



Research Paper

Open Access

## ROLE PLAYED BY THE UNHCR FOR THE PROTECTION OF REFUGEE CHILDREN: A CONTEMPORARY CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Deepa Salian, Dr Suresh Kumar Shetty, Dr Tharanatha\*, **Rakshith BV\***, Priyanka Thakar\*,

1 Research Scholar, Department of Law, SDM Law College, Mangalore. [deepasalian@sdmhc.ac.in](mailto:deepasalian@sdmhc.ac.in)

2 Associate Dean, Kasturba Medical college, Mangalore. [suresh.shetty@manipal.edu](mailto:suresh.shetty@manipal.edu)

3 Principal, SDM Law college, Mangalore. [principal@sdmhc.ac.in](mailto:principal@sdmhc.ac.in)

4 Assistant Professor, SDM Law College, Mangalore. [rakshithbv@sdmhc.ac.in](mailto:rakshithbv@sdmhc.ac.in)

5 Student, SDM Law College, Mangalore. [bb548@sdmhc.ac.in](mailto:bb548@sdmhc.ac.in)

Volume 6, Issue 14, 2024

Received: 10 JULY 2024

Accepted: 31 JULY 2024

Published: 02 AUG 2024

doi:10.48047/AFJBS.6.14.2024.996-1015

**Abstract:** According to the report made by UNHCR in April 10, 2022, it was found that more than half of the Ukrainian refugees are children who are the most vulnerable group because of both physical and mental realities. Most of the children have lost their parents and are unaccompanied minors finding shelter in an unknown country, with people whose culture and language is extremely different hence, they become the victims of violence and sexual abuse. Most of the refugee children worldwide find it difficult to adapt to the new culture of the host country, so they are confronted with psychological problems and ultimately commit suicide in refugee camps. It was reported by the UNHCR that most of the Syrian refugee children are working in the street of Lebanon for four to six hours a day to provide basic needs to their family members, which is a worst violation of human rights. Nearly 2.7 million Syrian child refugees are currently living in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. Though a refugee child continuously encounters physical and psychological trauma. Refugee Convention of 1951 and protocol on the status of Refugee 1967 are silent and inadequate to protect refugee children globally. It is the UNHCR and the UNICEF that are helping the child refugees worldwide. Since it was established in 1949 UNHCR has done an admirable job towards refugee children in upholding the best interest of the child. Henceforth, this article will articulate on the distress condition of refugee children in different camps and highlight the working of UNHCR in safeguarding the rights of refugee children globally.

**Keywords:** Persecution, Refugee Children, Unaccompanied Minors, UNHCR, Vulnerable group, Protection, Psychological, problem, sexual abuse, violation, Human rights, Education.

### INTRODUCTION

Children need protection in their tender age, because they are separate vulnerable group and individual bearing rights. These children are very sensitive, so it is the responsibility of



family, and state to safe guard their rights, and provide them with necessities. But present scenario reveals that children are exploited globally specially children who are orphans due to different reason, illegal migrants children who have crossed borders due to economic crises in their country and the refugee children who have fled to other countries due to religious persecution and mainly due to civil wars. Some children who are innocent become easy prey to illegal activities like involuntary servitude, forced terrorism, unnatural offenses. In spite these agony faced by the refugee children there no adequate single instrument in international law that seek to protect refugee children effectively. It is imperative that children needs specific legal protection in international law. Refugee children must be given first priority in international legal agenda. International communities have regarded children as the right bearers and regarded them as the part of Human right law so that children are protected from exploitation. Under universal declaration of Human rights of 1948, convention on right of child was adopted in 1989 which emphasis on the protection of children worldwide. The core principles of this convention is Article 2 which states about nondiscrimination and Article 3 which deals with Best interest of the child which strengthens the children domestically and internationally. It needs to be noted that in the convention on rights of child article 22, is included which is emphasis on the safety of refugee children rights and non refoulment. In spite this article which deals with safe guarding children rights, most the refugee children confront with discrimination in the host countries because they are powerless and dependent in nature. The refugee convention of 1951 is regarded to be completely inadequate to protect the refugee children, because convention is age neutral and does not specially mention about children who are equally valuable members of the society. In the recent scenario, it may note that it is only UNHCR and UNICEF, which is regarded to be influential in advancing refugee children's rights throughout the world. These two agency of united nation organization provide appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance to refugee children globally whether it is Syrian refugees, afghan refugees or Ukraine refugee. UNHCR have begun to operationalize the relationship between the Refugee Convention and the CRC. With the intention to provide guidance on how the CRC, might be substantively relevant in the refugee status determination context.

**PREDICAMENT CONDITION OF REFUGEE CHILDREN IN DIFFERENT REFUGEE CAMP  
KUTUPALONG-BALUKHALI EXPANSION SITE (BANGLADESH)**





Figure 1: *Child refugee camp*

(Source: <https://www.malteser-international.org/>)

The Kutupalong-Balukhali Expansion Site (Bangladesh) camp is home to child refugees who are going through unimaginable levels of misery (voanews.com, 2018). The joint oversight of the camp by the UN and the Bangladeshi government substantially obstructs the delivery of necessary services.



Figure 2: *The open drain that now runs through the crowded centre of Kutupalong camp*

(Source: <https://geographical.co.uk>)

**Sanitation and Water:** The risk of contracting waterborne illnesses is increased in camps with unhygienic facilities and inadequate water supplies. Serious health risks are associated with poorly planned well excavations as well as shallow, unclean latrines (geographical.co.uk, 2018). One of the biggest challenges that still exists in the building and maintenance of sanitary infrastructure is coordination.





Figure 3: Children suffered from Diarrheal diseases

(Source: <https://www.voanews.com/>)

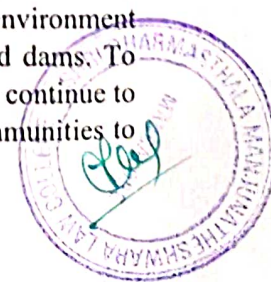
**Healthcare Services:** There is a shortage of access to healthcare and a high rate of illness among refugees, particularly among children (voanews.com, 2018). Basic health stations treat illnesses, wounds, and malnourishment, but the crowded, dirty surroundings promote the spread of diseases like diarrhea. Trauma treatment is necessary for refugees because of their experiences in Myanmar. There may be gaps in insurance coverage when complex medical concerns need referrals to many clinics.

**Preferred foods:** The minimal food donations that refugees get are deficient in several critical nutrients. The major causes of malnutrition are the poor people living in Myanmar and the long walk to the camp, especially in children (geographical.co.uk, 2018). Despite having little means, relief organisations battle severe hunger. Stunted development and anemia impact a significant portion of the child refugee population.

The UNHCR places a high priority on the health and wellbeing of child refugees in Bangladesh. They have launched a massive vaccination Programme with the goal of immunising up to 500,000 children living in host communities and refugee camps (unhcr.org, 2023). During the second phase of the diphtheria campaign, UNHCR is specifically using Community Outreach Members (COMs) to urge refugees to seek vaccine. In addition, non-food items (NFIs) and building supplies for treatment and isolation facilities have been given by UNHCR's partners.

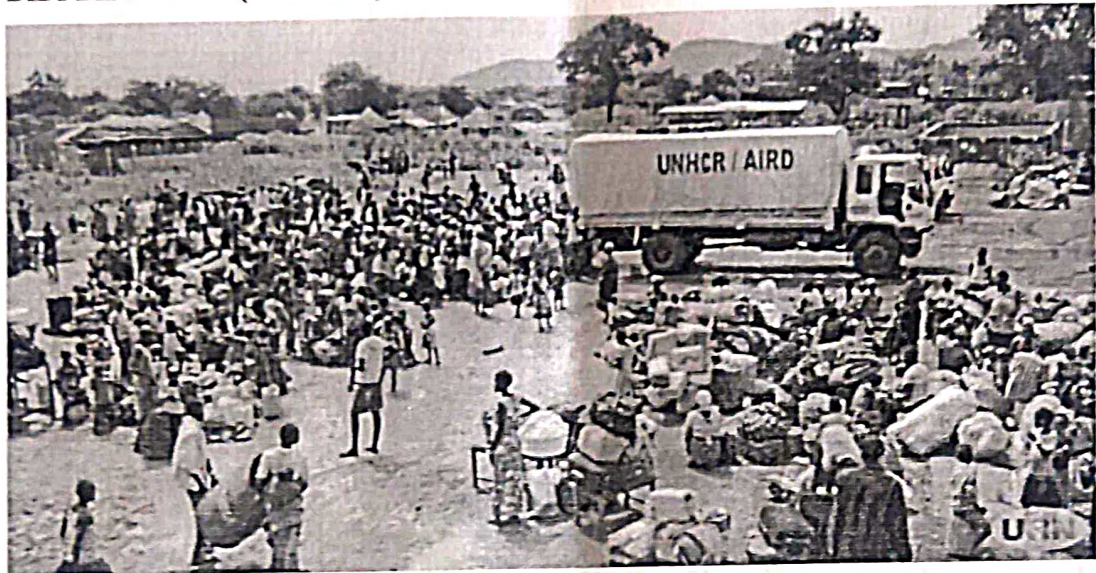
The UNHCR also moved the 9,400 refugees from Bandarban to the Kutupalong camp, giving them better access to basic essentials (malteser-international.org, 2018). The majority of these migrants had settled near the border, where they lacked access to facilities like healthcare and education. The move attempts to improve living circumstances and provide access to aid, and it is backed by the required relief supplies and logistical preparation.

Furthermore, UNHCR and its partners have made significant efforts to improve the water and sanitation infrastructure in refugee camps in order to preserve a safe and hygienic environment (unhcr.org, 2023). They have constructed latrines, bathing cubicles, tube wells, and dams. To accommodate evolving needs and goals and recognise donor assistance, UNHCR will continue to push for flexible financing. In 2018, UNHCR started to work closely with local communities to



improve child refugees' access to basic services (protection, housing, healthcare, nutrition, education, and environmental preservation) (malteser-international.org, 2018).

**BIDI BIDI CAMP (UGANDA)**



**Figure 4: Bidi Bidi Refugee Camp**

(Source: <https://healthpolicy-watch.news>)

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the situation for juvenile refugees in Uganda's Bidi Bidi Camp has become worse. Due to the epidemic, refugees' food insecurity has worsened, requiring them to eat less and less often. A lot of individuals now only eat once a day due to the World Food Programme's (WFP) reduction in the amount of food assistance that is available (Uganda Refugee Stories, 2020). Others have resorted to growing vegetables, sorghum, cassava, and maize as a coping mechanism, although finding space for farming is still difficult. Unsettling outcomes, such as child marriages and child sales, have been brought about by closing schools and damaging cultural customs (Nakkazi, 2021). Parents who are having financial difficulties are forcing their daughters to get married, and there are an increasing number of recorded incidences of sexual assault.





**Figure 5: Bidi Bidi Camp**

(Source: <https://healthpolicy-watch.news>)

The COVID-19 lockdowns, which restrict mobility, are the reason for the widespread unemployment. While a very small percentage do, most refugees do not work as temporary workers or farmers (Uganda Refugee Stories, 2020). With limited access to medical care, water, and social support, the situation is severe. The most vulnerable child refugees at the Bidi Bidi Camp will presumably experience more hardship and uncertainty as a result, but there is hope that the momentary respite provided by contributions from Germany and Sweden will eventually give way to a larger reduction in refugee rations.

A public awareness campaign has been launched by the UNHCR, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to help the education of South Sudanese refugee children in Uganda, specifically in the sizable Bidi Bidi refugee settlement (Nakkazi, 2021). In order to ensure that the maximum number of Ugandan refugee children may take advantage of educational opportunities, this initiative is dependent on community leaders to actively carry out its objectives by educating parents and children (Uganda Refugee Stories, 2020). Most of the 600,000 South Sudanese refugees who now call Uganda home are young adults (Nakkazi, 2021). For many of these largely young migrants, education is the key to a better future. In order to support these children's growth as possible future leaders, the UNHCR works with the Ugandan government to set acceptable educational standards for them.

In order to make this project possible, UNHCR and its partners are trying to raise the money needed to build more classrooms, recruit more instructors, and purchase textbooks (Uganda Refugee Stories, 2020). Additionally, they make a plea to the whole community to accelerate financial contributions so that UNHCR can continue to protect the security, dignity, and welfare of children who are refugees in Bidi Bidi. Through its actions, UNHCR aims to reduce these hazards and enhance the prospects for South Sudanese refugee children residing in Uganda.



**DADAAB AND KAKUMA CAMPS (KENYA)**

The protracted situation of refugees in Kenya's Dadaab and Kakuma Camps causes great problems for the children who live there, leaving them vulnerable and insecure. The main cause of these extended circumstances is the ongoing danger in their native countries, which keeps them from safely returning. Many young people see their home nations as distant goals because of political unrest, violence, and the possibility of starvation.

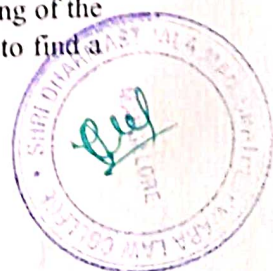


**Figure 5: Dadaab and Kakuma Camps (Kenya)**

(Source: unhcr.org)

Much of the population of refugees in Kenya is from Somalia, where conflict, mostly from Al-Shabab and other organisations, has killed civilians and forced young people to enroll as fighters. Parallel to this, South Sudanese refugees have fled their war-torn country, and their peace accords are often short-lived.

Furthermore, there has been a rise in xenophobia in Kenya, which has led to the dehumanisation of refugees (Kenya's Dadaab camp, 2022). This isolation is made worse by the social and economic alienation from local communities, which makes it more difficult for individuals to integrate and achieve self-sufficiency. Finding work or starting a company outside of the camps is challenging for refugees due to strict laws and few economic prospects. They continue to depend on aid, this prolongs the refugees' long-term position. These circumstances disproportionately affect young migrants (especially children), putting them at risk and offering no alternate route to a safe future (Kenya's Dadaab camp, 2022). To mitigate the suffering of the juvenile migrants in the Dadaab and Kakuma Camps, the international community has to find a solution to these intricate problems.



Three long-term options are provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to help child refugees and refugees in general. Voluntary repatriation, which permits refugees to return home when conditions are safe, is their preferred option. If repatriation is not possible, refugees have the option of resettlement. It entails moving to a third nation that acknowledges their status as refugees. Sadly, the onerous legal procedures lead to the annual resettlement of only a small percentage of refugees—roughly 1% (Kenya's Dadaab camp, 2022). Local integration, the third option, takes economic, legal, and social factors into account.



**LOCAL  
INTEGRATION**



**RESETTLEMENT**



**REPATRIATION**

**Figure 6: UNCHR Initiatives**

(Source: [unhcr.org/](http://unhcr.org/) Kenya's Dadaab camp, 2022)

One possible remedy is resettlement, however there are significant obstacles. Resettlement is harder to achieve in destination nations due to lower restrictions and anti-immigration sentiment. Social integration requires the development of networks and ties within the community, which may be difficult in refugee camps where there are restrictions on one's freedom of movement. Conversely, informal economic integration occurs when immigrants smuggle goods into their new country and undertake odd jobs.





### Global Resettlement

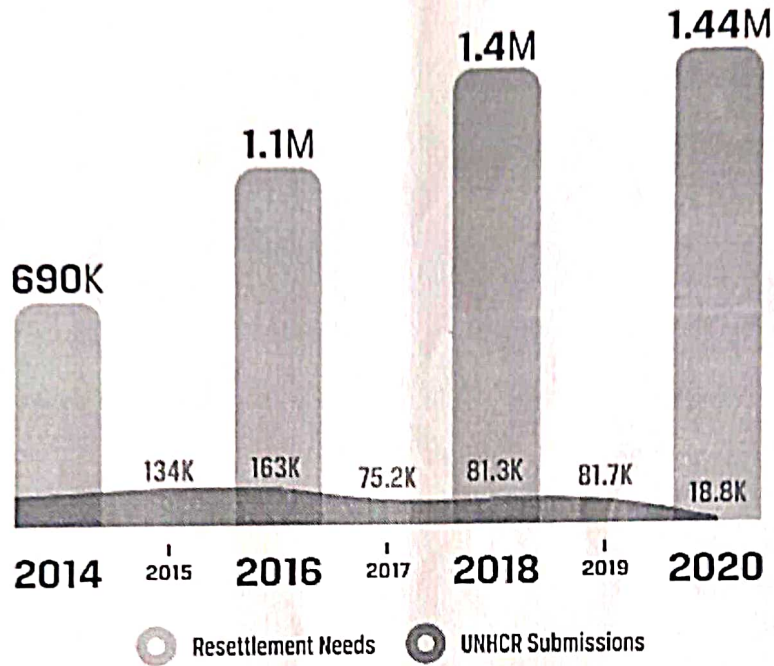


Figure 7: Global Settlement

(Source: unhcr.org/ Kenya’s Dadaab camp, 2022)

Legal integration occurs when refugees are awarded citizenship in their new nation; in the last ten years, only 1.1 million refugees have received citizenship (Kenya’s Dadaab camp, 2022). With the ultimate objective of improving the situation of child refugees and refugees generally, UNHCR works to strengthen good relationships between refugees and host communities in addition to pushing policies that lower obstacles and discrimination against refugees. The goal of this strategy is to assist refugees find more secure lifestyles and avoid living in camps for an extended period of time by easing their transition into society.



**AZRAQ AND ZAATARI CAMPS (JORDAN)**

Refugee children in Jordan's Azraq and Za'atari Camps face several challenges. The serious decline in the mental health of around 60,000 children in the Za'atari camp alone is one of the most urgent problems (Syrian refugees in Jordan as Za'atari Camp, 2020). With only eight institutions to care for eight thousand patients, there are only two hundred and fifty monthly medical consultations. This illness is made worse by a lack of access to prescription drugs and trained medical professionals.



**Figure 8: Azraq and Zaatari Camps (Jordan)**

(Source: globaltimes.cn)

Child labour is a serious issue that puts these young refugees' rights in danger and hinders their ability to grow. Even worse, the only source of income for refugee families is charity, and Jordan's response plan to the Syrian crisis has seen a sharp decline in funding over time. In 2016, 62% of the standards were saturated; in 2019, 50% were, and in 2021, 30% (globaltimes.cn, 2021). Reducing assistance impedes attempts to solve problems like child labour, hunger, poverty, and security challenges, particularly in a resource-poor nation like Jordan.





Figure 9: Mental challenges faced by children in the Za'atari camp

(Source: unhcr.org)

Child refugees in the Azraq and Za'atari Camps face not only the physical obstacles of their surroundings but also the psychological and emotional effects of their situation. Their suffering is further made worse by their inability to get basic healthcare and the dwindling assistance from other countries.

The 80,000 Syrian refugees living in Jordan's Za'atari camp are celebrating their tenth anniversary, according to the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR. UNHCR stressed the need for long-term solutions for refugees, despite the fact that the camp has saved lives and given Jordanians and Syrians economic possibilities. Most of the 675,000 Syrian refugees who are legally registered in Jordan live in the surrounding areas. The percentage of refugees living in camps like Azraq and Za'atari is only 17% (globaltimes.cn, 2021). The UNHCR, 32 international and Jordanian organisations, and the Jordanian government coordinate humanitarian aid efforts in Za'atari. With 3,600 refugees employed and over 1,800 firms established inside the camp, refugee entrepreneurship has flourished (globaltimes.cn, 2021). By doing business with companies and customers in neighboring cities, these companies boost Jordan's economy. On the other hand, throughout the camp's 10 years of operation, more than 20,000 births were recorded, suggesting that a generation of children had grown up there (Syrian refugees in Jordan as Za'atari Camp, 2020). The UNHCR offers a number of vital services, including protection, healthcare, and financial aid. Meanwhile, the viability of the camp worries UNHCR. The requirement for urgent repair for a large number of caravans used as housing is in addition to the electrical problem. Additionally, camp inhabitants are feeling the pinch from growing living expenses and economic shocks like COVID-19 (globaltimes.cn, 2021).



**NYARUGUSU, NDUTA, AND MTENDELI REFUGEE CAMPS (TANZANIA)**

Difficult challenges that affect refugee education globally are mirrored in the conditions faced by child refugees in the camps of Nyarugusu, Nduta, and Mtendeli. Only 61% of children who are refugees attend elementary school, compared to 91% of children worldwide. In low-income countries, this is less than 50%. For older refugee children, the situation becomes more difficult: just 23% of them are engaged in secondary school, compared to an international average of 84%. In low-income nations, just 9% of adolescent refugees can attend secondary education.



**Figure 10: Refugee children battle for education in Tanzania**

(Source: hrw.org)

The three refugee camps in Tanzania are in poor shape as a result of a significant financial shortfall. Since only 137 classrooms could be constructed by UNHCR and its partners between April 2016 and April 2017, over 70% of students in these camps attend school outdoors (Burundian refugees in Tanzania, 2018). Learning is made much more challenging by excessive student-teacher ratios and inadequate infrastructure.

The three camps need an urgent addition of 638 classrooms to address these issues. A major obstacle, however, is a shortage of funds. The plan for a Regional Refugee Response to help Burundian refugees in Tanzania is woefully underfunded, having only received twenty-five percent of the required funds (Burundian Refugees in Tanzania, 2018). To ensure that the young refugees residing in these camps may get a top-notch education and overcome the significant challenges they face, additional assistance and resources must be given.

Despite the many expenses and difficulties involved, UNHCR is committed to enhancing the educational opportunities for child refugees. They provide a classroom that costs \$12,000 to construct, exams cost \$250, and teachers make \$27 a month. A single child's annual tuition of \$35 is the bare minimum required to provide effective learning settings.





Figure 11: Initiatives taken by UNHCR for Child Education

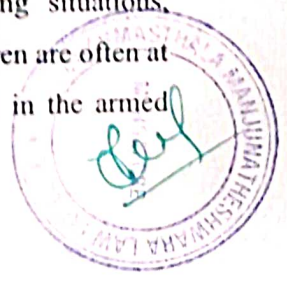
(Source: unhcr.org)

There are efforts in progress to include refugee education into the national system in order to provide recognised, overseen, and responsible services (Refugee Children Battle for education in Tanzania, 2023). To mitigate the acute scarcity, UNHCR is actively looking for more affordable ways to build schools in Tanzania. Due to overcrowding in the schools, it is now difficult for anybody to get a proper education in the refugee camps. The UNHCR's education partner in the Nduta camp, Save the Children, is erecting new mud-brick structures at Furaha Primary School. Nine classrooms, a staff area, the head instructor's office, and restrooms will all be located inside these structures. The Nduta refugee children now have hope for a better future since this progress enables them to concentrate on their studies and presents the prospect of further educational possibilities even in the face of difficult conditions.

**CHALLENGES FACED BY UNHCR FOR THE SAFETY OF REFUGEE CHILDREN**

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a UN Refugee Agency is the global Organisation that dedicates their work to protecting the rights, saving lives as well as creating a better and healthier future for the refugees all across the globe who are the forcibly stateless people and displaced communities. The life of refugees is difficult and is in turmoil even after they have successfully fled the countries due to various factors like conflict, violence, war and various other reasons. The primary reason for them to leave the country is to find peace however, the past trauma and the difficulties in terms of coming to another country and adjusting without any wealth, it has been challenging for refugees to adjust their lives and lead a happy life (Holvikivi & Reeves, 2020).

Many children are refugees who spend their childhood in challenging situations, displacement as well as uncertain when it comes to their futures. The refugee children are often at great risks in terms of abuse, violence, neglect, exploitation, forced recruitment in the armed



groups and trafficking in comparison to the adults. The refugee children often witness as well as experience various disturbing events, along with this, the social support of the children often weaken, and their education is also disrupted (Cerna, 2019). It is these experiences, which have a huge impact on the children from their infancy to their childhood and through their adolescence.

The UNHCR ensures the safety of the children in terms of where the children live, they play as well as learn. Safety is an important element and in order to make sure that the refugee children are safe, awareness is important which the UNHCR takes care of. On 19 May, 2022, there has been a huge migration and refugee crisis in Caribbean and Latin America that has had a huge impact of thousands of adolescents and children who had to run away from their respective countries without the supervision of an adult and these children have become vulnerable who are exposed to various threats as well as violation of the rights (IOM., 2022).

In the current scenario of ongoing Ukraine war with Russia reveal the statistics which show that about 7.5 million Ukraine children had become refugees. Among them where about 2 million children could escaped and crossed into their neighboring countries and about 2.5 million children were internally displaced (Havana, 2022). The forced uprooting of the children especially under these circumstances has led to the children to fight the situation alone as many of them have lost their parents or family members in this process. It is during this time that the UNHCR had played a huge role in ensuring the safety of the children who had come from Ukraine. In the neighboring countries where majority of the children became refugees, the UNHCR have been sending the refugees with piles of suppliers, which are essential like sleeping mats, thermal blankets, and sending convoys in the country in order to distribute these amenities to the children and other refugees who are displaced internally. They have also sent emergency experts so that they can cater to the required needs of the refugees.

War has a huge impact on people and is seen to suspend and take away the childhood from the children in the society. This is a negative experience changes the life of the children and has a deep impact on their minds and leads to several challenges especially during the growing age because of the traumatic experience. Research suggests that children who have become refugees especially due to the outbreak of wars are the most vulnerable aspects and experience severe mental health issues like depression and anxiety, where the recovery is quite difficult because of the situation they have experienced and the loss of their family members. This is a huge issue as

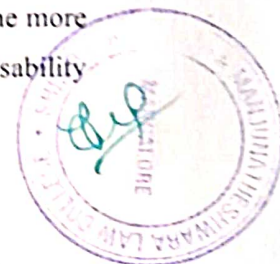


mental health challenges like this can have a significant impact on the development of the children, which can further contribute to their learning, cognitive and their social skills.

Protection and safety of the children have been the core mission for the UNHCR. Other than providing the necessary support and the immediate requirements to the refugee children, the UNHCR also ensures they incorporate various programmes and interventions to protect the refugee children. One of the aspects which the UNHCR highly focuses on is reuniting the refugee children with their family members (UNHCR South Africa., 2022). Families are highly important for the refugee children as they are the primary care givers as well as provide them with the protection, which they require, and having their families with them helps in their overall development (Denov & Shevell, 2019). Due to unforeseen circumstances, many refugee children travel to other parts of the country without the presence of any responsible adult and their family members. For the betterment of the refugee children, the UNHCR along with other NGO's work on finding the family members of the children and ensure they are united with their family members.

The changes in the daily routine and life of the refugee children like the interruption of school, the sudden as well as the abrupt parting from their family, their friends as well as their familiar places and the risks of child protection can have a huge impact on the psychosocial wellbeing of the refugee children (Frounfelker et al, 2020). Other than this right, all the children both refugee and non-refugee children have right to care and protection which is a necessary element for the wellbeing of the child. The refugee children who have experienced trauma because of the displacement and conflict have the right to psychological and physical recovery and social integration in the environment, which helps in fostering self-respect, dignity and the health of the child (Yaylaci, 2018). The operations of the UNHCR focus on taking actions in order to improve as well as preserve the well-being of the refugee children, which is done by mainstreaming the psychosocial support to the children in every aspect of their work and implementing various support programmes. UNHCR also collaborates with various sectors and specialists so that they can ensure a child-centered as well as holistic response, which helps in contributing to the mental wellbeing of the refugee children.

UNHCR looks after every need and requirement of the refugee children. One of the more vulnerable sections in these aspects are the refugee children who have some form of disability

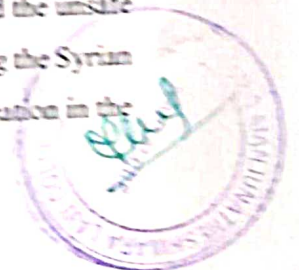


which makes them prone to risks at a higher degree. The article 2 as well as 23 in the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as the UN Convention on Rights of Person with Disabilities which is article 7, state the fact that the children with physical and mental disabilities have equal rights in terms of having a decent and full life that ensure promote self-reliance, dignity as well as facilitate the active participation of the child within the community (United Nations Human Rights, 2006). However, most of the children who are disabled are denied equal access and admission to various services as well as opportunities due to the cultural, social, structural, economic and physical challenges and barriers. On the other hand, the vulnerabilities of these children being refugees and disabled as the same time increase their vulnerabilities which put the refugee children at higher risk in terms of exploitation, gender-based violence, sexual violence, abandonment and neglect (Chynoweth et al, 2020).

Disabled children often face discrimination in the society and the refugee children who are disabled face discrimination where many of their parents and their family members leave them, as they are difficult to manage and take care off (Wells et al, 2020). During forced displacement, many parents lose their income and their money, which is the reason why they tend to leave their disable children so that they are looked after properly (Arfa et al, 2020). Despite of all the reasons, the abandonment and the negative experience can take a huge toll on the mental health of the refugee children.

The UNHCR through their several initiatives in various camps has helped in protecting the rights of the refugee children, which has helped in contributing to their development. The activities of the UNHCR have also ensured that the refugee children are protected from various risks, which are, associated with the vulnerable children in terms of violence and other factors. However, UNHCR does not only dedicate their work towards providing their refugee children with lodging, food and necessary medical care but it also emphasizes on the overall development of the refugee children and aim to make sure that their lives are better (Pherali & Abu Moghli, 2021). This makes the UNHCR highly focus on the education of the refugee children.

Kaya, A. & Kiraç, A. (2016) states that there were many vulnerable refugee children in Turkey who had escaped the country due to the oppression they were experiencing and the unsafe conditions in which they were in. However, the UNHCR played a huge role in protecting the Syrian refugee children by not only providing food and shelter but also focusing on their education in the





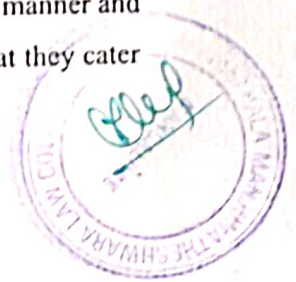
future, which was necessary for their future and their further development (Yılmaz, Karatepe & Tören, 2019).

Quality education is highly important and necessary as it helps in developing problem solving, analytical and critical thinking skills, which are highly applicable in the daily lives of the people (González-Pérez & Ramírez-Montoya, 2022). This can help in fostering the social cohesion, address all the psychosocial needs and provide the refugee children with knowledge, which is lifesaving. The UNHCR is seen to advocate for the access to high-quality education for all the refugee children of different ages through inclusion in the national education structures and systems. Higher education among the refugee children and even other children is critical and is a link between earning and the learning, which helps in allowing the young people thrive successfully in the society and sustain their lives in the future (Streitwieser et al, 2019). The investments made in the higher education when it comes to the refugees helps in strengthening national education structures and systems where they participate in order to benefit the students, institutions and the host communities. The participation of the refugee children also contributes to the social cohesion. Thus, it can be seen that the UNHCR has a huge role to play in not only protecting the refugee children but also ensure the overall wellbeing of the children.

**CONCLUSION**

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR since the 1950s has been active and have played huge role in improving the lives of the refugees and providing them with the necessary support they need to sustain in an unknown country. From the paper, it has been seen that the UNHCR has always been beside the refugees especially during the emergency and time of crisis like the conflict in Ukraine, Syria, in India and many more. In crises, the most vulnerable people are the children who are refugees. From the research of the report, it has been identified that there are many young children who have escaped countries because of negative situations and among which many of them have travelled alone without the supervision of a responsible adult. It is these vulnerabilities of the refugee children, which has led them to be at high risk in terms of violence, sexual exploitation, human trafficking and many more. It is in these situations, the UNHCR has played a huge role in ensuring safety of the refugee children.

UNHCR ensures protection and security of the refugee children in an efficient manner and ensure advocacy so that people are aware of the challenges and act accordingly so that they cater



to the needs of the refugee children. One of the major factors, which affects the refugee children, is the experience, which they gather during the time of crisis. The sudden and the abrupt change is seen to make a huge change in the lives of the refugee children which is the reason why they face various mental health issues which the UNHCR takes care off. However, the UNHCR has not only helped in protecting the refugee children but has always made significant efforts to ensure that they develop in a positive manner. UNHCR focuses on providing quality education to the refugee children and have come up with various programs that support their future endeavors so that they are able to develop themselves which can further help them in their employment which is necessary for survival and also focus on their overall development which will make life better for the refugee children in the future.

REFERENCES

Burundian refugees in Tanzania face increasing danger Human Rights, 2017. Watch. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/11/30/burundian-refugees-tanzania-face-increasing-danger> (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

geographical.co.uk, 2018. the-rohingya-camps-of-despair[online] Available at

globaltimes.cn, 2021. Syrian refugees in Jordan worried about upcoming cut in UN Food Aid, *Global Times*. Available at: <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202106/1227447.shtml> (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

<https://geographical.co.uk/culture/the-rohingya-camps-of-despair> (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

Kenya’s Dadaab camp, 2022. *UNHCR*. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/news/kenyas-dadaab-camp-swells-somalis-fleeing-drought-conflict> (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

malteser-international.org, 2018. *Internationales Hilfswerk für humanitäre Hilfe*. Available at: <https://www.malteser-international.org/en/our-work/asia/bangladesh/life-in-a-refugee-camp.html#:~:text=Kutupalong%20isn't%20only%20the,%2C%20sanitary%20facilities%2C%20or%20healthcare> (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

Nakkazi, E., 2021. *Living conditions of refugees in Uganda may become 'untenable', warns Food Aid Head, Health Policy Watch*. Available at: <https://healthpolicy-watch.news/living-conditions-of-refugees-in-uganda/#:~:text=Bidi%2Dbidi%20hosts%20270%2C000%20South,cases%20are%20on%20the%20rise>. (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

Refugee children battle for education in Tanzania, 2018. *UNHCR*. Available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/refugee-children-battle-education->



tanzania#:~:text=More%20than%2070%20per%20cent,ratio%20adds%20to%20the%20difficulti  
es. (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

Syrian refugees in Jordan as Za'atari Camp, 2020. UNHCR. Available at:  
[https://www.unhcr.org/news/durable-solutions-required-syrian-refugees-jordan-zaatari-camp-  
turns-10](https://www.unhcr.org/news/durable-solutions-required-syrian-refugees-jordan-zaatari-camp-turns-10) (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

Uganda refugee stories, 2020. UNHCR. Available at: [https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/uganda-  
shows-how-including-refugees-can-lift-whole-society](https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/uganda-shows-how-including-refugees-can-lift-whole-society) (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

voanews.com, 2018. Rohingya refugees in bangladesh at risk as diarrheal diseases spread [Online]  
available at [https://www.voanews.com/a/rohingya-refugees-in-bangladesh-at-risk-as-diarrheal-  
diseases-spread/4054626.html](https://www.voanews.com/a/rohingya-refugees-in-bangladesh-at-risk-as-diarrheal-diseases-spread/4054626.html) (Accessed: 13 September 2023).

Arfa, S., Solvang, P. K., Berg, B., & Jahnsen, R. (2020). Disabled and immigrant, a double  
minority challenge: a qualitative study about the experiences of immigrant parents of  
children with disabilities navigating health and rehabilitation services in Norway. BMC  
health services research, 20(1), 1-16.

.Cerna, L.(2019). Refugee education: Integration models and practices in OECD countries.

Chynoweth, S. K., Buscher, D., Martin, S., & Zwi, A. B. (2020). A social ecological approach to  
understanding service utilization barriers among male survivors of sexual violence in three  
refugee settings: a qualitative exploratory study. Conflict and health, 14(1), 1-13.

Denov, M., & C. Shevell, M. (2019). Social work practice with war-affected children and families:  
the importance of family, culture, arts, and participatory approaches. Journal of family  
social work, 22(1), 1-16.

Frounfelker, R. L., Miconi, D., Farrar, J., Brooks, M. A., Rousseau, C., & Betancourt, T. S. (2020).  
Mental health of refugee children and youth: Epidemiology, interventions, and future  
directions. Annual Review of Public Health, 41, 159-176.

González-Pérez, L. I., & Ramírez-Montoya, M. S. (2022). Components of Education 4.0 in 21st  
century skills frameworks: systematic review. Sustainability, 14(3), 1493.

Havana, O. (2022). Escaping war: What Ukraine's children carry with them. Aljazeera.com.  
Retrieved 25 July 2022, from  
<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/longform/2022/6/3/escaping-war>.

Holvikivi, A., & Reeves, A. (2020). Women, Peace and Security after Europe's 'refugee  
crisis. European Journal of International Security, 5(2), 135-154.

IOM. (2022). Latest Migrant Tragedy in Texas Highlights Crisis Along Deadliest Migration Land  
Route. International Organization for Migration, Retrieved 25 July 2022, from  
[https://www.iom.int/news/latest-migrant-tragedy-texas-highlights-crisis-along-deadliest-  
migration-land-route](https://www.iom.int/news/latest-migrant-tragedy-texas-highlights-crisis-along-deadliest-migration-land-route).



- Kaya, A. & Kırac, A. (2016). Vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees in Turkey. Support to Life Association. Retrieved from <https://data2.unhcr.org/ar/documents/download/54518>.
- Streitwieser, B., Loo, B., Ohorodnik, M. & Jeong, J. (2019). Access for refugees into higher education: A review of interventions in North America and Europe. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 23(4), 473-496.
- UNHCR South Africa. (2022). Family Tracing & Reunification - UNHCR South Africa. UNHCR South Africa. Retrieved 25 July 2022, from <https://help.unhcr.org/southafrica/get-help/family/>
- United Nations Human Rights. (2006). Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. United Nations Human Rights. Retrieved 25 July 2022, from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities#:~:text=The%20purpose%20of%20the%20present,respect%20for%20their%20inherent%20dignity.>
- Wells, R., Murad, M., Higgins, M., Smith, L., Lenette, C., Lappin, J., ... & Zwi, K. (2020). Exploring the intersection of human rights, health, disability and refugee status: An arts-based approach. *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 26(3), 387-404.
- Yaylaci, F. T. (2018). Trauma and resilient functioning among Syrian refugee children. *Development and psychopathology*, 30(5), 1923-1936.
- Yılmaz, G., Karatepe, İ. D., & Tören, T. (2019). Integration through exploitation: Syrians in Turkey.

