

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL

NRC

The Norwegian Refugee Council is an independent humanitarian organisation helping people forced to flee.

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Before the drought, Mako Ogli used to live in Ferdigab, Somalia, with her two-year-old son Mohamed. When the water got scarce, she moved with all her belongings, walking for a whole day and night to Wereg's village.

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Queries should be directed to info@nrc.no

The production team expresses their gratitude to the NRC staff who contributed to this report.

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REACHING MORE COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS

2017 saw protracted and neglected crises uproot millions from their homes.

Entering 2017, over 65.6 million people were displaced by war and violence. 128 million needed humanitarian aid. NRC reached a record number of people in response to the urgent need, assisting 8.7 million individuals. We strove to operate on the frontlines, as close as possible to people who needed us the most.

Protracted crises consumed much of our work. Conflicts in Yemen, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo continued unabated. When I visited Yemen in May, I witnessed war and sanctions ripping an entire nation apart. We scaled up our emergency operation in response and spoke out boldly against humanitarian atrocities.

Similarly, the Lake Chad region faced hunger, cholera and conflict. In Nigeria, our emergency teams provided lifesaving assistance, while our food security and livelihood staff helped people become self-sufficient.

In Syria, conflict lines shifted but the human suffering remained acute. Government-backed troops retook large swaths of the country from opposition forces. Half-a-million people were trapped in besieged areas. Our teams provided food, livelihood support and rehabilitated community structures.

But 2017 was not all bleak.

While we began the year faced with multiple potential famines, NRC was part of an international effort that helped to avert or reduce mass starvation in Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen and Nigeria. This was no small feat.

Our NORCAP experts contributed vital skills to the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors in 77 countries across the globe.

We expanded our presence to better help communities in crisis. We opened a country office in Cameroon to broaden our response to the Lake Chad crisis. We established a representation office in Berlin, to collaborate with the German government, an increasingly important actor in responding to global refugee issues. In Burkina Faso, we closed our operations and handed over programmes to international and local partners.

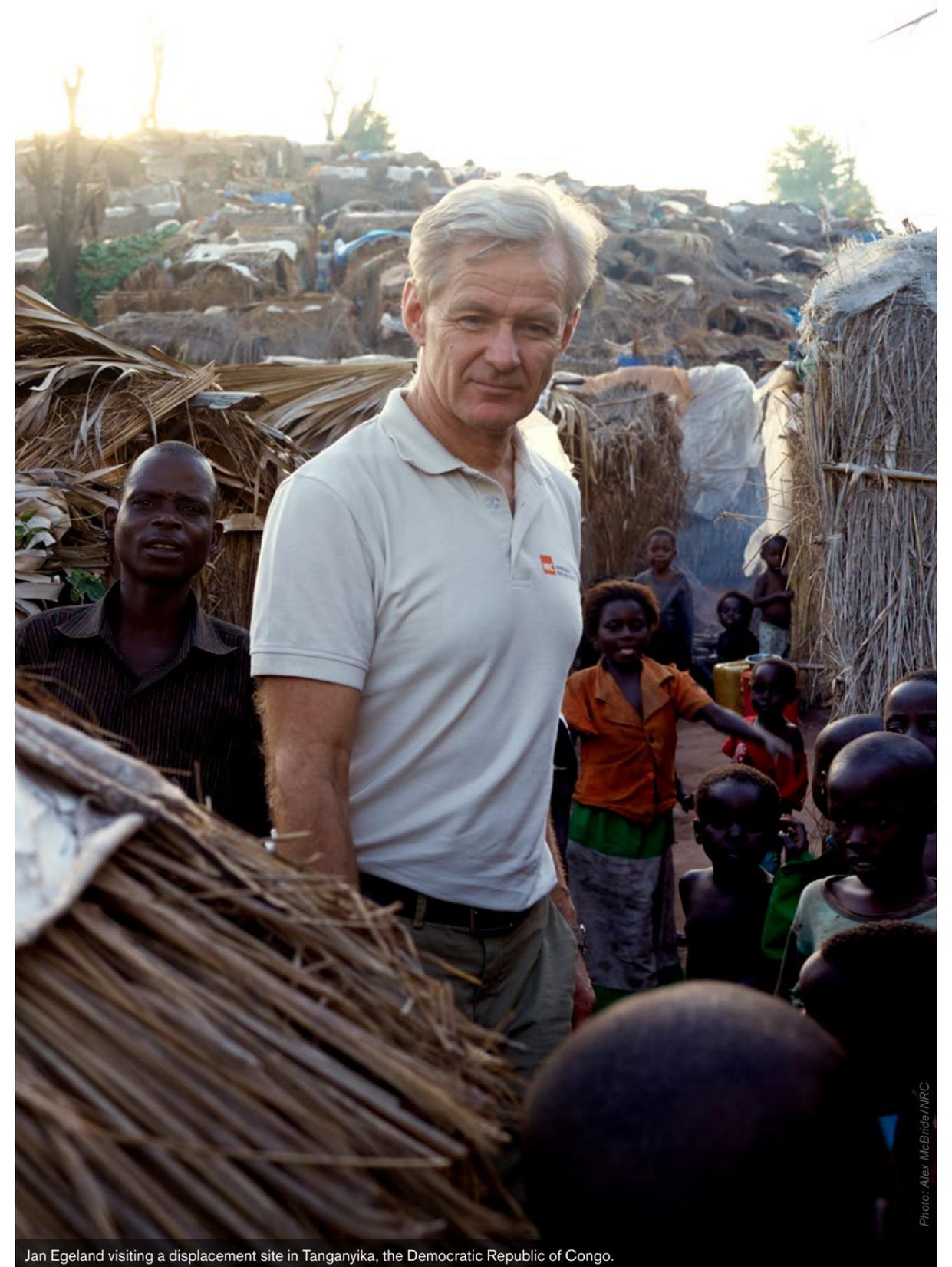
NRC grew in terms of resources and funding. Our total income reached USD 490 million, up 33 per cent from 2016. This enabled us to assist more people in need, with higher quality services. There remain, however, many more we need to help and protect in hard-to-reach areas. Extreme risks, lack of permissions from authorities and conflict parties, and destroyed infrastructure created barriers for us in reaching vulnerable communities.

Our committed, skilled and courageous staff risked gunfire, attacks and violence. Their safety and security remain our priority.

I had the opportunity to meet hundreds of colleagues in 2017, travelling to Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Nigeria, Palestine, Turkey and Yemen. Speaking with displaced families, I was humbled to learn the tremendous impact we had on their lives. Through the commitment of more than 14,000 humanitarian workers, nearly all of them in field locations, we aspire to assist and protect even more vulnerable people in 2018, delivering in more hard-to-reach places.


JAN EGELAND

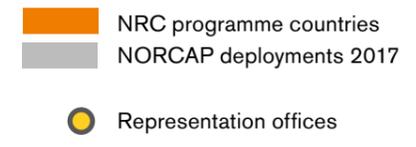
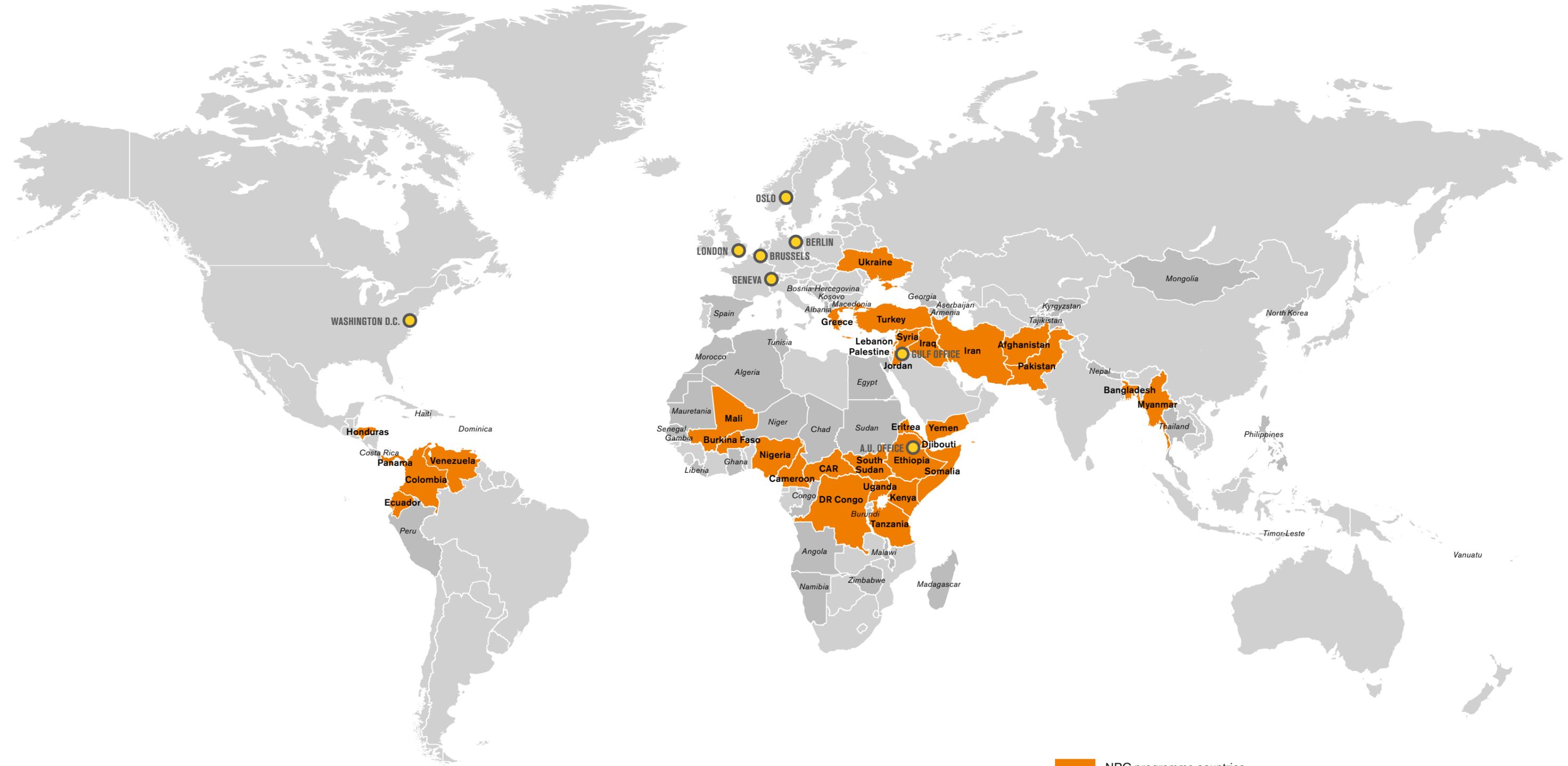
Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council



Jan Egeland visiting a displacement site in Tanganyika, the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Photo: Alex McBride/NRC

WHERE WE ARE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While the number of displaced people and humanitarian needs are increasing, we expanded our work and were able to help more people than ever before.

NRC's overall aim is to help people forced to flee.

We help people cover immediate needs and find lasting solutions to displacement. We assisted 8.7 million people in need thanks to relevant programmes, donor mobilisation and our ability to recruit qualified staff. Our teams responded to humanitarian needs within our six sectors of expertise: camp management; education; information, counselling and legal assistance; livelihoods and food security; shelter and settlements and water, sanitation and hygiene promotion.

We also focus on topics that are relevant across sectors.

For example, all our programmes consider gender issues, from speaking up on women's right to land in Afghanistan, to building girls' toilets in schools in South Sudan and preventing recruitment of boys as child soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo). We also prepare displaced youth for the future through education and livelihoods training.

We work to find innovative solutions on how to efficiently deliver aid to more people in need. For instance, we expanded our work on cash assistance, enabling us to reach more crisis-affected people, and for them to choose their own priorities. We partnered with corporate sponsors to receive complementary expertise, allowing us to further develop.

Our teams reached more people with emergency assistance in hard-to-reach areas.

In Syria, we provided food, while building and supporting shelter, education and sanitary facilities. In Yemen, we assisted people at risk of famine. In eastern DR Congo, which experienced one of the highest number of new displacements in the world last year, our teams reached hundreds of thousands with educational, food security and legal assistance. We helped prevent a food crisis in Somalia thanks to an early release of funding by donors and a large-scale response, including food dis-

tributions and cash transfers. While the humanitarian crisis deepened in South Sudan, our mobile emergency teams assisted displaced people with shelter, food and clean water.

In areas where the scale of the emergency affected our in-country operation's ability to respond, we sent additional staff to help on a temporary basis. 27 experts provided short-term assistance in 12 countries. Our emergency response teams handed out supplies and food to Afghans returning from Pakistan in the middle of winter. In Iraq, they helped people fleeing Mosul.

In protracted crises, we supported lasting solutions such as integration through livelihoods and education.

In the large refugee-hosting countries of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, we have helped displaced people find new livelihoods. In Colombia, our teams supported the re-integration process following the peace agreements. In Iran, we enabled education for Afghan refugees who have been displaced for decades. In Kenya, we informed Somali refugees about living conditions in their home country, so they could make well-informed decisions on going back. We also spoke up against preliminary and forced returns in countries such as Afghanistan and Syria.

Maintaining our neutral and impartial position, we negotiated with governments and non-state groups to assist people in areas that are hard to reach.

In Turkey, Pakistan and Bangladesh we faced bureaucratic barriers preventing us from operating. We continue efforts to be able to work there. We trained our staff in humanitarian negotiation. In Mali, DR Congo and the Central African Republic, we launched mediation initiatives aiming to access the hardest-to-reach areas and to reduce tensions and violence within communities.

We adjusted our responses according to where the needs were greatest. We are expanding our response in the Lake Chad Basin. We established a new programme in Cameroon, and we are opening up a regional office in Dakar, Senegal. Additionally, our teams assessed the need for assistance in Libya, and will initiate operations there in 2018. We handed over our operations in Burkina Faso to other INGOs and NGOs due to a decrease in funding allocated to refugees in the country.

We promoted the rights of displaced people, advocating for better reception conditions in Greece and being vocal in condemning the attacks on civilians in Yemen.



The drought followed Mako Ogli and her family lost most of their livestock. She struggles to keep the remaining animals alive, searching for grass and water to feed them.

Although there is still a large gap between humanitarian need and global funding, the financial support from our donors increased. Our budget increased by 33 per cent from 2016, and constituted a total of USD 490 million. We have a diversified range of institutional donor partners, and we are expanding our private donor markets beyond Norway. As our donors are presenting new demands to us, we are developing new ways to work, for example within NGO consortia. Additionally, we are working for reform in the humanitarian sector. Through our prominent role in the Grand Bargain process we strive to, among other things, simplify financial reporting.

We have reached more people than ever before thanks to our 14,450 humanitarian, 7,450 of them employees, working in 31 countries. Our employees work in high-risk environments. It is our duty to take care of our staff and make sure they are reasonably safe. We are therefore improving and expanding our work on security risk management. We continuously strive to create a culture of safety in the organisation, where our staff can raise their concerns among other means through staff surveys and discussions.

As a growing organisation it is important to, at the same time, ensure quality in all our work. To achieve this, we have invested in reinforcing our support functions. We also constantly evaluate our efforts to learn from our experiences and to adjust our approaches and strategies. In 2017, we evaluated our Better Learning Programme in Palestine and our pilot interventions in Honduras. The lessons have guided our subsequent activities. Additionally, we continue to strengthen a cost-efficient culture, making sure that as much of our received funds are spent for the benefit of the people we serve.

We can firmly say we have managed to reach more displaced people in hard-to-reach areas with a timely and effective assistance in the past three years. We have been a reputable voice globally, advocating for displaced people's rights. Our teams have worked to find lasting solutions, supporting external partners to act efficiently and helped displaced communities to prevent, manage and recover from crises.

Entering 2018, we have new strategic objectives for the coming three years. We work in a constantly changing humanitarian environment where growing needs remain unmet, international norms are under pressure and the humanitarian sector is changing with rapid technological development. We will expand our work in neglected crises, assist more people in hard-to-reach areas and promote lasting solutions. Additionally, we will strengthen integration among our programmes, all while including protection and cash assistance in our operations. Our main ambition is to be the leading displacement organisation serving people that are hard to reach.

Our expert deployment capacity, NORCAP, helped improve international and local ability to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from crises. When more than 600,000 people fled Myanmar to seek refuge in Bangladesh, we deployed 24 experts to assist national and local stakeholders to set up camps and provide shelter in Cox's Bazar. In 2017, the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM) was integrated into our work. This allowed us to build bridges between our emergency response and longer-term efforts.

Our Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) reported on and advocated for people displaced within their own country. IDMC refined its ways of monitoring internal displacement, providing data that is more comprehensive.

PART 1 PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES



CAMP MANAGEMENT



The Norwegian Refugee Council is working in Monguno town, Nigeria, providing shelter, water and sanitation to families in need.

A camp is not a long-term solution. It's the last resort. But in crises and complex emergencies, a camp may be the only option. NRC sees to it that camps are safe places, offering access to services, shelter and protection. Our teams work to promote communication, coordination and community engagement. We facilitate coordination mechanisms, establish and support community representation structures, manage feedback mechanisms for displaced communities, and provide them with information and training.

Although traditional camp management is rooted in formal camp settings, an increasing number of displaced people find themselves in informal settlements and urban areas. We apply our camp management know-how to these settings so that they can receive the same quality assistance. Using this field experience, we have spearheaded global resources toward best practices, most notably the official Camp Management Toolkit, and we are a global leader in the sector.

EDUCATION



NRC is building a new school building for Lufunda Primary School in Mpati, DR Congo with more than 300 children enrolled.

Our education programme offers protection and stability as well as essential knowledge to displaced people. We build classrooms, supply learning materials, train teachers and work closely with governments and partners to create flexible, full cycle education options for displaced communities.

We begin our work in the first phase of an emergency, providing physically and emotionally safe spaces where children can make friends, play and regain the stability to begin learning again. If a child or young person has spent time out of school, we guide them through accelerated classes so they can catch up with their peers. Whenever possible, we help children transition into formal schooling. We provide a range of education and training opportunities for youth, opening pathways to livelihoods and community engagement.

We actively advocate for the right to an education and strive to ensure safe, high quality and certified education options for displaced children and youth, even in the hardest-to-reach places.

LIVELIHOODS AND FOOD SECURITY



In Gomgoi village, South Sudan, NRC assists women to grow nutritious vegetables like arugula during the dry season.

Food security means having steady physical and social access to safe and nutritious food within economic reach. Conflict often triggers food insecurity and vice versa, depriving people of their ability to produce food, to work and to earn an income. If left unattended, these conditions can lead to famine.

To protect people's human right to food, our teams set up safety nets to meet basic needs. These nets enable people to access adequate amounts of food to meet their dietary needs, and which respects their cultural preferences. We promote and support livelihood strategies that protect and enhance people's ability to live a productive life. This approach bolsters the restoration of their everyday lives and ability to meet their food needs on their own.

To mitigate the risk of relapse, we invest in the participation of displaced people, so that they can strengthen their ability to adapt in the future.

ICLA



"It is important to have the card, because then I can travel anywhere I want" says Thar Zin Paing (14) from Myanmar.

Whether they have just fled from their homes, have been displaced for a long time and are considering staying where they are, or are preparing to return home, displaced people often experience violations of their rights. Our information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA) programmes support displaced women and men to claim their rights.

We focus on housing, land and property rights, obtaining civil and identity documentation, immigration and refugee laws and procedures, registration of internally displaced and labour rights. We apply various methods to assist displaced people to overcome legal problems, including dispute resolution and legal representation.

SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS



Even as the battle for Mosul, Iraq continued, NRC distributed building supplies to over 2,000 families whose homes had been damaged.

Shelter is essential for people's physical and social protection, dignity, privacy and health. At times, it can save lives. We endeavour to make shelters safe and secure, and we design them to resist natural and operational hazards. Our efforts also demand that these solutions provide adequate space, lighting, thermal comfort and ventilation. Our shelter and settlements programmes work across different settlement types, be they grouped (collective centres, self-settled camps and planned camps) or dispersed (host families, urban and rural self-settlement).

Our teams improve community infrastructure, help plan and build displacement camps, and distribute household items. We work with displaced people to identify and develop solutions that meet their needs, benefit local suppliers, and use local labour.

WASH



In Monguno, Nigeria, NRC runs shelter and WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene promotion) programmes for internally displaced people displaced by conflict.

For many displaced families, access to safe water and sanitation is a daily struggle. Disease prevention hinges upon access to clean water, culturally appropriate sanitation facilities, waste management and positive hygiene practices. The simple practice of washing hands with soap and water can prevent many dangerous diseases from spreading.

We work to ensure that people can access water and sanitation facilities within, or close to their households, schools and communal institutions. For us, it's important that every water tap or toilet we build can be used by all people, no matter their age, gender or physical ability. We work closely with displaced people and their local hosts to ensure that all facilities we build can be easily operated and maintained.

ACCESS IN HARD-TO-REACH AREAS



A truckload of people pass an oil field that was ignited by the IS group as they withdrew from the area.

Conflicting parties sometimes deny agencies access to areas they control. Additionally, attacks against humanitarian workers are increasing. Our teams actively seek to overcome challenges like these.

To reach people in need, we have developed guidelines and targeted training for our staff. We are rolling out a blended training approach, combining e-learning with in-depth humanitarian negotiations and mediation, for the benefit of our staff, as well as humanitarian partners. In countries where we are operating remotely, we developed a self-guided training module about safety, situational awareness and resilience. In Jordan, our teams organised a workshop regarding principled engagement with state and non-state armed actors in the Middle East. Because of this programme's success, we plan to replicate the workshop in other sensitive areas.

We have launched a three-year humanitarian mediation initiative in Mali, the Central African Republic (CAR) and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Our teams will facilitate mediation and dialogue processes to reduce tensions and violence, aiming to increase the access to, and the protection of civilians. Based on previous experiences in Haiti and CAR, humanitarian mediation processes enabled by neutral actors has proven to be important for civilians in regaining safety and freedom of movement.

We recognise our responsibility to do no harm, and always take steps to ensure that our work and interventions do not add to tensions or escalate conflicts. Conflict sensitivity and analysis are therefore the initial basis for our interventions and a pre-requisite to access high-risk environments.

CASH



Over 6,000 families received food and household items at the e-Voucher market in Kanyabayonga, DR Congo in March 2017.

Cash-based interventions enable crisis-affected people to make choices and prioritise their own needs. They, after all, know how best to care for their families. Provision of cash also supports local markets, which is a critical element for the survival and recovery of communities. Additionally, cash allows us to respond as quickly and efficiently as possible.

One modality is multi-purpose cash (MPC), which are a series of unconditional and unrestricted cash transfers over a set period. In addition to routinely considering the use of cash as a way to respond, we push the boundaries by using non-traditional partners, beyond banks and mobile money companies, in delivering MPC to hard-to-reach communities.

However, in some less challenging areas where MPC is rapidly becoming the default delivery modality, there is often no other sectoral work being done to address the non-financial barriers people face. We recognise that cash is not the solution to all needs in every humanitarian crisis. To complement cash transfers, our teams identify assistance within other sectors to run alongside the cash distributions, so that all needs are met.

There are also situations where cash should not be used. For example, when there are no functioning markets, no safe way to transfer the assistance or when cash transfers could put people at risk.

During 2017, we disbursed more than USD 60 million, which is a 50 per cent increase from 2016. Going forward, we will continue to increase and diversify the use of cash-based interventions across all activities and in all phases of displacement.

IMPLEMENTING AND LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS



A sign informing about several organisations working together to implement WASH activities in a refugee camp in Djibouti.

NRC understands local partnership as a working relationship between two equal organisations based on shared values, principles and the commitment to assist displaced populations.

Through our partnerships, we have increased the impact of our operations by enhancing the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of displaced people and promote their rights. These partnerships can further contribute to the widening of our reach, credibility, acceptance and accountability to affected populations, and can be useful in accessing or exiting certain areas.

In 2017, more than half of our country offices were engaged in some form of partnership, ranging from direct funding relationships with other national NGOs, to partnerships with national ministries and technical agencies. Our work with implementing and local partners increasingly involves capacity building and sharing of skills, both from us to our partners and vice versa. Our country offices worked with partners to access communities in need, render technical expertise and as part of planning an exit strategy for our operations.

We have developed internal guidance regarding our work with implementing partners. Key to this process was the improved attention to compliance and the best practices for contracting relationships. We completed field testing and finalised our toolkit for widespread use at the end of 2017. We also established a partnership helpdesk to support countries with technical and contractual advice on partnerships.

INNOVATION



The EdTech for Emergencies app provides Somali language reading materials to the Somali refugee community in Kenya.

To us, innovation means scaling up new solutions from other organisations and developing new solutions ourselves and with partners. Our innovation projects aim to deliver our services more efficiently, reaching more people and ultimately finding lasting solutions for those we help.

In 2016, we initiated our work with an internal innovation fund, and scaled it up in 2017. Through this, our country offices are invited to apply for funding to support their innovation activities. The lessons we learned from the fund have been crucial to structuring and developing innovative thinking within the organisation. It allows us to test what works and what doesn't, both when managing the fund and when implementing the projects. One of the main lessons was steering clear from ready-made solutions. Our experience indicated that some of the projects we funded in 2017 moved forward with solutions too fast, not investing enough time in gaining insight into the problem they were solving. This led to new challenges during the implementation phase of the project, which we could have avoided by prioritising a more focused insight phase. Therefore, we now fund the initial phases of the innovation process. This way, the innovation teams use time and resources at the start, and make sure a solution is solving the right problem in the best possible way.

PROTECTION AND GENDER



Women and children are especially vulnerable when forced to flee.

Protection is about safety, dignity, and rights. It is about people being safe from the harm or abuse others might cause them when armed conflict or disaster leaves them vulnerable. It is our mission to reduce risks for displaced people and strengthen their ability to protect themselves. From avoiding harm by providing lighting in a camp, to working on housing, land, and property rights to prevent discrimination of women, we strive to ensure safety, dignity and access to impartial assistance.

In providing support to the most vulnerable, we recognise the different impact that conflict has on women, men, girls and boys. Some may be denied their rights just by virtue of their gender. Others may be exposed to sexual violence and abuse, or are at risk of being dragged into illegal armed groups. That is why all of our projects take gender issues into account. From speaking up for women's land rights, to building girls' toilets in schools and protecting boys from being recruited as child soldiers, we listen to their needs, no matter their gender or age. We put equality into our day-to-day work, ensuring that it is part of the planning and practice of all our activities in the field.

YOUTH



A group of Eritrean youth, whom have crossed the border to Ethiopia, live in a children's collective run by NRC.

There are more young people in the world than ever before. Over 23 per cent of the people on the planet are adolescents and youth between the ages of 10 and 24. During a young person's displacement, education and training plays a key role in developing a sense of purpose and the opportunity to gain livelihood skills. Most programmes, however, target younger primary-aged children. Given the potential of young people to make a change within their communities, there is insufficient investment in the protection of their needs and rights. Youths themselves call for more bridges between education, training and eventual employment – hybrid education solutions that help them transition from school to work.

NRC's Youth Education programmes prepare this at-risk group to find new educational pathways and livelihood opportunities. We build on their capacities and help them obtain skills needed to meet the demands of the job market and to become active members of their community. We do this through offering numeracy and literacy courses, technical skills and life skills in safe and protective environments. We support their life-transitions by following up and mentoring our post-graduates as well.

We participate in various international, national and local policy and coordination platforms to positively influence humanitarian policy and practice for young people.

PART 2

COUNTRY OPERATIONS



Ei Ei Moe graduated from the NRC vocational training centre, Dawei, Myanmar. Now she is working as a trainee at a motorbike mechanical shop in town. Her ambition is to establish her own shop so that she can have an income and support her family.

AFRICA



Increasing displacements, drought and armed conflict continued to affect the region in 2017. Despite the growing list of challenges, a huge gap remains between the many humanitarian needs and available funding to confront them.

In Central and West Africa, we focused our responses on emergencies in hard-to-reach areas, while continuously evaluating the safety of our workers. Though humanitarian funding decreased in the Democratic Republic of Congo, we managed to reach new areas. We also responded to displacements resulting from the Boko Haram crisis affecting Cameroon and Nigeria. In Mali and the Central African Republic, we continued responding to new displacements, while also supporting those able to return.

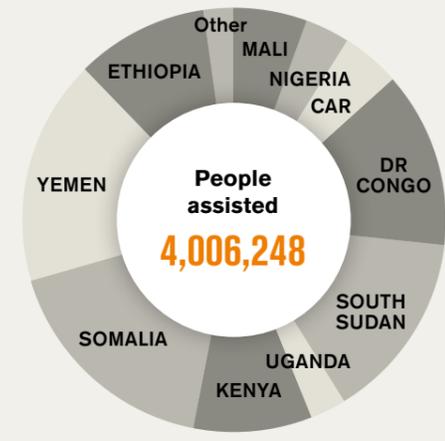
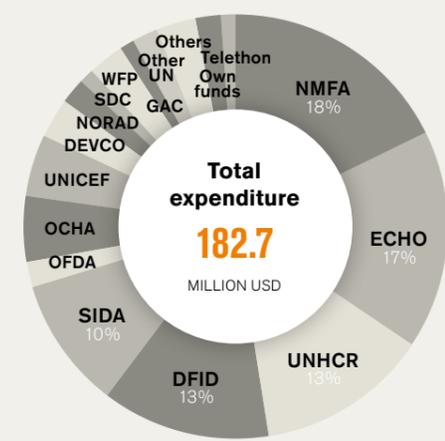
Our operations in East Africa have all increased focus on finding lasting solutions to displacement, especially in the large refugee hosting countries of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. We provided information about return to countries of origin, and assisted people to access a livelihood while displaced. We imparted resilience practices to displaced people facing shocks or stresses and jointly created better life conditions. In Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen, we successfully responded to the drought, hunger and famine that forced people to move.

Our constant efforts to expand and reach people in need have helped us respond to displacements that are becoming increasingly regional in character.



Angelina (23) had just been sitting for her last exam in South Sudan, when she quickly had to flee the country. Now she is living in Bidibidi in Uganda.

Main activities:



CAMEROON

Humanitarian overview

Thousands of Nigerians have fled to Cameroon's Far North region to escape violence. Entering 2017, the conflict and unrest had internally displaced 177,000 people as well.

In the Far North, attacks and looting by Boko Haram have created urgent needs among civilians, particularly women and girls. Meanwhile, Cameroon's infrastructure struggles to accommodate these rising needs. Most internally displaced Cameroonians have sought refuge in informal settlements and host communities. They lack basic services like education and healthcare. Many of the displaced are separated from family members, are forcibly recruited to armed groups, or become victims of sexual or economic exploitation.

Meanwhile, tensions between the host population and the displaced people

have been on the rise due to limited resources shared among them.

NRC's operation

As a response to the growing number of people forced to flee in the Lake Chad Basin area, NRC established a presence in the Far North region of Cameroon in April 2017. Though insecurity was a main challenge to our work, we were able to help people in locations that had not received any assistance prior to our intervention.

Our teams provided emergency shelters for people who were forced to flee and constructed temporary shelters for returnees whose homes had been destroyed during the conflict. We also distributed mosquito nets, blankets, sleeping mats and tools for farming. We distributed soap and cloth for filtering water, and trained hygiene promoters to familiarise displaced people in the area

with good hygiene practices.

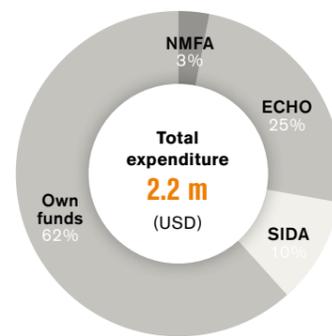
Most people have lost their civil documentation during displacement and have had to restrict their movement due to police checkpoints. Because of the vast amount of people without identity documentation, we assisted in registering cases and in obtaining these documents. 67 per cent of school-aged children in the region do not possess birth certificates. Lack of identity documents hamper their ability to enjoy primary education. Our teams began helping people obtain necessary documentation so they can access basic



services and education. Although we helped some people obtain civil documentation, others are still met by challenges. We will continue to advocate for the removal of heavy bureaucratic and financial barriers, such as expensive court hearings, lack of registers and qualified staff to perform transcription services.

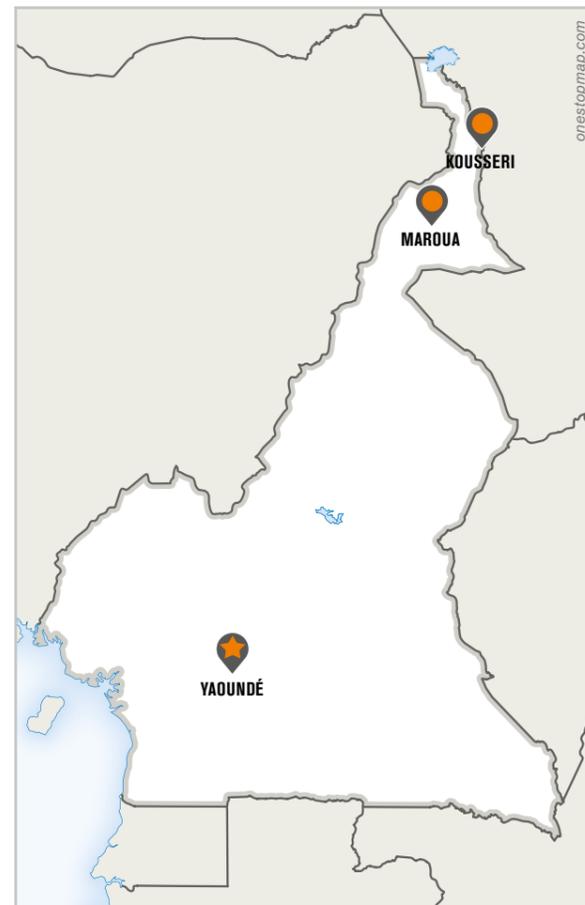
In the Far North region, people rely on agriculture and livestock for survival. However, in areas bordering Nigeria, Boko Haram members have been perpetrating attacks and looting crops and animals. We plan to initiate livelihood and food security activities to help people recover and meet their basic needs. Additionally, we will start up educational activities such as rehabilitating schools, training teachers and providing school materials so children can pursue their right to education.

In 2018, we will assess the needs and possibilities for an expansion to the east, north, and Adamawa regions of Cameroon, where they currently host the majority of the 237,000 refugees who have arrived in the country from the Central African Republic.



NRC CAMEROON

Established:	2017
International staff:	5
National staff:	38
People in need:	2.9 m
People assisted:	15,517



CAR



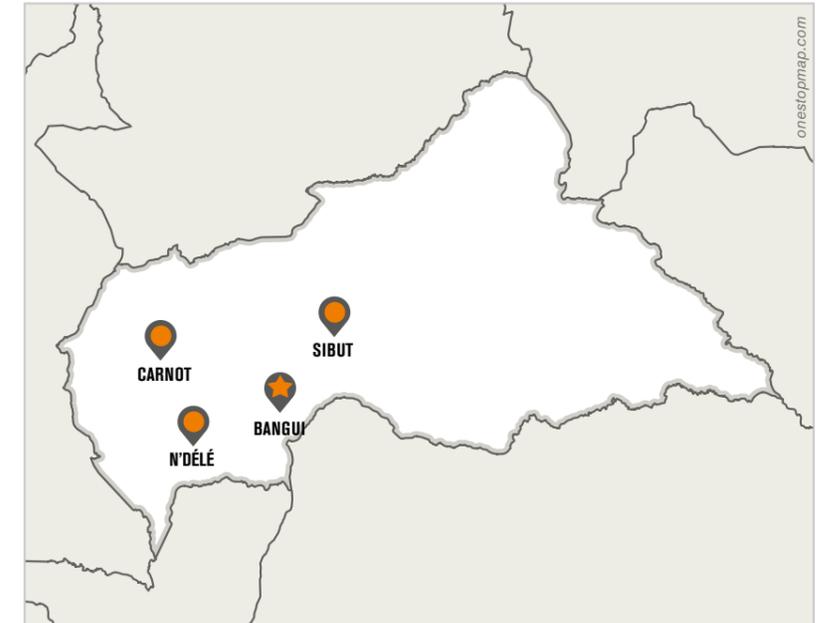
Humanitarian overview

The Central African Republic (CAR) has seen continuous political crises of dictatorship, military coups and armed clashes. In 2012, civil war broke out between Muslim and Christian rebel groups. Both have been responsible for massacres, executions, sexual violence, torture, widespread looting and destruction of property. Despite a cease-fire in 2015, and relatively peaceful elections in 2016, the security situation has deteriorated. Violence continued to escalate in 2017, with over 200,000 newly displaced in the first six months of the year. Now, more than one in five CAR nationals are displaced.

In 2016, the country was at the bottom of the UN Human Development Index. 48 per cent of the population faces food insecurity, eating only one meal per day. International efforts in the country have been inconsistent, with insufficient and ebbing aid. Only 37.5 per cent of the Humanitarian Response Plan was funded in 2017.

NRC's operation

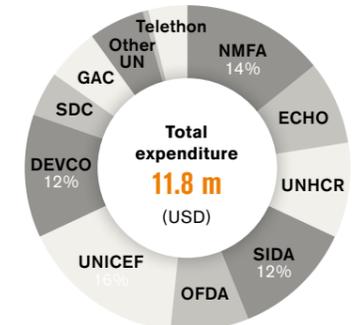
Our teams provided catch-up education classes to children and trained teachers. We expanded our food security and livelihood projects by arranging training sessions on agriculture and by distributing tools and seeds. To improve living conditions we erected and repaired houses. We rehabilitated community infrastructure, built schools, constructed and repaired latrines and provided clean drinking water. To make recovery possible, our teams supported community dialogue and dispute resolution. In Sibut, we trained community members to conduct a dialogue between the local community and pastoralists. Negotiations lead to pastoralists' access to the food market and no reported conflict incidents. In Kaga-bandoro, our teams facilitated community dialogues within and among the Christian and Muslim communities, including humanitarian actors and armed groups. The dialogues identified a number of problems, such as the need for a complaints mechanism for NGO activities and a faster distribution of humanitarian aid. We have developed an action plan to address these issues



and improve the quality of our help. The occupation of homes and properties must end in order to achieve long lasting solutions such as returns, recovery and rehabilitation. Our teams spoke with communities and government stakeholders about displaced people's access to housing, land and property (HLP) rights. Because of our constant advocacy towards national and local authorities, we contributed to drafting parts of a revised law protecting the HLP rights of displaced people. The work of local authorities also reflected our recommendations; community leaders in Carnot and Begoa forbid the sale of displaced people's property. Additionally, we supported the expansion of a formal ownership register in CAR.

We studied civil documentation and the impact that not having a birth certificate has on access to education. The study found that internally displaced people and returnees are unlikely to renew their civil status documents and that birth certificates play a role in the continuity of education, but not in initial access. Based on these findings, we now work to assist the set-up of civil registration centres and encourage the provision of civil documentation for children in schools where we are present.

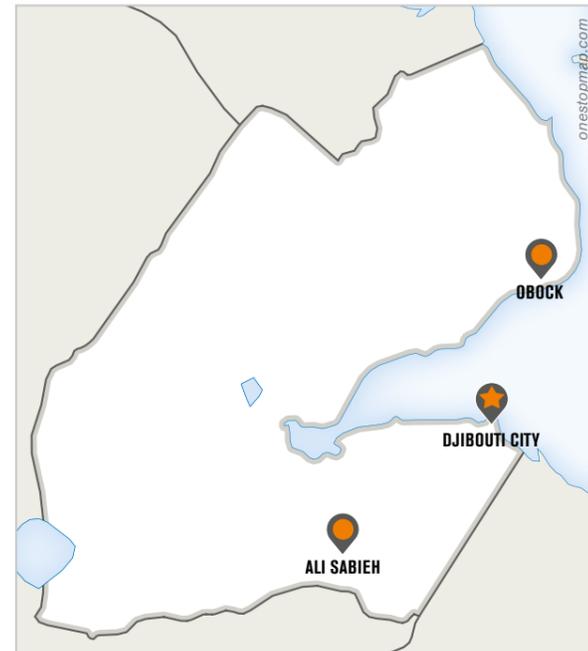
In 2018, we plan to increase our emergency response capacity in areas highly affected by the current crisis and population movements. We will open a new sub-office in Nana Gribizi, where our mobile teams will respond to emergency needs in the surrounding areas.



NRC THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Established:	2014
International staff:	21
National staff:	271
People in need:	2.2 m
People assisted:	199,564

DJIBOUTI



partner of UNHCR in all three camps. Escalated displacement from Yemen, violent protests in Ethiopia and more drought-related people movements have led to a population increase in camps and settlements for internally displaced people. We regularly share information with our colleagues in Yemen and have plans in place, should the situation further deteriorate.

We installed and rehabilitated water

sources, collection points and pipelines to ensure refugees receive enough clean water to drink and cook. Our teams constructed latrines and promoted good hygiene practices including waste management, hand washing, safe water storage and the cleaning of containers.

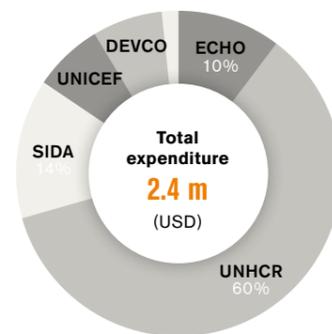
As crises progress in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Yemen, refugees in Djibouti need better housing for shelter. Using an improved design, we constructed permanent shelters made of concrete bricks and iron sheet roof, with two rooms so that children and parents had their own space. Our teams trained displaced people on shelter construction, allowing them to participate in the process and gain a source of livelihood, as they get paid for their labour.

Throughout 2017, we piloted vocational skills training in Ali Addeh camp with courses in computing, tailoring and beauty therapy. Since the camps are located in remote villages with no electricity supply, we installed solar panels to provide electricity for trainings at the youth centre. We chose solar power over generators because of its environmental impact and its durability. After

we installed the solar panels, vocational training courses progressed with minimal electricity supply and maintenance costs.

We continued to play an agenda-setting role in discussions about the protection of refugees. Our teams have spoken out on the importance for refugees' right to work in Djibouti and thus truly welcome the Refugee Act of 2017. For example, we published a report on the protection of refugees, where we urged the government to allow refugees to work and to obtain appropriate identification documents. Additionally, we participated in the CRRF steering committee in Djibouti. We made efforts to ensure that key stakeholders, such as the police, business registration personnel and employers, take into account the local integration process.

In 2018, we will continue our work to help displaced people in Djibouti find lasting solutions by assisting youth in accessing information about available jobs, access the documents required to run a business and provide cash grants to start up new businesses.



NRC DJIBOUTI	
Established:	2013
International staff:	2
National staff:	32
People in need:	289,300
People assisted:	31,446

Humanitarian overview

Despite its relative peace and stability, Djibouti is surrounded by countries affected by conflict. In addition, harsh climatic conditions and drought in the region have displaced people, and pushed them across the border to Djibouti. As of 2017, arid and resource-scarce Djibouti was hosting about 27,000 refugees, while around 100,000 people fleeing conflict and disaster have been moving through the country each year. High pressure on already weak social services has left an increasing amount of people with limited access to livelihoods and basic services such as clean water and education.

In early 2017, the President signed an act ensuring that all refugees have access to education, health services and employment, just like any other Djiboutian. The refugee act is part of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) that the government committed to at the Leaders' Summit for Refugees in New York in 2016.

NRC's operation

The majority of refugees in Djibouti live in one of three refugee camps: Markazi, Ali Addeh and Holl-Holl. NRC is a major

DR CONGO



Humanitarian overview

The population of the Democratic Republic of Congo has seen political instability, ethnic rivalry and violent conflict for over 20 years. In 2017, the displacement crisis continued to worsen, with almost a million people forced to flee, just in the first six months. By the end of the year, DR Congo had more than 4 million internally displaced people, making it one of the worst displacement crises on the planet.

In October, UN humanitarian agencies declared certain areas of DR Congo a Level 3 humanitarian emergency, which is a designation reserved for only the most serious humanitarian crises in the world. The amount of people needing humanitarian assistance increased by 79 per cent throughout 2017.

NRC's operation

The main challenges we faced in 2017 were the growing humanitarian needs and the need to scale-up our response. In areas where we were already present, we managed to follow up on the most important humanitarian alerts and swiftly reacted to them. We improved our ability to respond quickly to crises, by expanding our rapid response

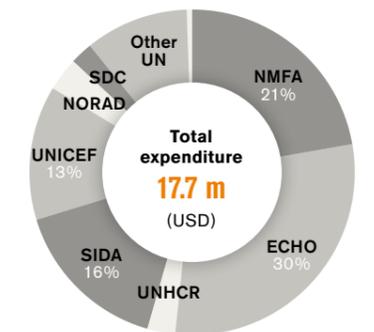
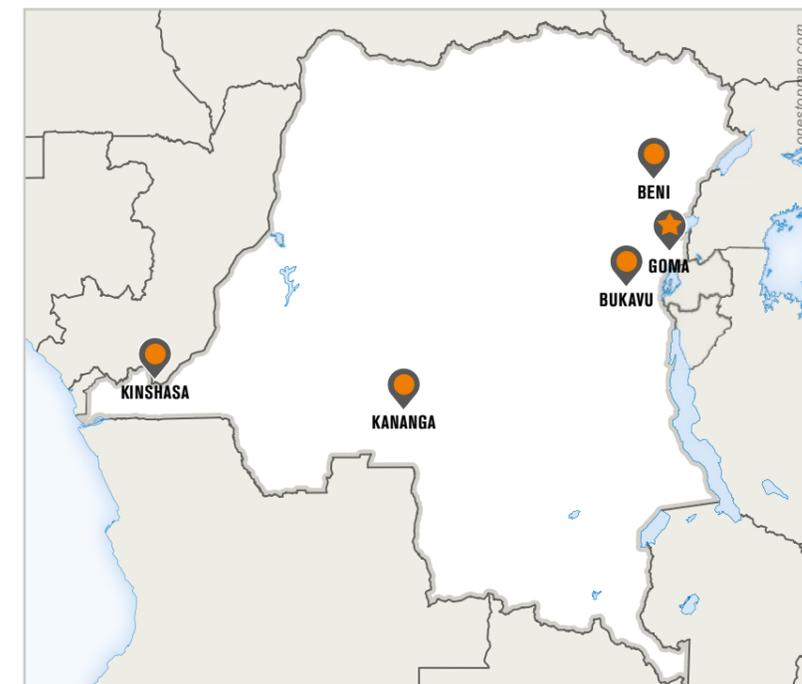
mechanisms, assisting displaced people with shelter, food, education, clean water and adequate sanitation. We accomplished this in large part by utilising cash and voucher distribution and in-kind fairs. Cash based programming enabled us to provide more adequate assistance in the fastest way possible, allowing a better response to sudden emergencies. We were one of the first responders in Kasai Central province, thanks to flexible funding. Additionally, we expanded activities to the Greater Kasai region and Tanganyika.

With our expansion into new areas that were previously development focused, we adapted our approach to be more community-based. We consulted and involved the local community in our work. This has empowered vulnerable populations and host communities to determine what is best for them. With this approach, we discovered that most people preferred cash to vouchers as cash enables them to purchase whichever items they need, when they require it. Our community-based approach built trust and acceptance and gave us greater access to conflict-affected areas. Due to a high level of child

enrolment in militia groups, we focused on providing education to those who were out of school through the distribution of school kits, teacher training and rehabilitation of schools.

During 2017, our teams produced five papers on humanitarian operations to strengthen our position on humanitarian principles and define our humanitarian response. We shared the papers with donors and partners such as UNHCR, and internally to support our advocacy work. With the evolution of our responses, these position papers have been valuable in the design of the projects, especially in the area of protection and community approach. Additionally, a report from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre highlighted that the levels of displacement were on the same scale as those in Syria. Our public advocacy influenced the decision to declare DR Congo a Level 3 emergency.

In addition, a range of activities was implemented to support vulnerable populations and host communities. This response included education, food security and information counselling and legal assistance.



NRC THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO	
Established:	2001
International staff:	15
National staff:	287
People in need:	7.3 m
People assisted:	592,420



STORIES FROM THE FIELD

CHANGING LIVES WITH ONE SWIPE

Distribution of electronic e-voucher cards in the Democratic Republic of Congo enables displaced people to choose for themselves which food or household items they need.

As the mid-day sun appeared between the clouds, Kahanbu Mastayabo unfolded an umbrella to protect her five-month-old daughter, tied to her back, from the scorching rays. The young mother and her husband did their shopping at a dusty, bustling market at the outskirts of Kanyabayonga, a small town in eastern DR Congo. The couple stopped at a small booth.

"Let's buy some of this oil," Kahanbu Mastayabo suggested to her husband.

They agreed on five litres of palm oil and passed their electronic payment card to the trader, who swiped it on a scanner on the back of a smartphone. USD 3.79 was subtracted from the card, and Kahanbu Mastayabo tapped her personal code on the screen to confirm the purchase.

The family had received an e-voucher card from NRC with an allocated amount of USD 55. They used the money to buy soap, beans, palm oil, fruits, a mattress and a blanket. Markets in the conflict-ridden North Kivu province are not normally this technologically advanced. Our emergency response teams assessed the situation of newly displaced families and later we set up a market place and allocated electronic cards.

"These e-vouchers have many advantages," said Jose Kibasubwamo, one of several local traders with a palm oil stall at the market. "Compared to paper vouchers, the electronic system is much more secure and precise, and by the end of the day it is easy and fast to calculate how much we have sold and then sort our payment with NRC," explained the trader with a big smile.



Photo: Christian Jepsen/NRC

Kahanbu Mastayabo (right) discusses the quality of dried fish with her sister (middle) and husband (left).

ERITREA

Humanitarian overview

Decades of conflict, political isolation and severe drought have adversely affected Eritrea's population and agriculture-based economy. The drought that ravaged the Horn of Africa region was, by the beginning of 2017, reportedly affecting half of the country. Almost all humanitarian indices rate Eritrea poorly, and the country is placed as number 179 out of 188 countries on the UN's Human Development Index.

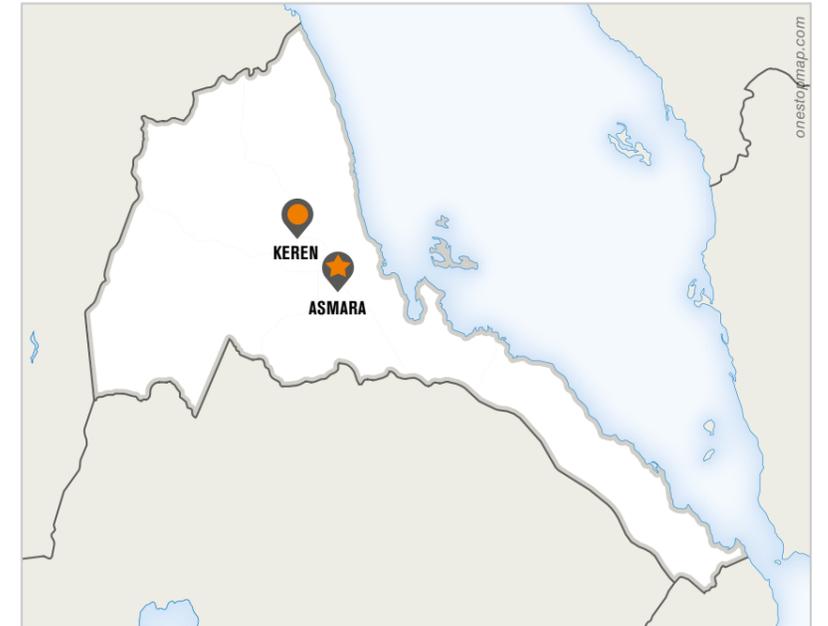
The country has a large and growing population of uneducated and unemployed youth. Despite the government's investment in education, school enrolment rates are still very low, mainly due to traditional taboos, school fees and the cost barriers for low-income families.

Per 2017, the school enrolment rates for primary education was at 46 per cent for girls and 53 per cent for boys. Only 29 per cent of girls and 33 per cent of boys attended secondary education. An ever-growing number of young people leave the country to escape poverty, a mandatory national service and few economic opportunities.

The second largest group of people looking to migrate to Europe are of Eritrean origin. One in ten of all prospective migrants to Europe are Eritrean. Some escape through dangerous migration routes and risk being trafficked or tortured for ransom. Others have transited neighbouring countries where they are hosted in refugee camps.

NRC's operation

We implement our activities through the Ministry of Education in Eritrea to help out-of-school youth aged 15 to 24 who are at risk of leaving the country through irregular migration routes. Most of them live in Eritrea's lowlands and coastal regions where many children and youth are unable to receive formal education due to the vast distances separating them from the handful of schools in the area. We help out-of-school youth to find more diverse job opportunities and reliable sources of income.

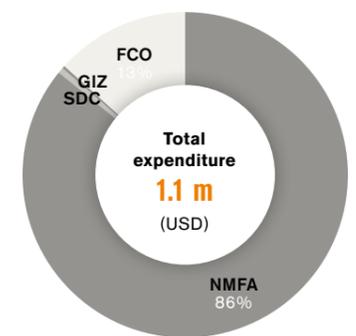


The school attendance of boys is often prioritised over that of girls, and many never finish school because they are expected to marry and become mothers. We had a special focus within our programmes on including people in vulnerable situations like young mothers, youth living with disabilities, and girls. As a result, over 80 per cent of our trainees are women.

In 2017, our teams trained teachers to provide vocational skills training in pottery, weaving, electrical installation, plumbing and irrigation skills. We equipped vocational training centres with necessary machinery and tools. As many of our students were already family breadwinners, we made sure they attended the training by offering conditional stipends to compensate for the loss of income. Additionally, our teams trained students in business management. After graduation, we provided them with kits and a start-up grant to help them establish their own business. Many of the graduates told us that they are now thinking more positively about how to make a livelihood. More youth are now eager to join our vocational skills training than were previously. However, to really improve livelihood conditions in Eritrea, there is a need to develop the country's infrastructure and

the industry sector to boost economic growth.

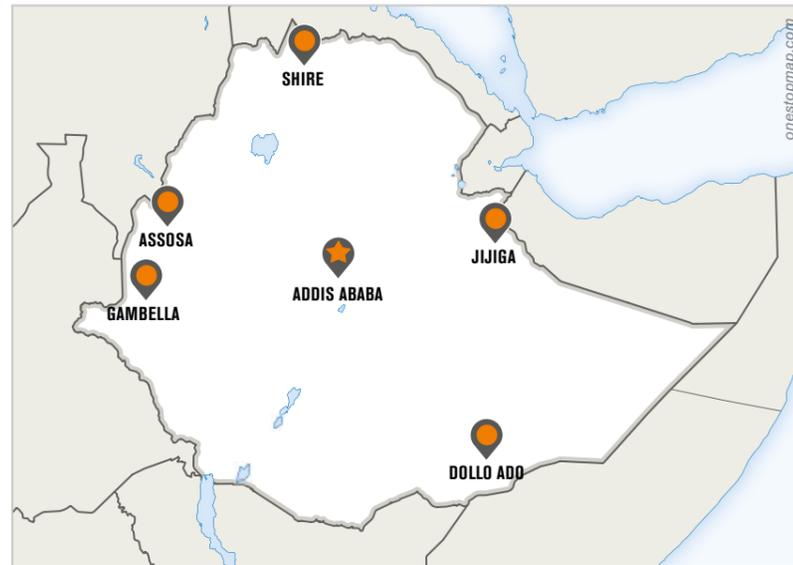
In 2018, because many adolescents remain out of school, we will work to reach even more youth with our educational projects by expanding to new areas and scaling up our work in existing vocational training centres.



NRC ERITREA

Established:	2013
International staff:	2
National staff:	0
People in need:	60,864 ¹
People assisted:	1,824

ETHIOPIA



Humanitarian overview

Surrounded by a region in conflict, Ethiopia hosts the second most refugees of any African country. As of December 2017, the country hosted over 890,000 refugees, with more than 100,000 new arrivals in 2017 alone. The main drivers of displacement for refugees arriving in Ethiopia are the continued tightening of the political and economic situation in Eritrea, and the conflicts and adverse climatic conditions in South Sudan and Somalia.

Meanwhile, climate change has taken its toll on Ethiopia. Consecutive droughts in the past three years have caused severe food and water shortages alongside the loss of livestock and crops. In 2017, many cases of internal displacement caused by unrest occurred in the same areas affected by drought.

NRC's operation

When drought hit the Somali region of Ethiopia, we assisted the affected communities with emergency shelters, clean water, and latrine construction. Additionally, we promoted good hygiene practices and distributed articles such as toothbrushes, soap and sanitary towels.

We assisted populations in hard-to-reach areas, including the

forementioned Somali region, as well as the Oromia region but faced complications due to periodic road inaccessibility. In hard-to-reach areas, regular monitoring of activities is also not always feasible.

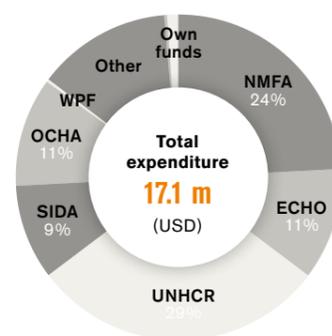
Our teams supported refugees with transitional and emergency shelter in camps and surrounding host communities. When constructing shelters, we involved the people we were helping as much as possible. In Gambella, we gave cash in return for work such as mud-plastering and grass thatching of roofs.

We also provided cash for the elderly, pregnant, and female-headed internally displaced families, so they could buy cooking utensils, clothes and food.

To create lasting solutions, we helped children access education and youth to improve self-reliance through livelihood activities. We provided quality education and catch-up classes, trained teachers and distributed school materials. Our teams set up vocational education courses, like hairdressing, carpentry, and business training that enabled students to start their own businesses after they graduated. We trained displaced people on agricultural production and distributed seeds and tools.

Due to the high number of unaccompanied Eritrean children in the refugee camps in Shire, our teams provided shelter and food, and employed social workers to take care of the children. In 2017, we offered information, counselling and legal assistance for refugees residing in Addis Ababa. We provided information and advice on how to obtain vital events documentation, such as birth and marriage certificates. Our teams also assisted refugees in urban areas with accessing security of tenure by giving information about tenancy law and leases. In 2018, we plan to expand our legal services to other areas of the country.

Although there were significant improvements for the people reached and engaged by our teams, it has been challenging to identify the specific interventions that have increased self-reliance for a substantial number of people. For refugees, freedom of movement in and out of the camp is limited and they are not allowed to work. In the Somali region, where the majority are internally displaced, physical access, limited funds and uncertainty about long-term solutions hampered our ability to offer long-term livelihood interventions.



NRC ETHIOPIA

Established:	2011
International staff:	12
National staff:	254
People in need:	5.6 m
People assisted:	452,555

KENYA



Humanitarian overview

Kenya hosts 480,000 refugees in camps and urban areas, most having arrived from Somalia and South Sudan. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to seek refuge in the country. Displaced people report lengthy delays in status determination and suspended registration or document renewal.

In the last two years, over 75,000 Somali refugees have returned to their country of origin. The rate slowed in 2017 as a result of the drought and a cholera outbreak that struck Somalia. Those returning are in danger of joining the already high numbers of internally displaced. Internal displacement in Kenya is often overshadowed by the refugee situation. Kenyans have also been forced to flee due to droughts, food insecurity, floods and ethnic conflict.

NRC's operation

In Dadaab and Kakuma, we distributed food and household items. We provided clean water and latrines, and we distributed soap and raised hygiene awareness in schools and communities. Children and youth attended our accelerated educational courses so they

could catch up with their peers. To increase livelihood opportunities for the youth, we provided vocational skills training, including professional certification, in trades like mechanics, computer skills and carpentry. Graduates received training and start-up packages to help them establish their own business as well as mentorship and follow-up support. We launched an online marketing platform that refugees and host communities use to sell their handmade products. Local artisans have witnessed increased demand and sales for their products after using this. Our teams collaborated with the University of Nairobi and the University of Trondheim to create entrepreneurship hubs in Kakuma, and developed online training for displaced youth and the host population. Additionally, we worked with social enterprises to offer displaced people online jobs such as web design, data entry and translation.

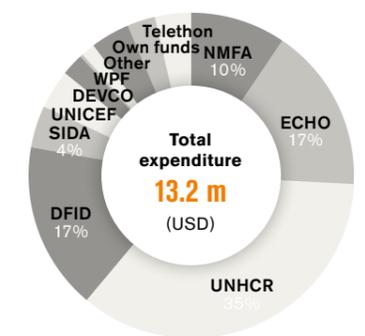
Responding to an increased demand for vocational skills training, we expanded the youth training centres in Kakuma, Kalobeyei and Dadaab. We simultaneously equipped them with ICT facilities and provided tablets with content used for both teaching

and personal study. Our teams increased the access to education for people with disabilities by renovating classrooms with ramps, adapting learning methods, using sign language teachers and computers with inclusive software such as Job Access with Speech. Female participation in vocational skills training increased from less than five per cent in previous years to 18.6 per cent in 2017, with more women participating in

traditionally male dominated courses such as mechanics and plumbing.

Without formal documentation, refugees face harassment, exploitation and detention. We provided information and legal counselling to help displaced people access legal identity documents like birth certificates, claim their housing, land and property rights and access essential services. We reached people through our legal aid centres or visited them in their homes. Additionally, we published a report on the legal refugee framework in Kenya and the challenges that refugees face in the urban areas. We found that refugees struggle to register and renew their registration due to lack of information, suspended processes and delays in procedures. With other agencies, we engaged in dialogue with government partners, drawing attention to the need for a legal framework that supports and protects refugees and other displaced populations and gives them access to early and durable solutions.

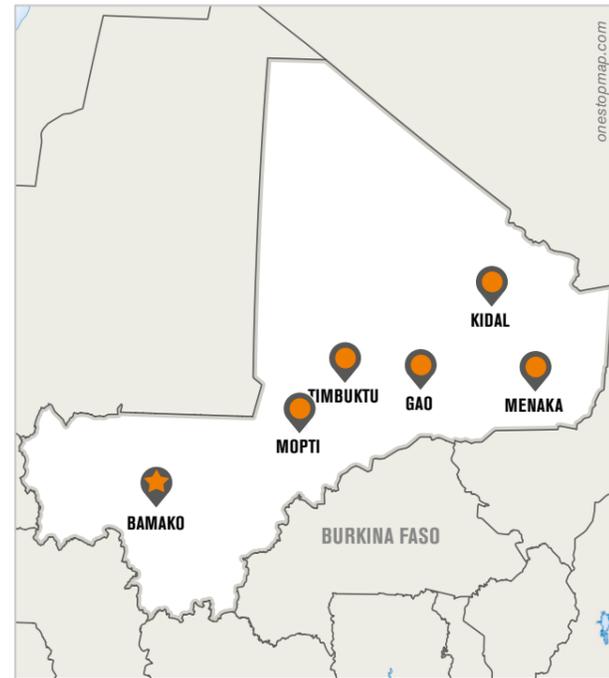
Working with NRC Somalia, we provided Somali refugees with information about living conditions in their home countries and the voluntary repatriation process, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding their potential return.



NRC KENYA

Established:	2016
International staff:	5
National staff:	198
People in need:	3.4 m²
People assisted:	399,439

MALI AND BURKINA FASO



their immediate needs and rebuild a safe and resilient future.

Our teams helped children access education by providing catch-up classes, distributing textbooks and pencils, training teachers and rehabilitating classrooms and latrines in school. We also established school management committees to strengthen community involvement. These

committees spread awareness about the right to education for every child, and encouraged parents who had taken their children out of school to re-enrol them.

We distributed food, vouchers and cash in northern areas where people did not have enough to eat. Our teams also began helping people to earn a living through community gardens and the provision of loans and village savings. So far, we have received positive feedback from the people to whom we gave cash assistance. They appreciated the transparency and clarity, in addition to the freedom associated with an independent choice.

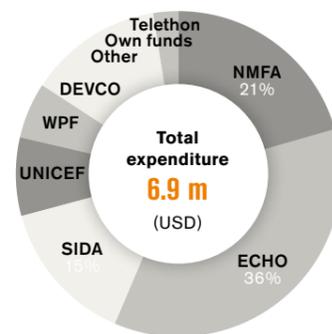
In central and northern Mali, our legal teams helped displaced people acquire civil documentation like ID cards and birth certificates and informed them of their rights and duties. Thanks to joint advocacy with other actors, the electoral card, which is free of charge and open-ended, now has the same legal value as the national identity card. This will make it easier for people to access civil documentation. Additionally, we assisted people in claiming their housing, land and property rights when

they had lost the related documentation or when entitlements to land were contested.

The volatile situation has made it more difficult to monitor the conflict and access hard-to-reach areas. Together with other organisations, we made action plans and met with authorities and UN agencies to initiate conflict resolution and ensure security and basic services. In 2017, we were the technical lead in ECHO's rapid response mechanism. Our teams reinforced the coordination between different emergency actors through workshops, trainings and the development of a common methodology to improve our emergency assistance and increase access to conflict affected areas.

Burkina Faso

Through our Burkina Faso programme, we provided shelter to Malian refugees and worked to ensure that children did not miss out on their education. However, with decreased funding allocated to the refugee crisis in Burkina Faso, we closed our mission in the country in March 2017, and handed the work over to other INGOs and NGOs. We continue our humanitarian efforts in Mali and will return to Burkina Faso if the humanitarian context changes.



NRC MALI

Established:	2013
International staff:	8
National staff:	105
People in need:	3.7 m
People assisted:	253,501

NIGERIA



Humanitarian overview

Although Nigeria is Africa's largest economy, a humanitarian crisis plagues large parts of the country. Violent attacks on civilians by the armed group Boko Haram have left 1.9 million people displaced within the country and, as of December 2017, over 200,000 have fled to neighbouring countries. The humanitarian needs in the north-east are extremely high. While the country has managed to avert famine for now, close to half a million children suffer from acute malnutrition. An estimated 75 per cent of water and sanitation infrastructure has been destroyed, leading to a surge in water-borne diseases like cholera.

In 2017, there was an increase in the rate of return by internally displaced people and refugees coming back from Cameroon and Niger. From January to June, close to 135,000 Nigerians returned and were faced with insecurity and lack of food, shelter, and livelihoods.

NRC's operation

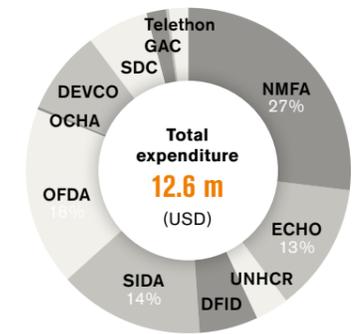
We established a rapid response team to meet immediate needs arising from displacement and refugee returns. The team provided food, shelter, and hygiene products to the most vulnerable as soon as possible, following their displacement. In August, the Borno State Government declared a cholera outbreak in parts of the state. We helped mitigate the spread of the disease by providing clean water, sanitation facilities and the disinfection of latrines. Our efforts also included home visits to talk about good hygiene practices. The outbreak ended in December.

Many families have lost their homes during the conflict and have been forced to live in self-made shelters, in abandoned buildings or communal facilities like schools. Our teams trained local communities in shelter construction, so they could build and maintain their own shelters. We also provided vouchers to help vulnerable families meet immediate food needs and gave agriculture trainings to families for growing their own food and increasing their resilience.

We published a report on returns in Borno State revealing that 86 per cent of displaced families were not ready to go back home, citing insecurity as the main reason. Following the report, UNHCR and the Nigerian Government placed more focus on the issue of forced returns. With premature returns and secondary displacement, our teams noted an increase in disputes over housing, land and property because of secondary occupancy. We organised dialogues with local leaders in Borno State to discuss land issues and find better ways to handle disputes. To prevent forced evictions and secondary displacement, we made sure displaced people had tenancy agreements and helped resolve disagreements between tenants and landlords through discussions. To help people obtain identity documentation, we supported the National Identity Management Commission and set up a mobile ID registration centre in one of the biggest formal camps in Maiduguri.

Last year, as one of the first INGOs, we expanded our areas of operation to Dikwa and Damasak in Borno State. Our successful negotiations with authorities to gain access permitted us to respond to the large influx of internally displaced. We will increase our collaboration with local communities

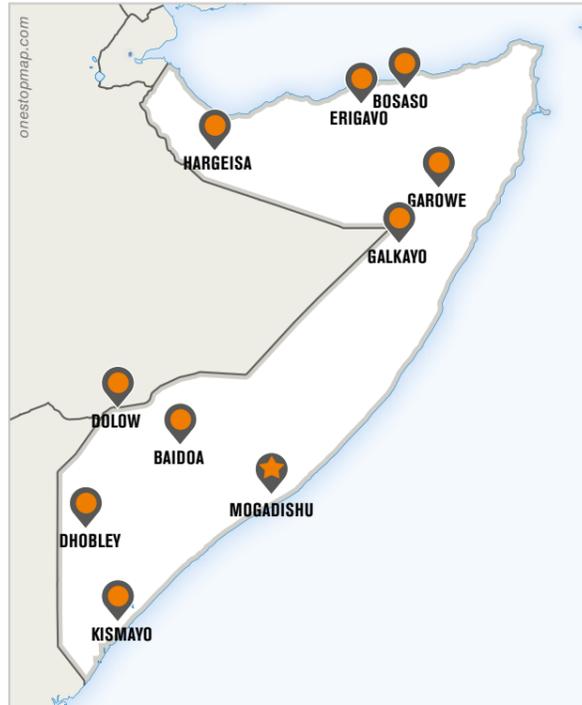
and authorities to better adjust and target our assistance to the needs of people forced to flee and to access more hard-to-reach areas. As half of the children in Nigeria do not attend school, our teams will begin educational activities in 2018. We will also establish a radio programme on issues affecting displaced people and offer them the opportunity to be part of finding solutions to their problems.



NRC NIGERIA

Established:	2015
International staff:	14
National staff:	207
People in need:	8.5 m
People assisted:	149,960

SOMALIA



Mobile phone-based cash transfers is a preferred way of assisting displaced people for use in functioning markets. Using cash transfers minimised security risks, reduced costs and improved efficiency. Our teams supported mobile cash transfers to people who periodically send money to their relatives in inaccessible locations, thus reaching areas that we otherwise could not have reached with in-kind support. Additionally, after people register

with UN-Habitat to design four different prototype shelters for various contexts, while involving all stakeholders, including the people we help, at every stage.

The presence of Al Shabaab continued to undermine our ability to access some rural areas, due to insecurity and illegal taxations. To help people in hard-to-reach areas, we both collaborated with local organisations and established our presence in adjacent districts where people can easily register for assistance before returning to their compromised districts.

We helped displaced people find lasting solutions, either when returning to areas of origin or in current locations of displacement. Our teams provided information to people wanting to go back, enabling them to make a well-informed decision. Upon their return, we gave counselling and legal assistance about housing, land and property rights to protect people from evictions and allowing them to rebuild their future while remaining on their land.

to receive mobile cash transfers, they can go back to hard-to-reach areas and continue receiving money there. Our cash support upheld the confidentiality of the people we assisted and gave them flexibility to meet their needs.

To prevent displaced communities from becoming dependent on our support, we helped out-of-school children catch up with their peers through our accelerated educational programmes, offered vocational training for youth and worked to build resilience among the displaced population. We supported a community project constructing solar energy pumping systems that provide clean water for drinking and crop production. We also supported an initiative to clear invasive agricultural weeds in an effort to expand the arable acreage. Together with solar driven irrigation systems, this contributed to improved social cohesion and increased food access throughout the year.

Over the years, we have provided numerous shelter models, ranging from low-cost transitional shelters to permanent shelters that can last beyond 30 years. In Kismayo, we are collaborating

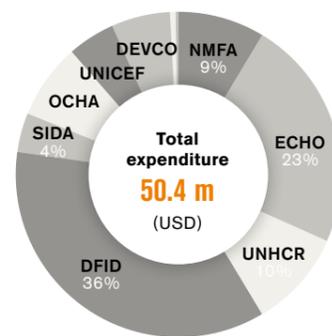
Humanitarian overview

Somalia remains mired in one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. As of 2017, over 1.1 million Somalis continue to be internally displaced, while over 1.2 million are refugees in the Horn of Africa and Yemen. More than 40 per cent of the population need humanitarian assistance. Meanwhile, a growing number of Somali refugees are returning to Somalia from other countries in the region. According to estimates, more than 100,000 refugees have returned since 2014.

Extreme drought has displaced about 766,000 individuals in Somalia since November 2016. Although the relief response to drought in 2017 has, in part, diminished the likelihood of a famine, drought continued to expand in the north of the country at the end of the year.

NRC's operation

When emerging drought and pre-famine status affected Somalia, we provided life-saving help such as food, clean water and shelter to people forced to flee. We made cash transfers to families for the purchase of food and household goods.



NRC SOMALIA

Established:	2004
International staff:	22
National staff:	240
People in need:	5 m
People assisted:	791,219

SOUTH SUDAN



Humanitarian overview

The humanitarian situation in South Sudan continues to deteriorate. At the conclusion of 2017, over two million people had crossed the border into neighbouring countries like Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia, while 1.9 million people were displaced within South Sudan.

Due to drought, conflict, economic collapse and lack of humanitarian assistance, localised famine was declared in February 2017. By May, coordinated humanitarian action had eased the food crisis, though the situation remains critical. According to estimates, 48 per cent of the total population will not have enough to eat in 2018. Employment opportunities are limited and extreme poverty has increased to 67 per cent. Additionally, the prospects for peace in South Sudan are low, with no success in implementing the peace accords agreed in 2015.

NRC's operation

We responded rapidly to the drought and famine by distributing food, clean water, shelter and education. Over half of our assistance was delivered through food distributions. We trained youth about agricultural production and helped them establish small businesses. Eighty per cent of the participants we talked to reported that the support made their businesses more effective in terms of the number of customers and the book keeping skills. Within five days of receiving an emergency alert, our rapid response team delivered materials like plastic sheets and ropes for displaced people to build shelters with instructions from our engineers.

Because of a cholera outbreak, with more than 11,000 cases since 2016, we drilled borehole wells to provide clean water, distributed hygiene kits and promoted good hygiene activities. As of January 2018, there had been no active cholera transmission in any of the areas where the disease was confirmed in 2017.

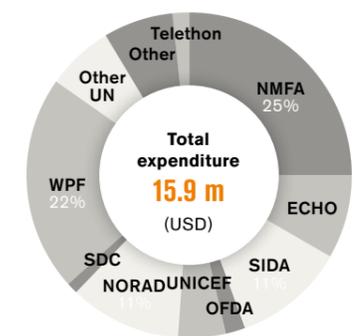
Globally, South Sudan has the highest proportion of out-of-school children,

with over 70 per cent of children not receiving an education and over one third of all schools in a damaged state. Our teams constructed temporary learning spaces and held catch-up classes. School attendance can keep children from joining armed groups and offers an opportunity to raise awareness about landmines and good hygiene practices. Students also received one meal a day to improve school retention and reduce malnutrition.

Although women have formal rights to land in South Sudan, customary law often prevents them from inheriting land after a divorce or as widows. We continued our work to help women overcome the barriers to own land. We made sure women were represented in the land administration council and trained women to collaborate in resolving disputes. In Bor, a group of women that we trained played an important role in advocating for vulnerable women facing forced eviction. Our teams gave legal assistance in cases of housing, land and property rights using domestic and international legal frameworks. We distributed posters, leaflets and held presentations. As a result, more women were able to claim their land rights based on the formal national law.

We launched a report on the protection of civilian sites, a situation in which internally displaced people seek

protection with the UN during time of crisis. The report advised how aid workers and peacekeepers can co-exist, how rules should be set up to manage criminality and security issues, to prevent flow of arms into sites and how to ensure families are eventually able to leave and return home. It resulted in our organisation meeting the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations to discuss how peacekeepers and humanitarians can improve the protection of civilian sites in South Sudan.



NRC SOUTH SUDAN

Established:	2011
International staff:	42
National staff:	231
People in need:	6.1 m
People assisted:	647,722

TANZANIA



Humanitarian overview

Political instability and violence in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have forced more than 350,000 people to seek protection in neighbouring Tanzania. The majority reside in the country's three refugee camps: Nyarugusu, Mtendeli and Nduta. All three camps are overcrowded, and many refugees and asylum seekers are forced to stay in mass shelters where they lack privacy and basic facilities. Residents are not allowed to move outside the camps. The risk of disease and abuse is high and vital resources, like firewood for cooking and water, are scarce. Still, the authorities have been reluctant to open new camps.

In the first three months of 2017, we saw an increase in the number of Burundians seeking protection in Tanzania. However, the number of new arrivals slowed significantly after the Government of Tanzania withdrew the initial refugee status, which granted all Burundian asylum seekers refugee status upon arrival in Tanzania. In a tripartite meeting in August, the Government of Tanzania, the Government of Burundi and UNHCR agreed that they would support voluntary returns of Burundians. By the

end of 2017, over 13,000 Burundians had returned. Meanwhile, the influx of Congolese asylum seekers has increased since July, and is expected to continue in 2018.

NRC's operation

After civil war broke out in Burundi, NRC started operations in Tanzania to support displaced people living in Mtendeli and Nduta refugee camps with interventions that included shelter, sanitation and education. Upon our registration in Tanzania, we worked in close collaboration with other humanitarian actors to provide water extension pipes, build family latrines and distribute sanitation articles in camps. Our teams provided tents and transitional shelters in the new extension of Nduta camp, which received new arrivals. We also constructed a school and a youth education centre. Additionally, we trained teachers and we played a key role in the Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA), which was conducted in the three camps by the end of 2017. The findings from the JENA will be published in March 2018.

In May 2017, we took over as the lead agency for camp management and water, sanitation and hygiene promotion

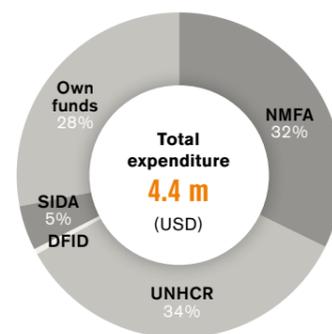
in Nyarugusu Camp, which hosts over 150,000 refugees. Our teams upgraded the existing water supply chain to provide camp residents with safe water. We constructed latrines, hand-washing facilities and waste management protocols.

Additionally, we distributed blankets, mosquito nets, kitchen utensils, hygiene kits

and promoted good hygiene practices through clean-up campaigns.

Towards the end of 2017, we piloted a community driven shelter project. We began involving the people we were helping in the construction of shelters to create a sense of ownership and to reduce costs and time. Our teams provided materials and technical supervision, while the communities executed the construction themselves. The project will be evaluated after the first phase is completed in 2018.

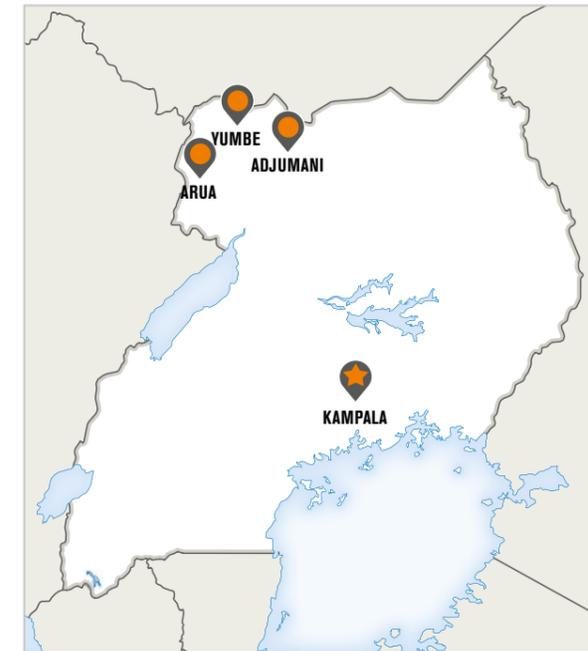
Overcrowding in camps makes it difficult to meet the breadth of needs. The Burundian influx at the end of 2016 and beginning of 2017 meant expanding an existing camp, which was done instead of providing viable land for additional camps. Moreover, there was not enough funding to provide basic services for people living in the extended part of the camp. In 2018, we will continue to increase awareness about the Burundian and Congolese refugee situations in Tanzania and urge the Tanzanian government to allocate viable land for new refugee camps.



NRC TANZANIA

Established:	2016
International staff:	3
National staff:	91
People in need:	316,641³
People assisted:	23,915

UGANDA



Humanitarian overview

Uganda is the largest refugee-hosting country on the African continent. By the end of 2017, the refugee population in Uganda was estimated at 1.3 million, with over 80 per cent of them women and children. More than one million have fled from South Sudan, over 240,000 from the Democratic Republic of Congo and the remainder coming from Burundi and Somalia.

Uganda has unique laws and regulations that promote the safety and well-being of refugees. They receive plots of land to build houses and grow crops. They have the right to free movement and work, to establish businesses and to access health care and education. However, the large number of refugees puts pressure on the state's infrastructure and the surrounding environment.

NRC's operation

As one of few organisations addressing the needs of children and youth in the West Nile region, we have worked to improve attendance rates in schools, especially among girls. We educated girls about menstruation issues and distributed sanitary towels to encourage them to attend school during their menstruation. We improved the learning

environment by constructing separate sanitation facilities for boys and girls, upgrading classroom structures and training teachers. The attendance rate in some schools rose from 42 per cent to 80 per cent.

Since 2014, we have offered an accelerated education programme (AEP), so children who have missed the chance to enrol in school can catch up. In 2017, we published a position

paper outlining our challenges, such as the need for a wider recognition of AEP as a resource in Uganda. In consortium with Save the Children, we work with government institutions to revise the AEP curriculum and create a harmonised approach across all partners. Additionally, our teams trained teachers and raised awareness in the community on the need for education.

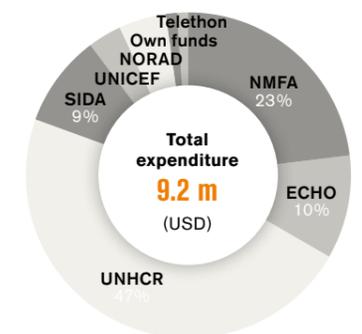
We expanded our work to the refugee settlements of Imvepi and Omugo in the West Nile, installing water and sanitation facilities, offering education and constructing semi-permanent shelters, classrooms and latrines. Our teams provided vocational training to youth, including classes on literacy, numeracy and skills such as cooking, sewing and agricultural know-how.

As the land currently assigned to refugee families is not sufficient to produce enough food, we pooled together groups of refugees and host communities who were willing to share land, while improving food production and living in peaceful co-existence. At the same time, we reduced the negative impact on the environment. For example, we used iron sheets for roofing instead of grass, as there is a shortage

of suitable grass in refugee hosting areas. We also provided moulds to make mud blocks instead of using clay for latrine construction.

In Kampala, we helped displaced people register as refugees and access identity documents like birth certificates. Our teams gave legal counselling and assisted people to claim their housing, land and property rights. We informed refugees about living conditions in their home countries, enabling them to make informed decisions about potential return.

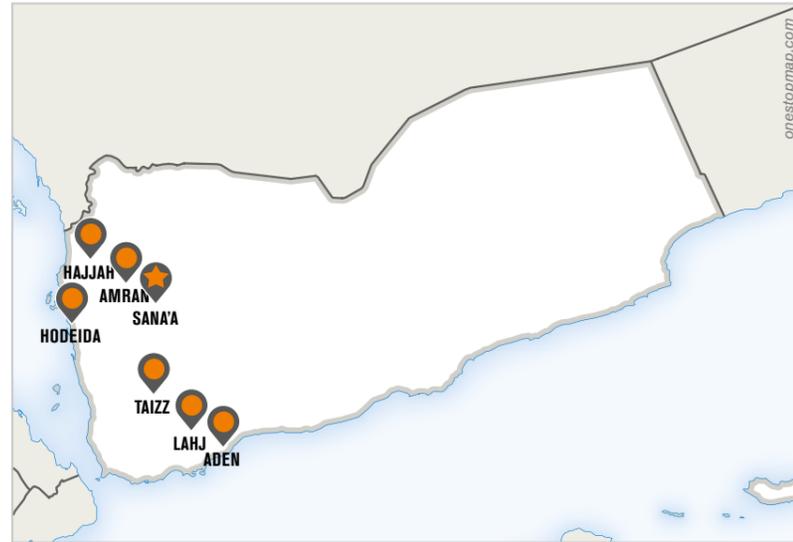
Uganda's friendly refugee policy allowed us to better link our humanitarian, recovery and development work and facilitated a closer cooperation with the government on improving services for both host communities and refugees. With the increased influx of refugees, our teams will expand to south-west and western Uganda. We will focus on providing life-saving assistance, but also assist people to become self-sufficient in Uganda or learn skills that will be essential upon their return.



NRC UGANDA

Established:	1997
International staff:	5
National staff:	85
People in need:	1,398,991⁴
People assisted:	130,072

YEMEN



Humanitarian overview

Yemen is currently one of the world's largest humanitarian crises. Entering 2017, two million Yemenis remained displaced from their homes, while 18.8 million were in need of humanitarian aid due to the conflict and economic crisis.

In November, the Saudi Arabia-led military coalition closed the ports in Hodeida, purportedly to stop weapons from reaching the Houthis, which the coalition has been fighting since 2015. Shipments of food, fuel and medicines were blocked. Meanwhile, the 2015 closure of Sana'a's international airport has left Yemenis stranded. Millions are food insecure and lack clean drinking water. A whole generation of either illiterate or poorly educated Yemenis is on the horizon, eroding the prospects for peace in the country.

NRC's operation

Damaged infrastructure, a crumbling economy and bureaucratic constraints continued to intensify the crisis and make it a challenge for humanitarian organisations, including our own, to reach out to people with lifesaving aid. We have, however, been one of the most vocal actors regarding the lifting of the blockade and our efforts contributed to increased international attention. Yemen's no-camp policy leaves displaced communities dispersed and sometimes difficult to identify. Many

live in dire conditions in open spaces, public buildings or congested situations with relatives or friends. We supported vulnerable families to establish secure, dignified places to live by giving cash grants to rent appropriate accommodation.

We provided people with food, vouchers, cash and larger grants to re-establish livelihoods, helping them to cover basic needs and reducing the risk of exploitation. Our teams gave monthly cash grants, allowing families to choose what type of food they would eat. However, the needs are huge and ever growing. Cash transfers should run for a minimum of six months.

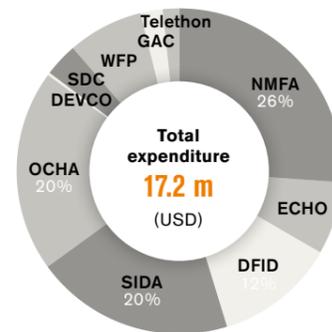
As our resources were limited, we were only able to provide cash grants over a period of three to five months. Additionally, dramatic inflation in the latter half of 2017 threatened the stability of markets required for food vouchers. We responded to the inflation by raising the value of our cash assistance and working with local food suppliers to change contracts according to market prices.

Lack of clean water, inadequate sanitation facilities and poor hygiene practices contributed to a high incidence of epidemic disease through the year. A cholera outbreak claimed the lives of 2,200 people. Despite the urgency,

the authorities were reluctant to allow access to the cholera-affected communities. Much later, as the epidemic evolved, we were allowed to enter, but access to communities remained highly regulated. To prevent disease, our teams provided clean water, water-pumping equipment and latrines.

We distributed chlorine-based water treatment tablets, hygiene kits and promoted good hygiene practices in collaboration with community volunteers. To respond more rapidly to the next cholera outbreak and other emergencies, we will negotiate with the authorities for expanded access and work to increase our flexible funding as this enables a faster response to unforeseen challenges.

With more than 1,800 schools damaged or destroyed in Yemen, our education programme aimed to ensure that children keep going to school. We rehabilitated and constructed classrooms, trained teachers, distributed school materials and provided sanitary kits to girls. In 2017, we expanded our education activities to reach conflict-affected communities in the Lahj and Hodeida governorates and we hope to expand these programmes further in 2018.



NRC YEMEN

Established:	2012
International staff:	14
National staff:	111
People in need:	18.8 m
People assisted:	762,531

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

THE CARNAGE IN YEMEN MUST END

Our organisation condemned, in the strongest possible terms, the killing of civilians in airstrikes on a residential neighbourhood in Yemen's largest city, Sana'a, in August 2017.

Ali Mansour lost his brother, sister-in-law and five nieces when heavy airstrikes hit Sana'a, Yemen's largest city. He was on the phone with his brother during the attacks and was disconnected. Following the fifth strike, Ali drove to check on his brother's family and found their home destroyed. "I was searching in the rubble for more than 14 hours before we found my brother's body," he said.

"Among those killed in last night's airstrike are children and elderly people with no interest or role in this war," Suze van Meegen, our Protection and Advocacy Advisor in Yemen, explained.

"Influential governments can stop this carnage immediately, but what they're doing instead is fuelling the fire that is destroying an entire nation."

During 2017, we spoke out about the humanitarian deterioration in Yemen, and we condemned all attacks on civilians and the blockade of crucial aid. Our advocacy work increased international attention and scrutiny, prompting more public statements and more international media interest. We also saw a slight shift in donor rhetoric and small concessions on imports through Hodeida Port.

When the attacks happened in August, we sent an open letter to the UN, US and UK expressing grave concern about the worsening humanitarian situation in Yemen. In the letter, NRC's Secretary General Jan Egeland called for immediate action: "In Yemen, we see a senseless internal conflict fuelled by regional powers, and aggravated by blockades and sanctions that are causing the collapse of a whole society."



Ali lost his brother, sister-in-law and five nieces during heavy airstrikes on a residential area of Sana'a in August 2017.

AMERICAS



Political turmoil, conflict and violence continued to displace people and leaving millions in need of humanitarian aid and protection.

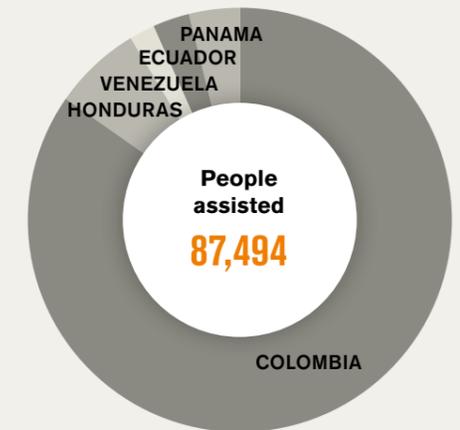
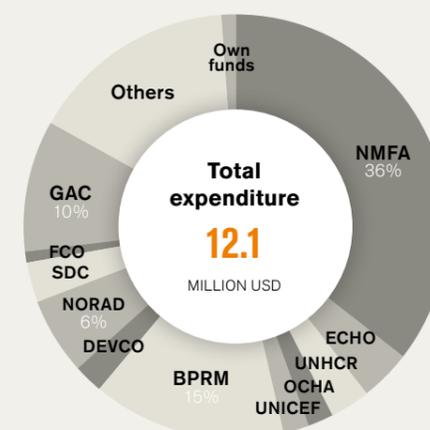
Despite the peace agreement in Colombia and a new phase of return and re-integration, violence in the Americas continued to force people to flee, and humanitarian needs remained. In Venezuela, rising general violence and malnutrition have displaced an estimated 1.5 million Venezuelans and is increasingly affecting its neighbouring countries. The deteriorating situations in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, also known as the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA), persists, with massive criminal gang violence. However, the humanitarian needs in Colombia and the NTCA region are not sufficiently acknowledged, either financially or politically, by donors and humanitarian agencies, who either pull out too soon or, as in NTCA, do not recognise the humanitarian needs.

We are increasing our activities in Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Venezuela and the NTCA, responding to both emergency needs, return and re-integration. Our teams raise awareness about the humanitarian suffering resulting from generalised violence and will continue to advocate for increased funding and respect for rights.



For many displaced Colombians, there's not enough room for them at local schools. NRC improves school facilities and support education.

Main activities:



COLOMBIA



Humanitarian overview

In the year after Colombia ratified the peace agreement with the former guerrilla movement the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), violence still forced people to leave their homes. Over seven million people have been displaced, and in 2017, armed conflict and the activities of illegal groups caused more than 139,000 people to flee. Rights defenders, indigenous people and Afro-Colombian leaders faced threats, killings and violence, amounting to over 70 per cent of the displaced people in 2017.

In the shadow of the peace agreement between FARC and the Government of Colombia, other armed groups are competing for control over natural resources and drug trafficking routes in regions previously controlled by FARC. To include other armed groups in the peace process, the Government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army (ELN) initiated peace dialogues and reached an agreement on a temporary bilateral ceasefire in 2017. However, with the expiration of the ceasefire in January 2018, and the attacks that followed, it is unlikely that this dialogue will resume anytime soon.

The rapid deterioration of the political and economic situation in Venezuela caused increased displacement flow into Colombia, where an estimated 600,000 Venezuelans have entered since 2014.

NRC's operation

We have focused on rebuilding the lives of people displaced long-term and victims of the conflict. We collaborated with these communities, allowing them to define their needs and decide how to best assist them. Additionally, we continued to help newly displaced people. When massive internal displacement occurred throughout the year in the Pacific area, our emergency teams distributed food and temporary shelters.

We helped more people who faced restricted mobility due to ongoing armed conflict in their areas. After receiving permission from local communities and admittance from armed

groups, we worked in areas that we had not been able to reach earlier.

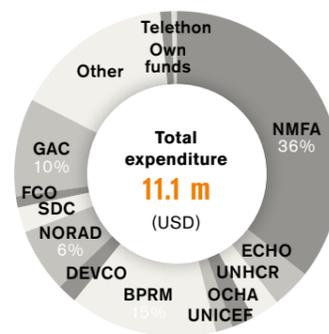
Our teams provided accelerated education to former FARC soldiers and out-of-school children and youth. We regularly met with community members, victims of the conflict and local leaders to ensure our impartial and neutral position in supporting the implementation of peace agreements. We provided alternative and flexible models to help displaced children complete their education and to support youth find safe work opportunities. We built temporary classrooms, trained teachers and distributed learning materials. We spoke up about the importance of a rural and ethnic educational model to achieve peace. Our recommendations were included in the National Education Ministry's Special Plan for Rural Education, aiming to reduce the gap between urban and rural education.

By law, displaced people in Colombia have the right to recover the land and homes they lost due to the armed conflict. Our teams helped victims of forced eviction to access land and housing by obtaining legal documentation. We visited communities and individuals to inform them on how to access social programmes and how to limit risks of being evicted. To create lasting change, we assisted and trained public officials in local and national institutions responsible for ensuring the rights of displaced people.

Our regional refugee programme in Panama, Venezuela and Ecuador



assisted Colombians who transited the border, in addition to recently displaced Venezuelans. We provided cash to meet their basic needs and legal assistance to help people gain refugee status and property documentation.



NRC COLOMBIA

Established:	2005
International staff:	3
National staff:	186
People in need:	4.9 m⁵
People assisted:	72,038

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

THE PEOPLE THE PEACE FORGOT

“We are afraid, because if they can kill one of our leaders, they can easily kill one of us,” said Anancio Roja.

In October 2017, Anancio Roja fled with his wife and children from their home to the village of Catrú in Colombia's Chocó region. The 33 year old is part of the indigenous group called Embera. His people have lived in this area for generations. Over the years, however, they have been displaced several times. They fled once again, when an armed group killed one of their community leaders.

Although Colombia reached a milestone with the 2016 peace agreement between the Government and the FARC armed group, conflict has continued, or even intensified in some areas, since FARC laid down its arms. Many groups wish to control these areas because of their natural resources and drug trafficking routes.

“This is the second time we flee. Both times we have come here, where we have friends and relatives,” Roja explained. He does not know for how long they will have to stay.

“That is a collective decision for the community to make,” he said.

“The government must protect us and let us know what will happen to us. We want justice.”

NRC helps displaced Colombians rebuild their lives and speaks up for their rights.



Anancio Roja and his wife Melida Isabaré, fled after one of their community's leaders was killed.

Photo: Ana Karina Delgado Diaz/NRC

HONDURAS



Humanitarian overview

Organised crime and gang violence has created a humanitarian crisis in Honduras. Many have fled after refusing to sell their land to criminal groups or to keep their children safe from gang recruitment and violence. The country's 190,000 internally displaced people live in slums or informal shelters in big cities. They lack essential services, education and income opportunities. While the internal displacement takes place in a situation not formally recognised as an armed conflict, the impact on the lives of those affected is no less devastating.

As the only country in the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA) the government of Honduras recognises internal displacement. Because of violence and the government's inability to protect the population, many have fled the country. 54,000 Hondurans, a record number, requested asylum from January to June of 2017, most of them continuing north to Mexico and the United States, or to Costa Rica and Panama.

En route, those displaced are at risk of being threatened, killed, tortured, recruited and abused. Those who are repatriated are subject to the same risks they faced upon their initial departures. The lack of protection upon return to Honduras forces many to leave the country again.

NRC's operation

In Honduras' most violent areas, an average of one child per family is not going to school. We assisted many of these out-of-school children re-enrol while working together with the Honduran Secretary of Education to provide flexible education models and assisting children to register for public education. We set up study groups for a duration of three to four months, preparing children to go back to school. Our educational teams taught them about personal safety, with subjects about human rights, citizen participation, conflict resolution and self-esteem. Around 66 per cent of the children who attended our educational courses have returned to school.

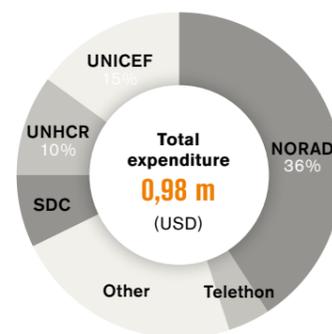


Over 48,000 Hondurans were deported from the USA to Honduras in 2017. We gave legal support to deported Hondurans about obtaining civil documentation such as birth certificates and national identity documents and how to access social services offered by the state or UNHCR. Because the people we assisted often needed help to cover their basic needs, we provided cash, which was used to rent safe accommodation, buy food or access healthcare. Additionally, we supported Hondurans fleeing to Costa Rica and Panama with legal advice on their housing, land and property rights. The support was provided when the beneficiaries were in Panama or when deported back to Honduras.

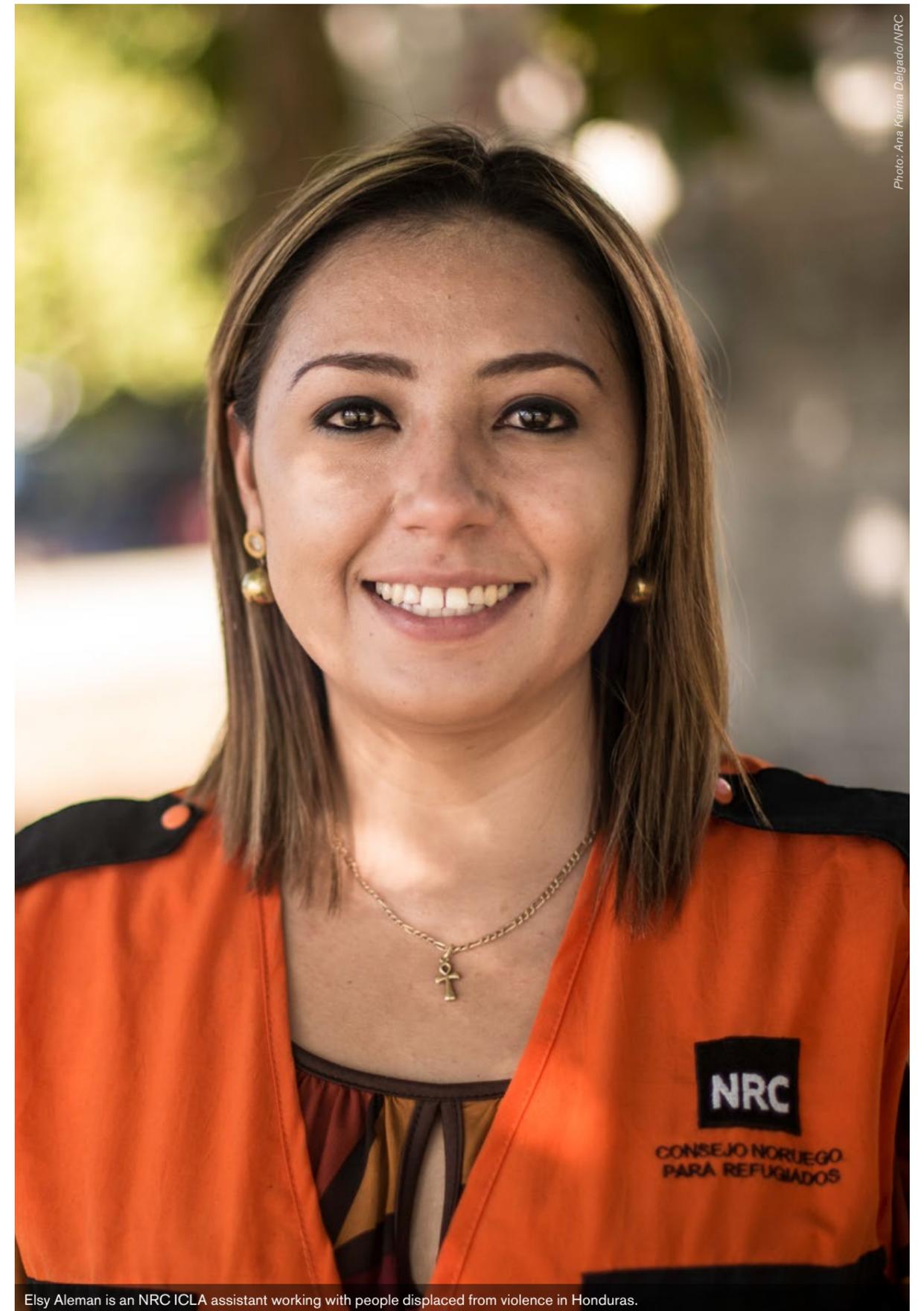
To create lasting change, we continued our work to strengthen the government's capacity to protect its citizens by developing a legal framework. Honduran authorities requested our knowledge and experience on working with the internally displaced. Our recommendations about giving access to legal identification procedures for displaced people and making school transfers take place quickly and efficiently, were included in the Ombudsman report.

The NTCA is a neglected displacement crisis. El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala had more than one forcibly displaced person per every ten

inhabitants by the end of 2016, the same rate as Afghanistan, Colombia and Iraq. Our presence and expertise as an organisation specialised in conflict-driven displacement is therefore vital. In 2018, we will expand our work on education and legal services in Honduras, continue our work on education in El Salvador and assess further expansion to Guatemala, Mexico and Costa Rica.



NRC HONDURAS	
Established:	2014
International staff:	1
National staff:	12
People in need:	2.9 m ⁶
People assisted:	5,724



Elsy Aleman is an NRC ICLA assistant working with people displaced from violence in Honduras.

Photo: Ana Karina Delgado/NRC

ASIA



Conflicts continued to cause massive displacements in the region. Afghans have sought refuge in neighbouring Iran and Pakistan, as well as Europe and within their own borders. Unrest in Myanmar led many to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh.

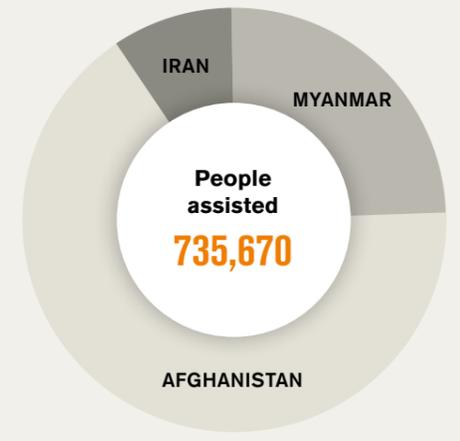
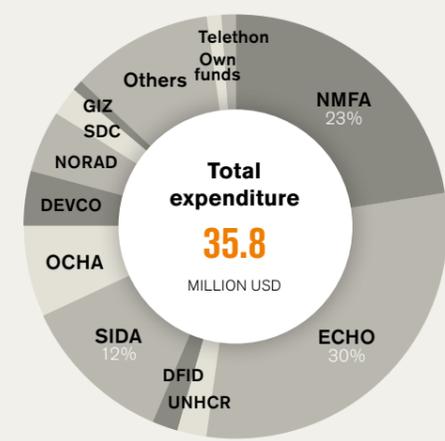
Along with other NGOs, we established an Afghan Displacement and Solutions Platform (ADSP), aiming to help displaced Afghans access their rights and meet their needs across Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. The ADSP will conduct research, promote policy changes and build capacity and coordination among organisations and stakeholders. The platform aims to support transitional programmes that will pave the way for lasting solutions in the future.

We assisted displaced people in Myanmar insofar as we were allowed to enter conflict areas. In Bangladesh, the capacity of local organisations was overstretched after the influx of refugees from Myanmar.

We faced challenges in securing registration in Pakistan and Bangladesh, with our teams having submitted the needed documentation and follow up to complete the administrative process. Meanwhile, in Bangladesh, we provide some assistance in collaboration with partner organisations. Upon registration, we plan to provide education in emergencies and camp management, two sectors with great needs.



Main activities:



AFGHANISTAN



Humanitarian overview

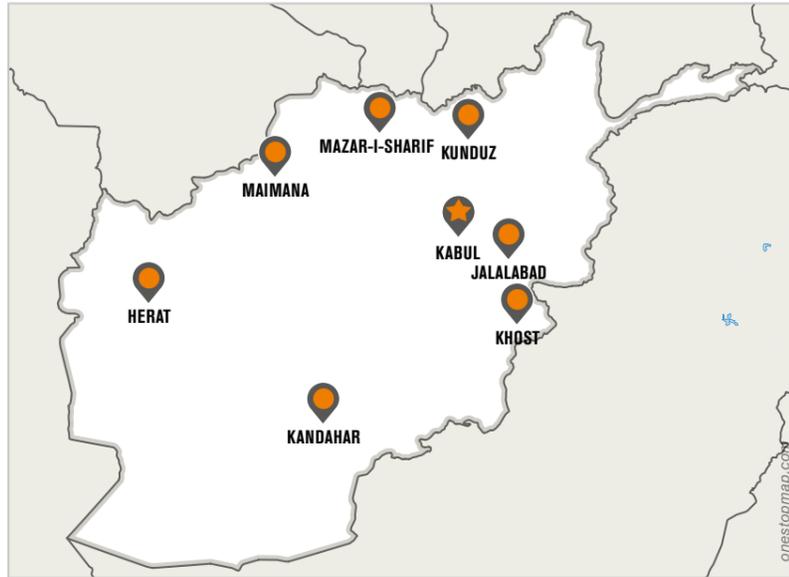
Afghanistan has been in an active state of war since its revolution in 1978. Over the past five years, the numbers of civilian deaths has climbed again, and Afghans fleeing their homes due to armed conflict has increased five-fold. In 2017, the UN reclassified Afghanistan from 'post-conflict' to 'active conflict'.

In Iran and Pakistan, generations of Afghans have grown up in exile. Each year, hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees spontaneously go back or are forced to return from these neighbouring countries. Seven out of ten Afghan refugees who return home are forced to flee again due to violence. More than 1.5 million Afghans are internally displaced. In addition to conflict, disasters like earthquakes and floods force many to flee. Conflict, potential risk of reprisal and bureaucratic impediments are the largest barriers for our teams to reach the most vulnerable people.

NRC's operation

In the aftermath of disaster and episodes of violence, we gave emergency assistance to internally displaced Afghans and Pakistani refugees. We helped them recover sooner by preventing distress sales of their assets, avoiding deep levels of debt or early child marriage.

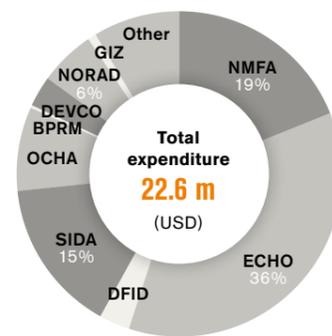
Our teams assisted displaced families to find permanent shelter in places where the effects of long-term displacement have taken hold. We eased the barriers to obtaining legal identity documents and helped clear the path for youth to acquire primary education. Our teams trained teachers and offered informal education to out-of-school children so they could catch up with their peers. Additionally, we helped people start or expand businesses and distributed cash so vulnerable families could buy their own food. We made sure schools had safe drinking water and provided families with latrines. Thousands of people displaced by conflict in Afghanistan do not have access to essential services, formal justice, education or land because they lack the national identity card called 'Tazkera'.



Our experts visited communities, held group trainings and provided individual counselling to help people claim and receive the 'Tazkera'. With this document, they can open bank accounts, apply for formal jobs, legally rent accommodation and buy property.

We advised people who have been forced to flee about their housing, land and property (HLP) rights. This was important, particularly for women, who face many barriers in owning and inheriting property. We were the only organisation in Afghanistan to work for widespread acceptance of women's HLP rights. We published a report finding that women spend most time within shelters, but were not properly consulted in the construction and maintenance process. As a result, we engaged more closely with women to obtain their views. We built an all-female shelter team to make sure women and children could access appropriate shelter with safe bedrooms and sanitation facilities. Our all-female shelter team helped homeless, displaced widows and female-headed families living in the informal settlements of Kabul. They reached conservative societies and served as role models showing that women can also be breadwinners. In 2018, we plan to expand the all-female model to Herat and Mazar.

In some areas, like Uruzgan, there are large pockets of displaced people with great needs. Through negotiations, we succeeded in reaching the population there, and our direct contact enables close monitoring of the quality of our assistance. This is important given the limited number of actors providing support in this area, complexity of the situation and the fact that local capacities are over-stretched.



NRC AFGHANISTAN

Established:	2003
International staff:	22
National staff:	1,389
People in need:	9.3 m
People assisted:	382,739

IRAN



Humanitarian overview

For more than three decades, Iran has hosted one of the largest and most long-term displaced populations in the world. Out of the about three million Afghans living in Iran, less than 45 per cent hold legal documentation.

While the government allows registered refugees access to some public health services, they have limited opportunities to produce a livelihood. Displaced Afghans in Iran face substantial challenges in obtaining and maintaining their legal status, and their ability to access civil documentation such as birth or marriage certificates and Afghan national IDs.

Natural disasters including earthquakes, recurring floods, droughts and landslides frequently occur across the country. In November 2017, a 7.3 magnitude earthquake struck Kermanshah province, leaving 270,000 people in urgent need of assistance.

NRC's operation

NRC distributed unconditional cash to vulnerable families and gave advice to help them prioritise their most urgent needs. We provided legal counselling to people in their efforts to obtain work permits and securing residency. Our teams visited people in their homes and met them in administrative centres to distribute bankcards and provide guidance to family members. Most families spent the money on meeting their immediate and most critical needs. As co-chair of the Cash Working Group, we held training sessions with cash assistance experts aiming to develop the knowledge and skills of humanitarian organisations in Iran on this topic.

A decree granting all Afghan children in Iran, regardless of their legal status, access to education has led to increased enrolment. Public schools, however, have limited capacity to integrate this new group of students. To help more children go to school, we rehabilitated and equipped classrooms, constructed one new school and distributed educational materials such as books and science kits. Our teams installed water purifiers to make

sure children have access to safe drinking water. Through the Ministry of Education, we offered accelerated education programmes for children who needed a catch up programme to re-enter school. Our educational activities promoted social cohesion for both Afghan and Iranian children and their parents.

Through a combination of courses in life skills, literacy and numeracy for Afghan families, the parents, in particular, have improved their skills and helped create a positive learning environment for their children, while prioritising their education.

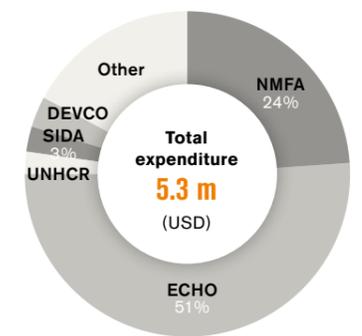
We assisted Afghans to learn vocational skills in different fields such as tailoring, electrician courses and computer skills, enabling those who complete to earn an income both while in displacement and upon their safe returns.

The majority of Afghans in Iran live outside of settlements and in urban areas. This renders the most vulnerable populations hard-to-reach, and many cannot access timely information that is critical to meeting their needs. In 2017, we began to rehabilitate and construct three community centers. One is already functional and the other two will open in 2018. They will serve as hubs for services that include education courses, training for income generation, as well as provision of information and counselling for Afghans.

Following the earthquake in Kermanshah province, our teams provided tents, installed latrines and distributed needs-based cash to families



to help confront the harsh winter conditions. We also worked to upgrade schools and help restart education activities in earthquake affected towns and villages.



NRC IRAN

Established:	2012
International staff:	7
National staff:	52
People in need:	3.6 m⁷
People assisted:	54,076

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Afghan schoolchildren and their Iranian peers feel the excitement of a new school year.

On September 23rd, which was the first day of autumn, schoolgirls and boys throughout Iran began a new year of studies. Over the past three years, Iranian public schools have opened their doors to Afghan children without legal documentation, who would otherwise not have the right to attend school.

Eleven-year-old Arezoo is enthusiastic and hopeful on the first day of another school year. She lives in Dasht-e-Zahmatkeshan, a settlement in Kerman province in south-east Iran. This year she'll be in the fifth grade and is excited to reunite with her friends.

"Learning is better than anything in the world," she said, repeating several times how valuable studying is for her.

"I know of others who haven't been able to learn anything, who haven't been to school. They feel very sad."

More than half of the world's refugee population are school-aged children. They are five times more likely to be out of school than non-refugee children.

In Iran, most Afghan children have the advantage of speaking, reading and writing the same language as their Iranian classmates. Farsi, Iran's official language, and Dari, the language spoken by the majority of Afghans, are very similar. In Kerman province, over 30,000 Afghan schoolchildren attend class together with their Iranian classmates. To enable more children to go to school, we have rehabilitated school buildings and classrooms, and provided sports equipment and educational kits.



Second grade Afghan and Iranian schoolgirls sit side by side at Kowsar School, near Kerman city.

MYANMAR



Humanitarian overview

Internal conflicts led by ethnic groups struggling for power have afflicted Myanmar since the country's independence. Armed clashes, chronic underdevelopment and natural disasters have destroyed homes, livelihoods, health and education facilities.

The vast majority of internally displaced people have extremely limited freedom of movement in Myanmar, resulting in dire conditions and inadequate access to health services, work and education. By the same token, the international humanitarian community has very limited access to deliver assistance and protection to them.

In August 2017, violence in Rakhine State caused over 600,000 people to flee across the borders into Bangladesh. The situation in northern Rakhine State remains perilous and uncertain for those who remained behind.

NRC's operation

When fighting escalated in Kachin and Shan States, resulting in the displacement of thousands of people, our teams distributed temporary shelters, sleeping mats, kitchen sets and solar lamps while responding with emergency education activities to protect children. We distributed e-vouchers to help more displaced children and youth access education. E-vouchers enabled them to choose what necessary items to buy, such as clothes, stationary and toiletries, and to continue their education despite the emergency. The e-vouchers were extremely popular as it gave both a choice and dignity to the people we helped.

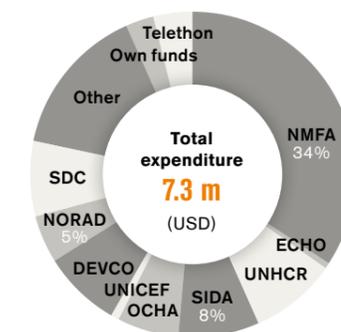
We continued our work with youth in southeast Myanmar. Through mobile training courses, we equipped them with life skills, as well as practical skills that are useful in the local market, such as food preparation and processing, tailoring and small machine maintenance. By identifying niches in the market, we can better match our training to fit the realities on the ground. This enhances the chances of employment after courses are completed and provides

youth with additional protective skills.

In Rakhine State, decades of tensions have boiled over and split Muslim and Buddhist communities. Muslim minorities have been denied citizenship, many live in camps or have been forced to flee. Our teams helped people both in camps and in the surrounding communities to decrease tensions. In camps, we distributed shelters, education kits and promoted good hygiene practices. Outside of camps, we rehabilitated schools and worked on issues of housing land and property to improve the relationships between displaced people and the host communities.

We strove to meet the needs of populations that were badly affected by natural disasters. When cyclone Mora reached Rakhine State, our teams helped camps and host communities to re-build infrastructure, provided kits for preparing clean drinking water and distributed household items like clothes and stoves.

Humanitarian access is a major problem for all actors in Myanmar. Often, we do not have a clear picture of people's needs, as the authorities restrict our movement and activity. For instance, the international community was only granted limited movement to conflict areas when displacement escalated in northern Rakhine. In March, we were able to establish a new office there, in Maungdaw, as one of few organisations present. We collaborated with communities and local authorities to ramp up our operation and help more people in the region. However, with the violent events in August we had to reduce our activities due to lack of access. We will scale up our activities, once again, when the authorities allow us to work in the area.



NRC MYANMAR

Established:	2008
International staff:	17
National staff:	313
People in need:	525,000
People assisted:	143,653

EUROPE



Although people continued to seek refuge throughout the continent, European governments took further steps to close their borders. Forced returns and detention were common. Incidents of xenophobia and discrimination continued to rise.

To stem this shift, our organisation took steps at the country and regional levels. Our report, *The Reality of the EU-Turkey Statement*, exposed the damaging impact European policies were having on vulnerable people by eroding protection for refugees. We advocated for more dignified reception conditions in Greece and rented apartments to improve accommodation there. In Ukraine, our teams did advocacy and media work on the loss of pensions and the need for compensation for internally displaced people (IDPs) due to destroyed property. With severe restrictions on humanitarian access in non-governmental controlled areas, our support to those communities living close to the 'contact line' has been critical to their sustenance.

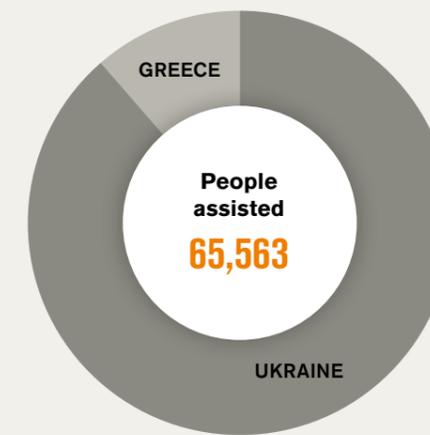
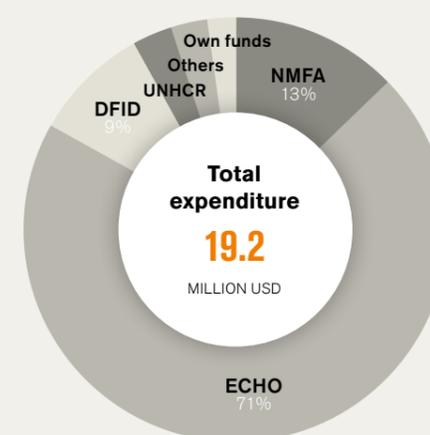
Our representation office in Brussels regularly met with representatives from the European Commission and other policy makers to advocate for the protection and support of refugees and the internally displaced. Advocacy served as a central tool in improving the quality of our help and ensuring the rights of displaced people.



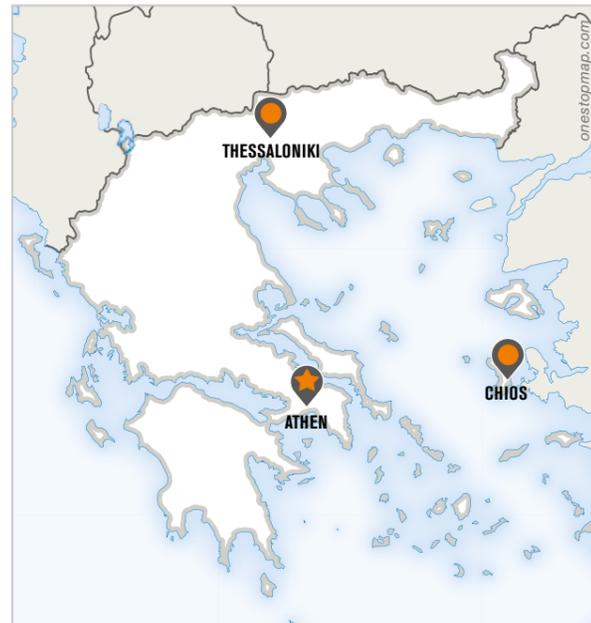
Sekou Kumara (right), 18, sits at the front of his English class in Thessaloniki, Greece as teacher Vassilis Papadopoulos looks on.

Photo: Maria Gouraridou/NRC

Main activities:



GREECE



Humanitarian overview

In 2016, with border closures and the EU-Turkey statement, the number of people entering Greece fell significantly, yet the following year approximately 50,000 people were still stranded in the country, with few opportunities for onward travel. In 2017, nearly 30,000 people made the sea crossing to the Greek islands from Turkey.

On the islands, people have been trapped in deplorable conditions and many have had only limited access to adequate asylum procedures. The facilities for accommodating refugees and asylum seekers on the islands are severely overcrowded.

Refugee camps were opened in new locations, including the main urban centres of Athens and Thessaloniki. Many were originally industrial warehouses and unsuitable for habitation. By the end of the year, several of these camps had been closed.

NRC's operation

In the first half of 2017, we assisted Greek authorities on Chios with running accommodation sites. Our teams provided informal education and pre-cooked meals to vulnerable people and distributed household items like diapers

and clothes. In July, we ended our activities on the island after funding ceased and the government took over. We shifted our focus to our response efforts in Thessaloniki and urged the authorities to house asylum seekers in apartments on the mainland with utility connections, rather than rapidly constructed, temporary facilities. At the end of the year, the transfer of asylum seekers from the

islands to the mainland increased. We rented apartments to help vulnerable refugee families obtain suitable housing. As the overall situation changed and the tenants did not proceed to third-countries for resettlement, the initially short-term solution became long-term. This enhanced the apparent need to plan for and negotiate contingency interventions.

Since the beginning of our operation, we have helped improve capacity and coordination within the camps. Our teams established standard operating procedures for camp activities and trained volunteer groups. To inform camp residents on available services, we held awareness campaigns and focus group discussions. We upgraded and maintained infrastructure like water and sanitation facilities and prepared camps for the winter.

Our staff helped refugees and migrants integrate into Greek society. We opened two information centres that provide language classes and recreational activities. Our education teams taught Greek, English and Arabic as well as math, science and IT.

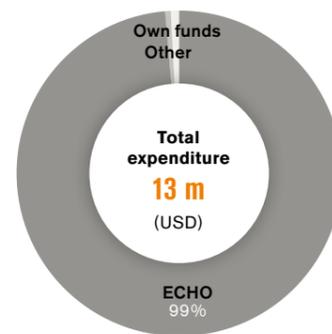
As refugee youth are highly adept with mobile technology, we also piloted a

project with online learning using tablets. This targeted young people aged 15 to 25, allowing them to continue their education wherever they are and tailored to their individual needs.

We spoke up for a coordinated response to humanitarian needs, but also the international community's responsibility to ensure human rights and refugee protection. Our team published a report on the shortcomings of the EU-Turkey agreement, a so-called temporary measure to stop irregular migration to Europe. One of the main findings was that refugees on the Greek islands did not receive sufficient legal counselling and assistance.

Additionally, we wrote a joint report concluding that youth lacked education, healthcare and jobs. As a result, we joined forces with other international NGOs to better understand gaps in the provision of services and design better programmes for youth.

We are an emergency focused organisation and will, in 2018, cease activities after a coordinated handover of key operations to other organisations securing long-term assistance.



NRC GREECE

Established:	2015
International staff:	3
National staff:	132
People in need:	49,927⁸
People assisted:	6,919

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

ONCE A DROPOUT, NOW A TEACHER

The Syrian war has turned many lives upside down. For Douaa Sakhnini, it has also reversed traditional gender roles.

At 18 years old, Douaa Sakhnini got married. At 19, she enrolled in university. At 20, she had her first child and dropped out to become a full-time mother. She watched with envy as her friends graduated and got jobs.

Then the Syrian war changed everything. Her five-year-old niece and two uncles were killed. She began teaching her daughters at home because going to school was too dangerous. The source of her husband's livelihood, a taxi, was destroyed by debris from a collapsing building. Then they lost their home.

At 27, she and her family fled Syria for Turkey and, after repeated attempts, made it to Greece.

"Anywhere is better than my country," Sakhnini answered when asked where the family thought they would go when they left Syria. The only thing she wanted was "something

safer, somewhere where there is work."

In Greece, Sakhnini's experience teaching her daughters helped her find work with NRC. The job makes Sakhnini the sole breadwinner for her family, teaching Arabic, maths, science and art to as many as 18 children. Her husband, she says, is happy someone is working. And so is she. It is her first-ever job. Teaching the children has rekindled her own goals and dreams. She would like to finish university.

Among the students are Sakhnini's daughters: nine-year-old Tharwat and seven-year-old Sara. They live in a room with two beds, crowded with toys, games and drawings. Tharwat wants to be a doctor, a dream that Sakhnini didn't have a chance to pursue. She's hopeful for her daughters.

"They can be what they want to be because now, they are free."



Douaa Sakhnini with her daughter Sara. Sakhnini had to drop out of university when she became a mother, but as a refugee in Greece, she has become the breadwinner for her family.

UKRAINE



Humanitarian overview

The armed conflict in eastern Ukraine has remained unresolved despite diplomatic efforts and numerous cease-fire agreements. Throughout 2017, hostilities occurred regularly along the contact line where the government controlled areas (GCA) meet the non-government controlled areas (NGCA). Over four million people have been affected by the conflict and almost 11,000 killed.

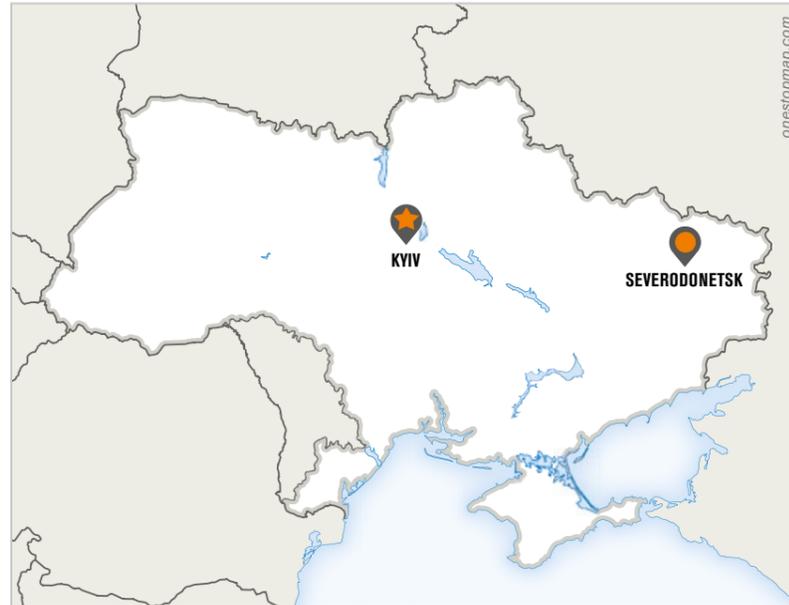
Entering 2017, 1.65 million people were internally displaced. Many Ukrainians, especially those along the frontlines, are facing a lack of basic services. Employment is scarce, medical care is difficult to access, and many do not have adequate food, shelter or heating. Although freedom of movement remains a challenge, an estimated one million civilians travel between the GCA and the NGCA every month to access markets, health care and social payments.

NRC's operation

Our programmes enable vulnerable Ukrainians to cover their basic needs. But as displacement becomes protracted, we have also begun to contribute to long-lasting solutions.

Our teams provided free legal assistance and counselling, helping to navigate access to civil documentation such as birth certificates and resumption of pensions and other social payments. We operated three legal aid centres, organised group information sessions and offered legal counselling through a telephone hotline and social media. We made home visits and dispatched mobile teams of lawyers along the contact line and at the entrance/exit checkpoints between GCA and NGCA. Additionally, we conducted research and advocated on rights and entitlements of displaced civilians. For example, we helped thousands of people claim and receive their pensions and social benefits, which is their primary source of income.

Our shelter teams strove to make sure that displaced Ukrainians had roofs over their heads and that they had the basic household items they needed.

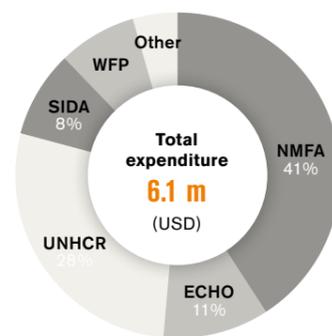


They provided emergency shelters, repaired community infrastructure, like hospitals and schools, and equipped them with items such as water filters, washbasins, water pumps and water heaters. They helped prepare civilians for the cold winter temperatures with proper housing insulation and solid fuel for heating, as well as distributed hygiene kits for the most vulnerable people living in frontline communities.

We provided cash to communities living along the contact line, which they used to buy food and solid fuel for winter heating. Our teams also transferred cash to conflict-affected families, allowing them to choose how to repair their damaged houses. Cash based interventions played a positive role in development of local markets and restored the self-esteem of the people we helped. Cash transfers also shortened the response time and allowed us to provide efficient assistance that better addressed the needs of the people we serve.

We supported Ukrainians' self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods. Our teams provided cash for people to buy tools, seeds and fertilisers. We rehabilitated agricultural infrastructure, such as greenhouses and irrigation systems. Additionally, we provided small

business development grants to stimulate economic recovery. As a result, the local communities earned an additional income while providing better nutrition for social institutions like hospitals, schools and kindergartens. We will continue to help affected Ukrainians along the contact line and work to expand our services for civilians in the non-government controlled areas of eastern Ukraine.



NRC UKRAINE

Established:	2014
International staff:	8
National staff:	106
People in need:	3.8 m
People assisted:	53,960



Our livelihoods and food security team visiting a greenhouse in Valuiske, Ukraine.

MIDDLE EAST



Displacements in Syria and Iraq escalated, and the Israeli occupation of Palestine continued, deepening the protracted refugee and IDP crises across the region. Forced returns increased, and of those who returned home, many lacked safety and basic services.

2017 was another year of violence in the Middle East, and both Syria and Iraq saw many spikes in conflict. In Palestine, moves to annex land and threats to demolish Palestinian structures in the West Bank accelerated. Our teams continued to deliver life-saving assistance in the form of food, shelter, water and sanitation to the most vulnerable displaced people in hard-to-reach areas ravaged by the fighting. We further developed our partnerships with local organisations, enabling us to reach more people.

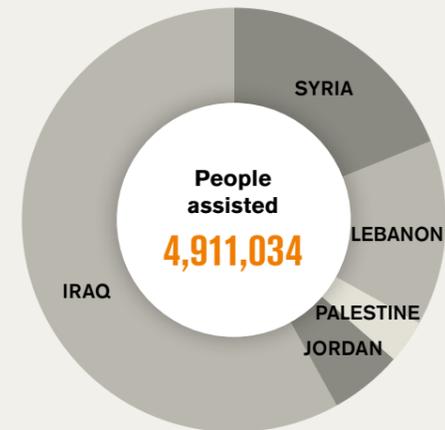
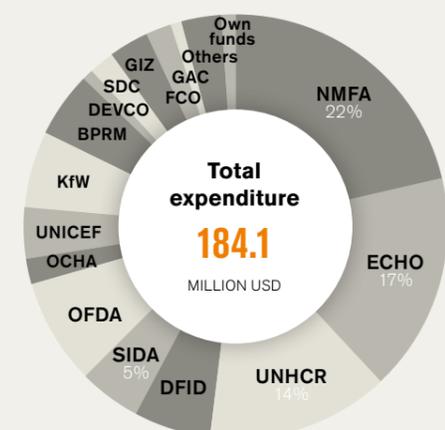
Simultaneously, we increased our effort to develop a regional approach to long-lasting solutions and established a regional unit for this purpose. The establishment of legal identity was identified as one of the greatest impediments to durable solutions to displacement as lack of civil documentation prevents people from accessing basic services, such as healthcare and education. We responded to this by helping people obtain such documents.

Our advocacy regarding humanitarian access, safe returns and durable solutions contributed to changes made in the aid responses in the region, government and donor policies and at the UN Security Council.



Syrian Abdel Aziz and his brother Naser live in Azraq refugee camp in Jordan.

Main activities:



IRAQ



Humanitarian overview

Conflict and economic stagnation have affected nearly every aspect of Iraqi society in the wake of the conflict with the so-called Islamic State (IS) group. In the first half of 2017, over 900,000 people were displaced as the government retook areas controlled by the IS group. The Kurdish independence referendum in September resulted in a military operation to regain control of disputed areas around Kirkuk. More than 100,000 people were forced to flee. At the end of the year, Iraqi authorities retook the last IS group-controlled territories in western Anbar.

Over the last two years, more than 3.2 million people returned to their districts of origin. For the first time since the conflict began, the number of people returning surpassed the 2.6 million who were internally displaced. However, people often returned to areas ravaged by conflict and lacking in basic services like water and electricity. The World Bank estimates that it will cost USD 88 billion to rebuild what has been destroyed. But even if these funds can be found, the government will face many challenges in rebuilding cities to ensure that people can return safely, when they are ready.

NRC's operation

NRC scaled up its emergency response because of increased displacement, particularly from Mosul. Around one million people fled the city during the military operation. We provided camp management, temporary shelter and distributed emergency supplies like food, water and hygiene items.

After the government retook IS group-controlled areas, we gradually shifted our focus from emergency response towards the returnee population's needs, to help them recover and rebuild. People returned to find their houses in ruins. We repaired and upgraded shelters, water networks and negotiated with landlords to formalise lease agreements and reduce fees. Our teams supported education initiatives for children traumatised by conflict, and we upgraded damaged schools in East Mosul.

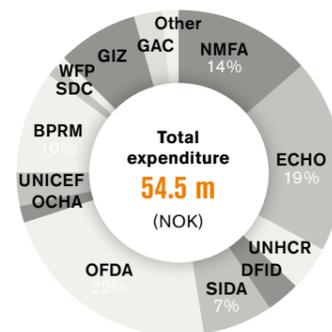
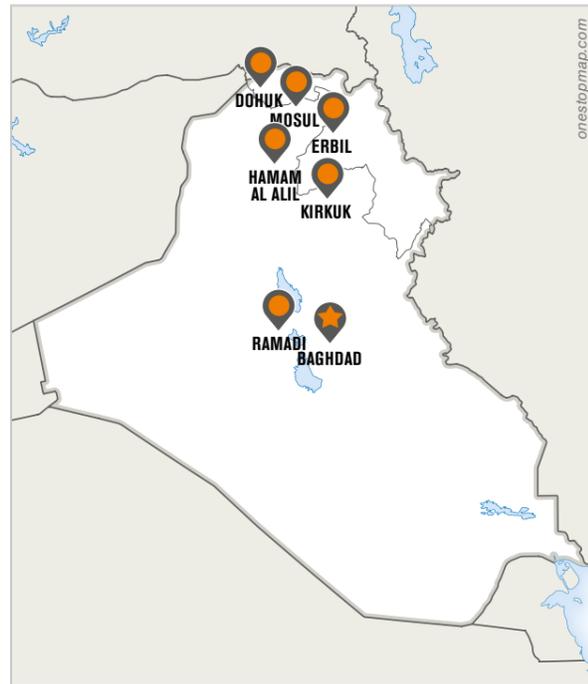
We also continued our work to support Syrian refugees in helping build a secondary school in Domiz camp.

We gave vulnerable families cash to buy food and pay rent. Cash is a short-term form of assistance and long-term benefits are not achieved unless these initiatives are combined with livelihood opportunities. We started implementing livelihood-oriented programmes and wish to expand them gradually.

In order to prevent the forced returns and evictions which we have witnessed, we spoke with national authorities, humanitarian partners, donors and diplomatic missions and the media. This resulted in numerous public statements and media articles.

Our organisation retains a prominent voice, highlighting the numbers of those who have fled and the conditions that they are living in. During the Hawija and Western Anbar offensives, we were one of the NGOs who strongly underlined the insufficient assistance available for the affected population. Our media work attracted broad coverage in international media outlets. We also continued our strong advocacy for voluntary returns of those who are able and willing to.

The UN estimates that, in 2018, one in four Iraqis will continue to need humanitarian assistance. Authorities keep insisting on people to return, often prematurely, while it is unsafe and they lack basic services and livelihood opportunities in their home areas. We will continue to advocate for the rights of displaced people in Iraq.



NRC IRAQ

Established:	2010
International staff:	65
National staff:	460
People in need:	11 m
People assisted:	2,044,731

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

FINDING HOPE IN EDUCATION

Mohamed fled from Mosul, where he had not attended school for two and a half years. He dreams of becoming a football player, or maybe a doctor.

Mohamed Mohseen, a 15-year-old boy from West Mosul, fled with his parents and eight siblings after the Islamic State (IS group) had taken over the city.

When we met him, he talked about how much he misses his home. "Before IS took over the city, we had redecorated the whole house," he said. "They destroyed it and we lost our car as well. Now we live here in a tent."

Like many other families from Mosul, Mohamed's family suffered from food shortages and bad drinking water while living under the control of the IS group. "The drinking water was not clean at all; it smelled really bad because the public water system was damaged."

Mohamed is one of many Iraqi children who have lost up to three years of formal education. "Before IS came, I had passed sixth grade. Then I was out of school for two and a

half years," he explained.

They fled from their neighbourhood and eventually ended up in Khazer camp, where he is attending school at NRC's support centre. "I feel thrilled to be back to school," Mohamed said with a smile on his face.

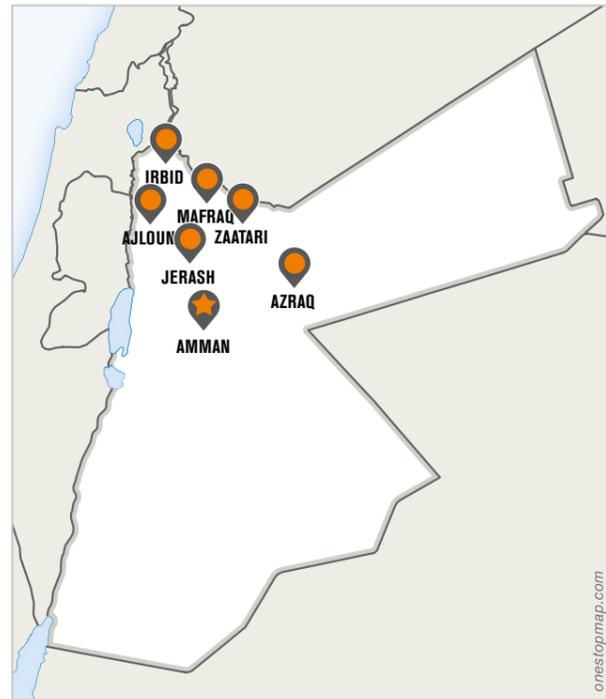
"I like the teachers here and my classmates as well." Still, he explained how much he misses his old school and the friends he had back home. "I loved all my teachers and my all-time favourite subjects in school are maths and Arabic grammar."

After school, he often plays football with his friends. "My dream is to play for one of the big football clubs in the world. I really like Real Madrid and Cristiano Ronaldo, I hope to see him one day," Mohamed said, and added, "Sometimes, I think I should just go to college and be a doctor."



Mohamed brought his schoolbooks and is ready for a class inside NRC's learning centre in Khazer camp, Iraq.

JORDAN



Humanitarian overview

Since the start of the Syrian crisis in 2012, Jordan has welcomed a large number of refugees fleeing the conflict. As of 2017, over 650,000 Syrians remain registered with UNHCR, but the Government of Jordan estimates that there are an additional 750,000 Syrian nationals in country. Four out of five Syrian refugees live outside camps in cities, towns and villages.

Many Syrian refugees in Jordan have depleted their own resources. They struggle to move freely in the country, provide for their families and access health care and education. Despite some progress in allowing Syrian refugees to engage in the formal workforce, the legal framework still imposes barriers. Refugees are often dependent on humanitarian aid, remain unemployed or find only informal working. An estimated 95 per cent of Syrian refugees live below the national poverty line, a twofold increase from 2014.

NRC's operation

Our operation acted as UNHCR's lead shelter and distribution partner in Zaatari and Azraq camps. We also

managed reception areas to ensure that new arrivals and returnees to the camp were welcomed in a safe environment.

Zaatari camp, home to around 80,000 Syrian refugees, turned five years old in 2017. We have given residents the opportunity to work as teachers, storekeepers or as maintenance staff. This stimulated the camp's economy and helped people sustain themselves.

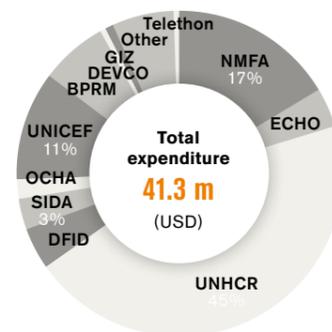
Our teams coached and financially supported youth initiated projects like repairing school furniture and making school uniforms. We enabled youth to make changes in their communities, resulting in increased wellbeing, confidence and independence.

People living outside of camps have struggled to find adequate housing. In northern Jordan, we provided safe shelters to the most vulnerable by renovating substandard buildings and completing semi-finished housing in exchange for rent reductions. We provided cash for rent to families under imminent threat of eviction. Media attention of these efforts led to wider acceptance of Syrian refugees.

A third of school-aged Syrian refugee children in Jordan remained out of school. Many public schools have reached their capacity and cannot accommodate more children. In Irbid, we built classrooms, sanitation facilities and playgrounds, allowing more students to attend school. We also trained teachers and principals to improve the quality of education and prevent dropouts.

Our teams arranged awareness sessions and gave legal advice and counselling on how to obtain civil documentation, register and access legal employment. We urged the Jordanian Government to legalise the status of over 20,000 Syrian refugees in their host communities and to allow Syrian refugee children without birth certificates to register as refugees. Those children can now register, reducing the risk of statelessness, family separation, trafficking and denial of services.

Our teams actively engaged with community based organisations (CBOs) in host communities to build local capacity and capitalise on existing resources. Collaborating with CBOs, we arranged a large-scale volunteer programme to train both Syrians and Jordanians to help us provide services and identify those who need support. As a result, we moved closer to the communities and increased the reach of our programme. We obtained feedback from the people we assisted on how we could improve our activities and adjusted our work accordingly, resulting in a more trustful relationship between our teams and the people we help.



NRC JORDAN

Established:	2012
International staff:	28
National staff:	562
People in need:	650,000⁹
People assisted:	187,907



A family put their NRC-issued gas heater and blankets to use in Azraq, Jordan.

Photo: Hussein Amri/NRC

LEBANON



Humanitarian overview

Lebanon has the highest number of refugees per capita in the world. The estimated 1.5 million Syrian refugees and almost 450,000 Palestinian refugees amount to over a third of Lebanon's total population. This puts pressure on public services and affects the country's demographic balance, at a time when its own political and economic stability is precarious.

Refugees from Syria are not considered refugees, but are treated under the Lebanese immigration law, depriving them of fundamental refugee rights. An estimated 75 per cent of Syrian refugees live below the national poverty line. The Lebanese government opposes creating formal camps, so refugees must find and pay for their own accommodation, either in urban areas or in informal settlements.

Due to a restrictive environment in Lebanon, refugees are increasingly likely to be pushed back to Syria before they can make an informed and voluntary decision.

NRC's operation

Our programme supports both displaced people and host communities in Lebanon. Across the country, we have worked to alleviate tension and promote social cohesion. For example, through projects that target communities hosting large numbers of refugees, we address issues around water and waste management. We also facilitate access to adequate housing for vulnerable refugee families through direct investment in the local housing market.

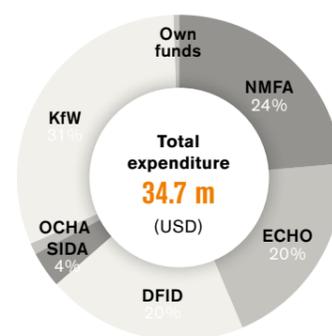
We responded when Syrians were displaced within the Bekaa valley following conflict and evictions, and after the armed conflict in the Ein El Helweh Palestinian camp. This included provision of emergency cash distributions and shelter repairs. While cash remains an appropriate first response for emergencies, it is insufficient to address the range of urgent needs faced by vulnerable families following relocation. We are now establishing systems to use post-distribution monitoring of emergency cash assistance to identify and target our follow-up programming, based on the specific needs and vulnerabilities of each family.

We helped Syrian children enrol in the formal education system, and provided learning support to reduce school dropout rates. To prepare out-of-school children for formal education, we offered classes in basic literacy and numeracy. During the autumn, we participated in the "Back to School" campaign, conducting door-to-door visits to ensure that all children, both Lebanese and non-Lebanese, would exercise their access to formal education.



Our mobile court reached refugees otherwise curtailed from accessing such services due to lack of freedom of movement. This has unblocked hundreds of marriage and birth registration files. We advocated for Syrian refugees to obtain legal residency and birth registration of new-borns. Our advocacy to change the rules requiring refugees to register the birth of their children within twelve months or face a difficult and expensive court procedure, has resulted in the Ministry of State for Refugee Affairs advancing the issue with other relevant line ministries in accordance with what we suggested. As a direct result of this advocacy, the cabinet has now formally requested that the Ministry of the Interior make the necessary changes. If this goes ahead, it will result in tens of thousands of children's births being registered.

There is a lot of pressure on Syrian refugees to return, illustrated most clearly by the restrictions imposed on refugees by municipalities, such as mass evictions, arrest and curfews. We have monitored eviction triggers and trends, and analysed the legality of the actions. This has resulted in increased scrutiny by the international community.



NRC LEBANON	
Established:	2006
International staff:	18
National staff:	475
People in need:	3.3 m ¹⁰
People assisted:	497,324

PALESTINE



Humanitarian overview

There are currently over five million Palestinian refugees spread across Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Many of the people displaced during the wars of 1948 and 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, have never been able to return. Israel's expansion of illegal settlements continues to force Palestinians off their land. They face revocation of residency, restrictions on their freedom of movement, discrimination, harassment and violence.

In 2017, the tenth year of the blockade of the Gaza strip, Israel continued to prevent free movement of goods and people in and out of Gaza. The situation has led to economic collapse, extremely high unemployment and critical shortages of essential services, including healthcare, clean water and sanitation, electricity and education. 80 per cent of the 2 million people in Gaza rely on some form of international aid. In the West Bank, more than 40 schools risk demolition to create space for illegal settlement expansion. Students face harassment and violence from both soldiers and settlers.



NRC's operation

Our team in Palestine employs experts specialising in legal assistance, shelter and education. We work with local actors to help Palestinians in the West Bank – including East Jerusalem and Gaza.

We provided information on housing, land and property rights, challenged discriminatory planning and zoning policies, and promoted women's rights to inheritance. Last year, there was a steady rise in the need for legal services, while the support from our donors decreased. To become more efficient, we focused our work on empowering local Palestinian and Israeli partner organisations, rather than hiring private lawyers. In the West Bank, we gave legal assistance to displaced people affected by eviction orders, land confiscation and settler violence. In Gaza, we helped Palestinians obtain necessary documents to prove their property ownership, enabling them to reconstruct their damaged houses.

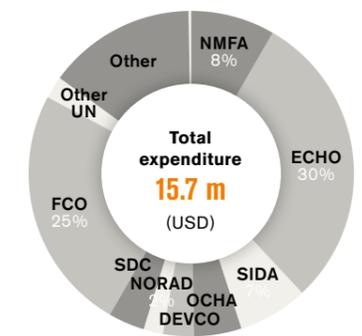
We helped repair buildings damaged during the 2014 conflict and gave cash support to vulnerable families to enable them to rebuild their homes.

Our teams worked with The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and government schools to provide quality education and decrease dropout rates. 79 per cent of children in the West Bank and 85 per cent in Gaza reported positive change in their social well-being. We continued to develop our Better Learning Programme (BLP), together with the University of Tromsø, to support children's recovery from the trauma of

conflict and displacement and improve their conditions for learning. We work closely with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to ensure that all schools eventually can implement BLP. We were selected to participate in a newly established consortium of education in emergency that will measure the outcomes of psychosocial learning programmes. We will use these findings to refine our approach.

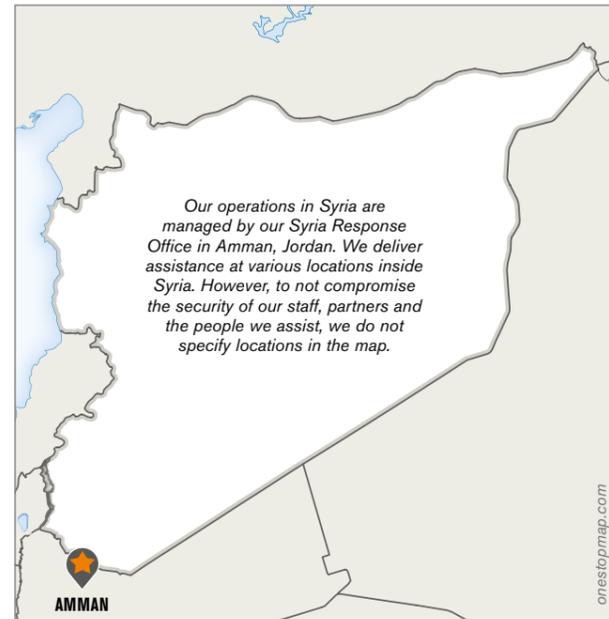
We also worked to protect and promote the human rights of displaced and vulnerable Palestinians. We spoke out specifically on the right to land, housing and education. Additionally, we organised two High-Level Expert Legal Symposia in Geneva and New York to launch our reports reflecting upon the legality of the occupation of Palestine. The findings were used by the UN Special Rapporteur in his recommendations to the General Assembly.

Our work in Palestine combines humanitarian assistance with the building of local capacities to improve community resilience.



NRC PALESTINE	
Established:	2009
International staff:	12
National staff:	115
People in need:	2 m
People assisted:	121,213

SYRIA



Humanitarian overview

Seven years into the war in Syria, the scale of humanitarian needs across the country remain overwhelming. Food prices are rising, while purchasing power diminishes, leaving 7.2 million people food insecure. Over half of the population lives in sub-standard housing, with one million people in shelters of 'last resort' such as schools, public buildings, mosques or camps.

Of the 5.7 million Syrian refugees worldwide, most of whom are in neighbouring countries, a very limited number have returned. There were three times as many newly displaced people than returnees in both 2016 and 2017. Without a political solution, displacement is continuing, and people in Syria bear the brunt of the hostilities.

NRC's operation

We are one of few agencies operating across the whole of Syria. Against a backdrop of intense fighting, we work to provide emergency, transitional and longer-term assistance to people in need.

During the final months of 2017, new, large scale forced displacement took place as a result of conflict inside Syria. To meet people's basic needs, we

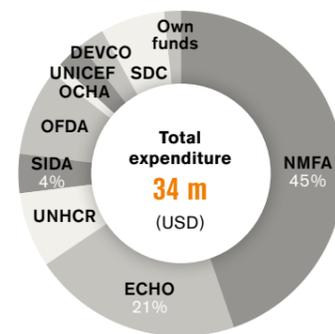
provided temporary water and sanitation facilities and distributed tents, blankets and hygiene kits, which include soap and sanitary products. To increase self-reliance, our teams delivered food, cash, seeds and food production training. We also provided poultry, livestock and veterinary support and rehabilitated community structures to sustain and enhance pro-

duction. We assisted people through an integrated approach; for instance, we repaired shelters while also helping residents to obtain documents proving ownership of their property.

With one in four schools damaged or destroyed in Syria, the availability of safe spaces for learning has been severely diminished. Our teams built and rehabilitated schools and distributed learning materials. We helped children catch up on lost learning through transitional programmes or self-learning initiatives. This was especially important in Aleppo governorate, as families who were once displaced began to return. In some areas, around 90 per cent of previous participants in transition programmes enrolled in and returned to formal schools, while in other areas only 40 per cent of participants were able to return. To help more children access their right to learn, we will work to ensure that schools and community learning centres have the resources to welcome children through the provision of safe learning spaces and furniture. We will also ensure that parents understand the importance of children accessing their right to learn and the documents needed to return to learning.

In 2017, we remained one of the leading organisations promoting civil documentation issues and housing, land and property rights inside Syria. Widespread destruction of civil registries across the country has reduced access to documents that people need to enrol in schools, access health care and move around freely. If a marriage is not registered, for example, it will affect birth records and future access to services, as a marriage certificate is a prerequisite in these cases. We helped people obtain these essential documents and spoke up for displaced persons' right to legal status, access to basic services and an accountable humanitarian response.

In a joint campaign, we helped secure the renewal of the UN Security Council Resolution 2165, which continues to authorise assistance into and within Syria through the most direct means. This resolution is critical to the delivery of lifesaving assistance in many hard-to-reach areas in Syria.



NRC SYRIA

Established:	2016
International staff:	51
National staff:	286
People in need:	13.5 m
People assisted:	672,523

TURKEY



Humanitarian overview

Turkey continues to host the largest number of refugees of any country in the world. More than 3.5 million Syrians have fled over the northern border into Turkey, where conditions for most refugees remain precarious. Additionally, 300,000 people from mainly Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan reside in the country. A majority of the refugees live in the border cities and the urban centres of Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara.

All Syrians in Turkey are granted a temporary protection status. This law guarantees against forced returns, the ability to access education and free health care. But in reality, insufficient resources hamper the government's ability to provide these services. Furthermore, lack of awareness and language barriers prevent many refugees from accessing the services they are legally entitled to.

The EU-Turkey Statement that came into effect in March 2016 has led to the deportation of refugees and migrants in Greece back to Turkey and curbed the onward migration to Europe. Approximately 30,000 refugees and migrants journeyed by sea from Turkey to Greece in 2017, a six-fold decrease compared to 2016. Meanwhile, the Turkish authorities have closed the border with Syria, allowing crossings only in special circumstances.

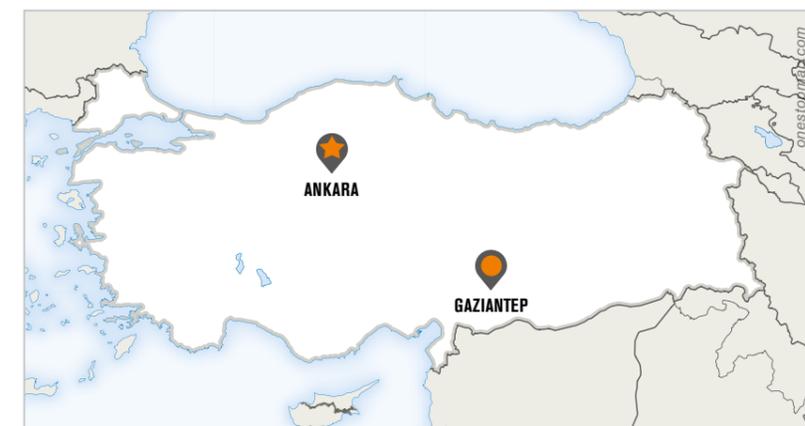
NRC's operation

Our programme operated in Turkey until May 2017, when our registration

expired. Since then, our team has worked with the Turkish authorities to renew our authorisation to implement activities in the country. Until our registration is renewed, and in compliance with Turkish legislation, we have closed our offices and suspended operations. Despite active engagement with the Turkish authorities, the likelihood and timeline for registration renewal are unclear.

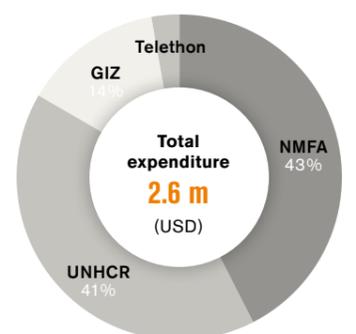
In the first part of 2017, NRC played an active role in the NGO community in Turkey. As the INGO with the largest programming presence in Ankara, we worked with Turkish governmental bodies, Turkish NGOs, and Syrian grass-root organisations. Together with the Danish Refugee Council, we analysed the protection context, identified major threats and vulnerabilities that refugees in Turkey confront and proposed how INGOs can adjust their projects to meet the needs of displaced people. We informed refugees on their rights through information campaigns and visits, and gave legal assistance on a range of issues such as registration procedures, civil documentation, work permits and housing, land and property issues.

As of January 2017, 40 per cent of Syrian refugee children in Turkey remained out of school. They face language barriers, overcrowded schools and lack qualified teachers to meet the demand for education. We worked with children, parents, teachers, local NGOs and municipality services to



help children who have missed years of education to enrol and succeed in Turkish schools. Our teams also provided Turkish language classes to help children and youth overcome the main barrier to them accessing education.

In a context of rising unemployment rates among refugees, we worked to ensure that vulnerable youth and adults had a decent livelihood and participated in their host communities. From October 2016 to January 2017, our teams provided vocational training courses, allowing participants to choose between a variety of specialisations such as cooking, sewing and computer training. We worked to ensure that women could participate in the courses by covering transportation cost, providing child-care and giving a daily stipend to compensate for lost earnings due to attendance. Once the course was completed, we helped participants find work.



NRC TURKEY

Established:	2016
International staff:	5
National staff:	39
People in need:	3.4 m ¹¹

PART 3
THEMATIC
AREAS

In 2013, Honorine Essibeda fled her home in Bengoua, a neighbourhood at the outskirts of Bangui in the Central African Republic. She has now returned and receives support from NRC to rebuild her home.



READY TO RESPOND

We deploy emergency response teams to reduce human suffering with life-saving interventions when and where the needs are greatest.

The number of people displaced by brutal violence and political unrest reached record highs in 2017. We need to respond quickly and effectively to help the most vulnerable. To do this, we use emergency response teams, roving experts, participation in multi-agency rapid response mechanisms and strategic planning and preparedness tools.

Providing crucial assistance

Our global emergency response teams (ERT) can be sent out at a moment's notice to assess needs on the ground. We deploy ERTs to support our teams in areas where we are already working and to determine how we can best assist in places where we do not have a presence. Our two global ERTs consist of people managing a wide range of emergency interventions including water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), emergency shelter and logistics and distribution. We have been increasingly successful in recruiting French-speaking experts for our emergency response in West Africa and now have a fully operational francophone ERT, as one of our two teams. In 2017, we deployed ERTs to Afghanistan, Cameroon, Chad, Iraq, Niger, Nigeria and Tunisia/Libya.

Hundreds of thousands of documented and undocumented refugees returned from Pakistan to Afghanistan at the end of 2016. They joined more than one million internally displaced people. We sent an ERT to Jalalabad to organise the emergency response in three provinces: Nangarhar, Kunar and Khost. Our team led the inter-agency response mechanism to provide emergency supplies and food to more than 100,000 vulnerable people in the middle of winter.

In Iraq, we assisted more than 20,000 people fleeing Mosul during the offensive to retake the city from the Islamic State Group. We distributed emergency packages including bottled water, tinned food, soap and towels.

We have been operating in northeast Nigeria since 2015. In the spring of 2017, the area experienced severe food insecurity that the UN predicted would lead to widespread famine. We sent an ERT to Borno, one of the hardest hit states with thousands of people in need of immediate help. We managed a multi-agency rapid response mechanism to bring food and other emergency supplies to more than 8,000 people. One specific challenge was reaching remote areas where there were no humanitarian operations. With helicopters piloted by the UN Humanitarian Air Service, we were able to reach displaced people in Dikwa, Damasak and Monguno with emergency shelter, cooked meals and distribution of other essential supplies. The ERT also established programmes for continued assistance to 4,000 families in these areas.

With our experience in assessing needs in the midst of emergencies, we were also able to identify where interventions did not have an added value. For instance, an emergency response team deployed to Chad in late 2017 advised against intervention after concluding that the number of humanitarian organisations present was sufficient. A response by our team would only increase competition for already limited funding to respond to the crisis. Based on this information, we decided not to enter and rather strengthened our emergency support elsewhere.

Additional support to our operations

We deployed 27 experts for short-term assistance in 12 countries. Such deployments fill gaps in staffing of our operations as well as where the scale of the emergency requires additional resources. For up to six months, these experts supported activities in our areas of expertise, such as camp coordination, education, information, counselling and legal advice, livelihoods and food security, shelter and WASH. The experts also supported our work on security,



A community volunteer helps a woman to carry a sack of maize during a food distribution in Ngop, Unity State, South Sudan. NRC distributed food, such as maize, lentils, oil and corn, to more than 7,100 people.

logistics and human and financial resource management. Maintaining a roster of experts for short-term assignments is a challenging task. Fatigue and burnout rates are high and we are vying for the same expertise as other humanitarian organisations. To address this challenge, we will increase the number of global roving staff from four to thirteen. Additionally, we will forge stronger links with our country and regional offices to identify additional experts for our rosters.

Promoting a culture of preparedness

Preparedness is as much about culture as it is about checklists and stockpiles. We developed new technical tools to reinforce a mind-set of preparedness throughout the organisation. Minimum Preparedness Actions set out a minimum standard operation procedure that country offices need to have in place to respond to a range of emergencies. We also introduced Mandatory Emergency Preparedness Plans, including realistic scenarios, to ensure our country offices respond rapidly to quick-onset disasters, such as seasonal flooding, drought and displacement emergencies.

Bureaucratic challenges

In some cases, the ability to operate in emergency situations is hindered by administrative constraints. This is an unfortunate reality for many humanitarian organisations. For instance, our activities in Turkey were put on hold awaiting renewal of our registration to operate in the country. In Bangladesh, complicated bureaucratic procedures for registration severely limited our assistance to Muslim refugees

fleeing violence in Myanmar. To address this challenge, we sent a three-person team to Dhaka and Cox's Bazar to shepherd the registration process in Bangladesh. We are also identifying ways to streamline preparation of memoranda of understanding and other required documents in countries where we seek to operate.

We partner with other organisations in areas where it is difficult to operate independently or where it is more effective to work together. In 2017, we partnered with UNICEF and the World Food Programme in eight Rapid Response Mechanisms (RRMs) in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Mali, Nigeria, Palestine and South Sudan. As we complement each other and have different strengths that we bring into the partnership, it enables us to better help the people we serve.

WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY?

NRC views an emergency as a change that would result in a serious disruption to a community or society causing widespread human, material, economic and environmental losses. An emergency exceeds the ability of those affected to cope using their own resources, thus it is a situation that requires response beyond normal programming.

BEING A RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYER

We ask our staff to work in high-risk areas where people are very vulnerable. It is our duty to ensure they feel reasonably safe and supported, so they are able to focus on the work at hand.

In 2017, NRC had 14,450 aid workers – 7,450 of them employees – in 31 countries. Most of these people were located within or near conflict zones and high-risk environments. In a world where aid workers are increasingly targets of violence, where the number and complexity of threats changes rapidly, we must constantly adapt our practices to ensure that staff are able to reach the people we serve safely and in time.

Our ability to deliver quality assistance to vulnerable people depends, in part, on ensuring that employees feel reasonably safe and supported by the organisation and that they have the knowledge and expertise to mitigate risks in increasingly hostile environments.

Protecting our staff

We take our obligation to protect staff seriously, and consider it part of being a responsible employer that we invest in appropriate care and security for our employees. Not having adequate procedures and systems in place can lead to loss of life or harm to employees, a reduced ability to deliver humanitarian assistance and legal and financial consequences for the organisation.

In 2017, we further strengthened our framework for the security, safety and health of staff. NRC's Duty of Care framework focuses on the physical and psychological wellbeing of employees. It is anchored in all phases of our engagement with staff, starting with recruiting the right people and making sure that they have support and training throughout their employment with us.

Taking reasonable steps together

Our organisation's objective in caring for our employees is to build and maintain a robust framework that emphasises

safety, security and health as a shared responsibility. Our focus in 2017 was to ensure that staff across the organisation had relevant training and tools to better predict and address safety and security risks at all levels of our programmes.

We developed Duty of Care Standards to clarify the minimum arrangements required of all our operations to protect staff from physical and psychological harm and to effectively manage incidents when they happen. In 2017, we established an e-learning module recreating field and management decision scenarios. The e-learning programme helps staff to test and assess their decisions and choices against the organisational Duty of Care Standards. Working with real-life scenarios, staff who have taken the module are now able to assess their decisions and choices against our principles and procedures.

We also hired an adviser to improve our work towards prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation.

Adjusting our policies along the way

We will launch a cultural awareness campaign for Duty of Care in 2018. The campaign slogans will be: Know the Way. Show the Way. Lead by Example and Reasonable Steps. Together, they exemplify our commitment to Duty of Care at all levels in the organisation. For employees, this means that they are adequately informed, prepared, trained and supported during their assignments. For managers, they should have the requisite competencies, training and expert advice to effectively assess risk, manage day-to-day operational risks and respond adequately to incidents and crises affecting employees and operations.

Creating a culture where security, safety and health are intrinsic to everything we do is a long-term undertaking.



One of our colleagues talking to displaced people in the Sanaag region in Somalia. We take our responsibility to take care of our employees seriously and support them while they assist people in need.

We are committed to regularly assessing and adjusting our policies and tools to ensure that they are up-to-date and relevant for our staff. We do this through staff surveys and feedback from staff representatives. Information sharing and discussions serve to remind staff about their right to voice concerns. We will improve the quality of our current incident reporting system, enhance information on security issues and provide better data and analysis on staff care.

Preparing for the worst to be among the best

For nearly a decade, we have remained a global leader in the provision of Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT) to humanitarian workers. We are the sole provider of HEAT for non-profit organisations in Norway, and increasing demand for our training demonstrates how critical it is for humanitarian workers. In 2017, we conducted seven HEAT courses that have prepared over 200 humanitarian workers to react effectively in high-stress and volatile environments.

The HEAT training has been a big benefit to international staff deployed to our country and regional programmes. In 2017, we have started to increase our capacity for secu-

rity training for national staff. Data on major incidents of violence against aid workers have shown that, while national aid workers are less subject to major attacks per capita than international aid workers, they make up the majority of victims and their specific security needs require more attention. Two Training-of-Trainer courses were carried out at the end of the year, and more are planned in 2018. In addition to basic security training, participants develop skills and knowledge in training methodology and practices. Our aim is to develop sufficient national capacity for security training in all our country programmes.

Increasing impact through partnerships

Through the partnership with The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Duty of Care, we are able to provide critical elements of the Duty of Care framework to our staff, including HEAT, training for managers and support for implementation of the minimum standards. We also partner with the Headington Institute, an organisation that specialises in psychological support for humanitarian workers. They support HEAT instructor teams to provide realistic, high-stress training through safe and effective approaches.

BETTER LEARNING

We use the lessons we learn from evaluating and analysing our activities to strengthen our programmes. This, in turn, increases our accountability to both the people we assist and the donors who support us.

Learning from our experience is crucial to enhance our overall response to displacement. Through systematic and impartial examination of our interventions, we can draw lessons that enable us to improve, adjust and answer for our actions. We can use the findings to immediately bring about changes in our practices and strengthen learning across the organisation, thereby improving overall approaches, strategies and policies. In 2017 we reviewed, among others, two of our programmes: one in Palestine and the other in Honduras.

Improving children's wellbeing in Palestine

We developed the better learning programme (BLP) to improve learning conditions for children and adolescents exposed to war and conflict in Palestine.

BLP offers psycho-social support through a three-phased intervention. First, we target all children by integrating psycho-educational support into classroom practice with our BLP 1 programme. Then, we implement our BLP 2 programme, supporting resilience among a smaller, more specific target group of academic under-achievers through five group sessions facilitated by teachers. Lastly, we operate a BLP 3 programme, with school counsellors giving group or individual sessions to address nightmares, which many children experience as a chronic symptom of traumatic stress.

We evaluated our BLP 1 and BLP 3 programme components to assess the extent to which we were serving the psycho-educational needs of the most vulnerable children. The evaluation concluded that BLP has a clear and demonstrable impact on improving the wellbeing of children participating in the programme. The programme equips them with skills for coping with fear, stress and the anxiety of living in a context of continual conflict.

The review also concluded that BLP supports conditions for children to better succeed in school. When asked to reflect on their experience, teachers noted improvements in students' abilities to concentrate and focus. The children had increased control over their own behaviour and improved academic motivation. However, it was not clear what impact the programme had on academic achievement or attendance.

The evaluation found that our efforts to reach more children resulted in a loss of quality in some programme areas. For example, our staff responsible for supporting BLP were overloaded with the number of schools for which they were responsible, thus reducing the level of support provided to teachers and counsellors who implement the programme. We will reduce the number of schools for which each of our team member is responsible, thereby increasing their capacity to assist teachers in schools. Additionally, we will provide a psycho-social package to support teachers and counsellors.

The review also highlighted weaknesses in the sustainability of some components of the BLP once our support ends. While we have a clear, well-planned exit strategy for hand-over of responsibilities for BLP 3 to appropriate authorities, BLP 1 was not yet sufficiently institutionalised to continue without our active support. To address this, we have defined minimum standards for BLP 1 that include concrete actions for integrating the programme as a stand-alone component in the school system. These minimum standards include child-centred teaching methodologies, activities for increasing the engagement of parents, ensuring mechanisms for supporting the supporters and strengthening capacity of trainers with relevant education authorities in Gaza and the West Bank.



A group of children living on the Gaza strip is learning how to deal with traumas and nightmares with the Better Learning Programme.

Based on lessons acquired from the evaluation in Palestine and to meet the demands of a global roll out of the programme, we are currently revising the BLP manuals, developing a teacher and parent training package and guidance to support high quality implementation of the programme.

Responding to generalised violence in Central America

Despite dramatic movement trends, forced displacement is not officially recognised in most of the countries that make up the Northern Triangle of Central America (NTCA). Of the three countries comprising the NTCA; El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, only Honduras acknowledges the existence of forced displacement within its boundaries. This, coupled with the highest displacement figures in the region at the time, facilitated our decision to pilot a programme in Honduras to respond to a range of protection and displacement issues.

Our primary objective for the pilot was to provide a humanitarian response to the needs of people affected by displacement, deportation and generalised violence. The response consisted of ensuring access to basic education for displacement-affected children and youth, give information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA), and provide short-term emergency assistance for internally displaced people and deportees with acute protection needs. We advocated for the protection of the rights of displaced and deported people and for displaced children to access education.

The review of the pilot concluded that our work in Honduras was a relevant response to the humanitarian needs of the people living in environments of generalised violence.

Our education programme addressed acute assistance and protection needs for children and adolescents. For example, our bridging classes included motivational teaching activities that encouraged children to prioritise return to school, establish a life plan and set short-term goals for their continued education. Their mobility is very limited due to the violence, so we conducted the classes in community facilities that were safe for the children to access.

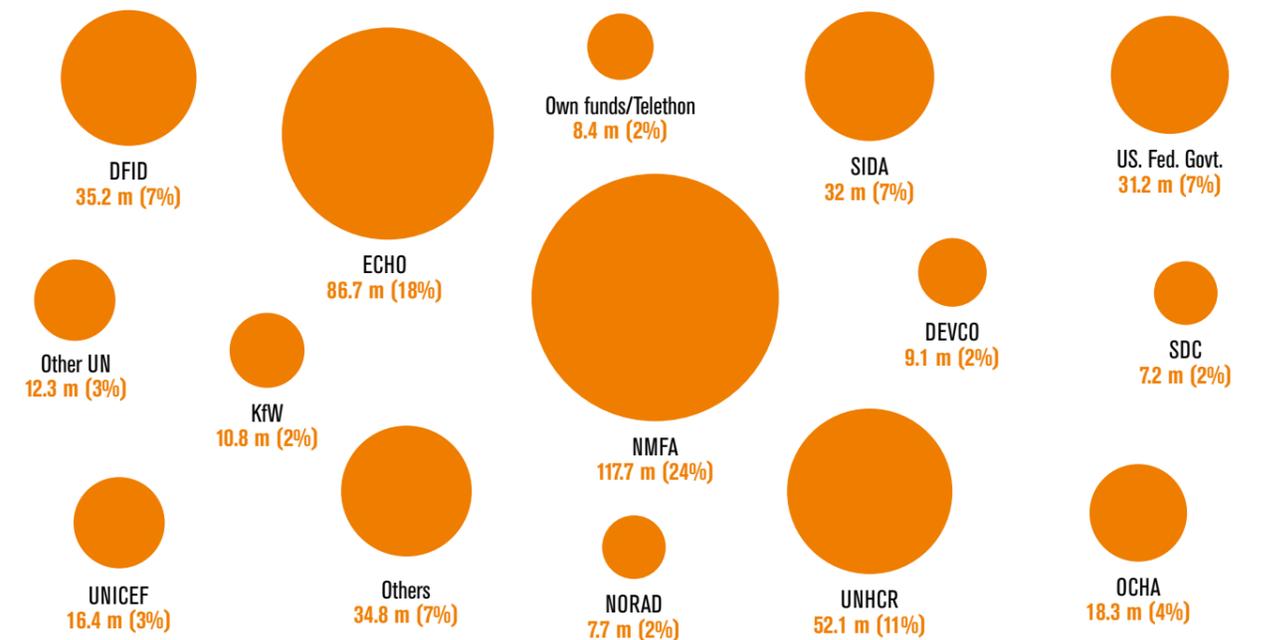
Our ICLA activities included assistance in obtaining civil and identity documents and gaining access to civil registration procedures. We also assisted internally displaced people and deportees with short-term emergency assistance including cash assistance for rent and transportation for relocation of families.

While the review confirmed that we had a positive impact on the lives of displaced people in Honduras, it highlighted the lack of a regional approach as a weakness of the current pilot programme. For a response to the current displacement and protection crisis in NTCA to be effective, it recommended the establishment of responses in countries of origin, transit and asylum.

We recognise the need for a regional approach and are currently assessing the potential expansion of our Honduras pilot programme to a regional programme. Our teams are evaluating the needs of people in refugee-like situations in Mexico and Guatemala. Based upon the needs identified, our ability to respond, and the feasibility of raising funds for such a response, we will consider further steps in order to expand our programmes in the region.

PARTNERING TO EXTEND OUR REACH

To reach more people, we have partners who help us in a variety of ways.



Over the last ten to fifteen years, we have gradually transformed our donor base. From having been a largely Norwegian-funded organisation in the early 2000s, we are today one of the humanitarian organisations with the strongest and most diversified range of institutional donor partners. The main reason for our successful diversification has been a strategic decision to boost fundraising efforts targeting non-Norwegian donors. In this process, we have built strong partnerships with a wide range of donors, encompassing both funding and policy dialogue.

NRC's total income in 2017 was USD 490 million. By raising awareness of the numerous humanitarian crisis situations and needs, as well as our success in securing funding from new donors, our income has increased 33 per cent from 2016. This has allowed us to reach more people than ever before. Institutional donors, such as government agencies and inter-governmental organisations have accounted for more than 90 per cent of our annual income. The rest comes primarily from private and corporate sponsors.

Increasing support

Almost all of our institutional donors raised their level of funding in 2017. As in previous years, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA) was our largest donor. The Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) had the highest increase, with 77 per cent and surpassed UNHCR to become our second-largest donor. Despite challenging political shifts in the US, funding from USAID and the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration increased by 64 per cent compared to 2016.

There are several reasons for this increased support. We are present in many of the areas with the greatest humani-

tarian needs and donors perceive us as delivering high-quality programmes. Our partners recognise our commitment to principled humanitarian action and for speaking up for the rights of vulnerable people.

While increased financial support is one of our aims, our partnerships go beyond fundraising. We maintain strategic relations with donors through our network of representation offices. This network has been further strengthened with the late 2017 opening of our newest office in Berlin. Additionally, our staff in the field collaborate with embassies and other donor representatives on policy development and programme implementation.

We managed to increase the share of flexible and predictable funding for humanitarian work. The NMFA, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) now provide core funding at the country level. This means that our country programmes are free to prioritise based on need. They can use this flexibility to rapidly respond to escalating situations, to support activities that otherwise would not be funded, or to ensure interventions in geographical areas where few others are present. This substantially increases our ability to provide timely and relevant support where it is most needed.

It has been more challenging to increase the amount of predictable funding. Traditionally, humanitarian donors are reluctant to commit to multi-year funding since it limits their ability to respond to new crises. We were, however, able to get agreements for multi-year funding for some countries. As funding committed over several years enables us to better plan and contribute to lasting solutions, we will continue to strengthen our efforts in this area.

New demands from donors

Some donors are channelling more funds through service contracts, where payments are standardly made at the conclusion of a project, as opposed to grants funding where funds are disbursed up front. This presents different obligations and risks that we are working to better understand. In addition, there is an increasing interest in funding NGO consortia, where several organisations collaborate in implementing a project.

To meet the requirements of these new models of financing, we must adapt our procedures and systems. We advocate with our partners and within the humanitarian system for financing reform, as we develop tools to work effectively within consortia. We will recruit people with expertise in development funding in the coming years.

Receiving expertise help

Partnering with corporate sponsors offers an opportunity to utilise expertise and solutions from others. Our corporate sponsors contribute pro bono services, provide flexible funding and bring experience and skills that allow us to modernise and innovate.

In 2017, in collaboration with the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), we produced an educational video that identifies key challenges in humanitarian financing and provides recommendations on how they can be addressed. As it explains a complex matter in a simple way, we have used the video with our partners to raise awareness and further the dialogue on finding solutions. BCG has also helped us develop a new strategy for private sector fundraising. Jointly, we have articulated who to target, how to target and where to target in order to secure more flexible funding. Kluge, a leading Norwegian law firm, has advised us on how to

comply with the European data protection regulations that will come into force in 2018. Xynteo, a high-level advisory firm and think-tank, is a new edition to our roster of partnerships. We participated and held a workshop at the Xynteo Exchange in Oslo, a platform that brought together global leaders from business, start-ups, academia, research institutions and government to work together on solving human problems.

Developing partnerships with corporate sponsors is a long-term investment, which requires dedicated staff. It takes time to identify projects that meet mutually beneficial objectives. We have strengthened our capacity on corporate partnerships through reorganising our staff and recruiting more people, looking forward to an intensified collaboration with our corporate partners in 2018.

Reaching more private donors

We also benefit from the commitment of more than 23,000 individuals who, in 2017, regularly gave money to support our work. Through direct mail and targeted marketing campaigns in Norway and Sweden, we raised USD 13.3 million. Support from private sponsors is a crucial source of un-earmarked funds, which permits us to make our own decisions on where the money can best be spent. We therefore have a strong ambition to strengthen this source of funding, including through expansion beyond the Norwegian market. Our experience from establishing NRC in Sweden is that we must be ready to meet administrative requirements. Moreover, it is necessary to build a strong brand. If people do not know who we are and what we do, they are less likely to support us. We are adjusting our promotional material accordingly and we will bring this experience with us as we enter the Austrian market in 2018.

NRC'S ENGAGEMENT IN THE GRAND BARGAIN

Humanitarian needs exceed the funding available. As a result, world leaders agreed at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit to reduce the financing gap by improving the delivery and efficiency of aid.

This agreement, the Grand Bargain (GB), cannot solve the funding gap by itself. However, since more than 20 donors accounting for 88 per cent of humanitarian funding have signed up, it presents a great opportunity to improve the way the aid sector operates.

One year later, the self-reporting reveals that signatories on average have taken action on 40 per cent of their commitments. This is an important achievement, considering that the Grand Bargain is a voluntary agreement, but progress has still been uneven.

The strength of the Grand Bargain is its unique set-up, bringing donors and aid organisations together, committing both sides to contribute their share. However, due to the breadth of the initiative, we now see a pick-and-choose approach, resulting in varied achievements and the pursuit of individual agendas. There is also impatience as impacts are not yet visible in the field, although this is probably a result of a necessary, initial focus on discussion, mutual understanding and global level activities. Identifying collaborative efforts across the workstreams, efficient workflow and real commitment is now essential to make a change. Through our expert roster, NORCAP, we have deployed one person to the secretariat and already improved communication and coordination between the actors involved.

NRC has initially prioritised four workstreams (see illustration), building on work we have already undertaken to improve donor terms and conditions. We believe these are the workstreams where we are likely to see a direct impact

on our work and ensure more funding reaches the people we serve. The achievement of other commitments, such as the one related to cash-based programming, is already embedded in our strategy.

Harmonising reporting

Donors and UN agencies have agreed to simplify their procedures to help us focus more on assisting people in need instead of using numerous hours on various reporting formats. As each donor has their own narrative reporting template, an organisation receiving funds from five donors may have to deal with five different formats, thus using a lot of time on a duplicative effort. We have encouraged, and now take part in, a pilot testing of this standardised reporting template for 42 projects implemented in Iraq, Myanmar and Somalia. Our objective is to also use lessons learned from this pilot to develop a harmonised financial reporting template.

We have proposed a new way of classifying costs, planning budgets and preparing reports to increase efficiency and transparency. We estimate that the sector can save up to 2.3 million hours each year if the solutions are rolled out globally. Our work to approach donors and secure their support on this will progress through 2018.

Committing funds over years

Multi-Year Humanitarian Financing (MYHF) allows for more predictable and flexible funding. The assumption is also that it reduces administrative costs and facilitates more responsive programming. Moreover, it strengthens preparedness

and resilience, particularly in the context of protracted crises. This, however, has rarely been tested in practice. To do so, we commissioned a study in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO) and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The study explored when and where MYHF can have the greatest effect. It further identified the investments and conditions required at the organisational level to enable organisations and donors to provide MYHF. The study was well received by the humanitarian community, and we are currently conducting two follow-up studies on the challenges of passing-through MYHF to partners as well as practical examples of good practices and benefits in a target country.

Reducing earmarking

Donors can tie funding to their priorities in various ways. For example, they can demand that the financial contribution is used in a certain geographic location, for a defined theme or for a specific project in a given country, a process called earmarking.

Increased flexibility in humanitarian financing is key to improving efficiency. Pooled funds are seen by many donors as the optimal tool to reduce earmarking by allowing them to provide donations that are not bound to a specific activity, project, or even country depending on the pooled fund set-up. We conducted a mapping of different humanitarian pooled funds to analyse and propose actions to replicate best practices. The study, titled Understanding Humanitarian Funds: Going Beyond Country Based Pooled Funds, which was published in 2017, has been used to discuss improvements with actors in Brussels, with OCHA and with Pooled Funds Working Group members.

We will expand our pooled funds study by looking at the role NGOs can play in ensuring greater efficiency of pooled funds and at how effective pooled funds are in reducing earmarking.

Joining forces

In our efforts, we have collaborated closely with the UN, donors and other NGOs. The fact that we have common interests and are able to push our common agenda together has made us progress significantly within the area of harmonised reporting and reducing earmarking. With some of our key donors, we have framework agreements for three-year periods offering predictability for our operations. Since 2017, we have, through these framework agreements, received core funding for our country programmes, which offers a greater level of flexibility. In the past year, we also signed several multi-year agreements with various donors, which will enable us to have a longer-term impact.

Way forward

We are stepping up our engagement to improve collaboration between humanitarian and development actors, governments, NGOs and the private sector. This is closely linked to the New Way of Working, which aims to meet people's immediate humanitarian needs while simultaneously reducing risk and vulnerability, and in doing so, help reduce these needs over time.

To shrink humanitarian needs and mobilise additional funds, it is of utmost importance to continue our engagement in the Grand Bargain.

THE 10 WORKSTREAMS & NRC PRIORITIES



IDPs ALONG THE CONTINUUM OF DISPLACEMENT

NRC's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) aims to influence the global migration discourse by improving our understanding of the relation between internal displacement, cross-border and return movements.

IDMC provided timely and targeted information on internal displacement to elevate the issue on the global policy agenda. Our global data was widely cited in numerous major global policy documents, including the new UN resolution on the protection and assistance of internally displaced persons (IDPs), passed in 2017. Additionally, IDMC's recommendations were broadly referenced during UNHCR's thematic discussions on the Global Compact on Refugees. Media citations of IDMC's data and analysis also hit an all-time high, with more than 2,000 mentions in 2017.

Increased relevance

IDMC's work is as relevant as ever. We continue to expand, engaging in new initiatives and forums in our efforts to elevate the issue of internal displacement on the international agenda.

In May, we published our flagship annual 2017 Global Report on Internal Displacement (GRID), reporting 31.1 million new cases of internal displacement. We subsequently launched our research agenda with the publication of our thematic series titled The Invisible Majority. In both the GRID and this series, we highlight the importance to: (1) build a common dataset that encompasses all types of displacement, (2) map the drivers and processes of onward movement across borders, and (3) monitor cross-border returns and the risk of future and protracted displacement.

In January, IDMC crowdsourced the development of the Internal Displacement Event Tagging Extraction and Classification Tool (IDTECT) to detect population movements by extracting displacement information from news databases. IDTECT works in real time, meaning that we were able to collect, analyse and report on more incidents of displacement in a more timely and responsive manner. With this tool,

we analysed more than one million reports and websites from September 2017 to January 2018, and extracted more than 200,000 potential facts about internal displacement occurring in 200 countries and territories worldwide.

Predicting disaster displacement

We also added new sources of displacement data, including hazard monitoring and analysis of Facebook disaster data, to paint a comprehensive picture of internal displacement. We improved our Global Disaster Displacement Risk Model, which enables policy and operational decision-makers to estimate how much disaster displacement may occur in the future by sudden-onset hazards. If linked with hazard forecasting, the model could enable us and our partners to issue early warnings about displacement, resulting in life-saving pre-emptive evacuations. We subsequently published our Global Disaster Displacement Risk report, which frames displacement through the lens of risk, rather than something to be addressed only after displacement has occurred. By viewing displacement from this angle, we use our model to advocate for greater investment in targeted measures to build resilience and reduce the risk of future displacement.

More frequent updates

In addition to expanding the scale of displacement monitoring, we began responding to our users' requests for more timely updates. We published biweekly internal displacement dispatches to provide updates on the most important stocks, flows and situations of displacement reported in a given period. For the first time, we also published internal displacement mid-year figures from January to June 2017, which allowed IDMC to shed light on certain rapidly deteriorating crises. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the one million new displacements in the first six



An informal settlement for displaced people in Mwaka village, Tanganyika province. The province has been one of the worst displacement-affected areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

months of 2017 surpassed the number of persons newly displaced over the entirety of 2016. With more frequent updates, we enable operational actors to respond to IDP crises in a more efficient and targeted manner.

Researching causes and implications

We engaged with the London School of Economics and the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis to research the economic impacts of internal displacement. Our work aims to propose the first standardised framework to quantitatively assess the short and long-term costs of internal displacement on local, national and regional economies. Demonstrating the economic costs internal displacement has on national governments and host communities can lead to increased political will to address and reduce displacement. Furthermore, by revealing where humanitarian and development investment can have the greatest impact, the study will contribute to ensure that the limited resources available to address internal displacement are invested toward achieving durable solutions.

IDMC also kicked off new research to develop a baseline understanding on internal displacement linked with criminal and gang violence in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador.

We closed the year with the release and launch of our 2017 Africa Report on Internal Displacement, which highlights the severity of the continent's continuing displacement crisis and calls for a new approach that addresses the structural

drivers and longer-term implications of displacement, as well as its immediate humanitarian consequences.

Putting internal displacement on the agenda

The most significant challenge that IDMC faced in 2017 was the lack of political will and limited international and national attention to the issue of internal displacement. We recognise that this needs to be addressed in various ways that include engaging with the UN system, as has been traditionally done over the years, as well as through building new and sustained relationships with countries and key stakeholders through bilateral engagement and outreach.

In 2018, IDMC will work to increase national incentives and political engagement on the issue of internal displacement. As part of our commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and of IDMC itself, we will extend support for the convening of a series of Displacement Dialogues and support state-led discussions, which offer countries affected by internal displacement the space to openly exchange information. Additionally, we will jointly identify common challenges, concerns and ideas for solutions to displacement.

PROMOTING COORDINATION AND NEW WAYS OF WORKING

NORCAP is a global provider of expertise to the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors. We build partnerships with international organisations and national actors to protect lives, rights and livelihoods.

Throughout 2017, NORCAP supported the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors to respond to needs on the ground. Through our provision of experienced and skilled personnel, we help our partners save lives, build resilient communities, ensure peaceful transitions from conflict and promote sustainable governance.

Today, conflict and insecurity, poverty and weak institutions create complex, long-lasting and recurrent crises. These are only exacerbated by natural hazards and climate change. Lack of capacity and coordination impede national and international actors' ability to address problems consistently and effectively. We see a shortage of qualified personnel to implement projects, provide technical expertise, undertake unbiased analysis and coordinate assistance. Often, national and local stakeholders, including governments, do not have the capacity to play a prominent role in crisis management. Nor are they able to meet their international obligations in terms of human rights and sustainable governance.

In an effort to address these challenges, NORCAP provided expert personnel and collaborated with international organisations and national partners to identify capacity needs and establish common goals and projects. Given their independence from operational and sector interests, our experts are well positioned to promote more effective ways of working. During the year, they helped increase coordination between agencies and sectors, and encouraged new and innovative approaches.

Improving crisis response

To improve crisis response, we provided expertise to partners in the UN system and other responders. NORCAP experts were deployed on more than 540 missions, working in areas such as protection, coordination, camp management, resilience, community engagement and accountability. We responded to the worsening crisis in the Democratic

Republic of Congo, the complex crisis affecting the Lake Chad Basin, hurricane Irma in the Caribbean and recurring droughts in Africa.

In the space of just a few months last year, more than 600,000 people fled extreme violence in Myanmar. We mobilised quickly to support the refugee response in Bangladesh. We deployed 24 experienced men and women with the skills needed to set up camps and provide shelter and protection to those seeking safety across the border. Our experts have been instrumental in supporting coordination between agencies and between sectors responding to the emergency. Due to their seniority, they have also contributed to capacity building and the mentoring of younger staff.

Strengthening capacity of national and local actors

There is a growing recognition that humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors need to collaborate to address acute needs and reduce underlying vulnerabilities. This demands a new way of working. With the integration of the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM), NORCAP is even better equipped to enhance collaboration across the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors. In 2017, we joined forces with the UN's Secretary General's executive office, to support the UN's reform agenda. The initiative aims to improve the efficiency of the UN system in pursuing common goals. On the ground, our deployments contributed to building bridges between emergency response and longer-term efforts, to improve resilience and preparedness.

To reduce needs, risks and vulnerability over time, NORCAP has increasingly focused on strengthening capacity of national and local actors. In 2017, we continued improving climate services across Africa. Our experts have helped regional centres and national meteorological offices in East Africa provide more timely and relevant climate information



CashCap expert Jimena Maria Peroni Galli looking out over an area of Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh.

to authorities in sectors such as food security, energy and humanitarian affairs. A critical need in climate services is coordination of initiatives. Our experts have contributed to the development of national frameworks and action plans in seven countries in the Sahel. An external evaluation in 2017 concluded that the programme constituted a highly relevant response to the challenges of disaster risk reduction, extreme weather events and climate change.

We also worked to strengthen the role of local actors in crisis management, to ensure ownership and sustainability. We trained and worked with Greek migration authorities to strengthen their capacity for dignified reception and protection of asylum seekers and migrants. We are developing a partnership with civil society organisations in the Lake Chad Basin, to support frontline responders to the humanitarian crisis. In Somalia, we worked to strengthen capacity within key authorities, to respond to the challenges facing the country. It is important that the experts we deploy work alongside local and national staff to create trust and common objectives.

Increasing the use of cash in humanitarian response

The Cash Learning Partnership's The State of the World's Cash Report shows that only 40 per cent of organisations have the capacity needed to implement cash transfer programmes. The coordination of these programmes is ad hoc and barriers to effective coordination are not adequately addressed. Cash and markets programming was one of NORCAP's focus areas in 2017. Through our specialised CashCap project, we deployed senior experts to 20 countries. They improved coordination on cash and trained UN agencies in how to develop and implement cash programmes. There is still lack of clarity as to which

humanitarian agency is leading the coordination on cash. Against this backdrop, the CashCap experts' neutrality and independence from agency-specific agendas, has been a critical element for the success of the deployments.

In Yemen, CashCap experts helped set up a working group to coordinate organisations implementing cash programming and to position it as a strategic mechanism for support to the humanitarian country team. The experts supported an evidence-based approach to the up-scaling of cash, and trained local and international staff. Cash is now considered a key activity for many agencies. With INGO and UN colleagues, the experts took part in efforts to negotiate with financial service providers and banks on the exchange rate provided to humanitarian agencies. As a result, the central bank announced a floating exchange rate, effectively cutting the costs of aid by nearly 30 per cent.

Due to lack of funding, CashCap has not been able to provide experts in as many crises as desired. In addition, donors are often reluctant to support capacity building projects. Nevertheless, investing in capacity building is crucial to the delivery of high quality cash programmes that are more systematic, coordinated and in line with the Grand Bargain commitments.

NORCAP KEY FIGURES 2017

We provided 543 deployments
Our experts worked 230 person-years
We supported 40 organisations
We worked in 77 countries
We recruited 126 new experts

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ACRONYMS

To preserve the flow of text, this volume does not spell out frequently used acronyms in every chapter.

ORGANISATIONS

BCG	Boston Consulting Group
DEVCO	European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DFID	UK Department for International Development
ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCO	Foreign & Commonwealth Office
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
ILO	International Labour Organization
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (German Development Bank)
NMFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NORCAP	Norwegian Capacity, NRC's expert deployment capacity
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance
PRM	US Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme

TERMS

AEP	accelerated education programme
BLP	better learning programme
GBV	gender-based violence
HEAT	hostile environment awareness training
HLP	housing, land and property
ICLA	information, counselling and legal assistance
IDPs	internally displaced people
INGO	international non-governmental organisation
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MYHF	multi-year humanitarian financing
NGO	non-governmental organisation
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene promotion



NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL