Introduction

In 2016, you helped UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, continue to save lives, protect rights and build a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people around the world.

Every donation you made, however small, has helped women, men and children who have been forced to flee home, leaving everything behind. This report highlights how generous supporters like you have helped UNHCR protect and assist millions of people in need in 2016.

Thank you for making this possible.

“Each time I witness simple and spontaneous acts of humanity and compassion carried out by everyday people to help refugees, it renews my faith that the people of the world will not turn their backs on these women, men and children who have lost everything.”

Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees
365 days together

UNHCR helps protect people forced to flee their homes. We work in some 128 countries around the world, protecting and caring for millions of people. Your generous support makes this possible. Here is a look at some of the events that marked 2016 and how we responded, together.

January
Thousands displaced in Niger

Around 100,000 people are driven from their homes in south-east Niger by attacks launched by the Boko Haram insurgency group. This includes local villagers, people already displaced from other parts of the country and Nigerian refugees. UNHCR redirects available resources to meet the urgent need for shelter and other basic aid, thanks to donors like you.

February
Refugees vote in Central African Republic election

Thousands of refugees vote in the second round of the Central African Republic’s (CAR) election which, after years of violence and suffering, could lead to peace and their return home. UNHCR helps inform eligible refugees from CAR in Cameroon, Chad and the Republic of the Congo about the electoral process and facilitate their participation.

March
Five years of war in Syria

This month marks five years of conflict in Syria – the biggest humanitarian and refugee crisis of our time. With your support, UNHCR and partners continue to protect and assist millions of Syrian refugees as well as families displaced inside Syria, delivering life-saving assistance, safeguarding fundamental human rights, and developing solutions to help Syrians find a better future.

April
Ecuador: The worst earthquake in decades

A 7.8-magnitude earthquake strikes Ecuador, killing over 650 people and displacing some 73,000. Thanks to your generous support, UNHCR airlifts aid within days – including 50,000 sleeping mats, 18,000 mosquito nets and 900 tents – to families who’ve lost everything. Some 17,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, mostly from Colombia, lived in some of the worst hit areas.

May
A global campaign to shelter refugees

As a record number of people worldwide are forced to flee, UNHCR launches Nobody Left Outside, a global campaign to fund decent shelter for refugees under our care. It calls on private donors and enterprises to raise funds to help shelter millions of refugees. Your support helps provide everything from life-saving emergency shelter like tents to temporary housing or rental assistance.

June
Forced displacement hits record high

Wars and persecution have driven more people from their homes than at any time since UNHCR records began, shows our new Global Trends report. A total of 65.3 million people were forcibly displaced at the end of 2015. On average, 24 people were forced to flee each minute.
**July**

**60,000 flee South Sudan**

Fresh violence in South Sudan’s capital, Juba, sends 60,000 people fleeing for safety to Uganda, Kenya and Sudan – mostly women and children. Nearly 1 in 4 South Sudanese are estimated to be displaced inside the country or in neighbouring states. Thanks to donors like you, UNHCR continues to protect those forced to flee and deploys additional teams, while working with partners to open new refugee settlements.

**October**

**Myanmar refugees return home**

After decades in exile, a first group of Myanmar refugees in Thailand voluntarily return home. As of October 2016, there were some 103,000 Myanmar refugees in Thailand. UNHCR offers counselling and information, to ensure that returns are based on informed decisions. UNHCR and partners also give return assistance to those who choose to go.

**December**

**Humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen**

As fighting rages on in Aleppo, Syria, in Yemen, over two million people have been displaced inside the country because of a conflict that started nearly two years ago. More than half the population are in dire need of food. The needs of displaced people are huge. “We are hungry, cold and ill, we need help, food and medicines,” explains one displaced father. With your support, UNHCR has provided emergency aid to 660,000 people in Yemen since the start of the war.

**September**

**Mediterranean death toll soars**

September marks one year since the death of Syrian toddler Alan Kurdi, which resulted in an unprecedented wave of public support for refugees all over Europe. Since Alan’s death, the pace of drownings at sea has only increased, making 2016 the deadliest year in the Mediterranean yet. Across the world, in New York, UNHCR delivers a petition signed by over 1.2 million people expressing solidarity with refugees to the UN General Assembly. Days later, 193 countries commit to protect refugee and migrant rights at a key UN Summit.

**August**

**First-ever Refugee Olympic Team**

Ten refugees make history as members of the first-ever Refugee Olympic team at Rio 2016. The team includes two Syrian swimmers, two judokas from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a marathoner from Ethiopia and five runners from South Sudan. “Their participation in the Olympics is a tribute to the courage and perseverance of all refugees in overcoming adversity,” says Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Two displaced athletes also compete at the Paralympic Games in the Independent Paralympic Athletes Team.

**November**

**Families flee Mosul**

Some 73,000 people are displaced from Mosul, since the start of an offensive to retake the city on 17 October. In response, UNHCR starts to build 11 camps across northern Iraq, to shelter up to 120,000 people. We also provide life-saving protection, emergency relief packages to benefit some 54,000 people and winter items to help families survive the cold – all thanks to your kind donations.
Responding to emergencies, together

In 2016, you helped UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, protect and assist millions of people forced to flee their homes.

Wherever needed, we responded with life-saving support, safeguarded basic rights and helped people build better futures. You made this possible.

From sheltering families displaced inside Iraq to helping over a million people forced to flee violence in South Sudan, we were there, thanks to you and generous donors like you.

**Syria: The biggest humanitarian crisis of our time**

Your donations helped UNHCR and partners continue to respond to the needs of families fleeing conflict in Syria. In November 2016, as temperatures fell, UNHCR started delivering lifesaving assistance to help 3.2 million displaced Syrians across the Middle East survive the winter – thanks to your support.

**Ecuador earthquake**

Your generous support helped give vital aid – including 50,000 sleeping mats, 18,000 mosquito nets and 900 tents – to families affected by the earthquake and its aftershocks, including refugees and asylum seekers from Colombia.

**Yemen emergency**

You helped Yemeni families fleeing to other countries and over 360,000 people displaced inside Yemen receive urgently needed aid items in 2016 – in a country left on the brink of a humanitarian catastrophe after nearly two years of bitter war.

**The Central African Republic (CAR)**

The situation in the Central African Republic remains fragile and hundreds of thousands of people are still displaced inside the country. Thanks to you, UNHCR and partners are present and continued, during 2016, to provide protection, shelter, basic aid, support to those returning home and more.

**Iraq situation**

Millions of Iraqis have been forced to abandon their homes after decades of conflict and violence. With your support, UNHCR is providing protection and life-saving aid like tents, mattresses and other essentials. Over 17 million people displaced within Iraq have received shelter and vital aid since January 2014.

**South Sudan emergency**

When fresh violence broke out in the country’s capital in July 2016, you helped provide life-saving aid like food, water and shelter to people forced to flee to neighbouring states. Uganda has received the largest number of refugees, hosting over 640,000 refugees from South Sudan by the end of 2016. Many are children. Some refugees report walking for days, often without food or water, to escape armed groups accused of killings, torture, rape and burning down villages.

**Europe refugee crisis**

In 2016, refugees and migrants continued to cross the Mediterranean to reach Europe. An average of 14 people died trying every day – the highest number ever recorded. Thanks to donors like you, UNHCR teams on the ground continue to support people arriving and in Europe, while calling for stronger EU action on refugees. This includes increasing legal pathways to Europe to allow refugees to reach safety without making dangerous sea crossings.
A Year in the Life of a UNHCR Emergency Coordinator

23 years. 5 continents. 2 plane crashes. And countless hours travelling by foot, car, boat, plane or horse to reach people forced to flee in even the most remote locations. Roberto Mignone has experienced a lot in his 23 years working for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

Roberto is now a Principal Emergency Coordinator, deployed to support UNHCR’s efforts to prepare and respond to emergencies worldwide. In 2016 alone, Roberto was sent to Burundi, Senegal, Ecuador, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Panama, Venezuela, South Sudan and Iraq. Here’s what he had to say about his experiences in just a few of these places – doing the work you made possible on the ground, every day last year.

APRIL

A strong earthquake hits the coast of Ecuador, in an area where many Colombian refugees live. Ecuador hosts the largest number of refugees in Latin America so UNHCR was already present in the country. This meant we could respond very quickly to the needs of people displaced by the earthquake – refugees, asylum-seekers and locals alike.

I arrived at the same time as the first airlift of UNHCR aid, which brought supplies like thousands of tents, sleeping mats, mosquito nets and kitchen sets for people in the worse hit areas.

There are 12 of us in UNHCR’s Emergency Service Team, ready to be deployed anytime, often within hours. The first step in any emergency is to assess the situation. We try to involve refugees and others under our mandate right from the start, including women, youth and the elderly, to understand their needs and bring in their skills and ideas.

AUGUST

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When our work pays off and those we care for are properly protected and assisted, it’s very rewarding.

In Ecuador, I helped setup camps to shelter affected people. In fact, Ecuador’s Minister of Interior and myself setup the very first tent in one of those camps! It was a surreal moment, when the Minister turned to us and asked who could help him setup the first tent. We worked very closely with the government of Ecuador, other humanitarian actors as well as with the affected communities. Coordinating UNHCR’s work with these actors is a key part of my work. Needed. Sometimes though, you have to take a step back and let a colleague take over, otherwise you won’t be of any help to anyone, as much as you want to.

SEPTEMBER

After some rest and medical care in Geneva, I head to Iraq, where the government is planning a military offensive to retake the country’s second largest city, Mosul. When I arrive, UNHCR is stepping up preparations to receive people displaced by the fighting.

I start working with our local teams to plan the emergency response, to ensure we have enough tents, camps and land to shelter fleeing families and give them the protection they need. It’s a race against time, working with the government to find suitable sites to shelter these families.

After a few days, I get sick again and have to be evacuated. Clearly I haven’t fully recovered from the malaria. This job can be physically, mentally and emotionally very hard...In my first year on the job, I was deployed 10 out of 12 months. Still I wouldn’t trade the work I get to do in the field for the world.

When you’re on the ground during an emergency, you see that every contribution from our donors makes a difference, even if it just allows us to buy one bucket or one plastic sheet to help shelter a family. When you’ve lost everything, even a little is a lot.
Survival

People forced to flee usually leave everything behind to make the dangerous journey to safety. In 2016, your generous donations allowed UNHCR to provide millions of people with the protection and assistance they need to survive – including emergency shelter, food, water and healthcare.

PROTECTION

You protected families and individuals, including the most vulnerable children on the move.

In 2016, your generous donations allowed UNHCR to protect and care for millions of people around the world who have been driven from home due to wars or persecution. Through direct cash support, for example, UNHCR helps refugees pay for basic life essentials like shelter, food and healthcare. This is critical to protecting the most vulnerable, including young refugees like Moises.

“I want [my brothers] to be able to study and be in a safe, secure home. It’s been too long since they’ve had that.”

Helping Moises keep his brothers safe

When street gangs attacked his family’s pizzeria in southeast El Salvador, 20-year-old Moises, his father and two younger brothers had no choice but to run for their lives. Leaving was the only option to avoid more harassment and being forced to join the brutal gangs.

Moises and his family are part of a growing number of people fleeing the raging gang violence in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala – now among the most dangerous countries in the world. After reaching Mexico, Moises’ father abandoned the brothers.

With their mother long out of the picture, Moises, Anderson, 17, and Jairo, 14, found themselves alone in a foreign country with no parents and no possibility of returning home.

Now the legal guardian for his younger siblings, Moises is doing all he can to help them start over in Mexico, where they have been given asylum. Thanks to generous donors like you, Moises has received financial support from UNHCR, helping him keep his brothers safe.
SHELTER

You sheltered families forced to flee, often leaving everything behind.

Imagine behind forced to flee your home, your town, your country, because of war or persecution. Not knowing where you will sleep next. When families are forced to flee, one of the first things they need is a safe place to stay. This is where you come in. By donating to UNHCR, you help deliver emergency shelter like tents, provide transitional housing and give families a home when they are finally able to return to their country. In Greece, we moved close to 4,000 people in eight government-run sites from tents to UNHCR prefabricated houses in 2016, helping parents like Omar and Banan keep their children warm and dry.

“Shelter is the foundation stone for refugees to survive and recover, and should be considered a non-negotiable human right. As we tackle worldwide displacement on a level not seen since World War 2, no refugee should be left outside.”

Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees

In 2016, you helped respond to increasing needs and multiple emergencies across the world. Your support allowed UNHCR to continue to help the most vulnerable by giving safe shelter to people forced to flee their homes. Lacking a safe and private place to eat, sleep, study and store belongings can have profound consequences on people’s health and welfare.

But without a considerable increase in funding and global support, millions of people fleeing war and persecution face homelessness or inadequate housing. That’s why in May, UNHCR launched a global campaign to provide shelter to those forced to flee. Individuals like you, companies and foundations are called upon to raise funds to help shelter two million refugees across the world by 2018. And you have generously responded. Since its launch, the campaign has raised some $10 million from people, companies and foundations around the world. Thank you for supporting this campaign and helping shelter refugee families.

Nobody Left Outside: Coming together to shelter refugees

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Sheltering Banan’s family

Banan and her husband Omar left their home in Syria after bombs hit their town. Their eldest children were only ten and eight years old. After several years displaced in other parts of the country, the family fled to Turkey and then to Greece in 2016. There they found shelter in Nea Kavala, a government-run refugee accommodation site. The family was moved from a tent to a UNHCR prefabricated house in November 2016. At the time, 32-year-old Banan was pregnant. Now she can finally keep her family safe and warm.

© UNHCR/Zoe Papadopoulou
WATER

You gave safe, clean water to refugee families.

When people are forced to flee, your donations allow UNHCR to give life-saving assistance, including water. By providing clean water and sanitation services, you help save lives and protect families from deadly diseases like cholera. With your support, UNHCR makes sure refugees and other people of concern have safe access to quality water as well as proper hygiene and sanitation facilities, like latrines. In 2016, you made it possible for UNHCR to build over 41,000 latrines, 171 water taps and 100 wells by mid-2016 alone. Together, we also reached over a million people with environmental health and hygiene campaigns, helping displaced communities stay healthy. In South Sudan, you helped provide clean water to both refugees and the generous locals that welcome them.

“As a mother of nine, I need a lot of water to wash my children. Things have changed for the better since UNHCR installed a hand water pump right next to my house.”

Giving clean water to Lizbeth’s family

Lizbeth has nine children. She used to queue for water for hours. Today, she is one of over 6,500 South Sudanese who have access to clean water since UNHCR drilled boreholes and installed pumps for local communities hosting refugees. Lizbeth and her family live near four camps sheltering Sudanese refugees. As well as protecting people forced to flee, UNHCR also provides critical support to communities who generously welcome refugees. In South Sudan, safe water is often as hard to access for local people like Lizbeth as it is for refugees. That’s why UNHCR is committed to ensuring access to clean water for both those forced to flee and the communities that host them. Thanks to UNHCR, Lizbeth now has more time and can go fetch water even at night. We couldn’t do it without the support of generous people like you, villages, to benefit both refugees and host communities alike.

HEALTH

You saved lives and protected refugees’ health.

Making sure refugee families can access proper health care is critical to keeping them safe. With your support, UNHCR and partners help keep families safe by making sure they get the medical care they need and are equipped to protect their health. In emergencies, we can quickly deploy health care experts to address the main risks to refugees. We also run vaccination campaigns to prevent the outbreak of disease and work to include more refugees in national health-care systems. In 2016, to prevent malaria, UNHCR continued to distribute life-saving bed nets to refugees, helping to protect families like Jacqueline’s.

“I use the mosquito net to protect the children from mosquito bites and malaria.”

Keeping Jacqueline’s family safe

Jacqueline was only 25 when she was forced to flee violence and killings in her native Burundi. At the time, she was pregnant with her second child. Today, she lives with her husband Joseph and their two little boys, Alikeli and Dani, in Tanzania’s Nduta refugee camp. At first, the family stayed in a mass shelter, where Jacqueline worried about her children catching illnesses and diseases. Then they received their own shelter. To help counter the risk of malaria, a big problem in the area, UNHCR also gave the family insecticide-treated mosquito nets, which Jacqueline and Joseph use to protect their young children from disease-carrying mosquitoes.
NUTRITION

You provided life-saving support, helping the most vulnerable grow stronger and healthier.

Making sure displaced people, especially children, get access to proper nutrition is vital to keeping them safe. Communicable diseases brought on in part by malnutrition are responsible for millions of preventable deaths each year. UNHCR and partners strive to protect the health of people forced to flee, including by ensuring that children and their mothers receive nutrition and care in times of crisis. Thanks to the support of donors like you, UNHCR screens children like Jena and provides supplementary food to help them grow stronger and healthier.

“"The clinic is open daily for screening of children. This helps us check for new cases of malnourishment and implement preventative programmes""

Helping baby Jena stay healthy

Eight-month old Jena’s mother Amani waited patiently in line for her daughter’s follow-up appointment at a clinic in Azraq refugee camp, Jordan. Soon enough, Amani was called up by Shahed, a nutritionist who works at the UNHCR-funded community clinic. Staff at this clinic screen children like Jena for malnutrition. In 2016, they saw an increase in the number of cases due to the number of new refugees coming from Syria. Many had spent some time without proper food and health care services, caught on the other side of the border. When a parent brings their child to the clinic, nutritionists like Shahed assess their growth and nutritional status and provide therapeutic food and/or referrals to hospital when necessary. They also do spot tests for anemia. This is critical to making sure young refugees like Jena grow strong and healthy.

Restoring hope

People forced to flee are often stripped of their fundamental human rights. UNHCR focuses on safeguarding their rights by ensuring safety, documentation and access to education and skills, thanks to the support of generous donors like you.
EDUCATION

You gave young refugees a chance to go to school.

When children are forced to flee, they often miss out on years of school. Robbed of an education and the safety of school, they can face exploitation and abuse. Globally, only 50% of refugee children go to primary school and only 22% go on to secondary education. With your support, UNHCR helps ensure that young refugees like Sasha get the chance to learn. By mid-2016 alone, UNHCR enrolled over 1.3 million children in primary school worldwide – thanks to donors like you.

“The day I came to school was the happiest day of my life. I can’t even tell you how badly I want to be the first person in my family to go to university.”

Helping Sasha get closer to her dream

21-year-old Sasha dreams of becoming a lawyer, to defend human rights. Sasha fled her home in the Democratic Republic of the Congo four years ago, after a rebel group attacked her village, burning down homes. Sasha and her two younger brothers managed to escape. Their parents weren’t so lucky. Crossing rivers, hiding in the bush and traveling thousands of kilometres in trucks, the siblings finally reached Tongogara refugee camp, Zimbabwe, where they now live with relatives.

Safe at last, Sasha started teaching herself English, to be able to go back to school. Today, she is finishing secondary school and dreams of studying law. With the support of donors like you, UNHCR covers school fees, teacher salaries and the cost of uniforms and learning material for refugees in Tongogara. We are also building extra classrooms and bringing in more teachers so refugee and local children can continue their education. Together, we ensure that refugees like Sasha can start building a better future.

LIVELIHOODS

You made it possible for people to learn new skills, to help re-start their lives.

Giving refugees the opportunity to work is key to helping them rebuild their lives. It gives them the chance to meet their families’ basic needs, live productive and dignified lives, and make a positive contribution in their communities. Refugees often leave home with only the clothes on their backs, but they do bring valued skills and experience. Making sure they can use and build on these skills is key to helping refugees become self-sufficient. UNHCR does this in various ways, including by offering vocational training, supporting micro-enterprises and giving people the tools they need to work. The work you make possible makes a real difference in the lives of refugees, including fishermen like Hawali Oumar.

“I am grateful to be given the tools to resume my work.”

Providing a safety net for Oumar

One night, Oumar woke up to the sound of gunfire and found his town in flames. The 43-year-old Nigerian had no choice but to run for his life. Oumar reached safety in Chad, but lost his father and 10 other relatives in the violent attack. His 18-year-old daughter was separated from the rest of the family in the chaos and only reunited with them two years later.

With the support of generous donors like you, UNHCR offers livelihood programmes to help refugees like Oumar get back on their feet. In the lakeside community where Oumar sought refuge, you have given refugees canoes, nets and basic fishing equipment, giving them the ability to start working again. Thanks to you, refugees like Oumar can now sell fish to help support their families.
You helped displaced families integrate, resettle or safely return home.

Through your generous support, UNHCR works tirelessly to protect and assist refugees throughout every step of their journey. Our ultimate goal is to find durable solutions that allow them to live in dignity and peace. These include helping families return home when safe to do so, or settle and make a positive contribution in a new community. None of this would be possible without the kindness of donors like you. Your support has helped thousands of refugees find home, like Thant Zin Maung and his family.

“I hope that in five years, my wife will be walking, my children doing well in school and that I'll be successful in business with the skills I learnt as a refugee.”

Bringing Thant Zin Maung and his family home

Thant Zin Maung, 48, has been living in Nupo camp, Thailand, for the past decade. In 2016, he was finally able to return to his native Myanmar with his wife and two young children. With your support, UNHCR and partners help people who have been forced to flee, like Thant Zin Maung, return home when safe, advising them on what they can expect at their destination and providing small return grants and legal aid to help returnees get back on their feet. Thant Zin Maung’s priority is to enroll his sons in school and get treatment for his wife’s health problems. He plans to use his return grant to set up a small business, drawing on the training he received while living in the camp.

Finding Home

Every donation you make to UNHCR gives refugees and forcibly displaced communities hope for a better tomorrow. Together, we help families and individuals return home when it is safe to do so, or settle in a new community. In 2016, your support continued to help refugees build better futures.
UNHCR in numbers

Every year, millions of men, women and children are forced to flee their homes to escape conflict and persecution. By donating to UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, you help save lives, protect rights and build a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people across the world. Everything we do helps protect people forced to flee their homes. And we just couldn’t do it without the support of generous donors like you.

1950
The year UNHCR was created. Since then, we’ve helped millions of people restart their lives.

72 hours
How fast UNHCR can deploy emergency stand-by teams to manage and coordinate a response.

65.3 million
forcibly displaced people worldwide, including 16.1 million refugees under UNHCR’s mandate.

373 aid workers deployed by UNHCR to emergencies in 2016, with many more specialist short term staff also sent to assist.

9,396
UNHCR staff members in the field (87% of our staff).

128 countries
Today UNHCR is on the ground in 128 countries

YOUR FUNDS IN ACTION

Every donation you make to UNHCR helps people forced to flee, making a difference in their lives.

UNHCR is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions. We rely on donors like you to assist wherever needed and get the job done. You gave generously to UNHCR in 2016, helping us respond to ever increasing needs.

In 2016, over $351 million was raised from more than 1.7 million individual donors from 48 countries as well as foundations, corporate and philanthropist partners, helping UNHCR respond in a time of unprecedented global displacement.

Together, we are changing lives and giving people hope for a better future. Thank you for making this possible.
DELIVERING VITAL SUPPLIES
Core relief items sent for emergencies in 2016

Can you imagine having to run for your life, leaving home with only the clothes on your back? In times of crisis, people can be forced to flee their homes within minutes. In those situations, UNHCR leads efforts to rush in life-saving assistance – like shelter, food, water and medical care – whenever and wherever needed.

In 2016, thanks to you, millions of items were shipped from our seven global warehouses, four regional stockpiles and directly from suppliers. You’ve helped families across the world receive essential supplies, including thermal blankets and sleeping mats.

From when an emergency strikes, we’re able to dispatch core relief items for up to some 600,000 people.