

### **New Protection Strategies for Protracted Refugee Situations**

It is unavoidable that social processes and behaviors will not trickle through and at least partially embed in every policy area. As the forward push and presence of technological innovation gains space in social practices it also secures its place in policy consideration. Governments, Agencies and Organizations, besides the evident need to employ technology to address efficiency and streamline solutions for concerns and questions, also have to adapt to the growing e-trend.

This paper aims to investigate the refugee context in India, with primary focus on the urban setting, applying a technology focused lens. Technology does not appear as a tool of entertainment in this phenomenon, but rather an indispensable asset what has the capability to identify additional protection mechanisms and extend existing systems in place. Data management, e.g sharing, collection, analysis are fundamental building stones in the application of this approach.

As a prime example, UNCHR has developed proGres, a registration and data management tool - with capability to utilize biometric identification/verification segments. Data stored in the database is of a critical importance and value as they define refugee hood and assist in defining services to be provided for an asylum seeker and/or refugee.

The paper aims to rest its investigation and insights on the existing tools and mechanism that e.g. UNHCR employs, in consideration of the constraints deriving from the Indian government's position, and ad hoc attitude towards refugee matters, and the polarity and intertwined nature of existing case-loads [e.g Tibetan and Sri Lankan vs. Afghan, Myanmar, Somali cases]. A focus areas is how contribution can be made to ensure a more harmonized identification mechanism of the population of concerned and address more efficiently protection challenges, e.g. specific needs identification and assistance, coordination with implementing partners.

The study aims to provide ground to extract lessons learned and good practices, and potential solutions – not necessarily only for the urban context – which could ensure an enhanced and reinvented protection mechanism, which also takes use of existing technology platforms, to fulfill its mandate.