

THE POWER OF CLOTHING

— Making The World A Better Place —

Special Edition: Supporting Refugees



Helping Refugees Build a Better Life

Having fled their country with just the clothes on their back, refugees often walk for miles and cross dangerous seas to seek refuge in unknown lands. Today, millions of refugees worldwide are struggling to survive, and secure precious daily necessities such as food, water, living quarters, medical treatment and education. UNIQLO clothing can protect against the cold and the sun, improve hygiene and help maintain people's dignity. Thanks to donations from customers, UNIQLO has been able to provide emergency clothing aid. But we also want to provide longer-lasting support and help refugees rebuild their lives.

The Power of Clothing
Making the World a Better Place

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Cover photo:
Syrian refugees reach the
Greek Island of Lesbos
© UNHCR/A. McConnell

Refugees Flee for Many Reasons

Refugees cross national borders for many reasons, including to escape armed conflict. Others are fleeing from ethnic, religious or political persecution. Some are adults, some are children, some are sick. The stories that follow are about some of the refugees cared for by the UNHCR.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established in 1950 to protect and support refugees and displaced persons worldwide, and help resolve refugee problems.



Jihan A 34-year-old refugee from Syria

A Mother's Plea for her Children's Education

Jihan needs her seven-year-old son to help do the cleaning and shopping because she is almost blind.

Jihan fled Syria with her husband and two sons, boarding a boat across the Mediterranean that was meant to take eight hours. Forty-five treacherous hours later they arrived in Greece. There was no guarantee they would make it, but they felt they had no choice.

In Syria, Jihan worked as a public servant, while her husband, Ashraf, worked at the university. They were both passionate about education. Now a refugee, Jihan is losing the sight in her left eye, and she is more worried than ever about her children's education.

"We risked our lives to come and find people who might understand our situation, but so few people do," she says sadly.



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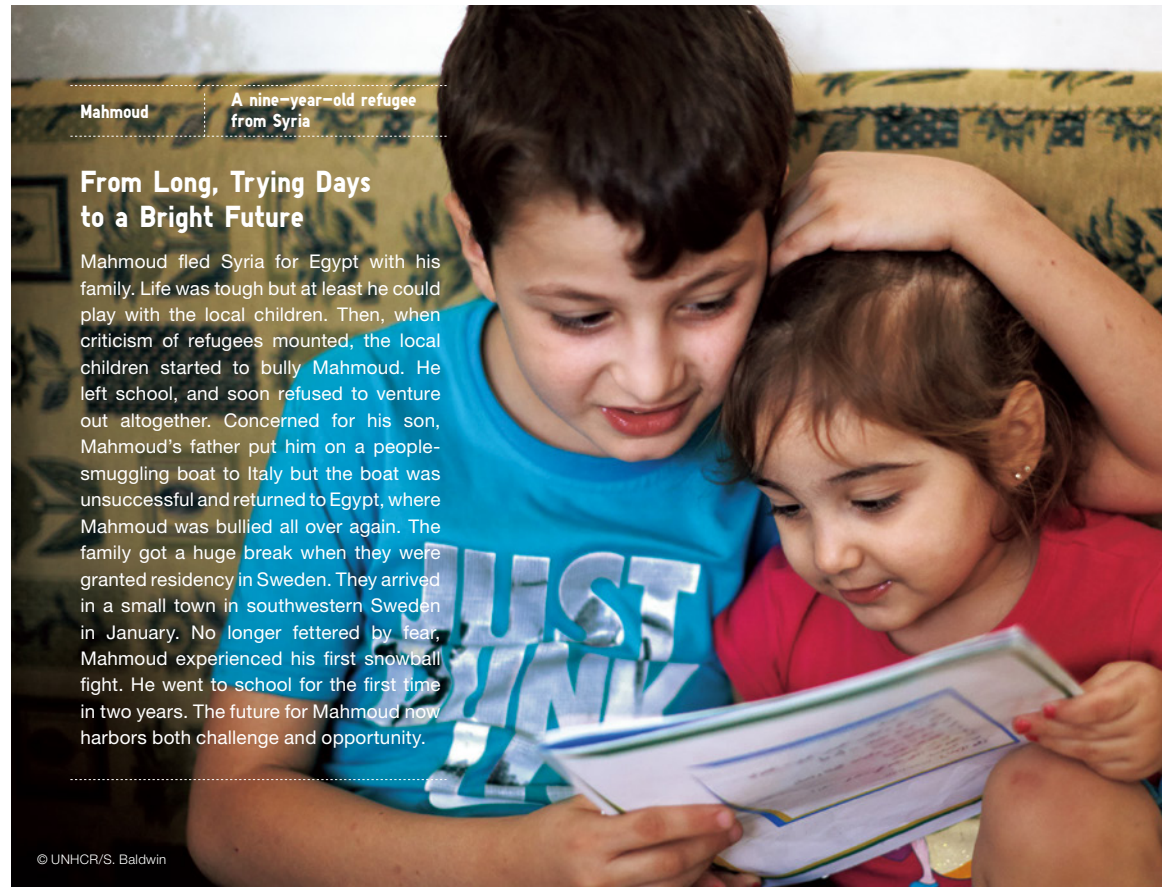
Mahmoud

A nine-year-old refugee from Syria

From Long, Trying Days to a Bright Future

Mahmoud fled Syria for Egypt with his family. Life was tough but at least he could play with the local children. Then, when criticism of refugees mounted, the local children started to bully Mahmoud. He left school, and soon refused to venture out altogether. Concerned for his son, Mahmoud's father put him on a people-smuggling boat to Italy but the boat was unsuccessful and returned to Egypt, where Mahmoud was bullied all over again. The family got a huge break when they were granted residency in Sweden. They arrived in a small town in southwestern Sweden in January. No longer fettered by fear, Mahmoud experienced his first snowball fight. He went to school for the first time in two years. The future for Mahmoud now harbors both challenge and opportunity.

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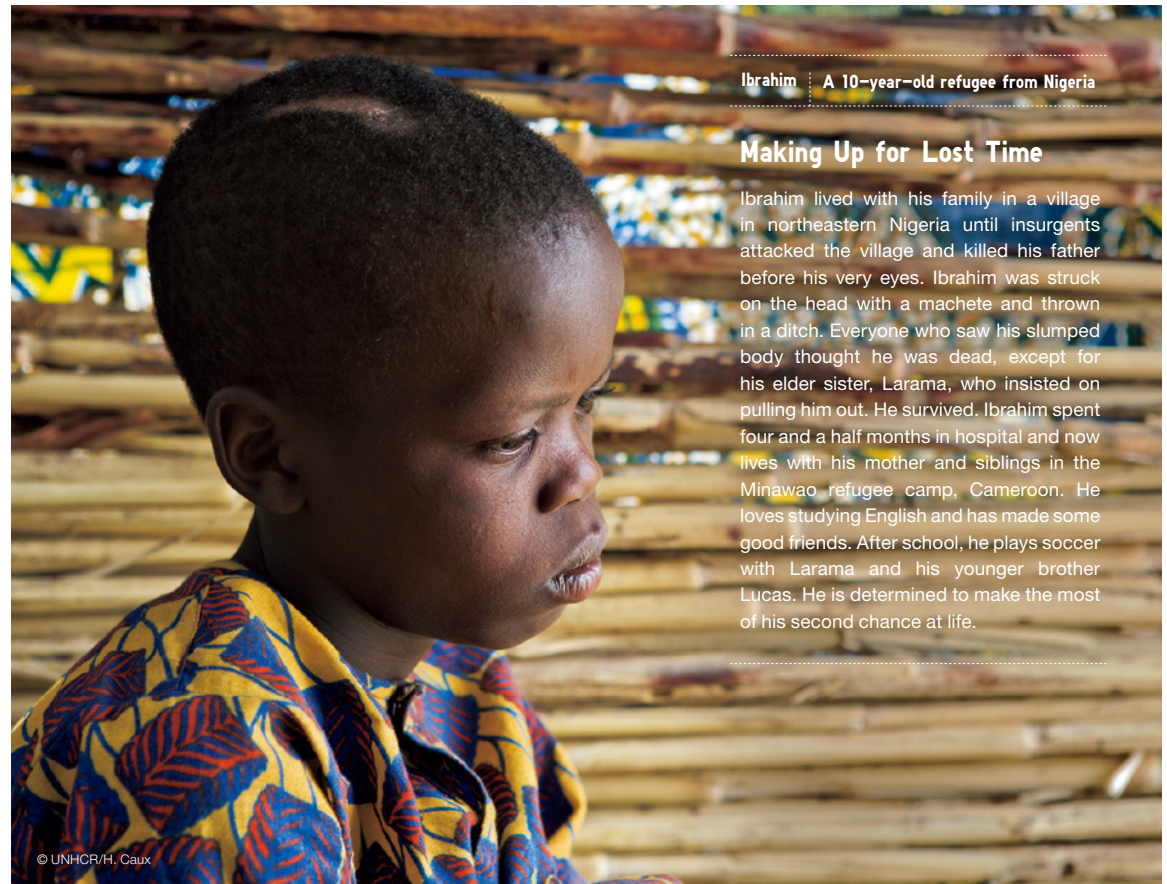


Ibrahim A 10-year-old refugee from Nigeria

Making Up for Lost Time

Ibrahim lived with his family in a village in northeastern Nigeria until insurgents attacked the village and killed his father before his very eyes. Ibrahim was struck on the head with a machete and thrown in a ditch. Everyone who saw his slumped body thought he was dead, except for his elder sister, Larama, who insisted on pulling him out. He survived. Ibrahim spent four and a half months in hospital and now lives with his mother and siblings in the Minawao refugee camp, Cameroon. He loves studying English and has made some good friends. After school, he plays soccer with Larama and his younger brother Lucas. He is determined to make the most of his second chance at life.

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Leveraging the Power of Clothing

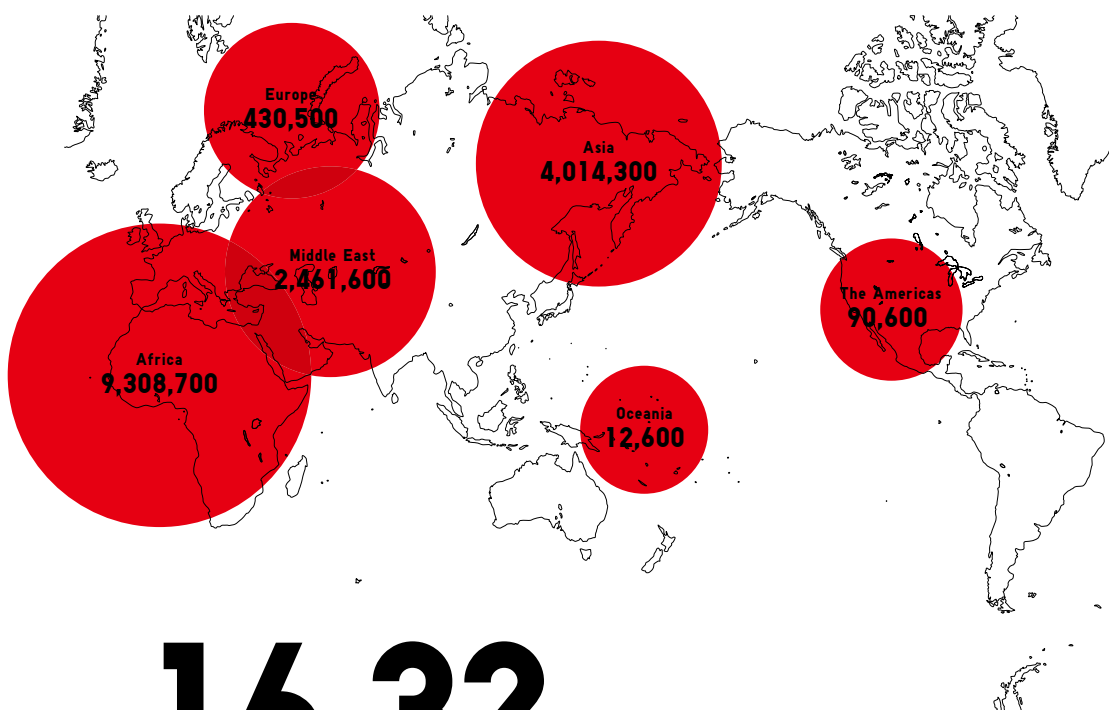
What role can UNIQLO fulfill here? We can address refugees' needs by offering immediate aid and longer-term support. The first step: delivering UNIQLO clothes to those in need.

UNIQLO INITIATIVE 1 2006—

All-Product Recycling Initiative
Delivering Clothing

We redistribute second-hand UNIQLO and GU clothes donated by customers to refugees and people in need through our All-Product Recycling Initiative. The initiative began in 2001 with the UNIQLO Fleece Recycling Campaign, and was expanded to include all UNIQLO items in 2006, and all GU items in 2010. As of November 2015, the initiative covers stores across 16 countries and regions. Approximately 10% of the items collected are recycled as fuel. The remaining 90% are donated to refugees and people in need after confirming the type and quantity of items required and appropriate transportation routes. Our staff help distribute the clothes and interview refugees on site about their specific clothing needs. As of August 2015, we had donated 16.32 million items in 53 countries and regions.

All-Product Recycling Initiative: Clothing Distribution by Region



16.32 million items

(As of August 2015)

UNIQLO INITIATIVE 2 2011—

The Refugee Internship
Working Together

To help foster their long-term independence, UNIQLO offers work experience programs for refugees, and their families, who have recognized refugee status and the right to settle in Japan. After a three to six-month internship in a UNIQLO store, the intern can apply for a permanent store position. We currently have 13 refugees working as interns and full-time employees. They become part of the store team, and are encouraged to pursue their hopes and aspirations in the same way as other employees.



Intern Hta Lar Baw from Myanmar was concerned about whether she could understand Japanese and function successfully in the workplace at first, but the staff in her store fully supported her and she now works as a full-time employee.

UNIQLO INITIATIVE 3 2013—

The Power of Clothing Project
Learn, Know, Do

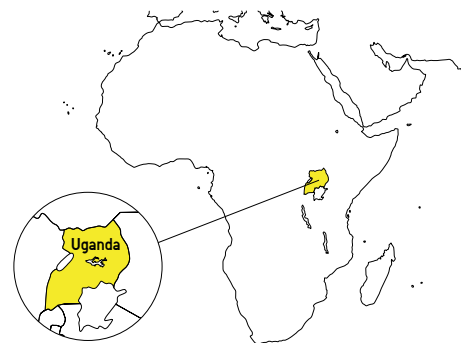
The Power of Clothing Project cooperates with schools across Japan to educate children about refugees. Since 2009, Fast Retailing staff have given presentations on the company's CSR activities at participating schools. From 2013, children have been taught about how refugees live and the importance of clothes. They are then encouraged to form a group to collect clothes for those in need. Finally, the children receive a photo report from staff who distributed the clothes to refugee camps on their behalf. In fiscal 2015, 238 schools and 26,000 children participated in the project.



The project is open to primary, middle and high schools in Japan. Schools can apply through the UNIQLO website. For details on the number of participating schools and application period for fiscal 2016, see www.uniqlo.com/jp/csr/school/ (Japanese only).

Report: Clothing Support for the Republic of Uganda

Uganda has accepted approximately 500,000 refugees from places such as South Sudan. South Sudan is one of the three major areas pinpointed by the UNHCR as requiring urgent support. UNIQLO staff visited Uganda in early October to see how the clothes we donated were being used.



Uganda lies nestled in the heart of East Africa, bordering five countries: Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan. Over the last twelve months, the country has been receiving refugees from three emergencies, from South Sudan in the north and from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi in the Mid and South-West. This has led to the country becoming host to more than half a million refugees and asylum-seekers, more than at any time in Uganda's history. Many Ugandans were themselves refugees not so long ago and there is a shared spirit of ensuring their neighbours in need have a safe place to go.

We visited the Kiryandongo refugee settlement, where most of the refugees have fled the civil war in South Sudan. Often, you will find refugees

confined in camps, unable to leave and surrounded by fences. However, here, there is no fence, and refugees and local residents come and go freely. Everyone has access to the same local schools and hospitals. Having visited many refugee camps, we realize how rare it is for refugees to be given the chance to live in peaceful coexistence side by side with the local community. The majority of refugees share common traits with local residents, including religion and language.

We spoke first with Loum and her family, who were wearing UNIQLO clothes (pictured below). When civil war broke out in South Sudan, they fled to Uganda on foot to seek refuge. Having lost everything, the Government of Uganda provided them with land on which to build their new homes, using materials provided by the UNHCR. They built



a new house, tilled the fields and began selling vegetables in the local market. They are safe here, but every day they ask themselves impatiently how long they must live as refugees. Loum is desperate to be self-reliant and rebuild her life as it was before. Being exhausted from the long displacement, she was excited to hear about the distribution of UNIQLO clothing. "We barely have enough to live on, let alone buy clothes. It is cold here at night and I want the children to have proper clothes, so I was delighted with the high quality clothes provided by UNIQLO," she said.

Fifteen-year-old Akwero (pictured below) was also sporting UNIQLO clothes. She lost her parents and fled South Sudan. She now lives in the settlement with her two younger sisters. She wants to go to school but, while she can get by

on the support she receives from the UNHCR, she has no way to pay tuition. Her lips tremble and she emotionally withdraws when we speak of her mother. But she talks excitedly about her dream to become an artist or a nurse. Glad in a yellow polo shirt, her face is full of life.

The refugees are stoic and hardworking. They put the clothes we deliver to good use. Some people change straight away into their UNIQLO clothes and pose for the camera. Children jump up and down. Mothers say the clothes will enable them to send their children to school with confidence. We know our actions make a difference, but we also know we need to do more when we don't have the right sizes or enough children's clothes. This experience encourages us to double our support efforts.



Cing Hau Lun, from the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
UNIQLO Atré Kameido Store

My dream is to open a UNIQLO store in Myanmar.

Cing Hau Lun applied for refugee status in Japan in 2007 to escape her home country of Myanmar due to her participation in political activities. She has been working in the UNIQLO Atré Kameido Store for two years and is a reliable full-time employee who supports the Japanese staff.

“After graduating from university in 2007, I felt increasing pressure from the authorities regarding my involvement in political activities. I decided to come to Japan. It took several years to gain refugee status. I heard about UNIQLO’s internship for refugees when I was working part time and studying Japanese. I was assigned to work here in the Atré Kameido Store. Now, two years later, I am a regular full-time UNIQLO employee.

At first, I couldn’t understand the technical terms and I didn’t know what to do. At the time, the store manager told me that I was part of the team and I shouldn’t single myself out as a refugee. From that day on, my confidence grew.

People who work in UNIQLO stores don’t stick to strict roles. Instead, we all take turns helping customers, working the cash register, doing the displays and hemming clothes, and helping each other to ensure the store runs smoothly.

I enjoy passing on all I have learned to new staff, which builds a stronger team and helps everyone serve our customers better.

New staff do make mistakes. No one really wants to point out a mistake, but we have a responsibility to do so in order to ensure the best possible customer service. I’m finally getting used to that idea after two years working here!

The refugee problem is growing. I think it is hardest on children because they don’t know what

will become of them. The most frightening thing of all is not to be able to picture the future.

If Japan takes in more refugees, I would strongly encourage them to study Japanese. It is important to learn about Japanese customs and lifestyles and try to absorb them.

For instance, in Japan you greet people by saying “Hello” or “Good Morning,” but in Myanmar you would say, “Have you eaten?” You always add a term meaning “elder sister” when talking to a woman who is older than you. But you don’t add anything to the name of someone who’s younger. Even if they are not relatives, you address people of your parents’ generation as “uncle” and “aunt.” It would be strange if you did that in Japan! To reply “yes” in Myanmar, you repeat the word “Ho” several times. In Japan, one “hai” will suffice! How would you know about these different customs unless someone told you?

I email my mother almost every day, and I use the internet to check the international news. I have been following the general election in Myanmar very closely.

I am the only person in my immediate family living in Japan. I want us to be together, but that is difficult.

I would like to open a UNIQLO store in Myanmar one day. It can get very cold there so UNIQLO clothes would be perfect.”



Ger Duany, from Sudan (currently the Republic of South Sudan)
UNHCR goodwill ambassador, actor and model

Clothes play a vital role in the education of refugee children.

Born in Sudan, East Africa, Ger Duany's family escaped civil war only to be scattered across refugee camps. He survived as a child soldier before settling in the U.S. as a refugee. He now works as an actor and model. He appeared in the 2014 movie *The Good Lie* which depicts the daily life of refugees. He became a UNHCR goodwill ambassador in 2015.

"The civil war in Sudan deteriorated when I was eight years old. My family walked over 400 kilometers from our village to the Ethiopian border and then another 450 kilometers to a refugee camp. We lived there for over four years before civil war broke out in Ethiopia and my family was scattered.

I tried to walk barefoot to Sudan. I couldn't eat or sleep. I was close to giving up when I reached a military facility. They had water, food and somewhere to sleep. I became a child soldier to stay alive. I was given a gun and assigned a military unit, but I hated it. I escaped when I was 14. I headed for a refugee camp in Kenya. I managed to go to America as a refugee in 1994, when I was 16.

I acted in the 2014 American movie, *The Good Lie*, a tragicomedy about refugees who had been separated from their parents in the Sudanese civil war and now live and work in the U.S. The director and producer talked to us refugees about our experiences.

The movie explores the bewilderment of people in the host country and the refugees themselves in equal measure. In my experience, the cultural problems I experienced were nothing compared to my constant struggle in Africa. I was happy to learn all I could, and make the most of the opportunities this new land had given me. It is important to try and enjoy cultural differences rather than struggle with them all the time.

In one scene in the movie, some Americans

are amazed to see men brought up in the Sudan walking around holding hands. It is normal in the Sudan for two men who respect each other to walk holding hands, but it means something completely different in the U.S. In the Sudan, holding hands is a sign of respect. But it is something you can give up doing if you know it may be misunderstood.

My feelings towards my home country have not changed. When it rains, I think of the mineral-rich water in my Sudanese homeland. The soil is so fertile there, you can grow anything. I used to fish and swim in the Nile. It would be a beautiful, bountiful place if it weren't for war which has torn the country apart. When peace returns, I would also like to return to be reunited with family that still lives there.

I am involved in various activities in East Africa as a UNHCR goodwill ambassador, especially those relating to children and education. We must establish educational facilities in refugee camps, so that children can build a future for themselves.

Clothes give students the self-esteem they so desperately need. Many children can't or don't want to go to school because they don't have proper clothes. Clothes are vitally important for the successful education of children. I recently learned about UNIQLO's refugee clothing aid. I'm wearing a UNIQLO T-shirt now and know UNIQLO will make its recycling initiative a great success."





How we can help alleviate the refugee problem.

An unprecedented 60 million refugees and displaced persons around the world have been forced to flee their homes due to fighting or persecution, and that number could keep on rising. The situation is critical and requires urgent action.

Some refugees have lost their families, their homes and their jobs. Students can't continue their studies. Some struggle with mental or physical illnesses. Small children can't understand what is happening, or imagine a better future.

The Fast Retailing Group, as the operator of UNIQLO and other brands, is trying to make a difference, in line with its corporate statement: Changing clothes. Changing conventional wisdom. Change the World. As a global company, we have a responsibility to find ways to support refugees.

We have extended our All-Product Recycling Initiative to provide clothing aid for refugees and now collect second-hand clothing from UNIQLO and GU customers at stores in 16 countries and regions. We have recently launched a global recycling campaign called "10 Million Ways to HELP" and are encouraging all staff across the Fast Retailing Group to participate in the collection and redistribution of quality second-hand UNIQLO and GU clothing to refugees.

We have strengthened our global partnership with the UNHCR, and extended educational activities to teach children in Japan especially about the refugee problem. We also operate a refugee internship program at UNIQLO stores as part of our drive to help refugees become integrated into society.

We must keep going until the current refugee problem is but a memory.

Do you have UNIQLO clothes that you no longer wear?

Why not give them to refugees? Place them in this in-store box or give them to a member of staff and begin supporting refugees.



- Deposit at any time during opening hours.
- Place directly in the recycling box or ask a staff member.
- We accept all quality UNIQLO or GU brand items.
- Please bring in clean items to ensure they are delivered in good condition.
- We cannot take responsibility for any items left in the pockets of donated clothes.
- We also accept torn or stained items. If not suitable for reuse, these items will be recycled as fuel.



uniqlo.com/en/CSR

10 MILLION WAYS TO HELP

In our world today there are an unprecedented number of refugees—people like you and me who have been forced to flee their homes in search of safety and a new life.

Help us in our work with the United Nations Refugee Agency as we gather 10 million pieces of clothing for refugees in need wherever they are.

www.uniqlo.com/en/csr/
www.unhcr.org/