

### **Agenda Item 3 (b): Global Programmes (EC/69/SC/CRP.3)**

#### **Introductory Remarks of Andrew Harper, Director of the Division of Programme Support & Management**

**71st Meeting of the Standing Committee, 7 March 2017**

Thank you, Your Excellency,

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to appear before the Standing Committee to provide an overview of UNHCR's Global Programmes.

Through the Global Programmes, UNHCR seeks to improve the quality of life for refugees and other people of concern through support to field operations. The Programmes cover a wide spectrum of activities in the areas of: public health; HIV and reproductive health; nutrition and food security; water, sanitation and hygiene; shelter and settlements; camp coordination and camp management; education; livelihoods and self-reliance; environmental management and energy; registration and identity management; as well as information management.

UNHCR designs its global programmes to create a more agile, adaptable and contextualized response to the needs of refugees, stateless and IDPs. At the heart of the Programmes lie the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity Approach, as well as our collective goal to advance gender equality. Effective strategic and operational partnerships are, as outlined within the CRRF, the key to our success in each of these programme areas.

Given the scope of the Global Programmes, I will limit myself to the most significant new developments.

Your Excellency,

Let me begin with how we respond to emergencies. In 2017, we increased the technical support to the field by 50%, with over 300 specialists being deployed to the 15 declared emergencies.

In Bangladesh, delivering an appropriate shelter & site planning response was particularly challenging given the high population density and difficult

topographical conditions. We used drone technology to map inaccessible areas, and assess flood and landslide risks, which allowed a rapid shelter response for 80,000 families

We also continued responding to shelter needs in protracted refugee situations. The Master Plan approach was used to prepare a more sustainable settlement development plan for Damak in Nepal. In Palabek, Uganda, a series of low-density settlements that follow natural topography has reduced costs and helped preserve natural vegetation and resources.

In relation to innovative shelter solutions, the longstanding partnership with Better Shelter and the IKEA Foundation produced an improved model of the Refugee Housing Unit. This lightweight, durable and cost-effective shelter solution, which includes a solar energy unit for light and telephone charger, affords greater dignity and better protection.

Let me now turn to **public health**. The vision of UNHCR's Global Strategy on Public Health is to ensure that all refugees are able to fulfil their rights in accessing life-saving and essential health care.

In 2017, UNHCR reinforced reproductive health and HIV programming notably in Cameroon, Niger, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. In Algeria, Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Uganda, we trained 240 primary health care workers to provide mental health support to refugees. UNHCR continued to assist the authorities with HIV prevention initiatives, and the delivery of antiretroviral therapy to refugees, notably in Rwanda. In Uganda, together with UNFPA, UNHCR strengthened maternal health and HIV services for South Sudanese refugees through training and clinical services to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. Support to Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania led to improved integrated service provision for malaria. With the support of Gates Foundation, UNHCR also improved the quality of low cost high impact new-born care and maternal health services in Jordan, South Sudan and in Dadaab, Kenya.

Furthermore, to improve the management of Non-Communicable Diseases, UNHCR is developing a toolkit with scalable training and clinical tools for primary care providers.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Numerous refugee emergencies continued to pose critical public health challenges. The good news is that rapid response by UNHCR and partners prevented deaths, including during the cholera outbreak in Uganda. Comprehensive nutrition programmes by UNHCR and partners helped to achieve an improvement in Global Acute Malnutrition levels for refugees in some sites. Unfortunately acute malnutrition remains critical in 21 surveyed sites in Bangladesh, Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Sudan. Moreover, we saw improvements in stunting – a key SDG 2 indicator –, but every third site still recorded critical stunting levels. In 19% of the sites, anaemia levels were even significantly higher than previously observed.

Documentation from Rwanda and Chad, where some population groups have experienced food cuts of up to 50%, indicate that women have had to leave their children for long periods of time while searching for work outside refugee camps. Reports of women resorting to transactional sex to meet their basic needs have been discovered. Additional assistance to meet refugees' basic needs is desperately needed in at least ten countries.<sup>1</sup> UNHCR and WFP continue to jointly monitor and fundraise for operations of concern and are collaborating to target and prioritize those most in need.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In terms of **WASH**, UNHCR is reducing the cost of water supply in protracted refugee situations through improved management of water resources. UNHCR completed a four-year project to create an online geo-referenced database of all boreholes in refugee settings worldwide, and a tool measuring return-on-investment of the selected WASH response. The Cost of Water tool improves budgeting for the provision of water in camps, particularly in post-emergency situations. These tools supported the expanded conversion of motorized water pumps to hybrid or solar energy, which enables cost savings of up to 80%.

UNHCR is also scaling up **energy** interventions and partnerships, using innovative and sustainable technologies. Monitoring data showed that a lighting intervention in Burkina Faso resulted in 65% of households switching from torches to solar lights as their primary light source, which will save some \$23 per household in 2018. Additionally, in Burkina Faso, efficient cook stove interventions will save the equivalent of 39 football fields of forest and avoid

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<sup>1</sup> Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

772 tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2018. In Chad, similar intervention will save the equivalent of 27 football fields of forest.

The unmanaged use of often already scarce fuel resources damages the **environment** and can bring refugees into conflict with host communities. The ongoing restoration project in the Zamay forest area, in Northern Cameroon, has already had measurable impact on peaceful coexistence between the refugee and host community. A number of initiatives to mitigate or restore degraded forest areas are planned or underway, also in Bangladesh.

Your Excellency,

In order to respond to critical gaps in **refugee education**, UNHCR embarked on intensive efforts to increase access to quality education for more than 230,000 refugee and host community youth initially in Kenya, Pakistan, Rwanda and Uganda. Over 500,000 out-of-school children enrolled in primary school through the Educate a Child Programme in 12 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Currently over 10,200 refugees are following higher education courses in 50 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East through university scholarships provided by the DAFI higher education programme and Connected Learning programmes. Together with the Global Partnership for Education, 22 UNHCR country programmes ensured both refugee and host community students access quality education through the national system. UNHCR will monitor progress made through its Refugee Education Management Information System (REMIS) that was launched in November 2017 to ensure robust data management and improved quality of education data for refugee children.

Refugee education lays the ground for **livelihoods opportunities** and increased **self-reliance**. Where refugees are concerned, the preconditions to sustain resilience include freedom of movement, the right to work, valid and accepted personal documentation, and access to financial services.

UNHCR's work on building "inclusive value chains" for refugee artisans has shown for its part that refugees have skills and talents that can create products and deliver services for the global market. UNHCR is also working with refugee and host communities to include them in national and global "value chains" for different goods.

To increase access to credit for refugees and demonstrate that microfinance can be a tool to secure livelihoods for refugees, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and UNHCR launched a USD 15 million partial Credit Guarantee Facility (CGF), which is initially supporting refugees in Jordan and Uganda through a microfinance investment fund.

The institutionalisation of **Cash-Based Interventions** as a means to provide for the needs of the displaced and stateless populations, as well as returnees, is fully on track. In 2017, UNHCR provided \$502 million in cash, which was more than in-kind assistance, and increased the scope of our reach to 8 million people in 94 countries.

Over 60% was provided through multi-purpose cash, providing people with the ability to choose how to best meet their needs. Cash provided to cover basic needs helped to address protection risks, such as negative coping strategies, including child labor. One quarter of overall cash assistance was provided to meet specific protection objectives.

In large scale and mature cash operations, 93 cent of each dollar went directly to the beneficiary. Cash assistance also helps to boost the local economy. In some countries, we found that CBI assistance had effectively contributed to the real income of the host community.

Your excellency,

We certainly agree that secure and reliable **data collection** is imperative for solid and sustainable programming and interventions. In 2017, UNHCR continued to strengthen evidence-based decision-making with many partners.

Together with the World Bank Group, UNHCR continues efforts to bridge the humanitarian and development data gap. A Joint Data centre is foreseen to be established during the course of 2018. The centre will build on existing efforts and capacities to collect, analyse and disseminate primary microdata for a range of stakeholders, and on the work of the Expert Group on Refugee and Internally Displaced Persons Statistics (EGRIS) to strengthen global and country-level data collection systems. Greater efficiency of statistical systems on displaced populations will provide the foundation for more effective and accountable monitoring and evaluation processes

UNHCR also continued to consolidate its Information Management capacity. In July 2017, UNHCR launched a Handbook on Joint Needs Assessments to better support the field in providing accurate data for informed decision-making.

UNHCR continued the roll-out of its global Biometrics Identity Management System (BIMS) and further developed the web-based case management tool, proGres v4. UNHCR has rolled out proGres v4 in 37 countries, helping UNHCR partners and host governments to further standardize registration and case management practices. In total, over 4.4 million refugees and asylum-seekers have been biometrically registered in 49 countries through UNHCR's BIMS or IrisGuard.

In 2018, UNHCR will roll out a more pragmatic and centralized system for registration and identity management. This new ecosystem (PRIMES) will be the basic building block to leverage digital ID technology for empowerment of individuals to have access to and agency over their data; as well as building the capacity of civil and other identity registry systems to be inclusive and protection-sensitive; and strengthening service delivery by UNHCR and other agencies.

Your Excellency, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Let me stop here. I now look forward to any questions you may have and will do my best to answer them together with Deputy Director of the Division of Solutions and Resilience, Mr. Mamadou Dian Balde.

Thank you.