Expert Group Meeting on Older Persons in Emergency Crisis

OLDER PERSONS IN FORCED DISPLACEMENT: INTERSECTING RISKS
Global figures

- At end June 2018, 70.4 million people were forcibly displaced. This includes 20.2 million refugees.
- 5.2 million people were newly displaced in the first half of 2018.
- 58% of refugees were living in urban areas in 2017.
- 13.4 million (2/3 of all refugees) were in protracted refugee situations at end 2017.
- 3% of refugees were over the age of 60 in 2017.
Where do refugees come from?

The image shows a bar chart representing the number of refugees (in millions) from different countries. The chart includes data from the start of 2018 and mid-2018.

1. **Syrian Arab Rep.** - The highest number of refugees, indicated by the longest bar.
2. **Afghanistan**
3. **South Sudan**
4. **Myanmar**
5. **Somalia**
6. **Sudan**
8. **Central African Rep.**
9. **Eritrea**
10. **Burundi**

The chart uses blue bars for the start of 2018 and red bars for mid-2018.
Where are refugees hosted?
Risks for older persons on displacement

• Left behind when communities flee
• Isolated from support systems
• New roles as caregivers and heads of household
• Compounding barriers to accessing livelihoods
Access to documentation and social security

• Lack of access to national systems for refugees
• Documents may be left behind or lost during flight
• Restrictions on freedom of movement
• Barriers to accessing registration
Access to health care

- Barriers to reaching health centres
- Health programming may overlook the needs of older persons, such as NCD care and prevention, access to assistive devices and mental health and psychosocial support
Violence, exploitation and abuse

Risks exacerbated on forced displacement due to:
- Less visibility to humanitarian actors delivering prevention and response programmes
- Perceptions regarding care for older persons and social norms
- Barriers to reporting
- Disruption of social networks
Access to communication

- Technologies are increasingly being used in humanitarian action and older persons risk being left behind, due to:
  - Unfamiliarity with mobile phones and technologies
  - Unequal power relations within households
  - Language barriers
The Global Compact on Refugees: An opportunity to strengthen response to older refugees

- Greater **support to hosting countries and communities**, for the benefit of refugees and hosts
- Engage a wider range of states and other partners in refugee response: **multi-stakeholder approach**
- Foster **resilience and self-reliance** of refugees through access to livelihood opportunities and national services and systems
- Support conditions in **countries of origin** for return in safety and dignity
- Significant references to older persons and to age
Recommendations

• Enable non-discriminatory access to livelihoods opportunities
• Reflect the needs of older persons in health programming. Include older persons in all aspects of work to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse
• Conduct research on measures to ensure that older persons are not left behind through the use of technology in humanitarian action
• Strengthen the active roles of older persons in displaced and host communities
• Ensure access to national systems, including pensions, for refugees and other displaced persons
• Strengthen inclusion of age-related considerations in needs assessment, planning, monitoring and reporting for humanitarian action
THANK YOU

Kirstin Lange

Protection Officer (Disability and Aging)
UNHCR- Division of International Protection

lange@unhcr.org