



**Compact for
Young People**
in Humanitarian
Action

IGNITING HOPE

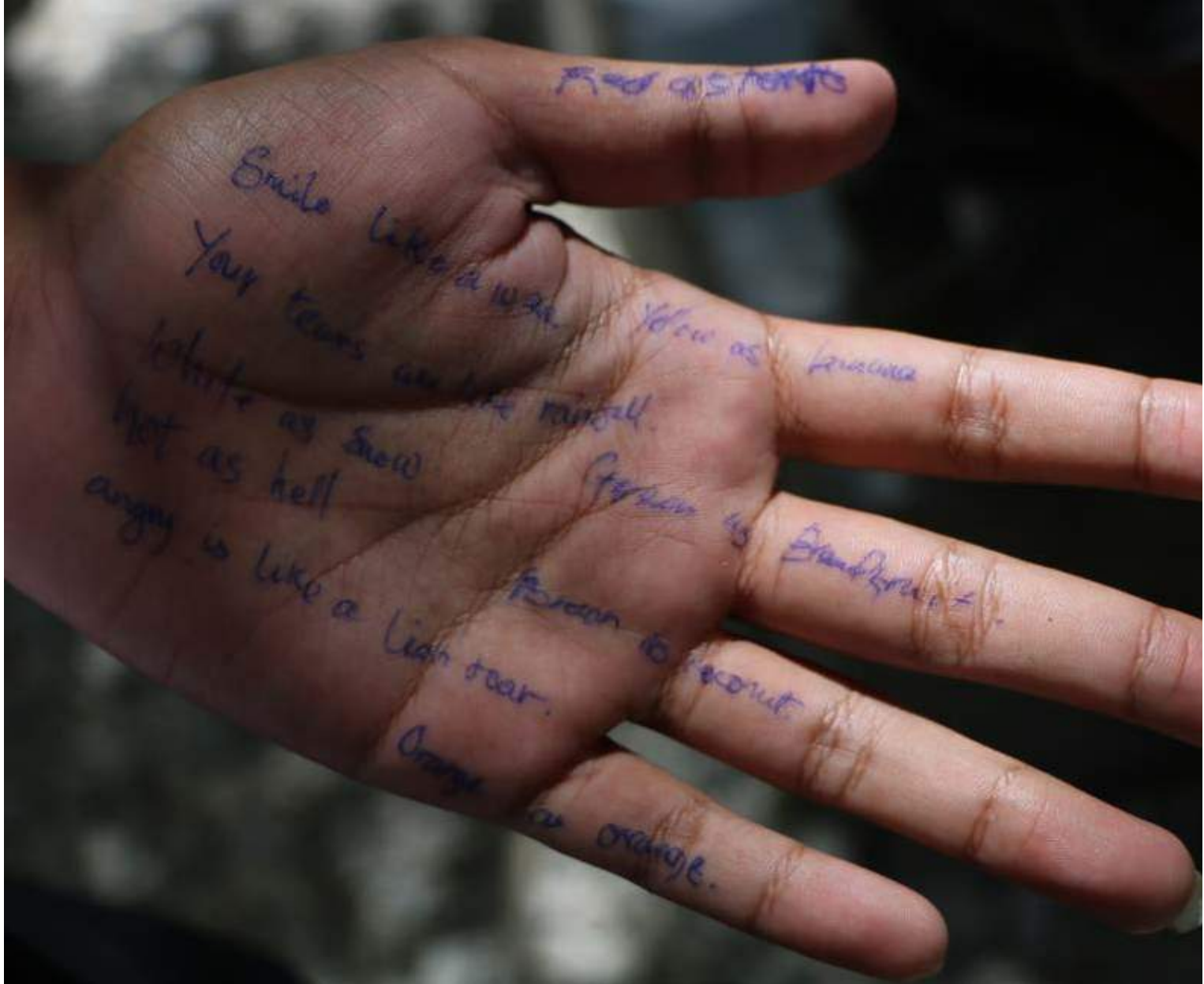
*"It is our humanitarian
and social duty towards
youth – to ignite in them
candles of hope during
this long night of war."*

Amjad, the poet of Za'atari

A young Syrian refugee
in the Za'atari camp
(story page 20)

**Compact for Young People
in Humanitarian Action**

IGNITING HOPE



↑

© IFRC
Kiribati

“When people lose everything, if they keep their hope and their dignity – that is what keeps them going.”

**Mr. Elhadj As Sy,
Secretary-General, International Federation of
Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)**

For and with young people

The Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action was launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul in May 2016. By September of the following year, the Compact celebrated the 50th signatory of a committed group that comprises international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), youth networks and the private sector, as well as United Nations bodies and governments themselves.

The enthusiasm with which the Compact has been embraced – and the number of partners who quickly committed to its principles – suggest it is the right idea for the right time.

If there is anything as powerful as an idea whose time has come, it is the collective energy and dynamism of the world's largest-ever generation of young people.

This youth “peak” is coming of age at a time of increasing – and increasingly destructive – natural and human-made disasters. We cannot see the energy of young people wasted on living with and dealing with crisis. Young people need all our support and investment to realize their own enormous potential.

Since Istanbul, we have seen increasing traction for the view that the humanitarian system needs to work not only for, but closely

with young people. From Jordan to Nigeria, from Haiti to Nepal, and from Germany to Greece, humanitarian actors are encouraging and relying on young people. We see young people stepping up to amplify humanitarian effectiveness, to push for innovation, to understand and serve affected populations, and to rekindle hope in places where it has been overwhelmed.

This initial report, covering the work of the Compact in its first 18 months, presents just a sample of the ways in which young people are adapting to and learning from these early efforts, in engaging with each other and serving populations in need. It also documents some of the innovative programming that puts the rights and needs of young people front and centre stage. The report serves as testimony to the transformation that is taking place in the member organizations of the Compact. This transformation is an imperative for creating the space for meaningful engagement of young people, as well as the space for youth-driven programming.

This report is also a reminder that young people are not homogenous, and a one-size-fits-all humanitarian approach will not do. We need to pay attention not just to their physical essentials for survival, but to the specific developmental and social

needs of young people of different ages, sexes, ethnicities, passions and motivations.

Time and again, we have seen that if we can foster hope and dignity, people can get through situations of tremendous loss and deprivation, sometimes even emerging stronger.

Strategic and effective programming, informed by evidence and by the voice of youth, and driven by young people themselves, can help turn humanitarian situations into possibilities for transformation – of individuals, families and communities.

We cannot lose sight of the opportunities inherent in crises. The lives of millions of young people, and the future we all want, are at stake.

Danielle Engel,
United Nations Population Fund
(UNFPA)

Marcel Stefanik
International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Coordinators of the Compact for
Young People in Humanitarian Action

A new Compact

The World Humanitarian Summit, on 23-24 May 2016 in Istanbul, emphasized the urgent need to safeguard the rights of young people and engage them in humanitarian response efforts. A new Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action was launched, under the leadership of IFRC and UNFPA, as a concrete and deliberate step by the humanitarian community to work with and for young people.

More than 50 humanitarian partners (see complete list, page 68), including governments, UN entities, international and local NGOs, and major youth organizations and networks, have become members of the initiative. By becoming a member of the Compact, the organizations commit to, and are accountable for, transforming humanitarian action **for and with young people**, to prevent and end conflict, safeguard human rights and the rule of law, and invest in young people now and in the future, leaving no one behind. This publication is just a sampling of the work being carried out in each of the five action areas.



ACTION 1

Services

PAGE 8

Promote and increase age- and gender-responsive and inclusive programmes that contribute to the protection, health and development of young women, young men, girls and boys within humanitarian settings.



ACTION 2

Participation

PAGE 20

Support systematic inclusion of engagement and partnership with youth, in all phases of humanitarian action, through sharing of information and involvement in decision-making processes at all levels, including budget allocations.

ACTION 3

Capacity



Recognize and strengthen young people's capacities and capabilities to be effective humanitarian actors in prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, and empower and support local youth-led initiatives and organizations in humanitarian response, such as those targeting affected youth, including young refugees and internally displaced persons living in informal urban settlements and slums.

PAGE 32

ACTION 5

Data



Ensure the generation and use of age- and sex-disaggregated data pertaining to adolescents and youth in humanitarian settings.

PAGE 56

ACTION 4

Resources



Increase resources intended to address the needs and priorities of adolescents and youth affected by humanitarian crises, including disasters, conflict and displacement, and identify ways to more accurately track and report on the resources allocated to young people in humanitarian contexts.

PAGE 42

Moving forward

PAGE 66

Annex

PAGE 68



© WRC
Omar J. Robles
South Sudan





Services

Supporting age- and gender-responsive programmes to protect the health and well-being of all young people in humanitarian settings

Action 1 Task Team

- / **Team leaders** United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
- / **Team members** Major Group for Children and Youth, Mercy Corps, Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Plan International, RET International, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNFPA
- / **Key tasks** Develop inter-agency guidelines to assist Compact members to programme with and for young people, building on the potential of young people, and laying the foundation for adolescents and youth to continue contributing positively to their communities in the longer term.

“We are not all the same. Programmes need to address the different areas that the youth deem important, and they need to be designed to be able to reach youth who are hardest to reach.”

**Foni, age 25,
South Sudan**

23%
of refugee youth

are able to access secondary education, compared with

84%
worldwide

Emergencies heighten the risks and exacerbate the vulnerabilities of young people. In the chaos during and after humanitarian crises, protective familial and social ties often erode. Opportunities for abuse and exploitation multiply as security systems unravel.

The term “emergency” suggests something short-lived. But increasingly, forced displacements and other humanitarian crises unfold over years, not months, with many young people forced to grow up away from home. Their needs – for safety and security, education, employment, and even play and recreation – must not be ignored.

The Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action pushes for interventions that meet the specific needs of young people in ways that speak to their gender, culture and evolving capacities, and contribute to their protection, health and well-being.

Young people have interlinked needs across multiple sectors. For this reason, humanitarian actors should consider age, gender and other factors of exclusion – such as disability status – when designing and delivering services. Engaging and consulting young people in a meaningful, concrete way can be part of ensuring that interventions meet their actual needs. While young people have often demonstrated significant capacity to contribute to humanitarian efforts, they are rarely listened to or regarded as positive and powerful agents of change.

A set of common standards and guidelines, under development by Task Team 1, will assist Compact members to uphold their commitment to providing age- and gender-appropriate responses, and to including young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of humanitarian actions.





“We must be bold and vocal in promoting the rights of all young people – especially those caught up in the crosswinds of conflict and disasters.”

**Dr. Natalia Kanem,
Executive Director,
United Nations Population
Fund (UNFPA)**



© UNICEF/
UN0120899/Rich

Young Syrians have an opportunity to read at a UNICEF-supported Makani centre.





© NRC
Christian Jepsen

Guidelines produced by several Compact members (MYAN, NRC and RET International) address the needs and rights of young people in humanitarian situations.



A protected, welcoming space is often an entry point for offering young people cross-sectoral services, especially for adolescent girls and young women who may otherwise be confined to their homes, unable to avail themselves of needed information and services. For adolescents, the opportunity to learn and to play is also essential for healthy development. For older youth, the chance to build livelihood skills is often what's needed most. Here are a few examples of Compact members' actions.

The right space. The creation of safe spaces, especially for girls and young women, has emerged as a key strategy for UNFPA's

humanitarian response, one that has been employed in responding to the Syrian crisis, and in situations from Kenya, Madagascar and Malawi to the Philippines and Turkey. In 2016, UNFPA supported 485 safe spaces in 34 countries. Such spaces afford girls and young women a chance to socialize and rebuild social networks, acquire useful skills, and access sexual and reproductive health care. In north-eastern Nigeria, safe spaces supported by UNFPA are providing shelter and building the resilience of girls and young women fleeing Boko Haram.

Prevention of and response to sexual assault is also critical, and is being implemented in camps

in Jordan, Kenya, Northern Iraq and Syria.

“I am safe, I learn, I connect”

UNICEF supports more than 230 Makani (My Space) centres across Jordan. The centres provide young people in the most challenging of situations with a chance to feel safe and supported. The Makani slogan, “I am safe, I learn, I connect,” conveys the essence of its approach: The core idea is to provide vulnerable adolescents and youth with learning opportunities, life skills training and psychosocial support services all under one roof.



© IFRC
Olivier Matthys

Carefree activities offer an outlet for young people affected by severe flooding in Pakistan.



The centres build on local networks of partners, using existing capacities and structures to facilitate sustainable change. They offer art, music, sports, languages and vocational skills, and referrals to other services, including case management for protection issues. Providing out-of-school adolescents with alternative education services means they can return to one of the official education tracks accredited by the Ministry of Education.

And they make learning fun. “My name is Farouq,” said one of the students, a 12-year-old Syrian. “I heard about the Makani from my friend. The thing I like most is the importance it places on art, sports and music classes.

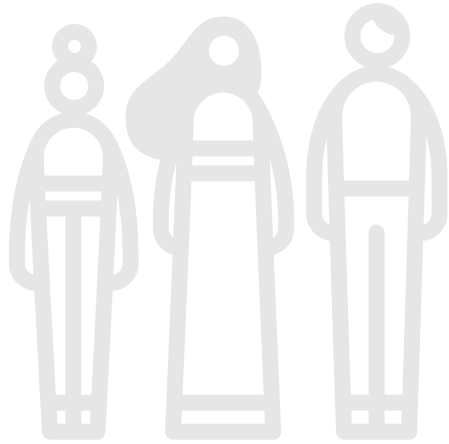
I have many friends now and have started to teach other students how to play.”

Safe schools. In the spring of 2015, a huge earthquake and its aftershock in Nepal killed almost 9,000 people, and damaged or destroyed nearly 800,000 homes. A year later, as limited reconstruction had taken place, **Plan International** built 310 temporary schools benefitting 21,021 children and adolescents so that they could continue their education in a safe environment.

In the wake of the earthquakes, Plan International also supported safe spaces for adolescent girls and young women to access information, education and skills-building opportunities, recreational activities, and other support

and services. Mobile teams conducted home-to-home visits and worked with small groups of girls. Special efforts were made to reach youth with disabilities, married adolescent girls and young mothers.

Restless Development Nepal was one of the first agencies to respond to the disaster, and young people were at the forefront of the response. As of March 2016, the youth-focused organization was working in 10 districts, having just started a new partnership with **UNICEF** on access to basic education. This partnership aimed to give 120,000 students increased access to basic education, and has included training for 5,750 peer educators, 1,600 teachers and 100 district education resource persons.



“I came to the centre during my pregnancy because health care was free at the clinic. Then I learned about the recreational and skills-based training workshops. I often bring my children along as they can play in a safe environment and interact with other children their age.”

Abeer, a 23-year-old Syrian refugee in Jordan

Virtual and institutional space. Young people need institutional space to grow. In response, a Youth Engagement Platform was established by the **United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth** and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to foster youth engagement in the follow-up to the 2015 **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction**. The Young Scientists Platform was created to provide a space for young experts from different scientific fields and regions to connect with their colleagues, to widen their knowledge and to share their expertise on disaster risk reduction.

Virtual spaces can also provide a sense of connection, especially for older adolescents and youth, and access

to vital information. Urban Refuge, a partner of the UN Major Group, has created an app that links urban refugees with local assistance opportunities not easily accessed using street addresses. The app, which is being piloted in Amman, Jordan, can access online resources such as jobs boards, informal and formal education programmes, and legal rights information.

Reclaiming lives. Reintegration into their communities is a daunting task for those who were recruited into armed groups. **RET International** tailors assistance to this group. Its holistic approach includes prevention of recruitment of children and youth into armed groups, sensitization and strengthening of communities on rights

and protection needs, demobilization and rehabilitation of former adolescent combatants, family reunion and social integration.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, RET is assisting former combatants to complete their educations or develop new skills, followed by integration into vocational training or support for small business initiatives. RET also offers psychological counselling and health check-ups. Collaboration with 50 local youth associations on peacebuilding and conflict prevention projects in their communities has reached more than 17,500 community members. Through this intensive programme, more than 600 underaged combatants have

Inter-agency guidelines

As a way to reinforce and institutionalize the actions of the Compact, the Action 1 Task Team is developing a set of inter-agency guidelines to address the gap in humanitarian tools to specifically address adolescents and youth. The guidelines, which will be released in 2018, will offer:

- A common set of standards, including rights-based and participatory approaches;
- Models of youth-inclusive programming that take advantage of the potential of young people to overcome intergenerational problems;
- Approaches to adolescent- and youth-targeted programming that recognize the positive contributions young people can offer in the short term, and lay the foundation for adolescents and youth to continue contributing positively in the longer term.



reclaimed their lives and reintegrated into their communities. The programme also targets young women who have become embroiled in conflict, often at the lowest end of the social hierarchy of armed groups, where they are subjected to extreme violence and abuse.

Play can't wait. Play is a human right that is crucial to holistic and healthy development. In January 2017, [Right To Play](#) began a multi-year initiative that uses sport and play to improve the well-being of refugee children, adolescents and youth (aged up to 18) living in camps and towns along the border between Myanmar and Thailand. The project seeks to develop life skills and address barriers to girls' meaningful participation in their schools and communities.



© Women's Refugee Commission



The “I’m Here” approach

Adolescent girls are among the most vulnerable populations in crises – and consistently overlooked in early responses.

The “I’m Here” approach provides field-tested and adaptable steps and tools to:

- Proactively identify girls
- Assess their needs
- Build effective programmes

Partners: **Mercy Corps**, in partnership with the **Population Council** and the **Women’s Refugee Commission**.



The poet of Za'atari: Igniting hope through books and learning



Amjad in the
Questscope Youth
Centre Library in
Za'atri refugee camp.

© Questscope
UNFPA Youth Centre

Za'atari camp – Amjad was a university student before he was caught up in the violence of the Syrian conflict and escaped to one of Jordan's refugee camp.

"When I came to the camp I felt that my spirit was being broken – just like so many youth around me. We were living in intellectual stagnation – in limbo. This made all of us vulnerable to any other idea presented to us. I thought, there has to be an end to this falling apart."

Writing was the medicine that began his healing. "I found new strength in myself and for others."

Day after day in the camp, Amjad, now known as the "poet of Za'atari," wrote to explore in

his soul what he could become despite the devastation of all he had known. He became a mentor through UNFPA's partner Questscope, and found satisfaction in guiding Syrians along the same healing path.

He was granted a space for his gifts and energy – a prefab caravan that is now a makeshift library stuffed with shelves of books, provided by UNFPA. The library includes a computer and space for literary discussions. Amjad organizes creative writing workshops to help young people come to terms with the challenges they have experienced.

Some 250 youth circulate daily around his library, many of them taking out books.





© UN Foundation

Za'atari refugee camp
in Jordan.





© OCHA
Iason Athanasiadis

Yezidi youth in the Arbat camp,
Iraq.





Action 2 Task Team

- / **Team leaders** United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth
- / **Team members** Gooddler, UNFPA, UNHCR
- / **Key tasks** Develop modalities to ensure that young people are systematically included in the governance of the Compact and supported in playing a substantive role.

Participation

Unleashing the power
of young people to
help and to lead

“I had to leave my home, family and country to save my life. Now I am trying to find meaning in this life by helping my fellow refugees.”

**Ali Johar, 21,
a refugee from Myanmar
currently living in India**

>600

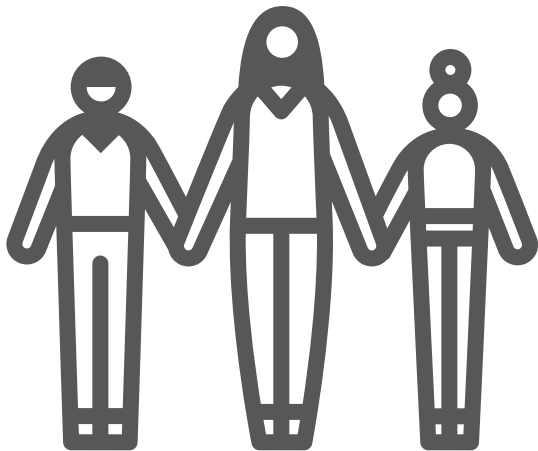
million young people

**aged 10 to 24 live in fragile
and conflict-affected settings**

Times of crisis often call forth the dynamism, flexibility and openness of young people. In difficult situations, young people can be resilient, resourceful and effective agents of positive change, able to effectively deliver assistance and rebuild communities.

Among people forced to flee their homes, the majority are typically young, which is also true of the receiving communities. Many are able and eager to shoulder responsibility, often finding that leadership and action give purpose and meaning to their lives. Members of the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action are committed to systematically engaging and partnering with young people in all phases of crisis, recovery and reconstruction, including in budget allocations and decision-making.

The power of young people is often an overlooked resource in dealing with humanitarian crises. But Compact members and partners are showing just how much young people can do, from clearing rubble in the aftermath of a hurricane to welcoming refugees and delivering meals, information and assistance. Action 2 of the Compact calls for sharing information with and involving young people in decision-making processes at all levels. This means including them throughout the humanitarian programme cycle, from funding, design and implementation through evaluation. This will require an institutional commitment and a shift from a business-as-usual approach.





© World Scout Bureau, Inc.

Scouts on the front lines following Hurricane Matthew in Haiti.

Government commitment. Agents of Change, an action plan published by Germany's Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in April 2017, declares the participation of youth to be crucial in humanitarian response. They are not just beneficiaries, the plan states, "they are players and partners." Towards that end, a forum of 24 young people helped draft the action plan, which aims to integrate youth rights more systematically in all projects and programming. German youth have also taken a lead in welcoming refugees to their country.

Plan International supported and strengthened the capacity of young refugees in Germany to lead activities, distribute information and train others. Several are engaged as youth advocates

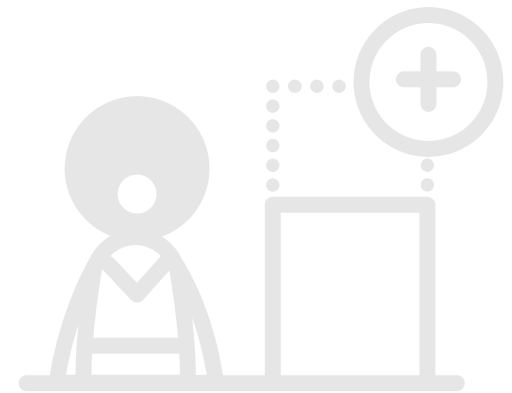
to raise awareness about the rights of young refugees through speaking and media engagements. Youth consult with refugee camp management and help to ensure that minimum standards for protection are met.

Collaboration with the German WASH (water/sanitation/hygiene) network and the support of the Foreign Ministry enabled arche noVa, an NGO founded by young people in 1992, to train professionals and students with technical backgrounds to assist in humanitarian actions. In Iraq, arche noVa training, benefiting mostly displaced young people, empowered them to educate and mobilize their communities around water, sanitation and hygiene issues following the establishment of water systems.



“If we create synergies between young responders and young refugees, then we create the basis for a better future in terms of solidarity.”

**Filippo Grandi,
UN High Commissioner
for Refugees (UNHCR)**



Ready for action. Many Compact members are deploying first responders when disasters strike. **Restless Development**, which has youth-led action hubs in 10 countries, has developed a model that enlists and empowers young people as crucial partners and leaders in disaster response.

When the Ebola crisis erupted in Sierra Leone, cohorts of Restless Development volunteers received extensive training on the disease and worked jointly with the health authorities to help break the chain of infection. Some 1,700 volunteers fanned out across 7,800 communities with life-saving information. The fact that many were known and trusted in the communities gave their health messages credibility.

In August 2017, when catastrophic floods and mudslides submerged homes and streets in Freetown, Restless Development quickly mobilized 100 young volunteers to gather vital data on the needs of affected communities, using an SMS platform, U-report, developed by **UNICEF**. The aim was to make sure the response matched local needs.

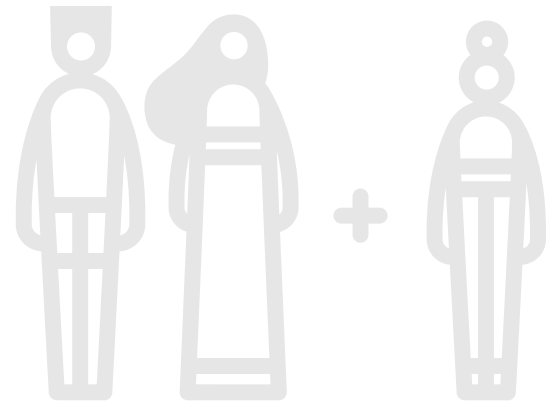
Being prepared. The wisdom of the Scouts' motto – Be prepared – became evident after Hurricane Matthew battered sections of Haiti in October 2016. Specially trained Scouts were among the first to deliver assistance in devastated neighbourhoods thanks to emergency preparedness. Twenty-four hours before the hurricane hit, the National Scout Association of Haiti, a member of the **World Organization of the Scout Movement**, activated its emergency

cells across the country. Groups of 20 to 50 young people aged 18 to 23 had been specially trained to assist in such situations by clearing the rubble, delivering first aid and clean drinking water, and taking measures to contain the ongoing cholera epidemic. “I am doing my duty as a Scout because I committed to always be ready to serve!” said Jaelle Sévigne, one of the early responders.

A special unit of Scouts d’Haiti, specifically trained in operating satellite communication gear in partnership with Telecom Sans Frontières, was deployed by a United Nations helicopter to coordinate with the national Centre for Emergency Response in reaching hard-hit neighbourhoods.

“We realized that we were physically stronger than the pregnant women, new mothers and their children, not to mention the women with disabilities and the elderly affected by the floods.”

Priyanka Singh, 20,
a UNFPA advocate against
child marriage who used
her experience to mobilize
others to respond to
flooding in Nepal



Plan International also mobilized youth to actively participate in response efforts following Hurricane Matthew in Haiti. The young people worked as community mobilizers and led activities in child-friendly safe spaces to support some of the most vulnerable children in the worst affected communities. Youth capacity-building was carried out through trainings on child protection and delivery of psychosocial support.

Rapid responses in Ecuador and Japan. Members of the **United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth** in Ecuador and Japan were trained and ready to respond when disaster hit

their respective countries. The Ecuador National **Medical Students' Association** deployed a body of volunteers on the ground in Quito after the 7.8 magnitude earthquake hit Ecuador in April 2016. Students worked alongside medical and emergency response teams to enhance the quality and reach of the response. Their peer-to-peer training methods were essential for the success of the sizeable deployment.

Following a series of disasters in Japan, starting with the 1995 Hanshin-Awaji earthquake, a coalition of youth groups organized under the Japan Youth Platform for Sustainability built

rapid-response capabilities. Most recently, students from Kobe and Kyoto have partnered with universities, local communities and NGOs to mobilize youth-led emergency response teams which complement the work of the authorities to enable a smooth response and help communities recover faster. Their skills were in demand after torrential rains and deadly flooding in Yamaguchi and Kyushu in July 2017.



↑

© UNFPA
Lubna Baqi

Youth in Nepal helping
out after the earthquake
in 2015.

→
© IFRC
Hanna Butler

Young people planting hope in the sands of Kiribati at the Red Cross Pacific Youth Climate Change Forum.



Confronting climate change. Young people, who will deal with the harsher impacts of climate change, played a large role at the 23rd Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP23). For instance, **SDSN Youth**, a group launched by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network in 2015, co-hosted an official side-event titled “Supporting Youth-Led Innovation to Confront Climate Change: Opportunities for Action.” The event brought together innovators with potential funders, including governments, international organizations and investors.

The panel featured eight innovators who discussed their work on solar lighting, agricultural adaptation and climate education, among other projects. Their stories pointed to common challenges, including the difficulty of applying for funding at multilateral financing institutions, the lack of youth involvement in national and local climate mitigation and adaptation plans, and the insufficient presence of capacity-building and skills-development programmes in many countries.



Time is running out



© IFRC
Hanna Butler

For young people in the Pacific islands, climate change is a lived reality.

For young people in many regions, especially those living on islands, the effect of climate change is not in the future, it is very much present. Rising sea levels are infiltrating wells and ruining crops. Storms, cyclones, droughts and heat waves are devastating homes and lives.

“I want the world to know what is happening in Kiribati, what climate change is doing to my beautiful home,” said Esther Nabuti, a young **Red Cross** volunteer.

In October 2017, 49 youth from the Pacific region came together in Kiribati for the Red Cross Pacific Youth Climate Change Forum. Led by the Red Cross Pacific Youth Network, the forum featured poets (“Let us rise up higher than the rising sea level,” wrote one),

journalists, scientists, environmentalists and community leaders, who inspired participants to speak out and take action on climate issues. The group also planted rows of mangrove trees, which can protect against storm surges, and brainstormed projects to take on in their own communities.

A couple of months after the forum, Esther’s dream of taking her message to the world was realized: She was invited to serve as a youth representative to the COP23 in Bonn. In a related video, she makes a poignant plea for help. “Climate change is here. We need your help. Time is running out.”



© UNICEF South Sudan

UNICEF's Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation.



Using creativity to spark participation.

The **Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation**, developed by UNICEF, is a package of guidance, tools and supplies to encourage creative responses among adolescents aged 10 to 19 affected by conflict and other crises. The kit aids learning, participation and psychosocial well-being, and helps adolescents prepare for conflict and crises in innovative ways.

Portable and streamlined, it includes paper, colour markers, pens, emotion cubes (which use emoji-like illustrations to help adolescents express their feelings) and inspiration cards. A detailed methodology for community youth facilitators shows how to put all the components to good use, whether

for creating structures for self-expression and critical thinking, mapping local resources or brainstorming possible projects for adolescents to take action in their communities.

UNICEF supported the use of the Adolescent Kit in Indonesia, one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. Eight groups of adolescents in flood-prone Jakarta neighbourhoods were encouraged to plan for floods using creative, inventive and even artistic methods that built their capacity to deal with stress and be self-empowered, including through the creation of their own adolescent support system.

The kit was designed based on the experiences of colleagues, partners and ad-

olescents around the world – especially through extended collaboration with UNICEF in Indonesia and South Sudan – and is available in English, French and Arabic. UNICEF and partners have used the kit in 10 countries to empower adolescent boys and girls in creative problem-solving and self expression.

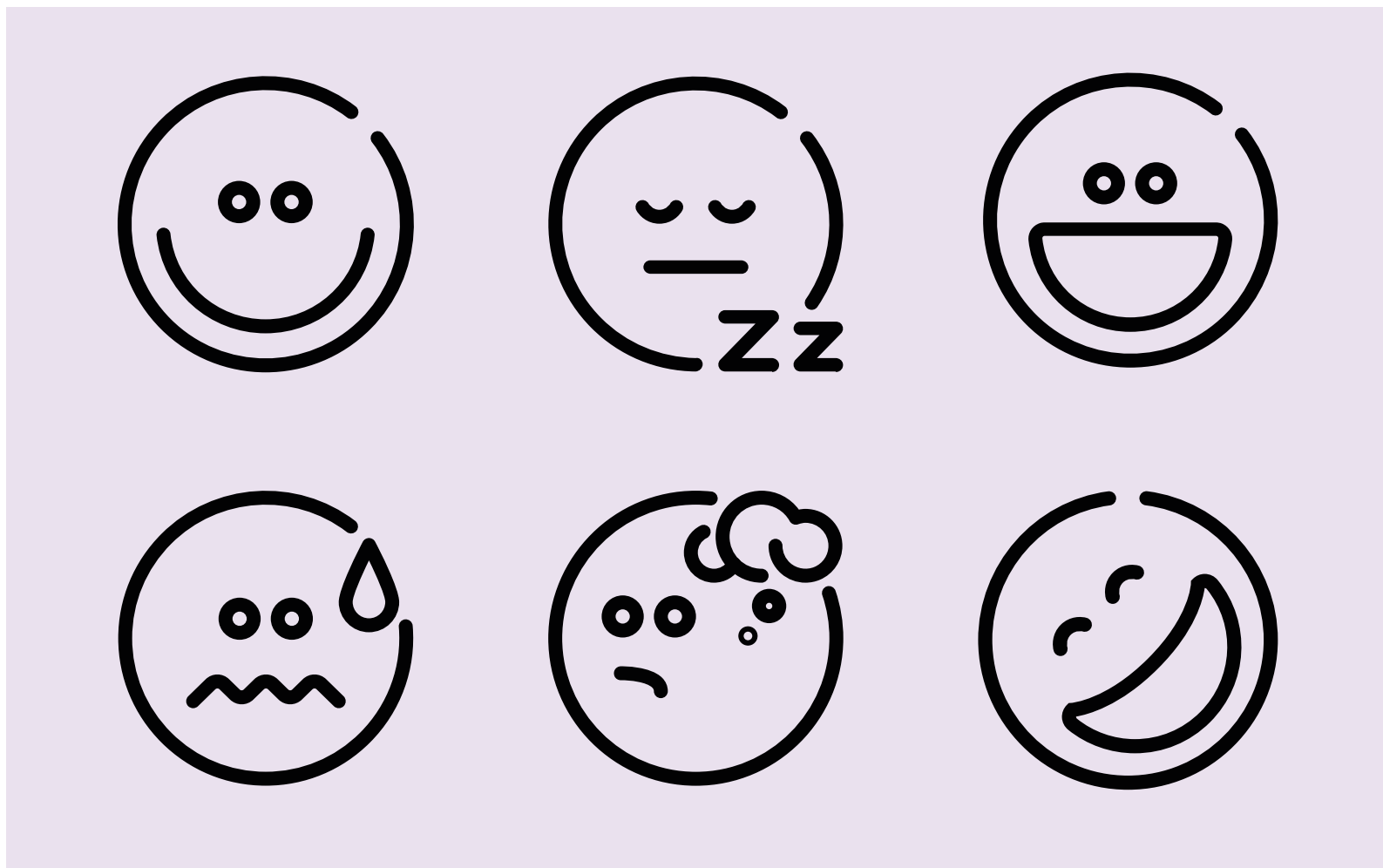
The excellence of the kit's design was recognized by its inclusion in an exhibit at New York's Museum of Modern Art, "Insecurities: Tracing Displacement and Shelter." The Compact will mobilize dedicated attention and resources to scale up further roll-out, so that adolescents living in crisis can meaningfully engage with peers and adults.

“By providing young people living through humanitarian crises with the skills and opportunities they need to rebuild their own lives, we are also helping them build stronger communities and more peaceful societies.”

Henrietta H. Fore,
Executive Director,
United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

© UNICEF

Elements of the
Adolescent Kit are
designed to elicit self-
expression and spark
creativity.





↑

© IFRC
Hanna Butler
Kiribati

↑



Action 3 Task Team

- / **Team leaders** United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), Reach Out to Asia
- / **Team members** Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, UNFPA, UNHCR, United Muslim Relief
- / **Key tasks** Develop local capacity-building platforms to catalyse support for local youth-led initiatives in humanitarian settings, and serve as mechanisms to empower and enlist local youth groups in humanitarian action.

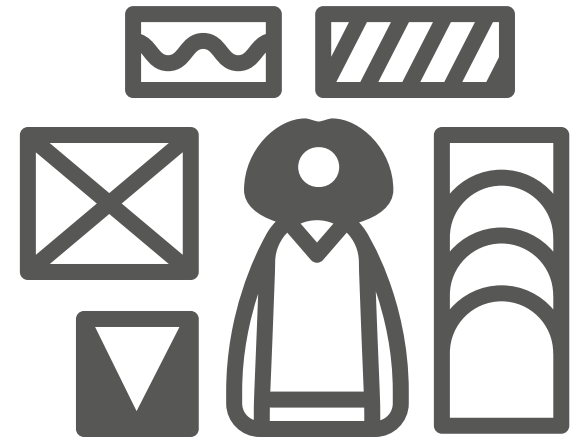
Capacity

**Building skills
for humanitarian
action and beyond**

“I am now a tailor. I am going to start my business with this dressmaking machine I have been given. This will support my children and family.”

**Elizabeth Nyator,
who received training through
NRC in Juba, South Sudan**

(story page 40)



The long stretches of time many young people spend in humanitarian settings can be a waste – or an opportunity to build skills that support individuals or families, or that create cohorts of effective humanitarian actors. Strengthened life and livelihood skills – honed through training and hands-on experience – can literally transform lives.

Members of the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action have committed to empower local youth-led initiatives and organizations in humanitarian response, including by targeting young refugees and internally displaced persons living in informal urban settlements and slums. They are working together on curricula and training programmes that will take this commitment forward.

Dealing with the deprivations of life, forcibly displaced into camps or living in the aftermath of emergencies demands resilience and flexibility. Having the right skills in these situations can save lives, build a sense of self-efficacy and prove invaluable once the crisis has passed.

Compact members are equipping young people in humanitarian situations with technical and vocational skills – from computer coding to tailoring. These new skills and capacities can serve during both initial relief and recovery efforts, and over the longer term during recovery and reconciliation. At the same time, young people from host countries are eager to be trained and to serve.

Engaging young people in regional responses. An interactive capacity-building exercise in Doha, Qatar, was the first major collective effort engaging all Compact members, who assisted in developing the curriculum and recruiting facilitators. Over the course of three days in November 2017, young people from the Arab States region learned how to plan and carry out small-scale social and community devel-

↓
The Compact's first major capacity-building exercise

120

youths

15

nationalities

3

training days

17

learning areas

43

sessions

6

months of ongoing support and mentorship

opment projects in emergency and post-crisis environments. The exercise was organized by **Reach Out to Asia** within the framework of the Compact, and was designed to deliver practical skills that could be immediately applied by youth in local contexts. Before the training, the methodology was field-tested in Jordan by **UNFPA** and **United Muslim Relief**.

In addition, United Muslim Relief worked with UNFPA and others on preparing and translating materials into Arabic for regional use in training young humanitarian actors.

The member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are among those most seriously affected by disasters. As a way to harness the strengths of the region's young people, the **ASEAN Youth Network for Disaster Risk Reduction** was launched in December 2016. The vision is to ensure the rapid and collective deployment of ASEAN's collective resources following a major disaster in one or more of its Member States. Towards that end, humanitarian agencies and youth councils in the region have been supporting each other through information on disaster alerts and volunteer opportunities.

The network encourages young researchers, scientists, entrepreneurs, doctors, educators, policy advocates and other professionals to improve responses to natural and human-made disaster risk reduction. It also involves youth in regional action on disaster management, from the dissemination of public information to capacity-building and deployment for crisis response.

"Los Ques Nos Une" ("What unites us") is a **RET International** campaign to end xenophobia, violence and

discrimination, led by displaced and local youth in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama and Venezuela. This collaborative effort involves multiple refugee and local youth initiatives – including workshops, demonstrations, forums, campaigns, murals, videos, theatrical performances and storytelling – across the four countries. Young people who have suffered violence and displacement are able to connect with others in similar situations, and learn to become effective actors for social justice and positive change.

Expert training on disaster medicine.

Disasters present whole new levels of complexity for the practice of medicine: How to triage victims following a major catastrophe; how to operate when electrical systems fail and medicines are in short supply; how to navigate the labyrinth of international humanitarian protocols.

Each year, some 20 medical students, selected from a pool of applicants 10 times that large, meet in mid-summer in Novara, Italy, under the auspices of the **International Federation of Medical Students Associations** to consider such questions. Virtual reality and real-life disaster simulations add to the sense of urgency: A computer platform, for example, pulls together actual data from a previous disaster.

The students' task is to manage the health-care response by using available resources, also linked to the platform. The training, which deals with everything from disaster medicine and bioethics to international disaster policy and legal frameworks, includes classroom work with experts, followed by a three-month online course. And the trainings have an impact well beyond the 20 students.



© ROTA
Lance Cenar

A three-day training on disaster response for 120 young people from the Arab States was one of the first major collaborative projects of the Compact.

After graduation, students are certified to deliver peer-to-peer education in the field of disaster medicine. These three-day, peer-to-peer trainings are creating a global network of disaster medicine trainers. The network is a natural platform for joint initiatives, including research projects and advocacy campaigns.

Enhancing resilience through higher education opportunities. The Global Platform for Syrian Students runs a scholarship programme for Syrian students and will launch a Rapid Response Mechanism for Higher Education in Emergencies that aims at boosting higher education opportunities for refugees, students at risk and forcibly displaced young people.

11.6
million refugees



4.1
million of these

were living
in protracted
displacement
at the end of 2016

had been
in exile for
20 years
or more





↑

© RBK
Alaa Kahel

Two ReBootKamp
students.

Zero to hero in four months

In September 2016, the first cadre of refugee software engineers graduated from a computer coding boot camp in Amman, Jordan, established by **RBK** (Rebootkamp). All of the graduates have received multiple job offers and are now beginning tech careers. The impact is amplified by the fact that each new programmer supports an average of 4.7 family members.

RBK's programme essentially compresses a four-year computer science course into four grueling months of hard work. The course taps the immense reserve of potential talent in the refugee population, providing an opportunity

to learn market-ready skills amid skyrocketing global demand for software engineers.

The course is transforming lives. Rwaida Almehanni, who fled from war-torn Yemen, is one such student. She was feeling aimless in Jordan when she encountered the RBK course. "It's a chance to start over. When I came here from my country I didn't know where I could start," she said.

RBK is staffing up for another campus near the Za'atari refugee camp, and is in discussion about similar projects in Gaza, Greece, Lebanon and Turkey.

Unleashing youth talent through vocational training

No one says life as a displaced person in South Sudan, one of the most impoverished and conflicted places on earth, is easy. But for Chuol Kong Koang, Elizabeth Nyator and other young men and women, vocational training at a protected site has launched them into new careers.

The trainings are offered at United Nations Mission in South Sudan Protection of Civilians sites in Juba, under the **Norwegian Refugee Council's** Youth Programme, with support from the Government of Norway.

After his training, Mr. Koang managed to borrow enough money from a relative to establish a small bakery. "Now I have an average of 100 customers buying bread and cakes from me daily," he said." More than 100 people, mostly young, were trained for six months in a variety of trades, including baking and hospitality, tailoring, masonry and

carpentry. Training in numeracy, literacy and life skills – such as health education, peace and reconciliation, nutrition support, psychosocial support, gender and HIV/AIDS awareness – was provided as well as alongside small grants for youth groups to mobilize community members.

Ms. Nyator is jubilant about her post-training prospects: "I felt my life has changed because before I used to live unhappily asking myself what can I do to get money as life is so hard here," she said. "But now, I am a tailor. I am going to start my business with this dressmaking machine I have been given. This will support my children and family."

The Norwegian Refugee Council's Youth Programme also supports displaced and host community youth to come together through similar activities in non-camp settings across South Sudan.



© NRC
Hassan Hijazi

In an NRC-supported project in Jordan, youth brainstorm community development projects.





↑

© IOM
Muse Momammed
Nigeria

↑↑



Action 4 Task Team

- / **Team leaders** UNFPA
- / **Team members** Gooddler, Istanbul Youth Assembly, Mercy Corps, Right To Play, Women's Refugee Committee
- / **Key tasks** Develop an outreach strategy and package of communication materials. Create a strong business case as an advocacy tool.

Resources

Increasing attention to
and resources for young
people in humanitarian
settings

“After joining an emergency response team I believe the reality of life is serving humanity.”

**Ibrahim, youth volunteer,
Pakistan Red Crescent**



Young people constitute more than a third of the people displaced by conflicts and disasters globally. They find themselves in situations over which they have little control – having been forced to leave their homes to escape violence, conflict or persecution, or flee the effects of climate change.

Members of the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action are committed to raising the visibility of young people in humanitarian actions and ensuring that resources dedicated to them are commensurate with their numbers, their needs, their rights and their potential. Learning new skills, strengthening existing capacities and receiving vital services can turn lives around.

Throughout the first year and a half of the Compact, members called attention to the plight and potential of young people in humanitarian settings. They organized forums and side events, produced reports and videos, conducted studies, arranged missions and garnered media notice. They advocated and spoke out and partnered with young people themselves.

International spotlight on youth. Since the launch of the Compact at the World Humanitarian Summit in May of 2016, members have intensified the international focus on the roles and rights of young people affected by crisis – not just as beneficiaries, but also as protagonists. The New York launch of the Compact a few months later, during the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly, injected further momentum towards the Compact’s five agreed actions. Hosted by the International Peace Institute, the high-level event linked the Compact to critical discussions taking place around refugees and displacement.

“No one gets a second chance at childhood or adolescence.”

**Agents of Change
(German Action Plan)**



© OCHA
Ivo Brandau

John, Issa and Stephan peek out from their school at Minawao refugee camp in Cameroon. Many adolescents displaced inside Nigeria and refugees staying with host communities do not have any access to education.



Events since then have further galvanized commitments to the needs and capacities of young people and the importance of “future proofing” humanitarian responses. This is done through the empowerment of adolescents and youth, further recognizing the growing plight of young people who are fleeing violence and war.

The **Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Australia** hosted FUSE 2016 – a three-day summit for young people of refugee and migrant backgrounds from across Australia. The event encouraged peer-to-peer networking; built young people’s knowledge, advocacy and community organizing skills; and provided opportunities to apply these skills in practice.

In June 2017, the Compact was featured in social media discussions about achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Compact members have also been working hard to ensure that young people are being considered in the development of the Global Compacts on Refugees and for Migration. Therefore, Compact members collectively developed “**Recommendations on young people in the Global Compact on Refugees**”.

Furthermore, the Initiative on Child Rights in the Global Compacts, including a number of Compact members, produced “**Recommendations for protecting, promoting and implementing the human rights of children on the move**,” including adolescents and youth, to inform the intergovernmental negotiations of the Global Compacts.

In September 2017, a lunchtime event co-sponsored by the International Peace Institute and **UNFPA**, “The Role of Young People in the Global Compacts on Refugees and for Migration,”

provided a platform for young people and their advocates to help shape consultations and negotiations for the two planned Compacts.

In October and November 2017, **UNHCR** brought 15 young refugees to Geneva to contribute alongside States and civil society actors to the “Thematic Discussions for the Global Compact on Refugees”.

The **Gooddler** Social Impact Youth Summit 2017, which took place in November in Silicon Valley, United States, brought together more than 350 university and high school students with inspirational entrepreneurs and corporate leaders. Using the Sustainable Development Goals as an entry point, the Summit focused on innovation, technology and social entrepreneurship as avenues for addressing global issues, including in humanitarian response.



Mission to Iraq: Envoy on Youth

“I have seen firsthand the devastating consequences of conflict and disaster on youth. I have also witnessed that young people have the hope and drive in them to make their situation better.”

**Jayathma Wickramanayake,
UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth**

While International Youth Day (August 12 each year) sparked attention across the globe, at a special event in Iraq, the **UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth**, Jayathma Wickramanayake, pledged to do everything in her power to ensure the voices of youth, including those working to build peace, are heard.

The first international mission of the recently appointed Envoy gave visibility to the young people of war-torn Iraq. Their critical role in building peace and rebuilding their country was highlighted by the Envoy’s speech.

“Today, thousands of young women and men work tirelessly, often under very dangerous conditions and with very little support or recognition, to build peace and promote security for all,” Ms. Wickramanayake said in her keynote at the event.

Iraq is one of the most youthful countries in the world, with over 60 per cent of the population under the age of 25. Many of these young people have spent all or most of their lives in a country beset by war, displacement and turmoil.

The event, organized in partnership with the **UNFPA** Country Office in Baghdad, convened over 1,000 young people from all over the country.

Lise Grande, United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Iraq, also pointed to the importance of young people. She called for “ensuring that youth are involved in every reconciliation meeting, every reconciliation initiative and every reconciliation conference.”



© Office of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth

On her visit to a camp for internally displaced people in Iraq, the Envoy spoke about the tough challenges faced by young people – especially young women – in humanitarian settings.



*“Usually I’m a decision-maker.
I move forward. I learn fast.
Here my brain is dead...I’m stuck.”*

**Eritrean refugee
in Lesbos, Greece**

*“We are bored of our empty time.
Can you give us something?
I’d like to learn a language and
then help others. Even if I have no
salary I will participate... Just let
our time be full with something.”*

**Syrian refugee
in Thessaloniki, Greece**

The power of stories. The size and scope of issues surrounding young people in humanitarian situations can numb. But individual voices, photographs and stories compel. An [assessment of the situation of young refugees in Greece](#) by the [Norwegian Refugee Council](#) and [Mercy Corps](#) captures some of their stories and voices.

Young people comprise more than 30 per cent of the young refugees and migrants, who have made their way to Greece, often risking everything to get there. Once there, as the report clarifies, many feel stranded, living in inadequate

conditions, enduring extreme stress, and stymied by protracted asylum procedures and a lack of reliable information about what comes next.

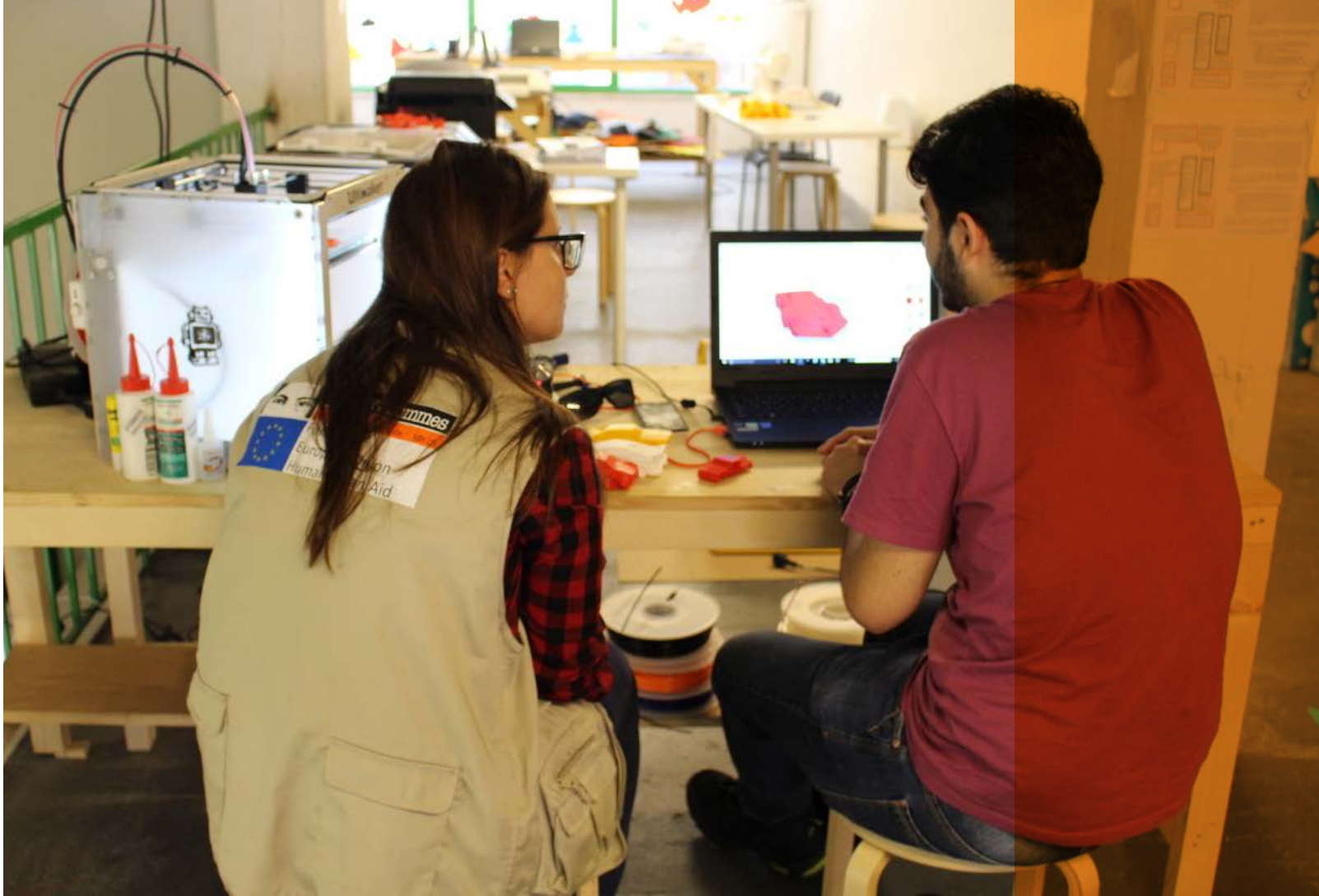
The report amplifies the voices of these young people, and provides recommendations for action to governments, donors and humanitarian actors, including a recommendation to increase the provision of tailored cross-sectoral programming for young people, and more resources to serve and engage them.



© Mercy Corps
Sara Hylton

Girl in the Malakasa camp
in Greece.





© Terre des hommes

Designing a car – and then printing it – at the FabLab pilot workshop in Ioannina, Greece.

A fabulous fabrication laboratory

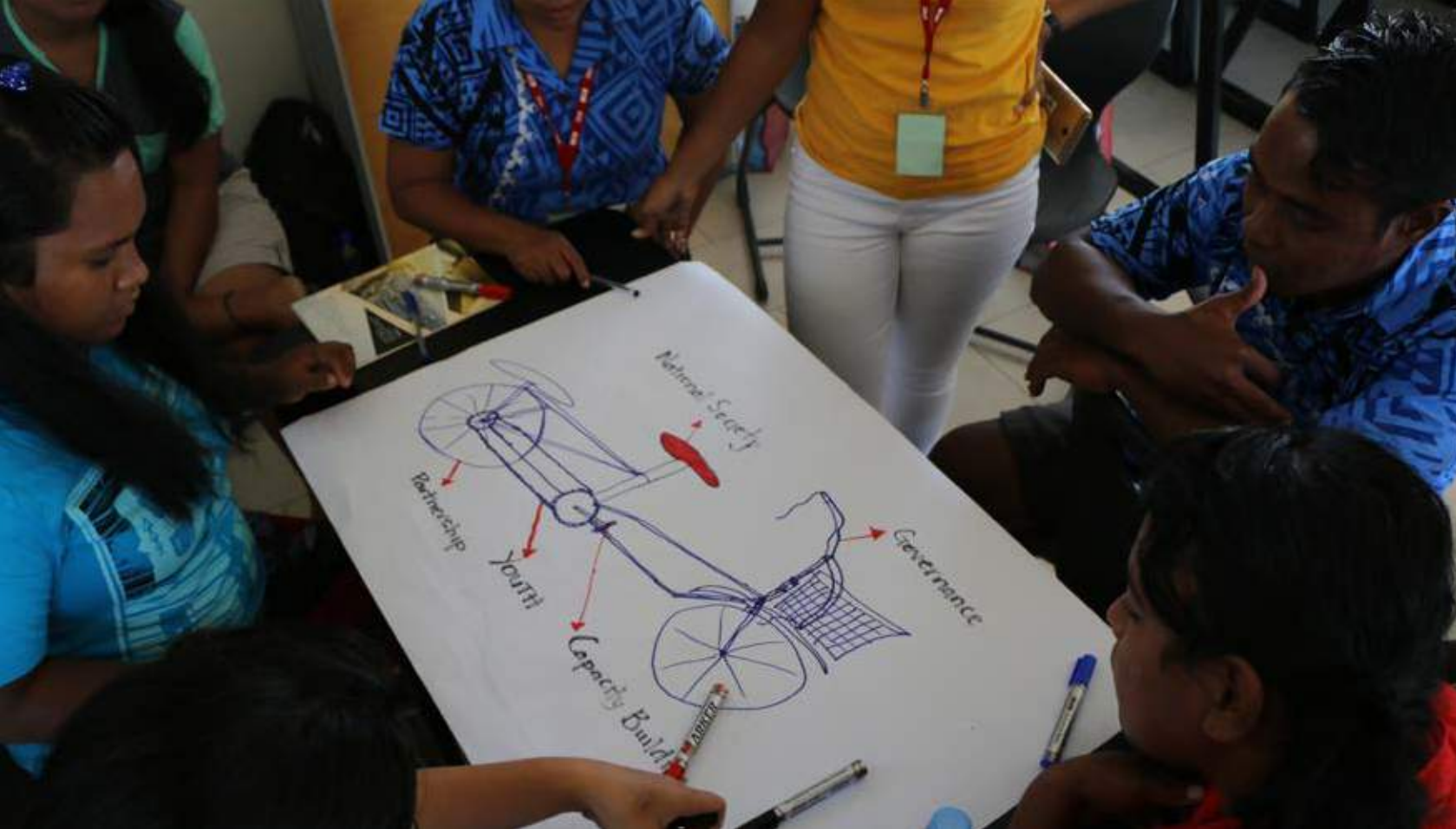
“At the FabLab I am now creating a car model. This 3D printer will print it in 39 hours. I want to study mechanical engineering and design. My dream is to be a car designer.”

18-year-old Yazan

Young refugees stranded in Greece have few opportunities to make use of their time and creativity. In response, **Terre des hommes** has set up FabLab, a pilot open space where they can learn new skills in a recently established community centre in Ioannina, Greece. It is part of TDH’s support to quality learning experiences as a bridge towards young people returning to more formal education.

This pilot project offers workshops that allow young people to implement their own projects and designs, using 3D printers, and computerized milling and sewing machines, among other state-of-the-art tools.

The lab is an innovative and empowering way of reaching out to young people interested in technology. While it provides young people with technical know-how, FabLab also strengthens creativity. And it serves as a meeting point between local youth and young refugees, promoting integration and exchange of ideas, skills and experiences.



© IFRC
Hanna Butler

The Compact seeks to harness the ingenuity of young people.

Valuing volunteers. One way of acknowledging the contribution of young people is to quantify it. In 2017, the **IFRC** published a series of **Volunteer Investment and Value Audit studies** for eight countries. Each measured the respective social and economic value of youth-led contributions to their work, using both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, including focus group discussions, interviews and data analysis. The studies tracked the number of hours rendered by volunteers, and analysed the impacts of volunteering on the volunteer him/herself and on the community.

A study on the Philippines focused on eight areas hit badly by Typhoon Haiyan in 2013. One of its findings: For each \$1 spent on volunteers and related programming, \$15 in value was returned to the local Red Cross.



*“Here we are losing
the time and chances.
We are losing the time
of our youth.”*

**Female refugee
in Lesbos, Greece**



Seeds of progress

The United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth encourages activities for young people to enhance understanding, knowledge and skills in relation to disaster risk reduction and humanitarian action. The Seeds for a safer tomorrow toolkit was launched at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Mexico in May 2017. A workshop using the toolkit was attended by 60 youth from 15 countries.

2017

SEEDS FOR A SAFER TOMORROW TOOLKIT

**FOR PROMOTING CROSS-GENERATIONAL
DIALOGUES AND ACTIONS TOWARDS
SENDAI FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION**



**UN Major Group for
Children and Youth**
the space for children and youth in the United Nations



© World Scouting
Victor C. Ortega





Action 5 Task Team

- / **Team leaders** UNHCR
- / **Team members** Plan International, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UN-Habitat, United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth
- / **Key tasks** Creating a mapping tool, to better understand and assess the data that member organizations are currently collecting. Identifying and recommending credible data collection methods. Ensuring that data collection is sex- and age-disaggregated. The group is also working to develop sex- and age-disaggregated data standards, encouraging donors to insist on them, and working towards more real-time data collection tools.

Data

Using accurate information to understand the needs of young people in humanitarian settings

“The potential of adolescents is widely compromised by the failure to invest in the measures needed to enable them to enjoy fundamental human rights.”

**United Nations Committee
on the Rights of the Child**



Adolescents and youth in humanitarian situations are at different stages in the crucial transition from childhood to maturity. The specific needs – physical, psychosocial, educational – of a 12-year-old girl from the Philippines are completely different than those of a 19-year-old South African man. Yet both fall into the category of young people (aged 10 to 24), and they often may be discussed in the same sentence.

The diversity of young people in humanitarian situations in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and stage of personal development (physiological and cognitive) means that needs, capabilities and capacities are broad, and, without quality data, often poorly understood.

Reliable and disaggregated data are essential to developing – with young people – successful responses. Quality sex- and age-disaggregated data underpin the achievement of all other action areas of the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action. Young people are increasingly becoming engaged in many innovative approaches to rapid assessments and critical data collection.

During times of crisis, information can be as critical as food and shelter. Yet humanitarian response often takes place in conditions of uncertainty, limited resources, and pressure to make rapid decisions to minimize social, economic and environmental loss. Young people are playing an important role in this.

Increasingly, Compact members are using evidence-based and community informed data collection and analysis, often by deploying new digital tools to guide decision-making and the allocation of resources.

Working from within. Acting on the Compact’s commitment to better data, **Mercy Corps** has embarked on an internal data system change process to improve quality and consistency in collecting, disaggregating and analysing age- and sex-specific data. It established agency-wide sex and age reporting requirements and guidance, and completed an internal review of current data collection systems. The review included surveying over 140 staff from 34 countries to identify challenges to, and generate solutions for, collecting and analysing sex- and age-specific data.

Of the

700,000

Syrian refugees

who have registered
with UNHCR in Jordan



3/4

are below age 32

57%

are under age 18



The organization plans to build the case for disaggregation by sharing case studies that show the impact it has on programming.

The **IFRC** is also changing its approach to data, starting from within. The federation is reviewing internal performance indicators, and operational and developmental assessment tools to ensure that they feature youth engagement specifically. Meaningful youth engagement will be a component of the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies' key performance indicators. More specifically, as of 2018, the IFRC Annual Membership Survey will track advancement in meaningful youth engagement against three global indicators. National societies will be required to report sex- and age-disaggregated data on the number

of their volunteers, staff and people reached through their services. The IFRC Secretariat's Operational Reports and Emergency Plan of Action Reports will also include data disaggregated by sex and age.



© UNFPF

A display of dynamism and commitment from a Vietnamese youth flash mob.

A close look at adolescent and youth-targeted programming for Syrian refugees. Of some 650,000 Syrian refugees who have registered with UNHCR in Jordan, about 57 per cent are under age 18, and three-quarters are below the age of 32. Given the paucity of data about youth in the sprawling Za'atari and Azraq camps, the **Norwegian Refugee Council** and **REACH** in partnership with key youth leaders, including the Za'atari Youth Force, conducted qualitative research engaging 189 youth, and 28 community leaders and youth workers. In 30 focus group sessions, young people were asked about a range of programmes, including formal education, sports and recreational activities, and livelihood and skills training.

The results are detailed and comprehensive. Overall, they revealed an overwhelmingly positive impact of youth-targeted programming on beneficiaries' sense of well-being.

Calling on young scientists and researchers. The knowledge and experience of young people is an underutilized resource in disaster relief. The Youth Science Policy Interface Platform, under the **United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth**, provides an avenue for young people to contribute to the analysis of existing knowledge and creation of new knowledge that help fill information gaps, especially as they relate to young people. A recent edition of the platform dealt specifically with humanitarian preparedness and disaster risk reduction.

Letting youth identify issues. Working directly with the Refugee Student Association of Mozambique (AEREMO), a youth-led association comprising refugees and asylum seekers in Maratane refugee camp and Nampula city, UNHCR is supporting young refugees to address social issues faced by students in secondary schools. AEREMO, UNHCR and Mozambique's Ministry of Education developed an online reporting platform for students that would enable them to flag protection concerns anonymously to school management, the ministry and UNHCR for follow-up. The data collected will be used to inform protection initiatives in schools as well as management decisions.



© UNICEF
Mark Naftalin

U-reporters in Liberia
helping to raise awareness
in the community about
Ebola virus disease and how
to prevent its spread.

The platform is supporting students to flag a broad range of issues they themselves have identified and defined, including alcohol and drug consumption; insecurity, such as robbery, assault or vandalism; discrimination; harassment or sexual harassment, and physical and psychological threats; early pregnancy; and absenteeism of teachers. To deepen understanding of the potential of the initiative, it is being piloted in two schools, one of which is well resourced and the other less well so. The two schools were selected using the criteria of high numbers of refugee students and the existence of Generation Biz, a successful adolescent sexual and reproductive health programme, introduced with [UNFPA's](#) support in 1999.

Refining data. In 2009, the [United Nations Inter-Agency Standing Committee](#), which coordinates international humanitarian assistance, introduced a gender marker to ensure that gender is factored into the design, implementation

*“For seven months
no one has asked us
how we are.”*

**Afghan young man
Vial refugee camp, Chios,
Greece**



and monitoring of all humanitarian programming. Five years later, the need to account for the different needs of women and men, girls and boys at different stages of life became clear. Age was added, and the gender and age marker has been piloted in several countries, with plans for global roll-out in 2018.

The marker was developed and tested by **GenCap**, the Gender Standby Capacity Project, a Standing Committee initiative created in collaboration with the **Norwegian Refugee Council**. GenCap seeks to help strengthen humanitarian capacity and leadership to promote gender equality programming.

New digital tools. In the aftermath of a natural disaster, such as a large earthquake or a typhoon in a poor country, data are the critical link to saving the lives of the most vulnerable. The digital revolution is reshaping the process of data collection.

A number of new platforms use open-source collaborative applications to collect and analyse real-time information quickly. The **KoBoToolbox**, for instance, developed by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, is an open source suite of tools to address data gaps. Since 2014, in a partnership with **UNHCR** and others, the Initiative has been adapting the tool for use in humanitarian situations.

U-report is a social messaging tool developed by **UNICEF**. It allows young people, referred as “U-reporters,” to respond to polls, report issues, support adolescent and child rights, and work as positive agents of change on behalf of people in their country. The tool allows them to share their ideas and information or ask about issues affecting their communities through text-based polls and social media. It takes advantage of the younger generation’s ease with using text messages and social media to encourage participation, feedback and mobilization.

By the end of 2017, there were over 4 million young U-reporters across the world.

Hack4girls. New digital solutions can put empowering information in the hands of young people. In November 2017, Maternity Foundation partnered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of **Denmark**, **Save the Children**, **UNFPA** and Microsoft to organize a Hackathon (Hack4girls) in Copenhagen. Startup communities, designers and entrepreneurs spent 36 hours developing digital solutions that can help improve the sexual and reproductive rights of young women in humanitarian crisis. The winner was a female health self-assessment guide that can be used off-line with image-based information.

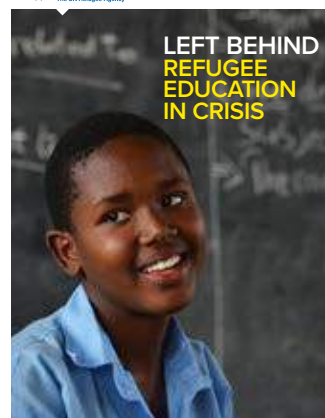
Left behind

“Compared to other children and adolescents around the world, the gap in opportunity for refugees is growing ever wider.”

**Filippo Grandi,
UN High Commissioner
for Refugees (UNHCR)**

The recent **UNHCR** report, **Left Behind: Refugee Education in Crisis**, draws attention to the crisis in education for refugee children and adolescents. It tells the stories of some of the world’s 6.4 million refugee children and adolescents (between ages 5 and 17) under UNHCR’s mandate. It also looks at the educational aspirations of those who want to continue their education beyond secondary

school. And it considers the conditions in which teachers of refugees carry out their work. Some 3.5 million refugee children and adolescents did not have the chance to attend school in the last academic year, according to the 2017 report. These include some 1.5 million refugee children and adolescents missing out on primary school, while 2 million refugee adolescents are not in secondary school.



© UNHCR
Anthony Karumba

Back to school for
a Burundian girl
mastering English
in Ruanda.



Moving forward

Thoughts from the Compact co-chairs



The first 18 months of the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action, as this report documents, are a testament to significant progress in giving visibility, dignity and hope to young people caught in desperate situations following crises or displacements. This report is just a sampling of the inspirational work taking place on the ground. For that is where the Compact lives – not in words or on paper but in its impact on young lives.

UNFPA has long viewed young people as a potent source of energy, innovation and know-how to tackle the daunting problems that humanity faces. Nowhere is this truer than in responding to

humanitarian crises, where the fortitude and resilience of everyone affected are sorely tested.

UNFPA and other Compact members have committed to giving young people a stronger role in improving the situations in which they find themselves, even as they develop new skills and capacities. We appreciate the innovative and strategic approaches Compact members have undertaken, and urge them to redouble their efforts to ensure that young people affected by crisis or displacement will have a chance to fulfil their potential and realize their dreams.

Dr. Natalia Kanem,
Executive Director of UNFPA



We are overwhelmed by the scale and magnitude of the humanitarian crises that we are seeing today. And we are humbled, because in spite of everything we do – and to be sure, much has been done – we know that we are nowhere near the scale of the response required.

The Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action can create synergies and amplify our individual and collective efforts. Compact members need to learn from each other, support each other, and counsel each other. Collectively, we need to nurture and to treasure the extraordinary abilities and strengths of young people. More than words on paper, we need to ensure that our actions on the ground demonstrate our respect for their needs and rights, and our faith in their capacity.

Mr. Elhadj As Sy,
Secretary-General of IFRC

The world needs this large cohort of young people as never before. They must be part of the solutions to dealing with the sheer volume of humanitarian challenges before us, right from the design of programming, through to implementation and evaluation. We need to learn from young people, and to bring their perspectives into new ways of doing business, and new ways of preparing for and responding to humanitarian crises.

Through this Compact, the IFRC with its 190 National Societies reiterates the commitment to working for and with our global community of young humanitarians – a community we are privileged to know, to be inspired by, and to support.

Annex:

List of Compact members

If you would like to know more about the Compact, or wish to join, kindly contact its coordinators:

Danielle Engel
UNFPA, New York
engel@unfpa.org

Marcel Stefanik
IFRC, Geneva
marcel.stefanik@ifrc.org

[Act for Human Rights – ALEF](#)

[Association ALJIL](#)

[Anti-Tribalism Movement](#)

[arche noVa](#)

[Benetton Group](#)

[Barranquilla +20](#)

[Committee for ASEAN Youth Cooperation](#)

[Crown Agents](#)

[Denmark](#)

[Danish Refugee Council](#)

[FinnChurchAid](#)

[Germany](#)

[Global Development Community/Boston University](#)

[Global Platform for Syrian Students – GP4SYS](#)

[Goodler](#)

[DOZ e. V.](#)

[IASC Gender Standby Capacity Project/GenCap](#)

[International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent – IFRC](#)

[International Federation of Medical Students Association – IFMSA](#)

[International Movement of Catholic Students – Pax Romana](#)

[International Rescue Committee – IRC](#)

[Istanbul Youth Assembly](#)

[Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network \(Australia\) – MYAN](#)

[Mercy Corps](#)

[Norwegian Refugee Council – NRC](#)

[Office of the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth](#)

[Plan International](#)

[Reach out to Asia – ROTA](#)

[Relief & Resilience through Education in Transition – RET International](#)

[ReBootKamp – RBK](#)

[Republic of Madagascar](#)

[Restless Development](#)

[Right To Play](#)

[Save Youth Future Society](#)

[Terres des Hommes – TDH](#)

[The Humanitarian Forum](#)

[United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth – UNMGCY](#)

[UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network Youth
– SDSN-Youth](#)

[United Nations Development Programme – UNDP](#)

[United Nations Population Fund – UNFPA](#)

[United Nations Human Settlements Programme – UN-Habitat](#)

[United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – UNHCR](#)

[United Nations Children’s Fund – UNICEF](#)

[United Nations Industrial Development Organization – UNIDO](#)

[United Kingdom Department for International Development
– UK-DFID](#)

[United Muslim Relief – UMR](#)

[United Network of Young Peace Builders – UNOY](#)

[United Nations Peace Building Support Office – UN PBSO](#)

[UN Volunteers – UNV](#)

[United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women – UN WOMEN](#)

[WeYouth](#)

[Women’s Refugee Commission – WRC](#)

[World Organization of the Scout Movement – WOSM](#)

Thanks go to the Compact members for providing the examples and photographs in this report.

The statistics found here come from official UN sources, including OCHA, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNFPA.

@UNFPA 2018

Project Manager: Danielle Engel and Heidrun Fritze, UNFPA

Design: LS – lsgraphicdesign.it

Text: Janet Jensen, reVision Consulting

Copyediting: Gretchen Luchsinger, Words for the World

Muzoon Almellahan was forced to flee Syria in 2013, spending three years in crowded refugee camps in Jordan before being resettled with her family in the British city of Newcastle. She is now a high school senior taking university preparatory courses.

“Leaving Syria, my dad told me I couldn’t bring everything, and only to bring the most important things, so I told myself to pack my schoolbooks because I believe in education,” she said.

Remembering her departure four years ago from the besieged Syrian city of Da’ara, she said, “I carried with me my hope, and I carried with me my books.”



**United Nations
Population Fund**
605 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10158
www.unfpa.org



**International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

**International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**
Route de Pre-Bois, 1
1214 Vernier, Switzerland
www.ifrc.org