

## Two years on

First, we focused on saving lives  
Now, Rohingya refugees are at the  
centre of the response



### INSIDE:

The difference  
you made

Emergency update:  
Venezuela

Fawaz's fight  
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Your impact in action:  
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Why I support refugees

Cover image:

A young girl fist bumps a UNHCR staff member at a nutrition centre in a Rohingya refugee settlement, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

Photo credit: UNHCR / K. Hasan



National Director Naomi Steer speaks with Nyaluak, an unaccompanied child in Gambella, Ethiopia.

Australia for UNHCR

## Welcome

Hope springs eternal, I see that time and again in the work we support. The wonderful garden of spinach, gourd and pumpkin grown by Sahera, a Rohingya woman allocated a plot of land in Kutupalong refugee settlement on the southeast coast of Bangladesh, is one such story.

Almost a million Rohingya fled Myanmar after successive waves of persecution, which peaked two years ago when horrific violence in Rakhine State triggered one of the biggest displacement crises on record. More than half are school-aged children.

Despite all they have been through, many witnessing horrors in their own country, these children have an incredible thirst for education and know what it could mean to them – the chance to build a better future.

UNHCR opened the first teacher training facility for the settlement in October last year. We have also been piloting literacy learning sessions for adolescent boys and girls, but the work is under-resourced and thousands more children need this opportunity.

When I founded Australia for UNHCR 19 years ago, we could expect a major humanitarian emergency once every two years. At the time, 21 million people were forcibly displaced.

Now it is 70.8 million – from UNHCR's annual Global Trends Report released in June – the highest number on record.

UNHCR is working in 134 countries, dealing with emergencies in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Venezuela, South Sudan, Cameroon and Yemen to name a few.

Internal conflicts have escalated, fuelled by regional and global rivalries. Crises have intensified, driven by poverty, climate change and scarcity of food and water. Responding to the threat of malnutrition quickly and effectively is a constant and growing challenge.

Yet amid so much adversity there are still many real and powerful examples of individuals and groups making a difference – the achievements of entrepreneurial refugee women in Kampala, Uganda, the leadership of refugee advocates like Melbourne lawyer Fadak Alfayadh, and the sheer generosity of Australian supporters like you, helping refugees dream and work towards a better future.

Thank you for all your support and for everything you do.

*Naomi Steer*

Naomi Steer  
National Director

[Follow me on Twitter @NaomiCSteer](#)



Members of the Lembo women's committee attend a meeting with Australia for UNHCR in the DRC to discuss benefits of the new Lembo health centre for refugees and the local community.

Australia for UNHCR

## The difference you made

### Immediate help for survivors of sexual violence

**T**he Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is one of the most dangerous places in the world for women. Renewed conflict has forced millions of people to flee their homes, with a staggering 4.5 million Congolese displaced across the country.

Conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence is widespread, leaving displaced

women and girls vulnerable. Survivors often struggle to access support, as shame and stigma keep them silent and isolated.

UNHCR's care and recovery programs help survivors access immediate assistance following an assault, and feel supported to rebuild their lives. In March, our Forgotten Women appeal raised \$513,600

to help UNHCR deliver specialist care to survivors in the DRC.

**Your support is helping UNHCR provide women and girls with access to immediate medical care, counselling, safe shelter and livelihoods projects to help them recover and become independent.**



Australia for UNHCR

## Care and protection for unaccompanied children

**T**he number of children fleeing conflict on their own is unprecedented. Every hour, around 20 children – the same number as an average Australian primary school class – run for their lives without their parents.

Embarking on perilous journeys with no one to protect them, they face many dangers, falling prey to malnutrition, violence, abuse and exploitation.

Australia for UNHCR supporters responded generously to our Lost Childhoods appeal in May, raising \$1.29 million to

help care and protect for unaccompanied and separated children. First responders to this appeal had their gift matched, dollar for dollar, thanks to a generous \$50,000 donation by the Cameron Foundation.

**With your help, UNHCR ensures these children have access to clean water, nutritious food, education, medical care and psychological support, and provides foster placements and family tracing services to help reunite children with their loved ones.**

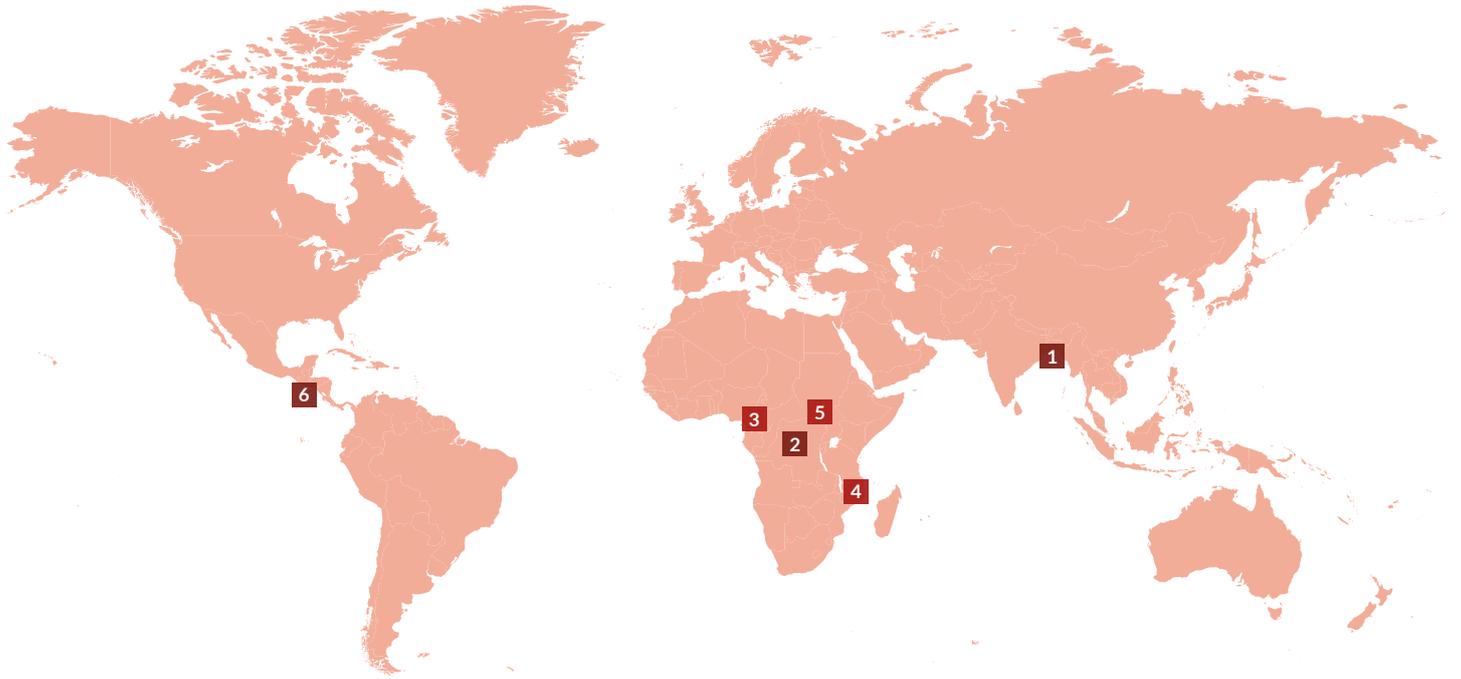
*"I go to school, I have what I need."*

When Eva, nine, arrived alone at a refugee camp in Ethiopia she received water, food, medical care and had a safe place to sleep. Today, she studies at a UNHCR-supported school and dreams of becoming a doctor.

*"People welcomed me and asked how I felt."*

After fleeing violence in South Sudan alone, John, 13, found safety when he crossed into Ethiopia. After meeting his immediate needs, UNHCR matched him with a caregiver, a young woman with two children.

# In the news



## 1 BANGLADESH

### Rohingya children lack education opportunities

Two years after horrific violence triggered a mass exodus from Myanmar, more than 500,000 Rohingya children and youth who have taken refuge in Bangladesh need access to education.

Schooling equips children with the skills to become self-reliant, and for girls, education is especially vital, protecting them from abuse and forced marriages. However, limited resources and the dangers of monsoon season have put education out of reach for many in the camps of Cox's Bazar.

One in three Rohingya primary school-aged children still have no access to education, and more than 96 per cent of youth between 15 and 24 years old are not attending any educational facilities.

With the support of Australians, the UNHCR Rohingya Education Program aims to raise \$1 million to recruit, train and support teachers, provide safe spaces for children to learn, and distribute education emergency packs.

For more information please contact Development Manager, Elizabeth Grady, at [egrady@unrefugees.org.au](mailto:egrady@unrefugees.org.au) or on 02 9276 6866.



## 2 GLOBAL

### Millions received healthcare in 2018

Some 10.5 million refugees received healthcare last year, according to UNHCR's Annual Public Health Global Review released in July, with significant progress made in maternal health. Nine out of 10 refugee women delivered their babies in health facilities with skilled assistance in the majority of the countries where UNHCR supports healthcare.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a three-year partnership between Australia for UNHCR and not-for-profit health fund Teachers Health is ensuring Central African refugee women and the local community can enjoy a safe pregnancy and delivery.

To date the partnership has funded basic equipment, essential medicines and staff salaries in eight health centres across Nord and Sud-Ubangi provinces. In Bili refugee camp, a new maternity ward was constructed, providing care for an average of 40 people per day, and at Inke refugee camp maternity ward, funds provided life-saving equipment, including a blood bank refrigerator and incubator.



### 3 CAMEROON

## Thousands displaced by violence

Nearly two years of violent clashes in Cameroon, between the military and armed groups, have displaced almost half a million people within the country and forced a further 35,000 across the border into Nigeria.

Most of those fleeing are women and children, who face a grave situation in both countries. Families are arriving in overcrowded host communities where food supplies are strained and with little access to proper shelter, health, education, water and sanitation.

UNHCR is working closely with the Nigerian government to register all new arrivals and provide life-saving assistance, including shelter, core relief items and access to food.



### 4 MOZAMBIQUE

## Support for Cyclone Idai survivors

One of the deadliest storms ever recorded in the Southern Hemisphere, Cyclone Idai made landfall on 14 March near Beira, Mozambique.

The cyclone wreaked havoc across Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, affecting more than 3 million people and displacing 200,000. Many lives were lost, with large-scale destruction of infrastructure and a tremendous surge in humanitarian needs.

In response, UNHCR airlifted 240 megatonnes of emergency shelter and core relief items to initially help some 36,000 of the most vulnerable survivors across the three countries. More than 65,000 items were distributed including kitchen sets, blankets, sleeping mats, solar lanterns, mosquito nets and plastic sheeting.



### 5 SOUTH SUDAN

## UNHCR calls for lasting peace

On the anniversary of South Sudan's independence on 9 July, UNHCR urged the nation's leaders to end what has become Africa's largest displacement crisis.

More than 2.3 million South Sudanese have fled to neighbouring countries, with children making up nearly two-thirds of the refugee population, while 1.8 million have been internally displaced.

The Revitalised Peace Agreement, signed by warring parties in September 2018, established a foundation for peace. While progress has been made, conflict and violence persists throughout the country. UNHCR continues to deliver life-saving assistance in South Sudan and neighbouring host countries, including food, shelter, clean water, education and healthcare.



### 6 CENTRAL AMERICA

## El Salvador joins effort to address forced displacement

Families fleeing gang violence and persecution in Central America are straining asylum capacity across the region, leaving growing numbers of people at severe risk.

So far this year, almost 600,000 asylum-seekers and migrants have arrived at the southern U.S. border from Mexico. Meanwhile, Mexico has reported a 196 per cent jump in asylum applications and El Salvador ranks as the sixth country of origin for new asylum-seekers.

In July, UNHCR welcomed El Salvador's decision to join the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework (MIRPS), a new approach to help and protect displaced people in the region. UNHCR leads the initiative, working with the governments of Mexico, Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama to deliver support.





## Fawaz's fight for survival

**A**t just 18 months old, Fawaz weighs little more than a newborn. He is suffering from acute watery diarrhoea and can barely hold the milk he is given.

Fawaz's mother, Ruqaya, sits by his bedside day and night at El Sadaqah hospital in Aden, Yemen. He is so deeply sick with malnutrition he can barely move.

**"My son is dizzy most of the time," says Ruqaya.**

"This morning the nurses tried to draw his blood, but they couldn't even find his vein. They put in the needle so many times... It was so painful."

A few months earlier, Fawaz, his parents and three siblings fled conflict in the port city of Al Hudaydah after their house was destroyed by fighting.

In Aden, they took shelter in a school with other displaced Yemenis. Fawaz's health began to decline because of the lack of food and poor sanitary conditions. After suffering diarrhoea and vomiting, he was admitted to hospital.

**UNHCR is often the first to identify malnourished children like Fawaz at our reception centres, and ensure they receive immediate treatment.**

We support the running of hospitals and emergency feeding centres, and supply life-saving therapeutic foods.

A recent UNHCR survey of refugee camps found alarming rates of malnutrition in children under the age of five. This includes 'severe acute' cases, like baby Fawaz, in the Middle East and in war-torn parts of Africa.

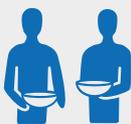
Many of the worst cases are among new arrivals: refugees who have just escaped a warzone, or a region stricken by drought

and food shortages, and made the difficult journey to safety.

Heqian Kuang, UNHCR Global Associate Nutrition and Food Security Officer, says we only have a small window of opportunity to treat malnutrition in young children – 1,000 days from pregnancy to the age of two. After this, much of the damage is irreversible and can last a lifetime, including physical deformities like stunting, organ damage and cognitive impairment.



Children with severe acute malnutrition are **11 times more likely to die than a healthy child** if not treated in time



**More than half** of refugee camps surveyed had unacceptable levels of malnutrition



Even a severely malnourished child has a **98% chance of recovery** if they receive urgent nutritional support in time

UNHCR is working to prevent malnutrition by supplementing the diets of pregnant and nursing mothers, and providing breastfeeding support to give children the best possible protection and start in life.

“We advocate for exclusive breastfeeding for six months and then continue to two years in combination with food,” says Heqian.

“This helps avoid the ‘hunger gap’ that can follow weaning when the child’s diet does not provide enough energy or nutrients.”

Even a severely malnourished child has a 98 per cent chance of recovery if they receive the right nutritional support in time.

**“Supporting our nutrition programs is one of the most effective things you can do when it comes to saving and improving the lives of refugees,” says Heqian.**

Plumpy’Nut® is our most widely-used emergency food to treat severe acute malnutrition in children. Made from peanuts, this high-energy paste contains sugar, vegetable oil and skimmed milk powder enriched with essential vitamins and minerals.

Provided as a ready-to-use sachet, it requires no water or refrigeration, and is easy for children to eat. Just three sachets a day for a month can take a severely malnourished child from impending death to a safe body weight, restoring their health and vitality.

**“Even a small gift goes a very long way when you think about the lasting impact you have on a child’s health and future quality of life.”**



Australia for UNHCR

## How can you help?

When you donate today, you can provide:

- 1 **Urgent treatment** – support for hospitals and feeding centres that monitor, treat and prevent malnutrition in children and infants
- 2 **Life-saving supplies** – therapeutic milks and fortified foods to treat severe acute malnutrition and vaccinations to protect children from preventable diseases
- 3 **Prevention** – pre-natal care and nutritional support for pregnant and nursing mothers to give children the best start in life



UNHCR/A. McConnell

**To make your donation:** complete and return the form enclosed with your copy of *With You*, call **1300 361 288** or visit [unrefugees.org.au/malnutrition](http://unrefugees.org.au/malnutrition)



Australia for UNHCR Special Representative Marta Dusseldorp speaks with Gloria at her home in Kampala, Uganda.

Australia for UNHCR

## Gloria crafts a future From refugee to business woman

Six years ago, Gloria arrived in Uganda as a widow with two children. Forced to flee conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, her family found safety near the border.

“I had nothing,” says Gloria. “No clothing. Nothing here. But I had the skills in my head.”

After struggling to find work, Gloria moved to Uganda’s capital Kampala eager to use her sewing skills to support her family. She joined the Refugee Women’s Craft Group and started to earn a regular income making keyrings, decorations, clothing and baskets.

**Australia for UNHCR is a strong supporter of livelihoods projects – including the Refugee Women’s Craft Group – that help women achieve financial independence and provide for their families.**

The group was started by six refugee women skilled in making crafts and has grown to 36 members, supporting more than 1,000 people. Australia for UNHCR again supported the Refugee Women’s Craft Group in 2019 by purchasing their handmade beaded keyrings for our new donor welcome packs.



Australia for UNHCR

For Gloria, the opportunity to work and earn an income has been life-changing. She can now afford to live in a modest two-roomed house with electricity.

“Before I started this keyring project, I was staying in a very tiny house, and I had almost nothing. Even a sewing machine I didn’t have,” she says.

**“Now I am happy. I can meet my house rent, I can pay for water, electricity and university fees for my son.”**

Eventually, Gloria earned enough money to buy a sewing machine and start her own business. Today, she makes and sells reusable cotton sanitary pads for young

girls at her local church. Owning a sewing machine also gives her the ability to work from home when she needs to.

Earlier this year, Australia for UNHCR Special Representative Marta Dusseldorp visited Kampala to meet with refugee women whose lives have been changed by this project, including Gloria.

“There’s a real sense of a possibility for the future,” Marta says. “And it’s because of people like Australia for UNHCR supporters, who are helping to give opportunities to these women.”

“They are now becoming independent business women with a future.”



A father holds a young girl while crossing the border between Venezuela and Colombia.

UNHCR / V. Tremeau

## Emergency update: Venezuela

**U**NHCR has stepped up support for Venezuelans displaced throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Between 3,000 and 5,000 people continue to flee Venezuela each day to escape violence, insecurity and threats, as well as lack of food, medicine and essential services.

The number of Venezuelans who have fled their country has now reached 4.3 million. This is the largest exodus in the region's recent history and one of the biggest displacement crises in the world. Colombia, one of the countries most affected, now hosts more than 1.3 million Venezuelans.

After the Venezuelan-Colombian border reopened in June, thousands more people crossed into Colombia seeking food and medicine. Families are often forced to take dangerous routes to cross borders, exposing them to sexual exploitation, abuse and kidnapping.

UNHCR has strengthened its presence along key borders to identify vulnerable people fleeing, including unaccompanied children, pregnant women, the elderly and people with disabilities.

**Across the region, UNHCR continues to lead the protection**

**response and provide life-saving assistance to Venezuelan refugees, including emergency shelter, core relief items, water and access to education, legal counselling and medical care.**

Inside the country, conditions continue to deteriorate. Record high inflation rates mean Venezuelans can no longer afford or access food, medicine and basic services such as education and healthcare.

Despite the challenges, UNHCR has maintained its community-based projects in protection, health, education, and water and sanitation, benefiting more than 450,000 people, including Colombian refugees and the local Venezuelan host populations.

Colombia, Peru, Ecuador and other host countries have generously welcomed Venezuelan families, but resources are increasingly overstretched. Thousands of people continue to flee and are in urgent need of assistance. Families have exhausted their savings and are falling further into poverty.

UNHCR is appealing for almost US\$160 million to respond to the emergency in 2019, but to date has received just half of that amount.



UNHCR is identifying those in need of protection, such as women and children.

UNHCR / V. Tremeau



A Venezuelan mother and her sons find shelter at a UNHCR reception centre.

UNHCR / V. Tremeau

Will you help provide life-saving assistance to families forced to flee?  
Please call 1300 361 288 or go to [unrefugees.org.au/venezuela](http://unrefugees.org.au/venezuela)



UNHCR / K. Hasam

## A reminder of home for Rohingya

**S**ahera smiles as she sees green sprouts emerging from the soil. For her, it's more than just the promise of fresh vegetables for her three children. It's a reminder of home.

"We had a lot of land back in Myanmar," she says. "Here we only have a small plot." But that small plot is making a big difference for her family.

When Sahera and her children took shelter in Kutupalong settlement, there was little space to cultivate crops, and like most Rohingya refugees, Sahera is a farmer.

**Through a unique project created by UNHCR and partners, women like Sahera can now plant, harvest and enjoy their own garden-grown produce again.**

Although the Rohingya have fled persecution in Myanmar in successive waves since the early 1990s, it was the eruption of violence in Rakhine State on 25 August 2017 that made this the fastest growing refugee crisis in the world.

Since then, more than 743,000 Rohingya refugees have fled to safety in Bangladesh. Most arrived within the first three months of the crisis.

Thanks to the generous support of Australians, UNHCR was there from the beginning to provide food, water, shelter and medical care on arrival. Now, two years on, UNHCR is focused on ensuring families can meet their daily needs and lead dignified and meaningful lives.

**"The first year, we focused on saving lives – making sure we provided the basic services that were needed for families to survive the monsoon period, but also trying to recover from the perils of their journey," says Oscar Sanchez Pineiro, UNHCR's Senior Field and Sector Coordinator in Cox's Bazar.**

"Now, we're focusing more on building capacity for refugees to do a lot of these things on their own. We're putting refugees at the centre of the response, to deliver services, upgrade shelters and improve infrastructure."

Last year, UNHCR helped hundreds of farmers cover over 43.5 hectares with trees, shrubs, herbs and other crops, reducing the effects of deforestation.

"UNHCR gave us these plants to take care of, as well as seeds, and bamboo that we used to create shade," says Sahera. "We

take care of the plants every day, and my children help water them."

**"My children get excited to see the vegetables. It reminds us of our farm back home. These vegetables taste really good, so I don't have to buy any from the market."**

Sahera's garden includes spinach, gourd and pumpkin – a particular favourite of her youngest daughter, Fatema. The family's harvest has been so plentiful that they can't use it all within their small household.

"Not only do we have vegetables for ourselves, we often share them with our neighbours," she says. "If we have leftover produce, we sell it to nearby shops."

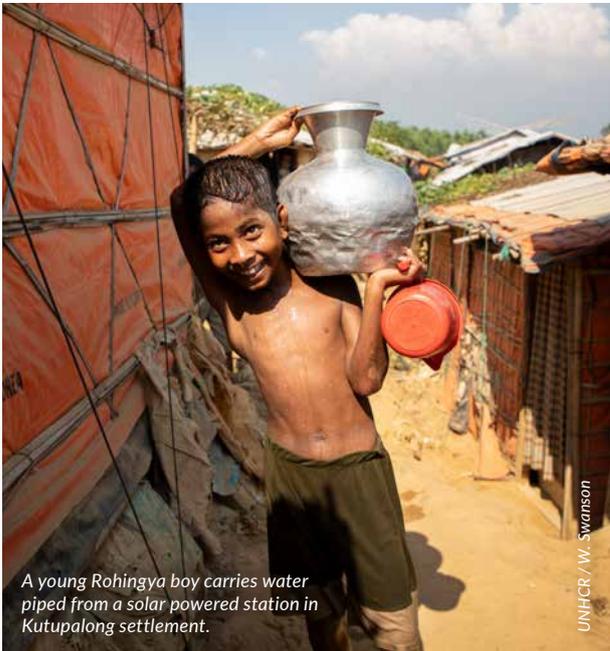
"Before we got the seeds, there was nothing to do. So this is a really great opportunity for us."



Sahera holds her daughter in her vegetable garden.

UNHCR / K. Hasam

# From the field: Hyo Mee in Bangladesh



*Hyo Mee Duerinck's passion for helping others has taken her across the globe. Originally from Korea, she has worked in humanitarian situations in Ghana, Samoa and Tanzania. In late 2018, Hyo Mee was deployed to Bangladesh with UNHCR to help meet the water and sanitation needs of almost a million Rohingya refugees.*

## What did your work in Bangladesh entail?

When I first arrived, I immediately got to work coordinating the building of small dams to retain as much water as possible for Rohingya refugees during the dry season. My proudest achievement was being part of the team who helped build four dams in less than two months. It was a race against time. These dams ensured a steady water supply for about 61,000 refugees, as well as local communities. It was a real team effort, involving refugees, UNHCR and our partners.

## What are the major issues now facing Rohingya refugees?

At the start of this emergency, the focus was on covering the urgent, basic needs of refugees. But now, two years into the crisis, UNHCR is working on improving standards, such as the amount of water provided per person per day, and looking into more lasting and innovative solutions.

Making sure that everyone can safely access water and sanitation facilities is critical. This can mean building toilet and shower blocks just for women and girls or putting locks on doors, to increase privacy and safety. It's about people being able to fulfil their basic needs in a dignified way.

## What difference have Australians made in Bangladesh?

Your donations make a huge difference. Imagine more than 700,000 people fleeing their homes and arriving somewhere where there is nothing. UNHCR was there right from the beginning, to plan and map sites where refugees could be hosted. People arrived exhausted, frightened and in urgent need of basic assistance. A little help makes a big difference.

## What is the most rewarding part of being a humanitarian worker?

What keeps me going is seeing people still smiling, despite everything they and their loved ones have been through. One day I met a refugee who invited me into his shelter to meet his family and share their lunch. It was so moving to hear their story. He told me about having to run through the jungle for days, with his three children, to reach safety. People like him will carry these experiences and stories for the rest of their lives, but they're doing their best to move on.

## Your donations helped provide:



23  
healthcare  
centres



679  
tube wells



1,602  
learning  
spaces



150,000  
shelter kits

# Your impact in action

## Women and girls

Women and girls are key to the wellbeing, safety and development of any community, but in times of crisis they can become particularly vulnerable.

As community structures break down, women can find themselves thrown into the role of sole breadwinner, lacking a legal identity and at heightened risk of sexual violence and exploitation.

Your generous donations ensure women and girls, who make up around half of any refugee or internally displaced population, have access to safe shelter, food, clean water and healthcare.

UNHCR also supports them to rebuild their lives through access to education, counselling, legal support, livelihoods projects and skills training.

During times of uncertainty, your support truly makes a difference. Thank you for helping women and girls to thrive, not just survive.



Hélène receives care for herself and her newborn at the Australia for UNHCR and Teachers Health funded maternity ward at Bili refugee camp, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Australia for UNHCR



Rohingya girls pump water and wash laundry at a well in Kutupalong refugee camp, Bangladesh. UNHCR has provided water and sanitation facilities to over 370,000 people.

UNHCR / B. Sokol



With help from UNHCR, Somali refugee Habibo farms fresh produce for her family and sells any extra to local markets in Dadaab, Kenya.

UNHCR / A. Nasrullah



Janine feeds fish at a farm run by refugees and locals on Lake Rwamunga, Uganda. UNHCR helps refugee women like Janine to start their own businesses and earn an income to support their families.

UNHCR / R. Nur



Venezuelan refugee Magdalena holds her baby, Neymar, as she talks to a UNHCR officer. Magdalena lives in the indigenous community of Tarauparu, Brazil where UNHCR has provided shelter materials, hygiene items, kitchen sets, mattresses and blankets.

UNHCR / V. Pesenti



Internally displaced women sew menstrual pads in a factory built and equipped by UNHCR in the town of Kitchanga, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

UNHCR / N. Micevic



Salam attends a vocational training course at one of UNHCR partner's community centres in rural Damascus, Syria.

UNHCR / O. Kabalan



Rohingya girls attend the UNHCR-funded Seagull Primary School in Kutupalong refugee settlement, Bangladesh. With support from UNHCR, over 62,000 children are accessing learning opportunities.

UNHCR / R. Arnold



Supplied: Woodrow Wilson

# Meet Fadak

I fled Iraq in 2003 with my mum and sisters after our country was invaded and suddenly became unliveable. We survived the invasion and war, but life became too dangerous for us in Baghdad.

We had experienced bombs, our house was damaged and because my dad was already studying and working here, we were able to reunite with him in Australia. It was hoped to only be a temporary solution, but Iraq is still unsafe and Australia has now become home for us, despite initial cultural and language differences.

I'm a lawyer, and after working directly with refugees for about five years, ranging from supporting refugee camps in the Middle East, to helping newcomers settle in Melbourne, I ended up in public advocacy.

**I realised that humanising people seeking asylum is what Australia – and the rest of the world – needs right now. I decided to use my personal story to introduce Australia to a refugee: me.**

My campaign of touring Australia to tell my story has led to countless television and radio appearances, a TEDx talk and many conferences and speeches on refugees, my story and women's leadership. Importantly, it's also led to international advocacy, particularly in Istanbul and Geneva.

I am so grateful to be given the opportunity to participate in UNHCR's NGO Consultations in preparation for the Global Refugee Forum and to raise issues of concern for refugees in Australia and Iraq. In Geneva, I spoke about my Meet Fadak project and particularly about my

use of social media to create positive change for refugees through humanising our lives and journeys.

**I've already been describing this day to my family and friends as one of the best days of my life. It's a big reason why I went to law school. I want to stand up for those whose human rights are at risk and defend those whose rights have been compromised.**

It's important for organisations like the UN to see refugees as impact stakeholders and our voices need to be at the forefront of policy making. The conversations, meetings, planning and decisions made in these forums will affect us and our communities directly. If it is about us, it should prioritise us.

There are millions of ways to be a refugee. We all have our individual stories and experiences, as well as unique circumstances that have caused us to flee. My advocacy work aims to educate people on the importance of getting to know the humans behind the headlines.

I'll continue to shine a light on the real stories of Australia's refugees through speaking and touring the nation, and especially hope to inspire young people and women along the way.

*Fadak Alfayadh is a 26-year-old lawyer and advocate who shares her story with Australians to humanise the refugee experience. In July, Australia for UNHCR sponsored Fadak's trip to UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva to attend international policy forums.*

For more information visit [fadakalfayadh.com](http://fadakalfayadh.com)



ABC journalist Kumi Taguchi speaks with Teachers Health's Reshma Joseph, Accenture's Fadi Chalouhy and Australia for UNHCR Board Member Lynn Dang.

## Speaking about statelessness

*"I had no legal access to education, health care, ID, a birth certificate, driver's licence, passport or bank account. From a legal point of view I had no status..."*



The Hon. Bob Carr speaks with Fadi Chalouhy and Reshma Joseph.



**A**t our annual World Refugee Day Breakfast in June, Fadi Chalouhy shared his story. Born in North Lebanon to a Syrian father and Lebanese mother, Fadi’s father left without registering his birth, leaving him stateless.

In Lebanon, women do not have the right to register their children – a form of gender discrimination that can cause statelessness. This type of legislation continues to discriminate in 25 countries around the world.

Being denied a nationality affected each and every aspect of Fadi’s life. But his biggest challenge was moving freely across his home country.

**“I was detained on several occasions, and no one had any idea how to guide me,” says Fadi. “I had no idea what statelessness meant, how to handle it**

**or who to approach for a solution or advice.”**

Fadi was put in contact with Talent Beyond Boundaries, an organisation connecting skilled refugees with employers around the world. They took on his case despite the difficulties and complexity of the situation.

Today, Fadi lives and works in Sydney for professional services company Accenture, where he uses his technology and business skills as a management consultant.

“I was lucky enough to get an education, compared to the majority of stateless people who are denied access to quality education.”

Statelessness impacts around 10 million people across the world, and the majority are not as fortunate as Fadi. Statelessness can mean a life without a

nationality, education, medical care or legal employment. UNHCR’s #IBelong campaign aims to end statelessness by 2024. To mark the mid-way point, United Nations Member States will convene in October to reflect on achievements and deliver commitments to ending statelessness in the remaining five years.

**“In my humble opinion, being stateless is the scariest environment imaginable for a human being to experience,” says Fadi. “You have no home, no place to call your own, no last name, no birth date, no identity.”**

“Stateless people do not have many success stories to reflect on or draw inspiration from. I want to be that success story that inspires a stateless kid somewhere halfway across the world to keep on fighting and searching for a solution, to never give up.”



## World Refugee Day Breakfast 2019

More than 485 corporate sponsors, former refugees and advocates attended our World Refugee Day Breakfast to celebrate the courage and contribution of refugees.

Former NSW Premier, the Hon. Bob Carr delivered the keynote speech, sharing his experiences in the field and work as Foreign Minister.

Mr Carr also generously donated all author proceeds from his new book – the political memoir *Run for Your Life* – to Australia for UNHCR to help Syrian refugee children.

In our panel discussion, hosted by ABC journalist Kumi Taguchi, Australia for UNHCR Board Member Lynn Dang and Teachers Health’s Reshma Joseph highlighted the importance of the corporate sector taking action to support refugees.

**Guests donated \$191,000 to support unaccompanied and separated children. These funds will help UNHCR provide access to safe shelter, education, medical care and nutritious food.**

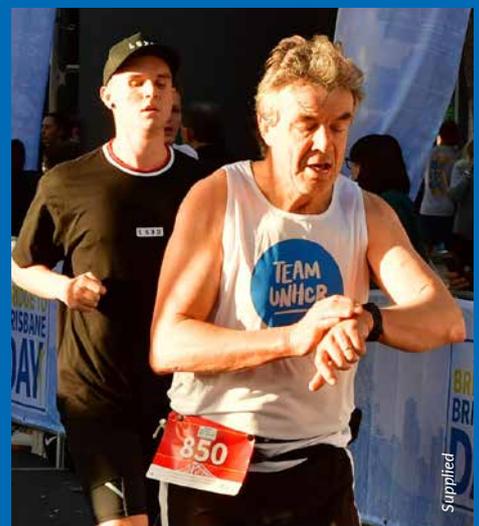
Special thanks to our presenting sponsor Colonial First State Global Asset Management and our silver sponsor State Street.



UNHCR / P. Toggart

# Why I support refugees

A Judge of the Family Court of Australia and keen runner, this year Justice Colin Forrest joined Team UNHCR and ran the Bridge to Brisbane for the eighth time, adding to his numerous distance running feats.



Supplied

## What motivated you to fundraise for Australia for UNHCR?

The plight of those who are fleeing war, violence, persecution, starvation and environmental degradation brought about by climate change troubles me. I live in a very wealthy, stable country in which most of us have never experienced these horrors. I am fortunate to be able to help.

## Does your position on the Family Court intersect with your support of refugees at all?

My Executive Assistant of many years came to Australia as a very small child with her parents as refugees from Laos. She is the most hardworking, loyal and capable Associate any Judge could ever have. My wife, myself, my Executive Assistant and her husband – who also came to Australia as a refugee from Laos – are going on a trip to Laos later this year to visit their homeland.

## What challenge did you set for your Team UNHCR run?

I have been running the Bridge to Brisbane for 10 years now. I have been a keen long distance runner and triathlete all those years, having completed many

half marathons, several marathons and many sprint, standard and long course triathlons. I enjoy trying to stay fit and healthy as I get older and I love the physical and mental challenge of endurance events. I also love the community participatory aspect of fun runs like the Bridge to Brisbane.

This year, after having read one of the Australia for UNHCR newsletters showing people running to raise funds for the organisation, I thought I could do that too. It makes the run a little more worthwhile, not just for me, but for others.

## What would you say to someone considering fundraising for Australia for UNHCR?

I would say that as Australians we can do much more than we currently do, individually and as a nation. We can help people who are not as fortunate as we are to live in a safe place, especially those forced to leave their homelands through no fault of their own. Australia for UNHCR is an organisation through which we can all do a little bit to share our good fortune with others.

To find out more about fundraising for Australia for UNHCR visit [teamunhcr.org.au](http://teamunhcr.org.au)

Thank you to all our generous and loyal supporters for making the life-saving work of UNHCR possible.

# Step with refugees

## Join the global movement to reach 2 billion kilometres

All over the world people are joining a global movement to cover the distance refugees travel each year to reach safety.

This November, Australians can walk, run or cycle in solidarity with families forced to flee their homes.

Make every step count towards this worldwide challenge while raising funds to provide life-saving support for refugees.

To register visit [unrefugees.org.au/2billion](http://unrefugees.org.au/2billion) or for more information contact our Community Fundraising team on 1300 361 288 or at [community@unrefugees.org.au](mailto:community@unrefugees.org.au)



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