UNACCOMPANIED & SEPARATED MINORS (UASMs)

APPROACHES OF THE E.U., LATIN AMERICA, AND THE U.S.

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Forum on Investing In Young Children Globally
REFUGEES BY HOSTING COUNTRY (2014)

Map: UN Information Centre in Cairo
GLOBAL OVERVIEW

- In 2014, the UN Refugee Agency reported 60 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide.
  - 19.5M refugees
  - 38.2M internally displaced persons
  - 1.8M asylum-seekers

- 51% of refugees are under the age of 18

- Refugee children are:
  - Vulnerable
  - Dependent
  - Developing

- USCRI has a long history of working with UASMs and has developed a report on options for managing the flow of these children.

Za’atari refugee camp
UNACCOMPANIED & SEPARATED MINORS (UASMs)

- International law defines “unaccompanied” children as those “under 18 years of age who have been separated from both parents and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible to do so.”

- “Separated” children are defined as those “under 18 years of age who are separated from both parents or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver.”
Over 1 million Syrian refugee children
- 8,000 are URMs
AFRICA

- 5 main countries of origin for refugees submitted by the UNHCR for resettlement
  - Democratic Republic of the Congo - 53%
  - Somalia - 23%
  - Eritrea - 8%
  - Burundi - 3%
  - Sudan - 3%

- Collection of the required information and documentation in support of the resettlement of unaccompanied or separated children cases is not always easily available.
AFRICA

2013 South Sudanese refugees
- 7,000 UASMs are displaced
- 31,000 UASMs have fled to neighboring countries
- 19,138 South Sudanese URM have fled to Ethiopia
- In Kenya, 11,764 UASMs in the Kakuma refugee camp (63% from South Sudan)

Additional UASM populations
- As of September 2015, 2,503 UASMs have been registered in Rwanda
- There are 73,173 UASMs in Ethiopia
- It’s estimated that 45% of refugee minors in Northern Uganda are unaccompanied
THE AMERICAS

- Apprehensions of children at the U.S. border rose from 4,910 in 2010 to 51,705 in 2014.

- In 2014, the UNHCR in its “Children on the Run” report indicated a 712% increase in asylum applications by Central American children in countries other than the U.S.

- December 2014: In-Country Processing Program for minors in the Northern Triangle began
  - 4,300 have applied; not a single child has arrived.
COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

Map: CBP
U.S. AND MEXICO

UACs Encountered by CBP

Unaccompanied Minors, October 2013 - September 2014

Unaccompanied Minors, October 2014 - March 2015

Graphs by WOLA

Sources: http://www.wola.org/2015/02/05/2014/01/28/1899/
THE EU

- 24,000 unaccompanied minors applying for asylum in Europe last year.
- UNICEF, Macedonia registered 3,857 in the last 4 months.
- Germany is expecting to see the highest number of UASMs entering its borders in six years.

Map: European Migration Network
169,559 is UNHCR’s total projected resettlement needs for 2016.

- No data on how many are unaccompanied children
- Many countries in the region are still not a part of the 1951 Convention.
- Iran hosts the largest number of urban refugees worldwide, mostly Afghan.

Map: UNHCR
The highest number of unaccompanied children are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Host</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Turkey, Indonesia, Pakistan, India</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burma/ Myanmar</td>
<td>Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia</td>
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<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
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<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
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<td>Syria</td>
<td>Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon,</td>
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(Based on the UNHCR Global Trends Report and reports from partners on the ground)
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recognize new forms of displacement.
- Grant “Children Protective Status” which makes them not removable for duration of the designation, granted travel authorization, can obtain employment authorization documents.
- Strengthen and create uniformity in regional and national frameworks which include child-welfare standards for ensuring protection.
- Encourage the UNHCR to work with additional resettlement countries to build their capacity to receive URM.s and include slots for unaccompanied refugee minors.
- Increase resources for outreach, registration, and best interest determination processes for increased identification of unaccompanied children in need of resettlement.
- The U.S. Government must prioritize raising the number of URM.s that it resettles annually.
THANK YOU

REFERENCES