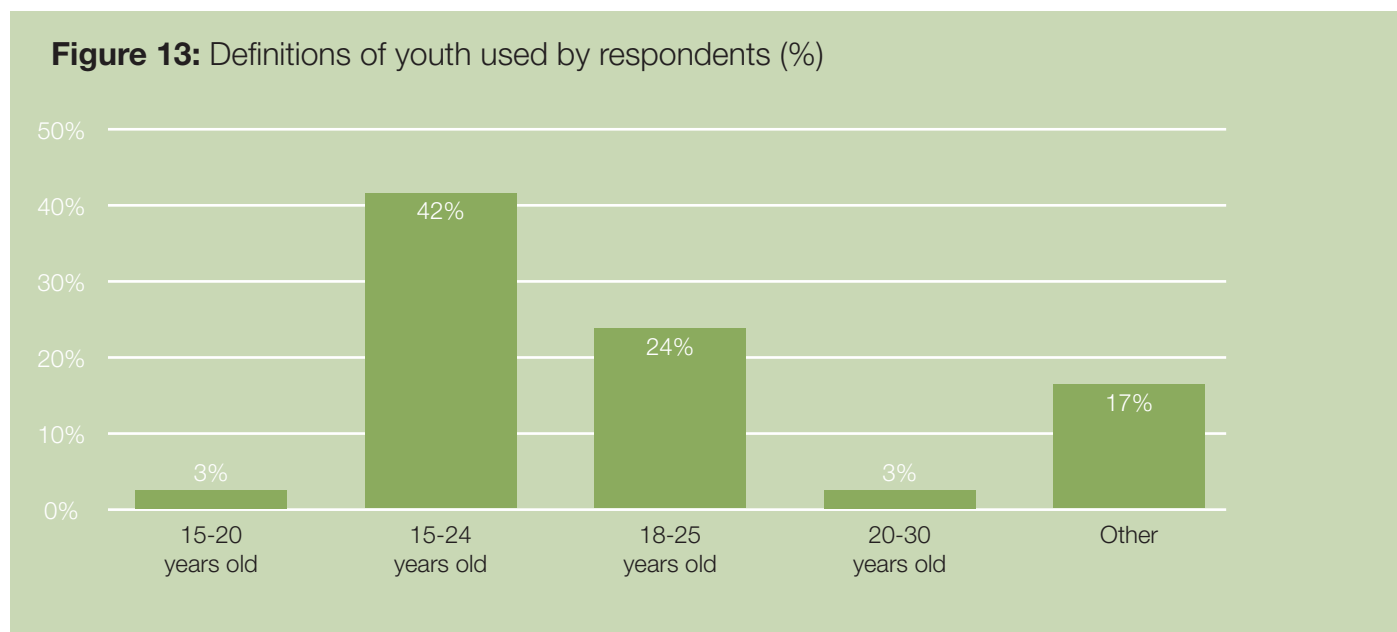
A key issue highlighted by respondents is the challenge of youth activities being cross-sectoral (education, child protection, self-reliance, specific needs): ‘It is essential for there to be more clear guidance on how these different programs come together, how to measure the various indicators falling under different objectives, to ensure coherence.’ To complicate matters, youth are seen as getting lost within the system or becoming ‘invisible’ once they turn 18 years old. Several respondents requested further guidance in administering protective programming and offering durable solutions to youth: ‘We don’t even have statistics because this age range is not part of the official data’.

“ *Their vulnerability doesn’t end the day they turn 18.* ”

4. Country Level Youth Programmes & Activities

4.1 Definitions of youth

The **most common age definition of youth in country operations is 15-24 years old (42%)**, although almost a quarter (24%) use the 18-25 years age range, and a further quarter (23%) use another definition. Several did not know what the definition of age was, while others said that although definitions of youth had not been discussed explicitly, they ‘assumed’ it was a certain age range.



Several respondents use **definitions of youth extending well above 25 years, including up to 50 years** (Syria), 40 years (Sudan, DRC), 39 years (Ghana), and 35 years (Uganda, Iran, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Africa). Several follow **country law** (Mexico and Colombia).

Others gave more descriptive definitions **based upon life-stages** – ‘From after leaving school to becoming elders’ (Kenya) or ‘once you are married you are an adult regardless of your age’ (South Sudan). Others based it on physical size – ‘we also consider youth at 11 years, because some children are bigger and therefore we take those at 11 years old as youth’ (Kenya).

Several respondents mentioned the need for further guidance on how to define youth when it comes to implementing youth programmes. For example, one respondent from Ethiopia noted that: ‘More guidance is necessary for implementation of Youth Programmes. The definition of youth (age group) is necessary. Currently some youth are covered under children’s programmes, vocational skills training programmes with other adult refugees, under health programmes etc’. A respondent from Morocco observed, ‘Many programmes /policies consider on one hand children less than 18 years old / on the other the adults. It’s important to insist on the vulnerability of youth less than 25 years old in strategies and guidelines of UNHCR, particularly young single parents and older Unaccompanied Minors. Their vulnerability doesn’t end the day they turn 18, and to work on programmes focusing on transition from childhood to adult age’. Similarly, a respondent from Brazzaville requested ‘that this age group is extended to 30 years because people from 20 to 30 years have basically the same problems.’

“ We are weak in the ‘crossover’ zone where youth are 18 or over, but still have not transitioned fully to adulthood.

4.2 Partnership working on youth-targeted programming

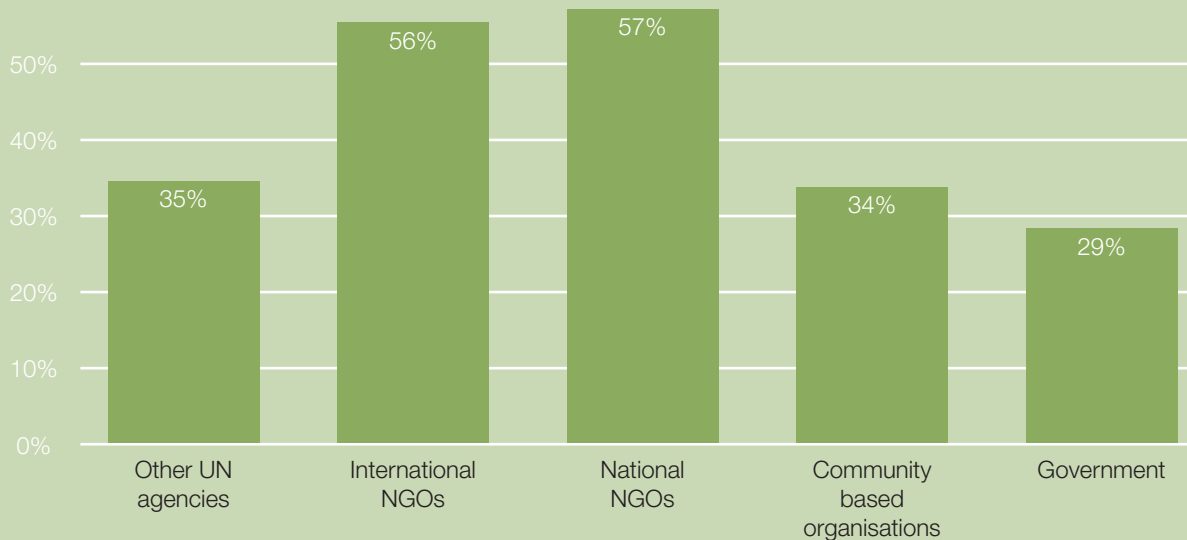
The primary implementing partners for youth targeted programming are national and international NGOs (mentioned by 64% and 57% of respondents), followed up by community based organisations, including self-initiated youth groups (32%), and government (26%).

The specific partners that were most frequently mentioned for youth programming include:

- National NGOs;
- International NGOs, particularly Save the Children, the International Red Cross/Crescent, International Rescue Committee, Danish Refugee Council, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Action for the Rights of Children (ARC), Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA), Intersos, Islamic Relief, and Lutheran World Federation;
- Other UN agencies, such as UNICEF, and also IOM; and
- Donors, particularly the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) which works extensively on youth programming and is one of the few donors to have specific youth advisors.

As shown in Figure 14, most of the youth programming in the respondents' country operations is provided by national NGOs (57%) or international NGOs (56%), with a smaller proportion provided by other UN agencies (35%), community based organisations (34%), and government (29%).

Figure 14: Provision of youth programming (% provided by partners)



In general, **collaboration with partners on youth programming is perceived to be good (44%), very good (20%), or excellent (4%)**. However, a sizeable proportion (24%) thought collaboration with partners is only fair, and 8% said it is poor. The survey did not directly look at the reasons behind poor partnerships, although it is clear from responses to other questions that **UNHCR staff would welcome a dedicated youth team to advise them on how best to implement youth programming, which would include developing and maintaining partnerships**. For example, one respondent noted that 'the biggest missing element for UNHCR is the absence of an organisational commitment to engage youth and the absence of any guidance / expertise on this within the organisation, leading to an absence of appropriate partnerships'.

Figure 15: Collaboration with partners on youth programming in country operations



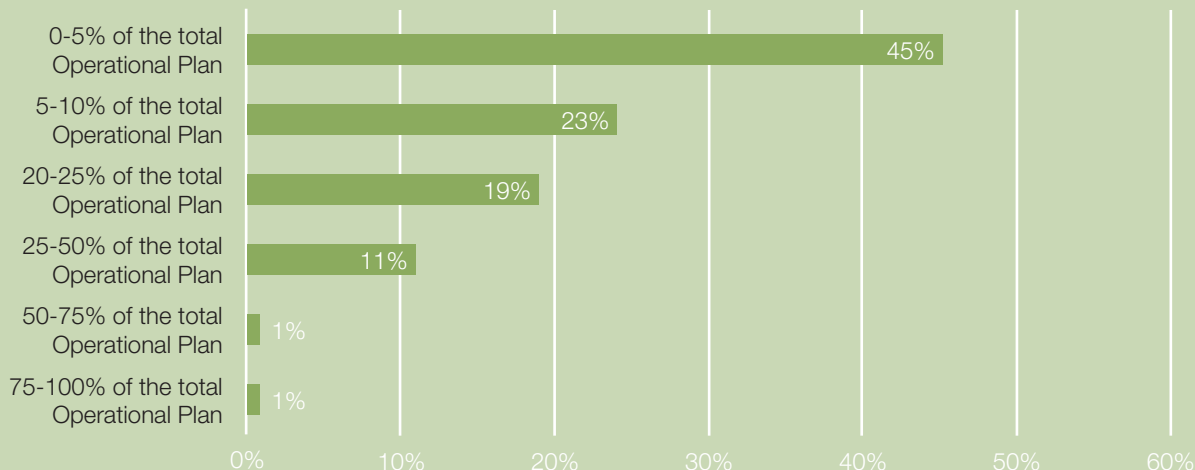
4.3 Funding on combined youth programming

Total spend on combined youth programming is relatively small (See figure 4). Of those who were able to answer this question (i.e. those who knew how much the budget for youth was), **61% said their country operation's total spend on youth is less than 50,000USD (23% said it is less than 5,000USD)**. Only 5% said it is over 500,000USD.

“ Sometimes we are constrained by funding to do what we should be doing for youth.

Of those respondents who knew what the figures were, **45% said that programs which target youth are under 5% of the total Operational Plan**, and a further 23% said they are 5-10% of the plan (see Figure 16). As previously mentioned, **the lack of dedicated funds for youth is a real challenge for respondents and the biggest barrier to working with youth**. In total, there were 174 comments relating to the problem of funding constraints for youth. For example, one respondent noted that ‘these programmes, if existing, are terribly underfunded’. Another commented that ‘competing priorities and resource constraints make it difficult to develop and sustain targeted programs for displaced youth.’ Another observed that, ‘As funding declines the quality of programmes changes’.

Figure 16: Percentage of total Operation Plan which targets youth



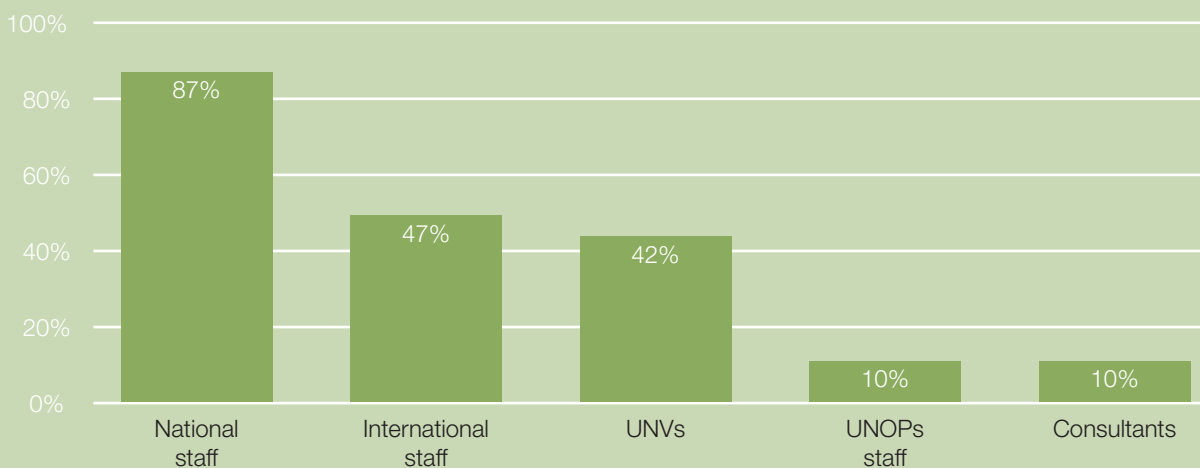
4.4 Staffing of youth-targeted programming

Most UNHCR staff spend a **small amount of time on youth-targeted programming**, with 39% of respondents spending less than 5% of their time on youth and only 3% spending more than half of their time on youth. When asked about their colleagues, only 10% said colleagues spent more than half their time on youth (See Figure 3).

As shown in Figure 17, 87% of respondents who work for country operations have national staff colleagues who work on dedicated youth programmes, with a smaller proportion of international staff (47%), UNVs (42%), UNOPs staff (10%) and consultants (10%), suggesting that **staff who work on youth-targeted programming are primarily national staff**.

“ *Not a priority to UNHCR – the first projects to be cut for budget constraints.* ”

Figure 17: The other colleagues in my operation who work on dedicated youth programmes are: (% of respondents working for country operations)



4.5 Provision of youth-targeted programming

Almost half of respondents have specific programs for adolescents aged 12 – 17 years (48%) and/or youth over 18 years of age (46%). The majority of youth programmes are for both sexes together, although 19% of programming for adolescents is for girls only, compared with 14% for boys only. Similarly, while programs for over 18s are largely for both sexes, 20% are for young women only, compared to 12% for young men.

The **most frequently mentioned types of youth programmes (see Figure 16) are vocational education (74% of respondents); HIV and AIDS prevention (71%);** sexual and reproductive health (66%); rape counselling (63%); early marriage (55%); sports activities (55%); formal education at secondary level (50%); technical training for employment (49%); maternal child health care (49%); survival sex prevention (47%); cultural/arts activities (47%); and life-skills training (45%). It should be noted that although the question asked respondents to tick if their country operation offered any of these programmes specifically for youth, a few respondents noted in the comments box that youth are included in these programmes, but they were not targeted primarily at youth.

Several respondents observed that while UNHCR emphasises basic education, young people have problem accessing secondary and higher education because these have not been prioritised or funded. As one respondent from Ethiopia explained, ‘Until recently, UNHCR only systematized primary education, which is regarded as a basic right of children. Most children cannot further their education beyond primary level owing to budget constraints. In rare occasions, secondary education may be available, but the youth will still face lack of means for tertiary education. The attitude that prevails in UNHCR is to only consider the so called ‘lifesaving sector’, while education is key to preparing youths for their future and preventing recruitment into gangs and antisocial behaviours. In general, youth activities are left to the initiative of some of UNHCR’s partners who are youth centered such as JRS and GTZ’. **The exclusion of young people from mainstream secondary and tertiary education means that ‘the only possibility is vocational training’ – the most widespread type of youth programming.**

“ *My current experience in programming for the youth presents a picture of ad hoc interventions with the exception of education opportunities.* ”

However, vocational training has its critics: ‘Most of the activities are centred on vocational training which benefits only few people.’ Several respondents emphasised the need for investments in secondary education. For example, ‘I strongly believe that UNHCR should come up with more support for secondary education. In Sudan the provision of secondary education to Eritrean refugees has allowed great number of refugees to get jobs in Khartoum and the other cities both in formal and private sectors. Good primary and secondary education and livelihood activities are the best one can do for the youth and for their families.’

After vocational training, **SGBV programmes and healthcare programmes are key priority areas for youth programming.** Few respondents commented on this type of programming, apart from briefly noting that SGBV and sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV/AIDS) are a key issue affecting youth. An interesting example of good practice from Uganda was given: ‘Involving youths in HIV and AIDS, SGBV prevention and response has helped in creating awareness on the issue in the community and prioritising support to clients and survivors. This also helped create a youth centre that is multi-functional in one of the refugee settlements under the Field office.’

“ *Emotional / psychological scars in most cases go unaddressed because they are either ‘not visible’ or resources are not there to address them.* ”

Several respondents requested **more funding for livelihoods programmes**, specifically those programmes which are **targeted and appropriate for opportunities available in the labour market.** One respondent noted that there was often an ‘interests vs. opportunities mismatch - IT skills vs. soap making skills for example’.

Another observed, ‘The incredible support to unaccompanied minors, particularly young females is extremely important; equally important are livelihoods projects that target the youths and women through community development approach to enhance self-reliance, peace, justice and sustainable development.’

Another gap is in the provision of specific mental health and psychosocial programmes for young people. Respondents observed how displaced youth often face several challenges, for example loss of opportunities and support networks, traumatic experiences, and ‘displacement-cultural shock’, which can in turn affect how they react to the new environment they find themselves in. There are also **few specific programs directed at youth empowerment**, although several examples of good practice were highlighted, including inter-ethnic or inter-cultural integration programmes, boy scouts / girl guides, youth committees, youth centres, and engagement in Y-Peer activities.

5. Designing, Monitoring and Evaluating Youth Specific Programmes

5.1 Designing youth-specific programmes

Respondents typically decide which programmes to offer and who to target using a **combination of AGDM assessments, needs assessments, and participatory assessments**. Several respondents commented that the AGDM tool helps UNHCR staff to ‘assess the needs and gather the interests and suggestions of the youth’. Decisions are also based on **lessons learned from previous programmes and gap analysis**. Respondents also looked for youth projects that were ‘**easy to adopt and sustainable**’.

Respondents emphasised the importance of **consultation with a wide range of partners and local stakeholders**, including community leaders/elders, young people, field teams, and government authorities. With targeted youth programs, such as ‘Children on the Move’ in Greece and *Lazos sin Fronteras* in Costa Rica, the design of programs is often based on partnerships, so the targets are jointly-decided, based on actors’ identified needs, participatory assessments, available funding and/or state support. Respondents also mentioned the need to take into account local sensitivities: ‘The design of specific programs should take into consideration restrictions and limitations set by the government. The best practice is to overcome this restriction in a manner not to jeopardize the existence of the whole operation.’

“Through participatory assessments, we gather relevant information from youth ... Unfortunately, given the very tight budget constraints, youth programmes are not prioritised, although the need is clear.”

Although the vast majority of respondents emphasised the **importance of making needs-based decisions (particularly based on protection needs)**, a significant proportion of respondents noted that in reality, **staff often have to make resource-based decisions**, based on staffing, funds available and partners’ capacity. For example, one staff member noted that, ‘Most of our programs are guided by the budget.’ Another observed that, ‘Honestly, the operation is donor driven. More than 70% of funds are earmarked and our level of decision is reduced.’

Several respondents highlighted the **problematic issue of managing young people’s expectations, particularly after conducting rigorous participatory assessments and consultations**. For example, one staff member from Malawi described this tension: ‘We conduct participatory/AGDM assessments where different age groups are involved including youth groups. Sometimes the People of Concern (PoC) expect too much from UNHCR; they do not know that the budget is limited.’

Indeed, several respondents seemed despondent about the extent to which pragmatic factors constrain the ability to follow through on the findings of participatory assessments: ‘Ideally it is supposed to be participatory through AGDM but findings are hardly used in decision making.’ Another respondent from Mozambique suggested, ‘It would be useful to conduct a field mission and see how hard it is to reserve funds for tailor-made activities in shrinking operations dictated by reduced funds for operations.’

“Assessments including AGDM guide our decisions, but the availability of funds is the final deciding factor.”

Another from Chad noted how budget constraints affected the **consistency of youth-specific coverage**: ‘Unfortunately our ability to target youth for specific programs is very hindered due to financial constraints. We received special funding for youth activities which enabled us to really develop our youth programs in a certain set of refugee camps, but these activities are not harmonized across all camps so some camps have very developed youth programs while others have very undeveloped youth programs/very low targets in terms of numbers of youth participating.’

Several respondents highlighted the **complexity of designing youth-specific programmes within urban environments**. For example, one respondent said, ‘In the camp, the reality of having a closed environment means it is much easier to identify needs and build responses. In the urban environments (South African cities, Maputo, Lusaka, Luanda) access to the refugees is a problem and we are only contacted by the cases who are already in a critical situation.’

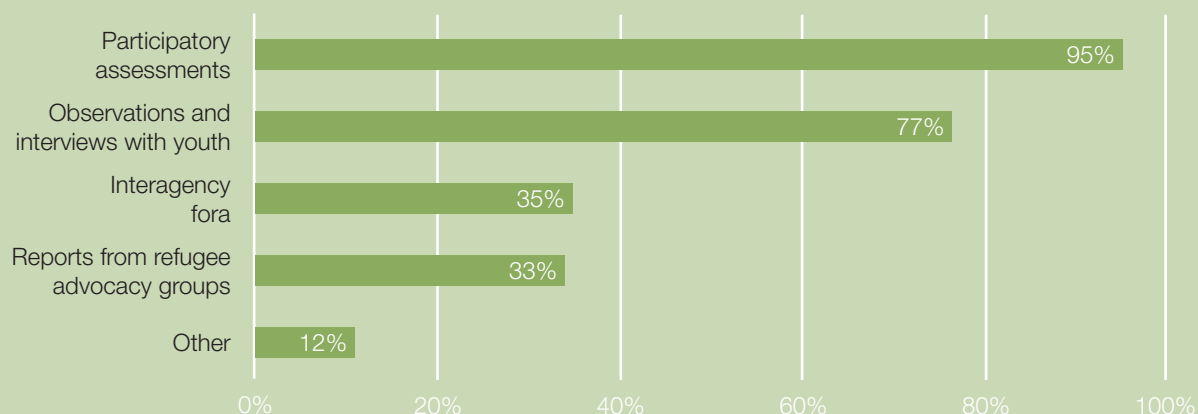
5.2 Monitoring and evaluating youth-specific programmes

The most common way of gathering evidence for youth-targeted programming is via participatory assessments (95%), followed by observations and interviews with youth (77%), interagency fora (35%), and verbal/written reports from refugee advocacy groups (33%).

“ Lacking an evidence base of what types of programmes have the greatest positive and relative impact for youth.

Other methods for gathering evidence for youth-specific programming include: verbal and written reports from implementing partners, relevant ministries and local government officials; field visits; Humanitarian Gaps Analysis (HGA); livelihood assessments (household economy approach or socio-economic surveys); protection working groups; health information systems; and through UNHCR’s Global Focus website and other institutional reporting mechanisms, such as the Standards and Indicators Report (SIR).

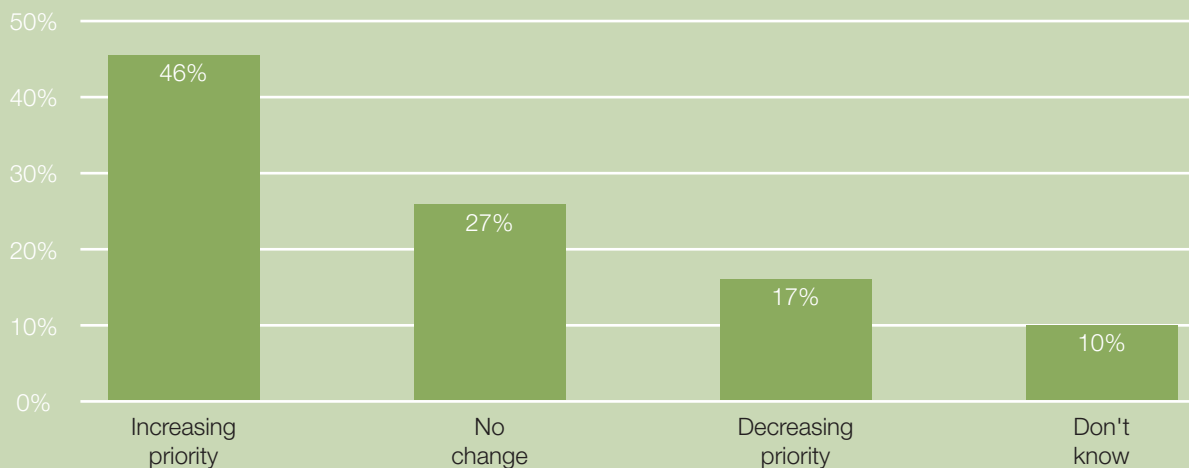
Figure 18: How do you gather your evidence for youth targeted programming?



5.3 Trends in youth-specific programming

Almost half of respondents (46%) think youth specific programming is becoming an increasing priority for their operation, 27% think there has been no change, 17% think it is a decreasing priority, and 10% don't know (see Figure 19 below).

Figure 19: Is youth specific programming becoming an increasing or decreasing priority for your operation?



Although respondents were largely of the opinion that youth-specific programming *should* be an increasing priority, whether it actually was an increasing priority *in practice* was another matter. As one staff member from Rwanda noted: ‘Every year the assessments suggest that the needs for addressing gaps in protection of adolescents and youth are becoming bigger and bigger. However, as the resources are shrinking, the first needs to be chopped off the priority list are youth programs.’

At an institutional level, although several respondents said they saw ‘no change’ in attitudes towards youth-specific programming, many commented that there were indications that youth were being taken more seriously, not least this survey: ‘The fact that this survey is being conducted is already positive and a step forward. Otherwise, I see no change at the institutional level.’ Others commented that they hoped that the survey findings would lead to greater investments in youth programming: ‘It is good if there is a concrete action for youth programming next to this valuable survey which should be country context.’

“ The issue of youth is becoming more and more prominent and there are more and more discussions on the need for youth-targeted activities, but the challenge is limited technical capacity and resources.

Key trends identified by respondents as affecting youth over the last 3-5 years include: youth unemployment; school dropout; early marriage; trafficking; recruitment in armed gangs; risk of sexual exploitation and abuse; substance abuse; survival sex; and the impact of the financial crisis, rising cost of living and food insecurity on youth.

In particular, **the prevailing trend is one of youth being increasingly aware of their rights and wanting to contribute (and integrate) – a trend which offers both opportunities, but also challenges, for UNHCR.** On the one hand, young people are increasingly keen to participate and develop programmes that they believe will benefit them and the wider community: ‘There is a desire to put the war behind them and move on with their lives rather than be held hostage by the opinions and statements of parents which may have a negative impact on them’ (Croatia). Another staff member from Kenya noted that a key trend is the ‘willingness of youth to help with programmes and running the community (as opposed to the ‘you have to do it all’ attitude of their parents).’

“ Youth need to be considered and handled with a lot of care, because this is the age when one’s future is made or lost.

However, as mentioned in Section 5.1, there is a tension between raising expectations by asking young people what their needs are, but being unable to deliver due to competing priorities and lack of dedicated funds. There is a danger that without appropriate opportunities and targeted programmes, youth are

starting to become disenfranchised and feel excluded. As one respondent from Algeria observed, ‘The youth is increasingly getting frustrated and demotivated due to the inability of reaching their full potential. The world around them is evolving and progressing whereas the Saharawi youth have no prospects for vocational training and jobs in the camps.’

5.4 Examples of good practice

Respondents highlighted a **wide range of examples of good practice**, including for example: ICT training programmes (Ghana); scholarships (Pakistan and Yemen); libraries in youth centres (Chad); youth committees / cabinets (Sudan and Thailand); sport activities (Iraq, Kenya and Ecuador); involving youth as key players in Community-based Rehabilitation (Afghanistan); involving boys and men in the fight against GBV (Kenya); peace managers in schools (Ecuador); and the Bonds without Borders programme where youth migrants, refugees and local population work together to build trust and fight xenophobia (Costa Rica). Interestingly, few examples of good practice were given of SGBV programmes and healthcare programmes for youth. (See Survey Annex 2 for examples of the different types of youth programming that respondents identify as being good practice).

“ It would be very important if youth became a priority in every UNHCR programme, because this age group has been made invisible.

Several respondents also provided useful thoughts, based on their experience, about **what makes a good youth programme**:

- Targeted - involves a situational analysis of youth
- Relevant and current - identifies needs, protection concerns and gaps through participatory assessments
- Budget allocations are commensurate with youth needs and expectations
- High levels of youth participation at all stages of the programme
- Youth recognize the benefits of the program and have a sense of ownership, as do the wider community
- Involves youth from different backgrounds and takes into account age, gender and disability (using AGDM)
- Involvement of multi-sectoral actors with collective response to prevent unnecessary duplication of efforts
- Has clear, measurable and time-bound objectives and indicators
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place

- Youth (both male/female) involved in camp management / community leadership structures
- When young people are able to use the skills acquired to be self-reliant
- Programme has a ‘multiplier effect’, for example encouraging younger children to continue their education as they have hope for the future
- Sustainable – it should be community-driven with technical support from UNHCR or other competent agencies/individuals with the aim of gradual handover to the community.

A key element of most of the respondent’s comments about examples of good practice is the **need to develop comprehensive youth programming, which balances ‘quick wins’ that show UNHCR is making a difference and building trust** (for example, sports or cultural activities) **with more substantial programmes that have a long-term impact**. In over 20 different country operations, respondents emphasised the **need for programmes that help young people to be ‘self-reliant’**. As one respondent from Liberia observed, *‘Youth involvement that will lead to youth empowerment and eventually to youth self-reliance is the way to go.’*

6. Recommendations

The overriding message coming out of the global survey of youth programming is that staff members think **youth should be an important priority for UNHCR, but they are struggling to prioritise youth programming without dedicated funding**. Lack of funding emerged as a key issue in all geographical regions and was mentioned in the comments section of most of the questions. Although the AGDM strategy supports the meaningful participation of young people and there are broader programmes that youth can benefit from, UNHCR staff expressed a real need in the survey for dedicated youth-specific programming with dedicated budget.

UNHCR staff members made the following recommendations:

- Allocate more funds to implement and develop programmes targeting the needs of youth
- Further guidance and technical support is necessary to help with the implementation of youth programming
- Definition of youth needs to be clarified to ensure youth don’t fall through the cracks of other programming (children’s programming, health programming, vocational training etc)
- Separate youth initiatives to emphasise the importance of youth programs
- Youth programming should be holistic and long term
- Collect age-based statistics to ensure youth are not ‘invisible’, collect examples of good practice and develop an evidence-base on what types of youth programming work best
- Establish section for youth within UNHCR HQ, offering technical expertise and advice
- Dedicated staff at country-level with training on youth programming
- UNHCR should partner with organisations with proved strength in youth programming

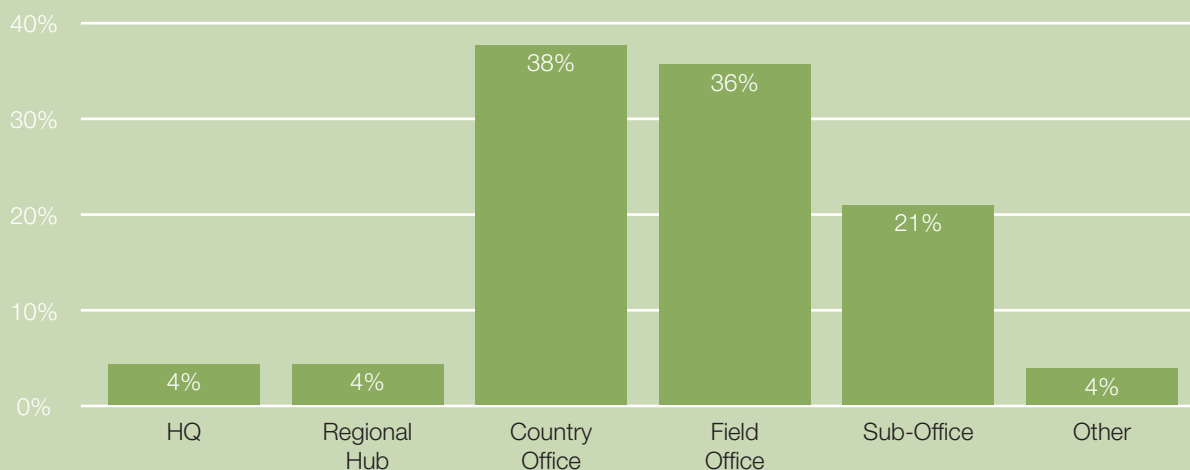
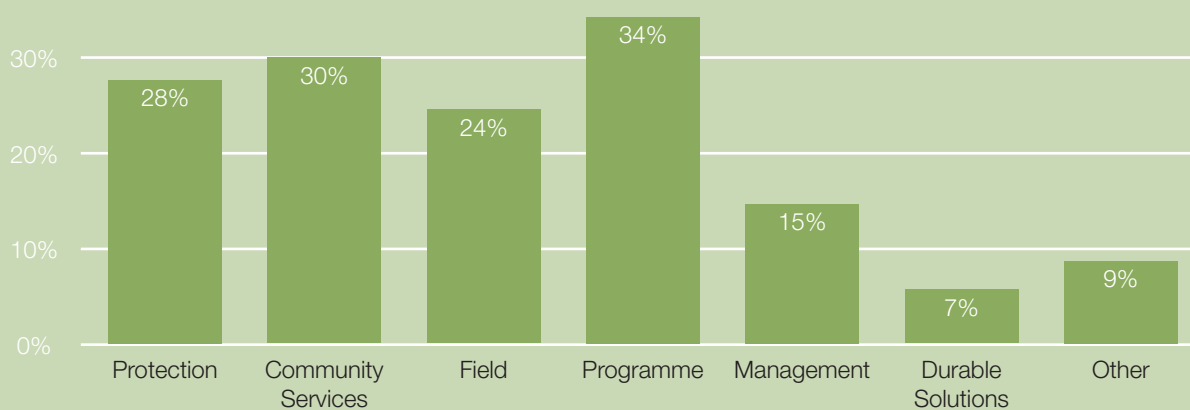
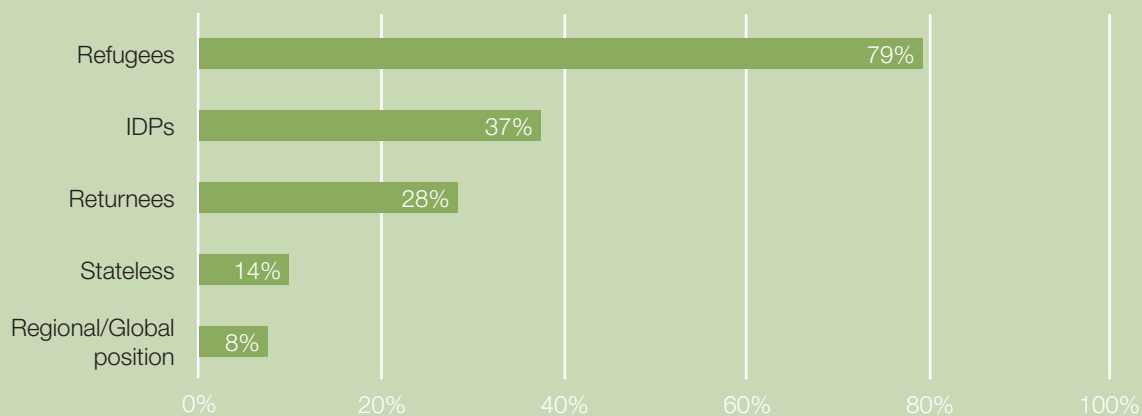
SURVEY ANNEX 1:
RESPONDENT PROFILE GRAPHS
Figure 20: Where respondents work

Figure 21: Respondents' position

Figure 22: UNHCR experience (number of country operations worked in)


Figure 23: Time spent on youth-related programmes
(% of time spent with different age groups)

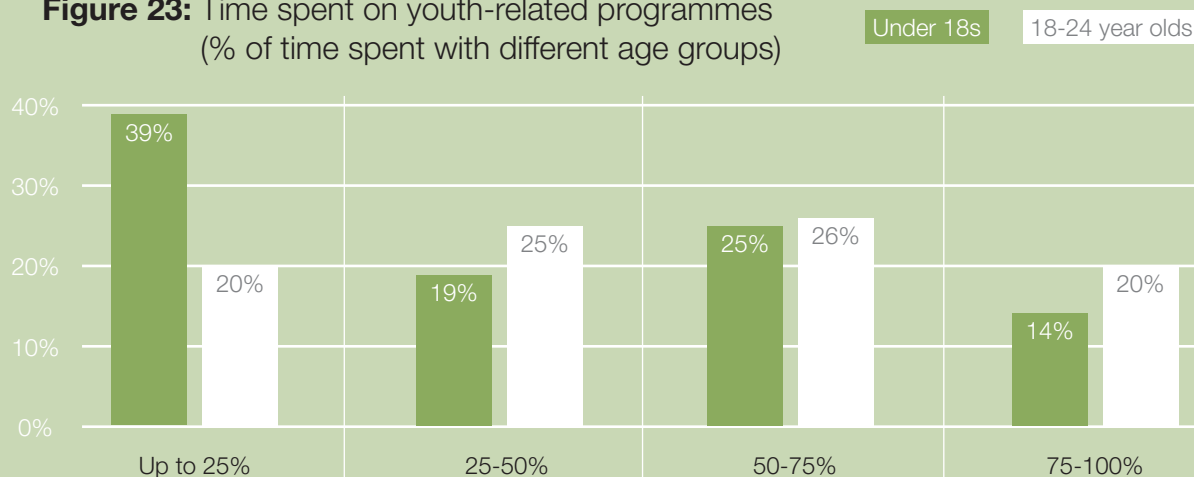


Figure 24: UNHCR experience (number of country operations worked in)

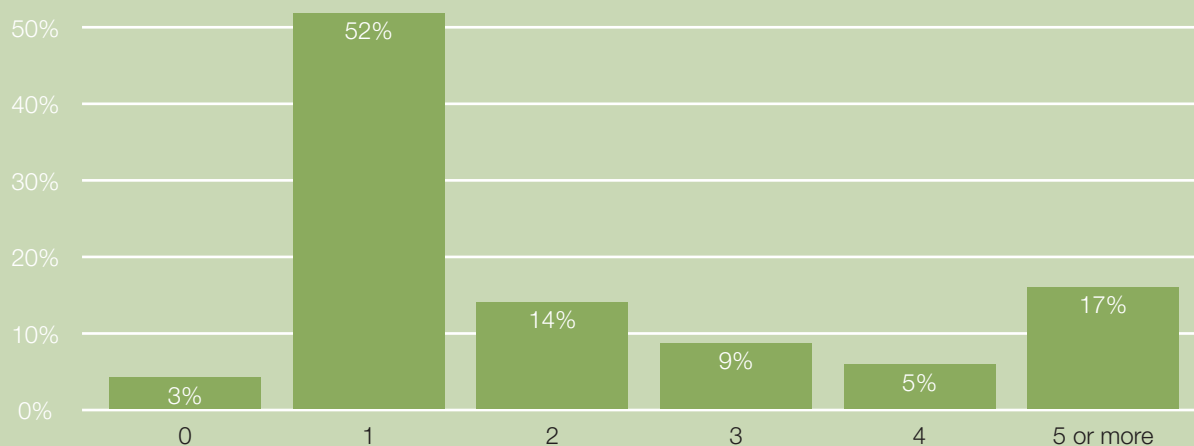
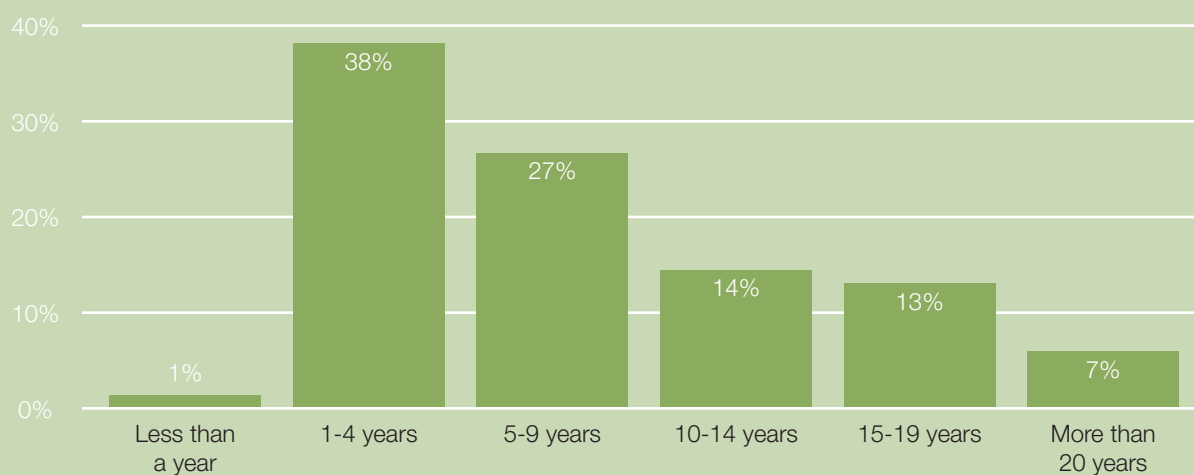


Figure 25: UNHCR experience (number of years worked for UNHCR)



SURVEY ANNEX 2:

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Education programmes

Vocational training

Vocational trainings (master craftsmen, hairdressing, computer courses, etc.) organised by UNHCR through assistance of its implementing partner can be a good example of youth programming. Afterwards, some of them were able to sustain themselves. (Kazakhstan)

Provision of vocational training for youth because the training is carried out in line with market demand plus people's interest - we are in a situation where more than 70% of the graduates are employed or self-employed. (Sudan)

We are preparing Community Technology Access to support computer literacy and vocational training of refugee youth to support self-employment opportunity. This is good example as refugees are not granted work permit in the COA. (Kyrgyzstan)

Vocational training programmes that qualify young people in a specific sector (for example: sewing). They offer access to paid employment and the possibility to start their own activity (individually or in group). They don't necessitate many resources for the start-up of the activities. (Cameroon)

Private vocational training programmes for youth (it is impossible to integrate refugees in public training, in the absence of recognition of the statute by the government): collaboration between the association in charge of the vocational training, the association in charge of the psychosocial/social/educational follow up et the UNHCR community services to identify the youth, financial support for the transportation etc, support to the search for internships and job placements. Moreover the support to their self-sufficiency and integration as represented in this programme, allows these youth to gain self-esteem, confidence in themselves and in the future, weave relations with young Moroccans and less thinking about the suffering they endured. (Morocco)

Language courses

We help youth to learn Cyrillic alphabet, we provide some English/Computer courses and other activities targeting their academic skills. As a result, children do better at school, adapt faster to the new education system (Tajikistan)

Upgrading language courses. Was good because high rate of attendance and efficient to reintegrate in their community of origin. (Burundi)

Organisation of courses to upgrade Arabic language for young repatriates from Senegal. This catching up programme has allowed students to easily integrate in the school institutions upon their return. During exams, thanks to these courses, students got good grades. We can also cite vocational training for small trades (painting, electricians, sewing, etc...). (Mauritania)

Secondary Education

Formal Secondary Education. It is good because it meets the needs and aspirations of youth consistent with a rights-based approach, participatory approach, AGDM approach to programming. (Ghana)

The latest move of UNHCR to support secondary education will certainly have positive impacts in increasing the enrolment of boys and girl youths in secondary classes. This will also impact on the

enrolment at primary and middle levels, once the parents see the possibility of continuing education in the secondary level. (Pakistan)

DAFI Scholarships

We have slightly less than 100 DAFI students. We hear back from students who have had DAFI scholarships in the past and who are very positive about the programme and ready and willing to assist their community (Pakistan).

DAFI scholarships in Pakistan are a good example as the dropout rate is almost nil and a large number of youth get jobs and become self-reliant. (Pakistan)

We have some examples of refugees who graduate from DAFI scholarships, they are now working and got married and their life is stable and happy, I could know that it is good when I see its effect on refugees and see to what limit refugees' benefit of this programmes. (Yemen)

ICT

ICT training programme provided to the youth in the Buduburam camp brought results as some the refugees have become self-reliant. They own internet cafes and few others have gotten jobs with some local enterprises. (Ghana)

Interest of the Youth in the Cyber Cafe was provided by the IP. The Cyber Cafe in Dakhla camp started in July 2011 and to date is frequented by many refugees, mostly by the youth. (Algeria)

Computer and English language training courses in the camps are well accepted by the refugee youth groups. Attendance is high, youth very motivated as it gives them at least some hope that they will leave the camp with some useful skills and find job eventually. (Bangladesh)

After the needs assessment and identification of specific areas that can be supported with available funding a programme is put in place. For example ICT has helped the Liberian youth in Ghana to gain employment both in Ghana and back when they return to Liberia. This has attracted a large number of Liberian refugees who have enrolled in the programme. (Ghana)

Tertiary education

The university and post tertiary programme particularly for refugees from countries without proper university (Somalis) forms the only professionals. Other nationalities are also selected but Somalis are prioritised. The priority for women also gives the possibility of higher studies to women that in their community, even in a situation of normalcy, which has not been the case for the last 20 years have a serious community opposition to move into studies. (South Africa / Southern Africa)

Howard Buffet program: This program was implemented 2007-2011, targeted 55 students from Kharaz refugee camp who moved after the secondary school to the urban area in Aden and joined the university through the scholarship offered to them by Howard Buffet foundation. Most of the students graduated and they are working now and helping other children in the camp. (Yemen)

Last year, during the participatory assessment, many complaints arose about tertiary education for youth. We had to take this complaint into account and plan for scholarship for all youth already involved in tertiary education. The program was funded and all youth in tertiary education receive grants for university fees and rent. (Cameroon)

Partnership for courses at HELP College of Arts and Technology being offered to refugee is a good example of youth programming as UNHCR works with the external, implementing partner with outstanding credentials. Regular meetings and exchange of ideas with the partner, and feedback gar-

nered from students helped to assess the existing programme. With a larger number of students expressing their interest and also enrolled in the second intake than the first of the programme, these show that youth are appreciative of the programme. At our partners' end, more courses are being looked into to be offered to the refugee youth, while extra-curricular activities and opening of new classes of the same course have been ongoing due to the immense interest of students. At our end, increasing enquiries about enrolment into the programme and our partner's training of youth to enhance their employability show how good the programme is. (Malaysia)

Peacebuilding education

Peace Managers in Schools - This initiative has already worked in other countries; it intends to strengthen capacities for conflict resolution and democratic instruments in schools. The aim of this project is to promote in schools, located in areas of high conflict areas, a culture of democratic values, participation and managing initiatives for the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Psychosocial support is provided for students as part of the response and the process of overcoming traumatic situations. The project will also work on strengthening the instances of student representation and decision making at the schools and in developing skills to have peaceful resolutions of conflicts within their classrooms and in their communities. (Ecuador)

Social protection – school kits, cash vouchers

Supporting IDPs students with their needs of school kits and covering the needs of his/her parents to work opportunity through self-reliance projects contributed for students to have high grades in schools and prevented child labour for more of IDPs children. (Yemen)

Cash vouchers for adolescent girls to improve schooling. School enrolment and lower risk taking behaviour. (East and Horn of Africa)

Using refugee adults as volunteer teachers

The programme managed in Van, in Turkey, through which refugees, host community (which actually includes IDPs) could enjoy a range of vocational and recreational activities. Some refugee adults were volunteer teachers. It really fostered community participation, inter-community dialogue, gave children an enjoyable way to spend their time and some respite to tired and stressed refugee partners. It was also a great morale boost to refugee volunteer teachers, who had a meaningful and really useful activity, contributing to the community. (Turkey)

Combined education programmes

A vocational training programme based on the needs of the community and the socio-economic context, including both girls and boys. This type of programme, combined with formal education (primary and secondary) has the advantage of absorbing all youth (boys and girls), who, for different reasons, cannot continue their studies, and it allows them to access livelihood opportunities with the required qualifications. (Ethiopia)

Mental Health & Psychosocial Programmes

Sports and recreational activities

We have a programme of street soccer in a difficult area in the country. Where youth refugees have been involved, the positive impact that this project has with the refugee population as well as with the local community has decreased discriminatory attitudes towards refugee population in the country (Ecuador)

Street football and popular theatre - We are working with youth on conflict resolution tools and providing gender sensitivity into sports activities. This year we hope to work with popular theatre projects. This initiative seeks to promote popular venues for discussion and awareness of issues affecting the community. Each community elects a work that makes visible its problems. In some communities sensitive topics such as sexual abuse, abuse of authority or coexistence issues will be covered (Ecuador)

Sports involves all the youths whether they are players or not. This is because those who are not players go to the pitch to support their teams, hence making them actively involved. (Mozambique)

One of the best youth programs is sports. The sports have been designed in a way that it integrates all youth in the camp and those in the host community. These programmes are always there all time even when the schools are on holiday. The students have mobilized themselves in more than 500 team groups. The most motivating thing is that best teams are awarded. This programme has both refugee and host community youth to live harmoniously and are relating very well. (Kenya)

Sports is good as it engages multicultural beneficiaries. (Kenya)

Sports and recreational activities: this will help youth to pass their time in a healthy manner rather than indulging themselves in other bad behaviours like drugs and watching bad movies and videos. (South Sudan)

Recreational activities for youth are an example of a good program due to different reasons: the need for recreational spaces has been expressed during participatory assessments and regular direct contact with youth. These activities have served as a tool to promote local integration with hosting communities, and to contribute to the psychosocial wellbeing of youth. In absence of budget constraints, we could add additional activities targeting youth specifically (Venezuela)

I believe, and it has been proven in different contexts that sport is a key catalyst for development, civic behaviour and education. Investing in sport in our camps, urban settlements or other areas will be easy, fruitful and especially highly appreciated by the PoC (Iraq)

Discussion forums for them to air out their issues and the possible responses. Recreation (sports) activities to keep them busy, interacting which is good for peace building. (Uganda)

I think, based on my 17 years field experience, healthy activities like sports and community centres for youth (girls and boys) are very important for the community and also for organisations who are working for their well-being. If youth of refugees or IDPs are fit they will be good volunteer for the community/organizations. (Pakistan)

Libraries in youth centres

We have built libraries in youth centres in certain camps, and through daily registries in which refugees sign in to access the library and its materials we can determine the numbers of users, including the male/female ratio, and what activities/materials they are accessing. The numbers can show us whether the libraries are a good investment and are being utilized, by which groups, and for what purposes. (Chad)

Support to LGBTI youth

Resettlement has been provided to LGBTI. Culture does not accept them and it's a kind of restoration or send them back to the life. (Pakistan)

Music groups

In my FO UNCHR has supported a musical group in an urban neighbourhood is strengthening local organisational skills of youths helping them to face pressures placed on youths by armed groups. UNHCR has supported the group with instruments and audio-visual equipment as well as with the construction of a local community centre where they will be able to meet. (Colombia)

Child shelters and women's centres

Best interest determination for unaccompanied and separated children is a mandatory procedure for UNHCR in general. BO Ankara, in my opinion is doing a good job keeping track and conducting BIDs on UASCs in an Urban Environment. The programme, in my opinion, is working decently because we can keep track of all UASCs that are registered with us, that are in Child Shelters, when they will be coming of age and released from Shelters, what kind of financial (in-kind or otherwise) assistance they need, their BID interviews and needs assessments etc. Of course the programme can be more efficient in many ways, i.e. less waiting periods for BID interviews and needs assessments, better assistance provided for UASCs, better education and livelihood opportunities etc, but many of these factors are dependent on external factors in Turkey (access to services and travel permits being dependant on the Government of Turkey's procedures etc.). In my opinion UNHCR Turkey is doing the best we can, given our financial resources and other constraints not related to financing of programmes. (Turkey)

Construction and rehabilitation of community centres, women centres, identification of persons with specific protection needs including youth, provision of assistance directly and through referrals to other agencies. (Sudan)

The AGDM results and the recommendations from the various meetings with refugee youth in our camp allowed us to think of opening a centre dedicated to cultural and recreational activities and to the development of girls, as cultural and religious constraints limit their participation to mixed centres. (Djibuti)

Youth counselling

Counselling targeted to youth populations: this is very important program, as in youth age, many of the youth might do very funny things and might have feeling that it is a very bad thing and cannot be solved and therefore counselling targeted to displaced youth populations is very important as it is not necessary that they are under the proper guidance of parents or guardians (South Sudan)

Livelihoods Programmes

The good example of youth programming is empowering the youth financially by giving them free higher education and skills. Entrepreneurship is also good but after that they should be provided with some kind of funding so that they can start their own setup or at least should be assisted in referring them to different opportunities. (Pakistan)

The youth programming I have been involved in included targeting the youths as special group given the fact that during the wars, it is youths and women that suffer most. In the livelihoods initiative that I have worked to promote, youth and women have been given priority and fully participated in identification of their real needs, suitable activities to address their needs, proposing their contributions,

identifying contribution from within and outside the communities, creating conducive environment for the youth to bring in new innovations and participating in regular reviews and strategic planning of the livelihood initiatives. The youths, have been able to make choices in their best interest and have championed voluntary community mobilization for the benefit of their communities, promoting peaceful-coexistence, justice and development through self-help efforts. The livelihood initiatives for youth and women have contributed to establishment of self-reliance through crop farming and the birth of small rural-industries like GARI production from Cassava and are hoped to lead to sustainable development in these communities. (Sierra Leone)

Income generation and vocational training beside involvement of the youth as daily labors in UNHCR intervention and during implementation of UNHCR activities (Iraq)

Skill building training for instance, carpentry, sewing, building, computer skills, sport, handcrafts, These activities are very important because they will provide youth with good skills (Sudan)

Skill acquisition targeted to employment possibilities in their Country of Origin. (Ethiopia)

SGBV Programmes

Pre-marriage counselling in order to avoid inter-family marriage, prevent early marriage, promote reproductive health (Iran)

Working with local organizations in the urban context during the 16 Days of Activism particularly boys and men and engaging them in the fight against GBV. (Kenya)

Working with boys and men to prevent gender-based violence. (Thailand)

The awareness raising programme for girls on the negative effects of early pregnancy, of sexual relations before 18 years, and the importance of continue their studies until the diploma. In our operation we have some awareness raising programmes, but they clash with cultural problems, large families, the insecurity of relatives, insufficient budgets, delays in the disbursement of funds to partners and the insufficient means at the hands of UNHCR staff to well follow up these programmes implemented by partners. (Congo Brazzaville)

Health Care Programmes

Provision of sanitary and hygiene materials to girls and women of reproductive age. This is good programming because girls from vulnerable families cannot afford hygiene and sanitary materials, especially among displaced populations. (Sudan)

HIV/AIDS Sensitisation Programmes Involving Youths (Zimbabwe)

Health Choice I & II for HIV prevention (Kenya)

Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) programme that is accessible, acceptable and appropriate to youth. Ex. Support drama or music groups to disseminate accurate ASRH information. Including information about available services. (HQ)

Youth Empowerment Programmes

Youth and leadership

In the refugee camps in Darfur, the youths group are very active and have undertaken some key camp management activities. They have established Youth Committee which is core to the camp management. The committee has both men and women and with support of UNHCR and IP Save the Children are assisting the developing a camp safety activities, camp waste management is done by the youth committee. The youths have undertaken voluntary efforts to functioning with limited support accelerated learning classes, adult literacy and language classes at the community levels. (Sudan)

Youth committee established by the youth group, actively undertaking camp coordination and camp management activities. Meaningfully engaging youths in camp management programmes such as food distribution, health campaign, solid waste management, running literacy classes for adult members in the community. (Sudan)

Location: Ban Dong Yang, Thailand Organizations Involved: COERR, Child Protection Committee (CPC - community-based organization) Duration and Status: 2 years/On-going Objectives: To cultivate children's understanding and positive attitude towards democratic system of government. To enable children to learn about teamwork and responsibility. To provide a forum where opinions can be discussed. To provide children with the opportunity to participate in Camp Committee and/or Child Protection Committee meetings and have their voice heard and their needs reflected by adults. Description: Child Cabinet, also known as Child Protection Forum, was founded jointly by COERR and CPC (Child Protection Committee) two years ago in Ban Dong Yang camp. The Child Cabinet is a mock government constituted by young people. They are recruited from different sections by the CPC and COERR staffs, PSW (Program Social Worker) and CPA (Child Protection Advocate), based on criteria such as leadership, courage, sacrifice for others, and active participation. After they join the cabinet, the young people are nominated and appointed into different posts, much like in the standard cabinet administrative system. The nomination and appointment process is autonomous and the young people divide the responsibility among themselves. Currently, the Child Cabinet has 19 participants. The Child Cabinet holds monthly meetings to discuss the general state of the children in the camp, identify issues, and propose solutions to problems. In addition to the monthly meeting, the Child Cabinet comes into session three or four times a month for different activities: community services activities, Saturday activities, music activities, environmental activities, etc. Representatives of the Child Cabinet are invited to attend camp committee and/or CPC meetings. However they are not always able to come due to extraneous circumstances such as school exams. Comments by Organizers: The Child Cabinet has been successfully operating for the past two years and is involved in many activities in camp. It is a great platform for community participation, role play, and growth for young people. (Thailand)

We have organised since 2008 and jointly with the Council of Europe seminars/meetings with and for young refugees in Strasbourg. Following this initiative, a network of young refugees in Europe was created (VYRE). This allowed us to promote UN and UNHCR's core values and objectives with regard to children, young people, and local integration (or social inclusion of young people). We promoted through the network and the Council of Europe former Directorate of Youth and Sports inter-cultural dialogue and awareness on refugees' rights, in order to promote young refugee and stateless participation in European society. It was fruitful because young refugees in Europe are now drafting recommendations to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. (France)

One of our OPs - Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA) - holds a youth group which was originally targeted to UASCs but is now open to all youth. They helped them to advocate for improvements to programming available to them in a structured way, inviting various stakeholders to listen to presentations of needs. This programming is positive insofar as it gave youth a means of self-expression and enabled them to create change in the services available to them (and facilitate their own), and created a useful channel of communication between them and service-providing organizations. (Egypt)

Youth can be mobilised through good camp managers and community services staff working directly with them. Youth programmes that are driven by the youth themselves are the most effective (South Sudan)

The process of youth autonomy is a programme with the aim of providing tools to non accompanied adolescents so as to allow them to live their life in the near future. We are executing the pilot project which is giving good results. We support also the Municipal Project Casas des Metros de las Juventudes in Quito. These are spaces for meetings and youth learning, which provide free courses on different themes like art, culture, music etc. There are 4 casas in 4 barrios of the city. With regards to refugee youth, their stories reveal that these spaces give them the opportunity to meet other young people with the same concerns and interests, build supporting social networks and express themselves. (Ecuador)

Youth activism

The youth project Bonds without Borders was planned jointly with youths, and its actions have been mostly based in the results of an extensive participatory assessment with over 300 refugees, migrants and Costa Rican youngsters. The engagement of the host community has been key during the process. (Costa Rica)

Youth involvement in Community Based Rehabilitation program

Community Based Rehabilitation program is one of the best activities that UNHCR has carried out in Iran. As you know, CBR or Community based Rehabilitation is a strategy for rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities, poverty reduction and socialize people with disabilities in their communities. In this program, the key success was owned to 'Youth Refugees' involvements, who were fully engaged in implementation, monitoring and reporting process. The main part of this project is to train refugees, preferably youth and through them identify the beneficiaries and implement the project. They are the core axis of the project implementation. In 2011, it was announced by the Government Counterpart (Interior Minister) of Iran that this project was the best among others. We know that CBR is a special work for special people, but the engagement of youth refugees is the key point to reach to a successful result. Perhaps, involvement of them in many UNHCR activities could be considered in priority, which is very much effective. I was the focal point of this project in UNHCR Kerman and noted that youth refugees tirelessly knocked the doors of UNHCR and the IP with enthusiasm and interest to serve the desperate beneficiaries. (Iran)

Youth participation

After the participatory evaluation, it is important to verify the information with regular field visits. Moreover, young people must identify problems and propose solutions. In the office, try to design a chronogram of implementation of the suggested recommendations/solutions. If there's a consequent budget, then execute the programme. (Chad)

Having an open discussion with young people can give them the opportunity to prioritise their needs and take action. (Chad)

Annex 4:

List of Interviewees/Country Offices

For the desk review:

Mr Austen Davis	Head of Technical Support, Norwegian Refugee Council;
Ms Cécile Mazzacurati	Youth Specialist, Humanitarian Response Branch, UNFPA;
Ms Christine McCormick	Child Protection Advisor - Fragile States, Save the Children UK;
Prof. Dawn Chatty	Director, Refugee Studies Centre, Department of International Development, University of Oxford;
Dr Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh	Departmental Lecturer in Forced Migration, Refugee Studies Centre, Department of International Development, University of Oxford;
Ms Janis Ridsdel	Child Protection in Emergencies Specialist, Plan International;
Ms Jasmeet Krause-Vilmar	Senior Livelihoods Programme Officer, Women's Refugee Commission;
Dr Jason Hart	Director of Studies, Department of Social & Policy Sciences, University of Bath & Research Associate, Refugee Studies Centre, Department of International Development, University of Oxford;
Ms Jennifer Schulte	Program Officer, Youth and Livelihoods, Women's Refugee Commission;
Prof. Jo Boyden	Director, Young Lives Project, Department of International Development, University of Oxford;
Ms Katherine Williamson	Senior Advisor, Child Protection in Emergencies, Save the Children UK;
Ms Kathrine Starup	Policy Advisor, Danish Refugee Council;
Prof Marc Sommers	Visiting Researcher, African Studies Center, Boston University & Fellow, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars;
Ms Radha Rajkota	Senior Protection Officer, International Rescue Committee;

For the final report:

UNHCR Country Offices	• Costa Rica	• Bangladesh	• Iran	• Kenya
	• Jordan	• Ethiopia	• Nepal	
Implementing Partners	• Kenya: Care International	• Jordan: Int. Relief and Development		
	• Iran: ILIA; Kyana	• Bangladesh: Technical Assistance Inc		
	• Nepal: Caritas			

List of focus group discussions

- Bangladesh: focus group discussions with Rohingya male and female youth – Cox's Bazaar District (June 2012)
- Iran: focus group discussion with male and female Afghani youth – Tehran (June 2012)
- Kenya: focus group discussion with male and female youth from Somalia and Ethiopia - Alijungur and Dadaab (May 2012)
- Jordan: focus group discussions with male and female youth from Syria, Iraq and Sudan – Amman (June 2012)
- Ethiopia: focus groups with married, unmarried, disabled, single male and female youth from Somalia – Kobe, Dollo Ado (June 2012)

Annex 4:

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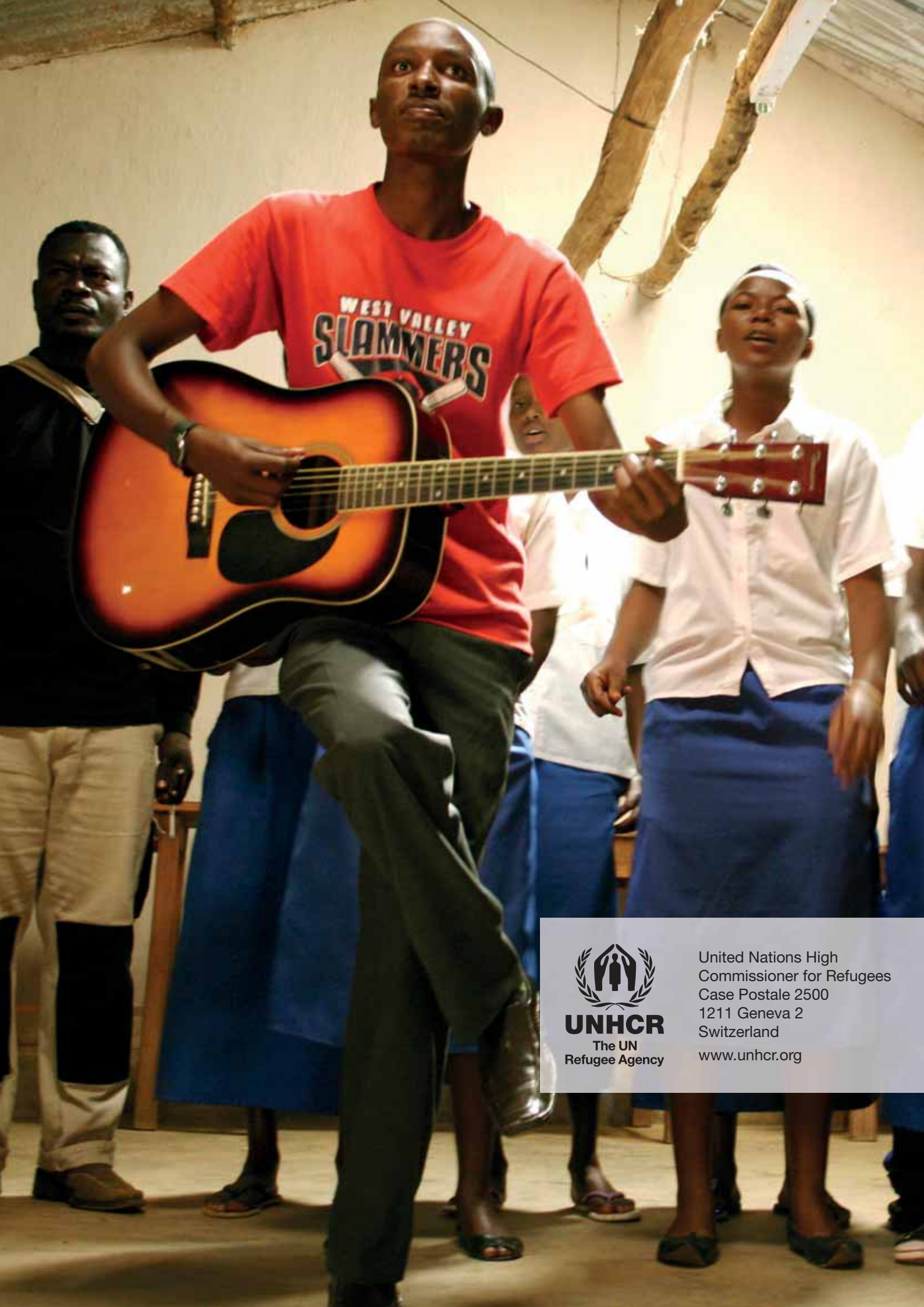
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World Bank

Why Invest in Children and Youth



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