



## SRMUN CHARLOTTE 2020

*Forging Connections: Building a Community Among Nations Through Diplomacy*

March 26-28, 2020

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Esteemed Delegates,

Welcome to SRMUN Charlotte 2020 and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - Executive Committee (UNHCR ExCom), which has been tasked by the UN to protect and promote the world's refugees.

To help address the refugee crisis as a result of World War II, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) called for the creation of the UNHCR in December 1949. In January 1951, the UNHCR formally launched, taking a non-political, humanitarian, and social role to assist and resettle refugees. Over time, the UNHCR's mission evolved to extend assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs), stateless people, asylum seekers, and other persons of concern. The UNHCR partners with Member States, non-governmental organizations, and inter-governmental organizations to ensure the protection and treatment of refugees. By 1958, the UNGA and the Economic and Social Council launched the UNHCR ExCom, the governing body of the UNGA's refugee subsidiary body that advises the High Commissioner, develops programs, decides policies, and approves budget plans.

With a focus on the mission of the UNHCR-ExCom and the SRMUN Charlotte 2020 theme of "*Forging Connections: Building a Community Among Nations Through Diplomacy*," we have developed the following topics for delegates to discuss at the conference:

- I. Addressing the Impact of Statelessness on Children
- II. Empowering and Integrating Gender Equity Movements for Refugees

This background guide provides an introduction to the committee and the topics that will be debated at SRMUN Charlotte 2020. It should be utilized as a foundation for a delegate's independent research. However, while we have attempted to provide a holistic analysis of the issues, the background guide should not be used as the single mode of analysis for the topics. Delegates are expected to go beyond the background guide and engage in intellectual inquiry of their own. The position papers for the committee should reflect the complexity of these issues and their externalities. Delegations are expected to submit one position paper and be prepared for a vigorous discussion at the conference.

Position papers should be no longer than two pages in length (single spaced) and demonstrate your Member State's position, policies, and recommendations on each of the two topics. For more detailed information about formatting and how to write position papers, delegates can visit [srmun.org](http://srmun.org). **All position papers MUST be submitted no later than Friday, March 6, 2020, by 11:59pm EST via the SRMUN website.**

We are very excited see the results of your preparation and research for SRMUN Charlotte 2020. We wish you all the best of luck in your conference preparation and look forward to working with you in the near future. Please feel free to contact Director-General Vanessa DuBoulay or Deputy Director-General Maureen Johnston if you have any questions while preparing for the conference.

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## Committee History of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – Executive Committee

The United Nations (UN) created the International Refugee Organization (IRO) in 1947, becoming the world's first agency to comprehensively address the refugee crisis after World War II.<sup>1</sup> The IRO's responsibilities included the registration, status determination, repatriation, and resettlement of refugees.<sup>2</sup> The agency encountered difficult problems due to lack of funding and tension among Member States regarding the resettlement of refugees.<sup>3</sup> In 1951, the IRO dissolved, but before its dissolution, the UN's goal to help refugees continued with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a subsidiary body of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) following the adoption of Resolution 319 (IV) on December 3, 1949.<sup>4,5</sup>

Although the UNGA adopted the UNHCR, the new subsidiary body was given a mandate to operate for only three years, starting on January 1951.<sup>6</sup> The short lifespan was a result of the disagreements among UN Member States regarding the potential political implications of the refugee agency.<sup>7</sup> On December 14, 1950, the UNGA adopted an Annex to Resolution 428 (V), which produced the Statute of the UNHCR.<sup>8</sup> The UNGA called upon governments to partner with the High Commissioner, taking a non-political but strictly humanitarian and social role, in regard to refugee-related functions.<sup>9</sup> According to the UNHCR Statute, the High Commissioner shall work on providing permanent solutions for refugees, but each case were subject to government approval.<sup>10</sup>

Since 1950, the UNHCR's responsibilities expanded through the UNGA and Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) numerous resolutions, and it allowed the refugee agency to help stateless persons and internally displaced persons (IDPs).<sup>11</sup> The UNGA would also pass A/RES/1166 (XII) on November 26, 1957, requesting ECOSOC to create the UNHCR Executive Committee (UNHCR ExCom) and replace the UN Refugee Fund Executive Committee.<sup>12</sup> The UNHCR ExCom would provide advice and directives to the High Commissioner, evaluate fund allocation, and approve refugee projects.<sup>13</sup> Although the UNGA tasked ECOSOC to establish the UNHCR ExCom, the refugee committee still functioned as a subsidiary

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Self-Study Module 1: An Introduction to International Protection. Protecting Persons of Concern to UNHCR*, (2005), <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4214cb4f2.html>

<sup>2</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Self-Study Module 1: An Introduction to International Protection. Protecting Persons of Concern to UNHCR*.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Self-Study Module 1: An Introduction to International Protection. Protecting Persons of Concern to UNHCR*.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Self-Study Module 1: An Introduction to International Protection. Protecting Persons of Concern to UNHCR*.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/basic/3b66c39e1/statute-office-united-nations-high-commissioner-refugees.html>

<sup>6</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Self-Study Module 1: An Introduction to International Protection. Protecting Persons of Concern to UNHCR*, (2005), <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4214cb4f2.html>

<sup>7</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/basic/3b66c39e1/statute-office-united-nations-high-commissioner-refugees.html>

<sup>8</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Self-Study Module 1: An Introduction to International Protection. Protecting Persons of Concern to UNHCR*.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*.

<sup>10</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Self-Study Module 1: An Introduction to International Protection. Protecting Persons of Concern to UNHCR*, (2005), <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4214cb4f2.html>

<sup>12</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 1166 (XII), *International Assistance to Refugees Within the Mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*, A/RES/1166 (XII), November 26, 1957, [https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1166\(XII\)](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/1166(XII)).

<sup>13</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 1166 (XII), *International Assistance to Refugees Within the Mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*.

organ of the UNGA.<sup>14</sup> ECOSOC would formally establish the UNHCR ExCom with the adoption of E/RES/672 (XXV) in April 30, 1958.<sup>15</sup> The UNHCR ExCom officially launched on January 1, 1959.<sup>16</sup> The UNHCR ExCom's Member States were elected by ECOSOC with the intention to provide the committee with "the widest possible geographical basis" and with shown interest to solve the refugee crisis.<sup>17</sup>

The UNHCR ExCom meets in Geneva, Switzerland, for one week, annually, during the first half of October.<sup>18</sup> The High Commissioner or a collective minimum of eight UNHCR ExCom Member States may request additional meetings.<sup>19</sup> Whenever the UNHCR ExCom is not in session, the UNHCR Standing Committee may convene to further continue the subsidiary body's work.<sup>20,21</sup> The UNHCR's documents and reports to the UNGA, specifically to the UNGA Third Committee, which handles items relating to social, humanitarian, and cultural issues.<sup>22,23</sup> During its annual sessions, the UNHCR ExCom reviews the Standing Committee's work, establishes programs for the next year, examines and approves finances, and adopts decisions on international protections for people.<sup>24</sup> Each UNHCR ExCom Member State has one vote and decisions shall be made by the majority of members present and voting.<sup>25</sup>

The UNHCR's initial annual budget in 1950 was USD 300,000 but grew to USD 8.6 Billion in 2019.<sup>26,27</sup> The refugee agency has been funded "almost entirely" from voluntary contributions, with 86 percent from national governments and the European Union, followed by the private sector providing 10 percent and other IGOs giving three percent.<sup>28</sup> The UN's main budget provides a limited subsidy of one percent towards the UNHCR budget for administrative costs.<sup>29</sup> The UNHCR has more than 16,803 personnel working across 134 Member States.<sup>30</sup>

Throughout its existence, the UNHCR encountered new refugee emergencies including the effects of the Hungarian Revolution, which saw 200,000 people flee to Austria, and the consequences of decolonization in Africa, Asia, and Latin America during the 1960s through the 1980s.<sup>31</sup> During the 70th session of the UNHCR ExCom in October 2019, High Commissioner Filippo Grandi acknowledged that the issue of

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<sup>14</sup> "How was the United Nations Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees established?" United Nations, <http://ask.un.org/faq/29765>

<sup>15</sup> Economic and Social Council, Resolution 672 (XXV), *Establishment of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*, E/RES/672 (XXV), April 30, 1958, [https://undocs.org/en/E/RES/672\(XXV\)](https://undocs.org/en/E/RES/672(XXV))

<sup>16</sup> "Executive Committee," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/executivecommittee.html>

<sup>17</sup> "Executive Committee," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>18</sup> "Executive Committee," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations General Assembly, A/AC.96/187/Rev.8, *Rules of Procedure*, A/AC.96/187/Rev.8, <https://www.unhcr.org/4201eb512>

<sup>20</sup> United Nations General Assembly, A/AC.96/187/Rev.8, *Rules of Procedure*, A/AC.96/187/Rev.8,

<sup>21</sup> Executive Committee," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/executivecommittee.html>

<sup>22</sup> "Executive Committee," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>23</sup> "Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues (Third Committee)," United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/ga/third/>

<sup>24</sup> "ExCom plenary sessions," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/excom-plenary-sessions.html>

<sup>25</sup> United Nations General Assembly, A/AC.96/187/Rev.8, *Rules of Procedure*, A/AC.96/187/Rev.8, <https://www.unhcr.org/4201eb512>

<sup>26</sup> "History of UNHCR," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/history-of-unhcr.html>

<sup>27</sup> "Figures at a Glance," The United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees, [https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html#\\_ga=2.214360606.86241849.1578633197-761866259.1578193094](https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html#_ga=2.214360606.86241849.1578633197-761866259.1578193094)

<sup>28</sup> "Figures at a Glance," The United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>29</sup> "Figures at a Glance," The United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>30</sup> History of UNHCR," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/history-of-unhcr.html>

<sup>31</sup> History of UNHCR," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

displacements remains a global concern several decades since UNHCR's creation.<sup>32</sup> According to Grandi, today's refugee crisis stems from different issues but the complexity to solve the crisis remains the same. Grandi noted that the modern crisis has been a result of:

*“Resource-based conflicts that transcend borders, shaped by a mosaic of local, regional and international interests; fueled by extremism, criminal networks and urban gangs. Loss of hope, as global advances in prosperity, education and the fight against hunger and disease fail to reach those most in need. Conflicts premised on ethnic and religious differences, stoked by others for political and financial gain. Collapsing eco-systems and weather-related disasters that destroy homes and livelihoods, forcing millions further into poverty. Damaging forms of nationalism, and hate speech that – often through cyberspace – have found a new legitimacy in public discourse.”<sup>33</sup>*

Grandi highlighted the major areas where refugee and IDP crises are occurring, noting Central America and the United States of America, Central African Republic, Iraq, Myanmar, Somalia, Syria, and Ukraine.<sup>34</sup>

The UNHCR's Global Trends Report, released in 2019, revealed there are approximately 70.8 million forcibly displaced people around the world, an increase of 2.3 million during 2018.<sup>35</sup> Among the 70.8 million, 3.5 million individuals are asylum-seekers, 20.4 million are refugees under the UNHCR's mandate, and 41.3 million are IDPs.<sup>36</sup> The remaining 5.5 million are refugees under the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) mandate.<sup>37</sup> The UNHCR's three-year mandate was extended to reoccurring five-year extensions until 2003, when the UNGA eliminated the deadlines. A/RES/58/153 removed the temporal limitation, adding that the UNHCR will continue “until the refugee problem is solved.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> "Opening statement at the 70th session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, October 7, 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/admin/hcspeeches/5d9b0ad44/opening-statement-70th-session-executive-committee-high-commissioners-programme.html>

<sup>33</sup> "Opening statement at the 70th session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>34</sup> "Opening statement at the 70th session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>35</sup> The United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018* (2019), <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2018>

<sup>36</sup> The United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*.

<sup>37</sup> The United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*.

<sup>38</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 58/153, *Implementing actions proposed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to strengthen the capacity of his Office to carry out its mandate*, A/RES/58/153, February 24, 2004, [https://www.iont.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/policy\\_and\\_research/un/58/A\\_RES\\_58\\_153\\_en.pdf](https://www.iont.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/policy_and_research/un/58/A_RES_58_153_en.pdf)

## I. Addressing the Impact of Statelessness on Children

### *Introduction*

Under normal circumstances, an individual acquires their nationality upon their birth, as a result of where they were born or through their parents' nationality. An individual may also acquire their nationality through an application process per a United Nations (UN) Member State's national law. There are individuals, however, with no nationality of any of the UN's Member States. Such individuals are known as "stateless."<sup>39</sup> As the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) noted, people can be born stateless or later become stateless.<sup>40</sup> Millions of people are identified as "stateless," which impedes individuals from attending school, visiting a doctor, obtaining employment, and purchasing a home.<sup>41</sup> Although the precise number of stateless people is unknown, the UNHCR estimated one third of the number are children.<sup>42</sup>

Statelessness can occur because of a variety of reasons, including changes across Member States' borders, establishment or dissolution of territory, but notably national-level legislation.<sup>43</sup> Nationality laws can exclude and affect certain populations. Children can become stateless if they are born in another Member State where it does not grant nationality based on birth or permits a parent to pass on nationality through family ties.<sup>44</sup> More than two dozen UN Member States have national laws where women are not allowed to pass on their nationality, which may affect families where the father is missing, deceased, or unknown, and some Member States limit citizenship based on an individual's race, religion, and ethnicity.<sup>45, 46</sup> People could also become stateless for residing in another Member State for a lengthy period of time.<sup>47</sup>

The UNHCR believes a stateless child is born nearly every ten minutes.<sup>48</sup> In more than 30 Member States, children require a nationality documentation to receive medical care.<sup>49</sup> Stateless children have been denied entry to classrooms, encountered higher education fees than people with a nationality, rebuffed from completing final examinations, and ineligible for scholarships or student loans.<sup>50</sup> Stateless children have encountered harassment due to their status, which has resulted in exploitation and abuse in more extreme cases.<sup>51</sup> As a result of being stateless, a child's ability to learn, grow, and be a productive individual in society can be impaired, despite 194 UN Member States ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a treaty with a provision stating every child has a right to a nationality.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> "Ending Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/ending-statelessness.html>

<sup>40</sup> "Ending Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>41</sup> "Statelessness Around the World," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/statelessness-around-the-world.html>

<sup>42</sup> "Statelessness Around the World," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>43</sup> "Ending Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/ending-statelessness.html>

<sup>44</sup> "Ending Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>45</sup> "Ending Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>46</sup> "What is Statelessness?," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/UNHCR-Statelessness-2pager-ENG.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> "Ending Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/ending-statelessness.html>

<sup>48</sup> "I Am Here, I Belong: The Urgent Need to End Childhood Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/the-urgent-need-to-end-childhood-statelessness/>

<sup>49</sup> "I Am Here, I Belong: The Urgent Need to End Childhood Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>50</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *I Am Here, I Belong: The Urgent Need to End Childhood Statelessness* (2015), [https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/2015-10-StatelessReport\\_ENG16.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/2015-10-StatelessReport_ENG16.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *I Am Here, I Belong: The Urgent Need to End Childhood Statelessness*.

<sup>52</sup> The United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 44/25, *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, A/RES/44/25, 1989,

## History

During 1951, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) gathered to discuss and draft an international treaty concerning refugees and stateless persons.<sup>53</sup> The Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees was adopted in 1951 but talks for stateless persons continued until September 28, 1954, with the adoption of the Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons.<sup>54</sup> Going into effect on June 6, 1960, the Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons provided an international protection framework for people who are “not considered as a national by any State under operation of its law.”<sup>55</sup>

Individuals who were categorized as "stateless persons," per the Convention, were granted set standards of treatment including the same rights to freedom of religion and education for children as citizens would have.<sup>56</sup> The UN Member States who signed onto the Convention could not deport a stateless person who lawfully entered their borders and requires national governments to provide identity and travel documents.<sup>57, 58</sup> The Convention was not a substitute for granting a nationality, but help stateless persons assimilate and eventually naturalize them into their country.<sup>59</sup> The 1954 Convention does not cover individuals who are suspected to have committed crimes against peace, against humanity, and a war crime.<sup>60</sup>

The 1954 Convention was strengthened with the adoption of the Convention of the Reduction of Statelessness on August 30, 1961. The 1961 Convention, which went into effect on December 13, 1975, established safeguards for the conferral and non-withdrawal of citizenship in order to prevent new cases of statelessness.<sup>61</sup> To further prevent statelessness, the 1961 Convention also called for Member States to grant citizenship to children born either within its borders or born from its nationals living abroad.<sup>62</sup>

The UNGA tasked the UNHCR to identify, prevent, and reduce statelessness.<sup>63</sup> In addition to utilizing the two conventions, the UNHCR must also promote measures to protect stateless persons.<sup>64</sup> Based on the principles of the 1954 Convention, the UNHCR developed and published the Handbook on Protection of Stateless Persons.<sup>65</sup> The handbook provides additional background about the Convention, plus the procedures for the determination of the status of a stateless person.<sup>66</sup> The handbook details procedures for Member States to use as a reference, but each Member State may have its own policy. The United States of America (US), for example, does not make determinations whether an individual qualifies as a statelessness

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[https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_RES\\_44\\_25.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_44_25.pdf)

<sup>53</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, (2014), [https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons_ENG.pdf)

<sup>54</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*.

<sup>55</sup> The United Nations, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, (1960), [https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1960/06/19600606%2001-49%20AM/Ch\\_V\\_3p.pdf](https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1960/06/19600606%2001-49%20AM/Ch_V_3p.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> The United Nations, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*.

<sup>57</sup> The United Nations, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*.

<sup>58</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, (2014), [https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons_ENG.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*.

<sup>60</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*.

<sup>61</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Convention of the Reduction of Statelessness*, [https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1961-Convention-on-the-reduction-of-Statelessness\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1961-Convention-on-the-reduction-of-Statelessness_ENG.pdf)

<sup>62</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Convention of the Reduction of Statelessness*.

<sup>63</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*.

<sup>64</sup> The United Nations, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, (1960), [https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1960/06/19600606%2001-49%20AM/Ch\\_V\\_3p.pdf](https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1960/06/19600606%2001-49%20AM/Ch_V_3p.pdf)

<sup>65</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Handbook on Protection of Stateless Persons* (2014), <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/statelessness/53b698ab9/handbook-protection-stateless-persons.html>

<sup>66</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Handbook on Protection of Stateless Persons*.

person.<sup>67</sup> In the US, if a person is identified as "stateless," that individual is still not provided with any benefit or status under its national laws.<sup>68</sup>

Numerous human rights conventions and treaties also recognized the right to a nationality, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.<sup>69</sup>

### ***Current Situation***

In the UNHCR Global Trends report for 2018, the refugee agency acknowledged that obtaining data on statelessness has been a challenge despite increased awareness of the issue.<sup>70</sup> For its 2018 Global Trends report, the UNHCR managed to collect data from 78 Member States due to national governments and other sources providing information.<sup>71</sup> Based on the submitted information, the UNHCR had data for nearly 3.8 million stateless people, of all age groups, but the true statelessness figure is projected as significantly higher.<sup>72</sup> During 2018, the UNHCR identified 56,400 stateless people acquired a nationality among 24 Member States, including Kazakhstan, Russia, Sweden, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.<sup>73</sup>

During remarks at the 70th session of the UNHCR ExCom in Geneva, Switzerland, Amina Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed said statelessness makes people invisible.<sup>74</sup> She added, "When people are unable to prove their identity, they may be unable to access basic services like education and healthcare. Statelessness can deny people and communities their identity and sense of self, contributing to the breakdown of family and social relationships and creating legal problems for generations. And stateless people are voiceless people. Prevented from voting or participating in public life, they are without representation anywhere."<sup>75</sup> While there are many complex problems in the world, the Deputy Secretary-General said statelessness is a problem that can be solved.<sup>76</sup> She cited the 1954 and 1961 Conventions as mechanisms that can "end virtually all statelessness within a single generation."<sup>77</sup>

At the UNHCR ExCom's 70th session, a high-level meeting on statelessness took place and many Member States issued more than 250 pledges to address the problem.<sup>78</sup> Albania pledged to align its national law on citizenship with key provisions of the 1954 and 1961 Convention and committed to improve birth registration procedures for children of Roma and Egyptian communities.<sup>79</sup> Argentina pledged to help

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<sup>67</sup> "Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/statelessness.html>

<sup>68</sup> "Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>69</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Action Plan to End Statelessness* (2014), <https://www.unhcr.org/statelesscampaign2014/Global-Action-Plan-eng.pdf>

<sup>70</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018* (2019), <https://www.unhcr.org/5d08d7ee7.pdf>

<sup>71</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*.

<sup>72</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*.

<sup>73</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2018*.

<sup>74</sup> "Deputy Secretary-General's remarks at Treaty Ceremony Conventions on Statelessness [as prepared for delivery]," The United Nations, October 7, 2019, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/dsg/statement/2019-10-07/deputy-secretary-generals-remarks-treaty-ceremony-conventions-statelessness-prepared-for-delivery>

<sup>75</sup> "Deputy Secretary-General's remarks at Treaty Ceremony Conventions on Statelessness [as prepared for delivery]," The United Nations.

<sup>76</sup> "Deputy Secretary-General's remarks at Treaty Ceremony Conventions on Statelessness [as prepared for delivery]," The United Nations.

<sup>77</sup> "Deputy Secretary-General's remarks at Treaty Ceremony Conventions on Statelessness [as prepared for delivery]," The United Nations.

<sup>78</sup> "Results of the High-Level Segment on Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/results-of-the-high-level-segment-on-statelessness/>

<sup>79</sup> "Results of the High-Level Segment on Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

children of naturalized Argentine citizens to access Argentine nationality.<sup>80</sup> Rwanda pledged a new nationality law for the naturalization of stateless persons.<sup>81</sup> Sweden acknowledged its national government has been identifying measures to limit statelessness and determining if certain children born stateless could automatically acquire Swedish nationality at birth.<sup>82</sup> The Thai government committed to promote access to education for stateless children.<sup>83</sup>

In 2014, the UNHCR launched the Campaign to End Statelessness in 10 Years, which ends in 2024. Solving childhood statelessness is one of the goals of the 10-year campaign. The UNHCR issued four steps for Member States to urgently follow:

- *Allow children to gain the nationality of the country in which they are born if they would otherwise be stateless.*
- *Reform laws that prevent mothers from passing their nationality to their children on an equal basis as fathers.*
- *Eliminate laws and practices that deny children nationality because of their ethnicity, race or religion.*
- *Ensure universal birth registration to prevent statelessness.*<sup>84</sup>

At the start of the 10-year campaign, there were at least 70,000 children born and unable to acquire a nationality among the 20 reported non-refugee stateless areas.<sup>85</sup> Twenty-nine percent of all Member States were found to have no provision in their nationality laws to grant citizenship to stateless children born within their borders or to children of unknown origin but were found in within their borders.<sup>86</sup>

To further enhance the UNHCR's mission to identify, prevent, protect, and reduce statelessness, the refugee agency has partnered with numerous UN agencies. Notably, the UNHCR has partnered with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to call on Member States and regional organization to take action and ensure no child remains stateless. In 2016, UNICEF and UNHCR launched the Coalition on Every Child's Right to a Nationality.<sup>87</sup> In this coalition, the UNHCR and UNICEF placed a focus on minority stateless children, an already vulnerable segment due to their ethnicity, religion, or dialect.<sup>88</sup> Some minority groups that have been affected by stateless are the Haitians of Dominican descent, the Makonde in Kenya, the Rohingya in Myanmar, the Kurds in Syria, and the Roma across Europe.<sup>89</sup>

Europe was also on UNICEF and the UNHCR's radar. In a February 2019 article, the UNHCR estimated that more than half a million people in Europe are stateless, although specific figures on total numbers of stateless children is unclear.<sup>90</sup> Based on the number of asylum-seeking children in Europe since 2010, the number of children identified as stateless has increased.<sup>91</sup> In 2017, approximately 2,100 children were

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<sup>80</sup> "Results of the High-Level Segment on Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>81</sup> "Results of the High-Level Segment on Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>82</sup> "Results of the High-Level Segment on Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>83</sup> "Results of the High-Level Segment on Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>84</sup> "I Am Here, I Belong: The Urgent Need to End Childhood Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/the-urgent-need-to-end-childhood-statelessness/>

<sup>85</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Action Plan to End Statelessness* (2014), <https://www.unhcr.org/statelesscampaign2014/Global-Action-Plan-eng.pdf>

<sup>86</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Action Plan to End Statelessness*.

<sup>87</sup> "I Belong: Minority Children and Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/minority-children-statelessness/>

<sup>88</sup> "I Belong: Minority Children and Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>89</sup> "I Belong: Minority Children and Statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>90</sup> "UNHCR and UNICEF urge action in Europe to end childhood statelessness," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, February 14, 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/press/2019/2/5c654e634/unhcr-unicef-urge-action-europe-end-childhood-statelessness.html>

<sup>91</sup> "UNHCR and UNICEF urge action in Europe to end childhood statelessness," The United Nations High

registered as “stateless,” representing a four-fold increase compared to 2010 data.<sup>92</sup> The UNHCR and UNICEF, in an effort to address child statelessness in Europe, proposed a low-cost and sustainable solution that included adopting or amending national legislation to grant nationality to all children, simplifying the nationality application process, and ensuring every stateless refugee or migrant is properly identified and protected.<sup>93</sup>

The UNHCR has also partnered with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to help governments draft and implement national censuses and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) monitors the human rights of stateless people.

### ***Conclusion***

More than a third of the world's stateless population are children.<sup>94</sup> Being born stateless or becoming stateless becomes a stigma for children. Many stateless children are unable to receive an education, healthcare, travel, and later denied job opportunities. Because of the consequences of being stateless, children are targeted, harassed, and exploited. Stateless children with disabilities and minority children are also discriminated due to their status.

According to the UNHCR, statelessness is a man-made problem and there are solutions.<sup>95</sup> Many international conventions, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and programs have already recognized that every child has a right to a nationality. Specifically, the Convention on the Rights of the Child states, “The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.”<sup>96</sup> Many UN Member States, however, have not caught up with many of the internationally recognized conventions. Member States have also enacted discriminatory provisions that affects certain populations from obtaining a nationality. In 1971, newly independent Bangladesh denied citizenship status to nearly 300,000 Urdu-speaking Biharis.<sup>97</sup> More than 800,000 Rohingya were refused nationality under a 1982 Myanmar citizenship law, which curtailed the Rohingyas' access to education, religion, and travel.<sup>98</sup> The Dominican Republic have frequently discriminated and denied Dominican nationality to individuals of Haitian descent despite clear entitlement in its law.<sup>99</sup>

The UNGA tasked the UNHCR to help stateless people since the 1950s. The refugee agency has made progress during the decades, but hurdles still exist. The UNHCR has been candid to note that many national governments and the international community appear “uninterested,” which has prolonged a solvable crisis.<sup>100</sup>

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Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>92</sup> “UNHCR and UNICEF urge action in Europe to end childhood statelessness,” The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>93</sup> “UNHCR and UNICEF urge action in Europe to end childhood statelessness,” The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>94</sup> “Special Report: Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years,” The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/special-report-ending-statelessness-within-10-years/>

<sup>95</sup> “Special Report: Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years,” The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>96</sup> “Special Report: Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years,” The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>97</sup> “Special Report: Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years,” The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>98</sup> “Special Report: Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years,” The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>99</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *I Am Here, I Belong: The Urgent Need to End Childhood Statelessness* (2015), [https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/2015-10-StatelessReport\\_ENG16.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/2015-10-StatelessReport_ENG16.pdf)

<sup>100</sup> “Special Report: Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years,” The United Nations High

*Committee Directive*

Delegates should familiarize their Member State's nationality laws. What are the methods to obtain citizenship or documented status in your Member State? Delegates should identify which international and regional conventions, relating to statelessness, their Member State signed or not signed. What were the reasons for not signing or ratifying a convention? How has your Member State contributed to UNHCR's efforts to identify, prevent, protect, and reduce statelessness? Does your Member State have legitimate concerns with some of the UNHCR's recommendations to solve statelessness? Are there policies in your Member State that accommodates children? What progress or decisions have your Member State made that others should consider?

## II. Empowering and Integrating Gender Equity Movements for Refugees

### *Introduction*

In the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations (UN) established an agency to help Europeans who fled from conflict and persecution.<sup>101</sup> The UN agency is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The UNHCR's mandate would eventually expand to help all refugees, not only Europeans. The UN defined refugees as "someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion."<sup>102</sup> Among the 70.8 million forcibly displaced people worldwide today, the UNHCR estimates 25.9 million people are refugees.<sup>103</sup> Of the aforementioned statistic, the UNHCR reported more than half are under the age of 18 years old.<sup>104</sup>

The UNHCR has been tasked to ensure all refugees have equal opportunity to engage in livelihood interventions.<sup>105</sup> The UN refugee agency has worked with the intention for all of its programs are "Age, Gender, and Diversity" (AGD) inclusive and for "specific groups of concern including women, adolescent girls and boys, older persons, the young, persons with disabilities, people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual or intersex, and women and men belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities or indigenous groups."<sup>106</sup> As recognized in the Commitments to Refugee Women, the UNHCR has a framework of gender equality mainstreaming and empowerment, and this includes programs for men and boys as they have been targets of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).<sup>107</sup>

### *Current Situation*

Since its inception, the UNHCR has taken steps to increase the active participation of women in society, and these steps include organizing women-only discussions, training women in leadership skills, raising awareness of gender equality, and enrolling women as refugee outreach volunteers.<sup>108</sup> There have been setbacks in the UNHCR's gender equity operations. The most notable factor in the setbacks is the socio-cultural norms that enforce restrictive gender roles.<sup>109</sup> Refugee women have been subjected to negative stereotyping because of their status, lack of access to child care and travel access, little to no income, and being marginalized by men in their families and communities.<sup>110</sup>

One of the UNHCR's missions is to identify refugees.<sup>111</sup> The UN refugee agency provides equal access for men and women to register with the organization.<sup>112</sup> However, there have been cases when the UNHCR will give registration processes a priority status if women are deemed to be at risk.<sup>113</sup> Unfortunately, the

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<sup>101</sup> "Refugees," The United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/refugees/>

<sup>102</sup> "What is a refugee?," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/what-is-a-refugee.html>

<sup>103</sup> "Figures at a Glance," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html>

<sup>104</sup> "Figures at a Glance," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>105</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018* (2014), <https://www.unhcr.org/530f107b6.pdf>

<sup>106</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018*.

<sup>107</sup> UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNHCR's Commitments to Refugee Women, December 12, 2001, <https://www.refworld.org/docid/479f3b2a2.html>

<sup>108</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*, <https://www.unhcr.org/57f3b9a74.pdf>

<sup>109</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*.

<sup>110</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*.

<sup>111</sup> The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, (2014), [https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons_ENG.pdf)

<sup>112</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*, <https://www.unhcr.org/57f3b9a74.pdf>

<sup>113</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*.

UNHCR registration process does take a lengthy amount of time.<sup>114</sup> Due to registration times, women and girls encounter various challenges. In the UNHCR AGD Accountability Report of 2014, the lack of identification because of the registration process can lead to refugees' exploitation, harassment, unemployment, and difficulties in obtaining food, health care and social services, and shelter.<sup>115</sup> Sometimes, the registration process takes a longer time to process because a person of concern doesn't have a birth certificate, which could result in the refugee becoming stateless and unable to gain basic access such as an education and health care.<sup>116</sup>

The UNHCR has called for empowerment programs with helps all persons of concern maintain a sustainable living that meets their basic needs.<sup>117</sup> The empowerment programs should include skills and vocational training, business development, language courses, agriculture and other labor-based activities, and cash or grant assistance.<sup>118</sup> These type of programs have also been made to positively target women since economic empowerment should include the participation of women in the decision-making process. Economic empowerment programs have also been recommended to survivors of SGBV.<sup>119</sup>

Despite the UNHCR's numerous protection efforts, SGBV still remains a threat for both males and females. As the UNHCR noted in its Review of Gender Equality in Operations report, "Another challenge is the conflation of SGBV and gender equality – where SGBV work is understood as the sum total of all gender equality programming. This confusion contributes to an agency-wide lack of engagement with broader gender equality concerns. Another critical challenge lies in ensuring SGBV prevention and response is built into protection responses at the very onset of emergencies."<sup>120</sup> To help combat this challenge, the UNHCR supports community-based prevention programming to help change attitudes, knowledge, and practices that have condoned violence.<sup>121</sup> Budget issues for UNHCR's programs have become a consistent issue over the years. The UNHCR noted the need for gender equality concerns, especially in sexual and reproductive health, needs to be given higher priority.<sup>122</sup>

The UNHCR's 2018 AGD Policy report went into significant detail about the need to recommit and implement effective equity programs regardless of ages, abilities, ethnicities, religion, sexual orientation, and nationality.<sup>123</sup> The report reaffirmed the UNHCR's commitments for women and girls to:

- *participate equally and meaningfully in all decision-making, community management and leadership structures, and committees of persons of concern.*
- *provided with individual registration and documentation, directly or through support provided by UNHCR.*
- *have equal access to and control over management and provision of food, core-relief items, and cash-based interventions.*
- *have equal access to economic opportunities, decent work, and quality education and health services.*

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<sup>114</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*.

<sup>115</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *AGD Accountability Report 2014* (2015), <http://www.unhcr.org/548180b69.pdf>

<sup>116</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*, <https://www.unhcr.org/57f3b9a74.pdf>

<sup>117</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*.

<sup>118</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*.

<sup>119</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*.

<sup>120</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*.

<sup>121</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*.

<sup>122</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*.

<sup>123</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity* (2018), <https://www.unhcr.org/5aa13c0c7.pdf>

- *have access to comprehensive SGBV prevention and response services.*<sup>124</sup>

Despite the commitments to women and girls, the UNHCR recognizes that gender inequalities also impact men and boys, and promotes these equal rights and equitable access to services for all persons of concern.<sup>125</sup>

### **Case Study**

#### *Rwandan Partnerships for Refugees in Africa*

As of 2017, Rwanda has hosted more than 170,000 refugees from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and other Member States.<sup>126</sup> Eighty percent of the refugees are living across six camps established through the UNHCR and the Rwandan Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs (MIDIMAR).<sup>127</sup> The UNHCR, in a report for its joint strategy campaign with MIDIMAR, acknowledged that the refugee population is proportionally more women and children, thus required socio-economic initiatives that caters to the community.<sup>128</sup> The refugees had been reliant on the humanitarian assistance, but a new partnership aimed to reduce dependency while boost the national economy and trade. In 2017, the UNHCR partnered with the World Food Programme (WFP) and Equity Bank of Rwanda to deliver aid through the form cash instead of traditional humanitarian aid and materials such as shelter, water, and blankets and other supplies.<sup>129</sup>

According to UNHCR Representative Ahmed Baba Fall, the refugee camps already provides access to local markets and services in the same manner citizen Rwandans do. "Providing refugees with cash will enable families to fulfil their needs in a more dignified manner by determining for themselves what their priorities are, and will also enable refugees to contribute to the growth of economy of the host communities, even more than they already do," said Baba Fall.<sup>130</sup> With the partnership, the UNHCR replaces the traditional type of aid with cash, and the refugees can purchase the items they need from the local markets. The UNHCR started the transition with a soft rollout in one refugee camp while other camps will have the option to opt in. However, the UNHCR's goal was to shift to the cash program through all camps.

This was not the UNHCR's first venture with cash-based assistance. The UN refugee agency implemented similar aid assistance in different Member States during the 1980s and the agency saw a significant impact on refugees' independence and ability to equally contribute to the local community.<sup>131</sup> "When refugees receive cash, it ensures they have the means to meet their basic needs, while enhancing dignity and choice in their respective refugee communities as well as boosting trade in the surrounding communities,"

<sup>124</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity*.

<sup>125</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity*.

<sup>126</sup> "UNHCR, WFP and Equity Bank sign agreement to provide more dignified living conditions to refugees in Rwanda through cash-based assistance programme," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, October 5, 2017, <https://www.unhcr.org/rw/12507-unhcr-wfp-equity-bank-sign-agreement-provide-dignified-living-conditions-refugees-rwanda-cash-based-assistance-programme.html>

<sup>127</sup> "UNHCR, WFP and Equity Bank sign agreement to provide more dignified living conditions to refugees in Rwanda through cash-based assistance programme," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>128</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Economic Inclusion of Refugees in Rwanda*, <https://www.unhcr.org/rw/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/02/Economic-Inclusion-of-Refugees-in-Rwanda-Final-Version.pdf>

<sup>129</sup> "UNHCR, WFP and Equity Bank sign agreement to provide more dignified living conditions to refugees in Rwanda through cash-based assistance programme," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://www.unhcr.org/rw/12507-unhcr-wfp-equity-bank-sign-agreement-provide-dignified-living-conditions-refugees-rwanda-cash-based-assistance-programme.html>

<sup>130</sup> "UNHCR, WFP and Equity Bank sign agreement to provide more dignified living conditions to refugees in Rwanda through cash-based assistance programme," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>131</sup> "UNHCR, WFP and Equity Bank sign agreement to provide more dignified living conditions to refugees in Rwanda through cash-based assistance programme," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

continued Baba Fall. The WFP had also established a similar program for Congolese refugees in Rwanda by using cash based transfers (CBTs) since January 2014. A WFP study with the University of California, Davis, discovered the refugees did have positive effect in the local community and economy.<sup>132</sup>

Unfortunately, there are must-need items that still required women to purchase, such as sanitary pads. Usually, the UNHCR distributed sanitary pads for free to women but this would negatively affect local markets selling the same item.<sup>133</sup> To help remedy this problem, the UNHCR provided refugee women with additional and "unconditional" cash transfer to purchase sanitary pads.<sup>134</sup> The UNHCR provided additional cash for refugees to also purchase soap.<sup>135</sup> The UNHCR and MIDIMAR's intention here is to potentially start or expand the rate of refugee-entrepreneurs inside refugee camps and for Rwandan companies to ensure access to high-quality items.<sup>136</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

The UNHCR's Policy on AGD states that gender often defines the duties, opportunities, responsibilities and even the constraints of men, women, girls, and boys in society.<sup>137</sup> Gender equality, according to the UN refugee agency, refers to the "equal enjoyment of rights, responsibilities, and opportunities."<sup>138</sup> Empowering gender quality is a guiding principle for the UNHCR but gender stereotypes and discrimination has affected progress. As the UNHCR acknowledged in its Global Strategy for Livelihoods: A UNHCR Strategy 2014-2018 report, there are multiple factors that must play a role in integrating refugees including the national government, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), the private sector, research institutions, other UN agencies, and the UNHCR and refugee communities.<sup>139</sup> There are many areas where refugees can be integrated better in society but culture or societal norms might also affect such progress.

### ***Committee Directive***

Delegates must review their Member State's policies on gender equality. What areas need improvements? What national programs and partnerships have occurred in your Member State to improve all populations, this includes men, boys, and people of all age groups? How could the UNHCR ExCom learn from other successful programs? What's your Member State's policies for giving refugees access to basic services? Delegates should familiarize with NGOs and IGOs that have partnered with the UNHCR to integrate refugees. Are there other organizations that the UNHCR should partner?

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<sup>132</sup> "UNHCR, WFP and Equity Bank sign agreement to provide more dignified living conditions to refugees in Rwanda through cash-based assistance programme," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>133</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Economic Inclusion of Refugees in Rwanda*, <https://www.unhcr.org/rw/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/02/Economic-Inclusion-of-Refugees-in-Rwanda-Final-Version.pdf>

<sup>134</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Economic Inclusion of Refugees in Rwanda*.

<sup>135</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Economic Inclusion of Refugees in Rwanda*.

<sup>136</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Economic Inclusion of Refugees in Rwanda*.

<sup>137</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity* (2018), <https://www.unhcr.org/5aa13c0c7.pdf>

<sup>138</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender and Diversity*.

<sup>139</sup> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Economic Inclusion of Refugees in Rwanda*, <https://www.unhcr.org/rw/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/02/Economic-Inclusion-of-Refugees-in-Rwanda-Final-Version.pdf>

## Annotated Bibliography

### I. Addressing the Impact of Statelessness on Children

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *I Am Here, I Belong: The Urgent Need to End Childhood Statelessness* (2015), [https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/2015-10-StatelessReport\\_ENG16.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/2015-10-StatelessReport_ENG16.pdf)

In 2015, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) published this report featuring key findings and personal stories of stateless children and young adults. The report highlights how the lack of a nationality can have long-lasting effects for an individual seeking an education, healthcare, employment, and being a member in society. The personal stories range from diverse Member States such as Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Italy, Jordan, Malaysia, Thailand.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *I Belong: Minority Children and Statelessness*, [https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/IBELONG\\_Minority-Children-and-Statelessness.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/IBELONG_Minority-Children-and-Statelessness.pdf)

The UNHCR partnered with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to further build on the mission to identify, prevent, protect, and reduce statelessness. The partnership featured a campaign known as the Coalition on Every Child's Right to A Nationality. The UNHCR and UNICEF published this report that featured a focus on how minority children are affected by statelessness. The report defines what is a minority and highlights stories from people affected by their minority status.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Ending childhood Statelessness in Europe* (2019), <https://www.unhcr.org/5c63e7864.pdf?query=Statelessness>

The UNHCR and UNICEF partnership continued in Europe. In January 2019, the two UN agencies highlighted the similar struggles that stateless children encounter but with attention to Europe. This brief includes recommendations for European Member States to follow and lists international and regional legal instruments and conventions pertaining to statelessness and which European Member States have signed.

"Colombia gives Venezuela newborns a start in life," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, October 14, 2019, <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/stories/2019/10/5da42be64/colombia-gives-venezuela-newborns-start-life.html>

In South America, Colombia is one of the United Nations (UN) Member States where obtaining its nationality can occur if one parent is Colombian or if the foreign parents meet residency requirements. With the crisis in Venezuela, many Venezuelans have migrated to Colombia but have entered as stateless or risk statelessness. This UNHCR article features how Colombia amended its national law to help thousands at risk of statelessness, by granting citizenship to children born in Colombia but from Venezuelan parents. The Colombia law, however, does have its limitations. The UNHCR, UNICEF, and the International Organization for Migration have even offered to pay for additional personnel to expedite the process in Colombia's registrar offices.

"Stateless person definition," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/52865/stateless-person-definition>

In 1982, the UNHCR published the Handbook for Emergencies, a tool for the agency's emergency operations and its workforce. In 2015, the UNHCR released its fourth edition of the Emergency Handbook. The handbook includes additional information about the definition of a stateless person and provides additional links and resources relating to the topic.

## II. Empowering and Integrating Gender Equity Movements for Refugees

"Refugees receive coveted Equity Bank, educational scholarship," The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, January 8, 2018 <https://www.unhcr.org/ke/13026-refugees-receive-coveted-equity-bank-educational-scholarship.html>

In Topic II of the UNHCR ExCom Background Guide, a case study featuring the Equity Bank of Rwanda was highlighted. In this article, the Equity Bank with MasterCard Foundations provided scholarships to students who were refugees from South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. One scholarship was given to Prisca Nikuze, the top performing female student from the Angelina Jolie Primary School in Kakuma, Kenya. The winners are guaranteed a four-year scholarship that covers school fees and lodging. The Equity Bank manager of Kakuma noted how this is a positive example of the inclusion of refugees.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations*, <https://www.unhcr.org/57f3b9a74.pdf>

The UNHCR Review of Gender Equality in Operations report reviews how the agency's equality policies and procedure has helped refugees but what areas still require improvements. The information in the report was based on surveys from 55 UNHCR field operations. The report's recommendations covers multiple areas including education, health, and economic integration, and more.

"Geneva Refugee Summit Grapples With Issues of Equity," Voice of America, December 16, 2019, <https://www.voanews.com/europe/geneva-refugee-summit-grapples-issues-equity>

This article covers information leading up to the UNHCR's first Global Refugee Forum in December 2019. It has been an easy topic for UN Member States to discuss refugees and how to resettle the displaced populations. The UNHCR's High Commissioner, Filippo Grandi, is quoted about his thoughts and hopes for Member States and other international agencies to help refugees.

"Partnering with communities," United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, <https://emergency.unhcr.org/topic/14427/partnering-with-communities#4,1578800941384>

The UNHCR Emergency Handbook includes various methods for people to familiarize how to partner with communities. The handbook includes sections specifically regarding age, gender, and diversity (AGD), and provides definitions for the three terms. The online handbook also includes additional reports and manuals, from the UNHCR, from the last 15 years.