

Convention Plus: Framework of understandings on resettlement

Introduction

The Agenda for Protection¹, deriving from the Global Consultations on International Protection, recognized that there is a need for more coherence in the search for durable solutions, by integrating voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement, wherever feasible, into one comprehensive approach implemented in close cooperation with countries of origin, host countries, [countries of resettlement](#), UNHCR and its partners. Pursuant to the Agenda for Protection the Working Group on Resettlement prepared a paper elaborating upon the concept of the strategic use of resettlement and providing various scenarios for its use. The Working Group defined the strategic use of resettlement as the planned use of resettlement that maximizes the benefit of resettlement, either directly or indirectly, to refugees other than those being resettled. Those benefits may accrue to other refugees, the host States, other States and the international protection regime in general.²

Building upon this effort, Canada prepared a discussion paper which was considered during the inaugural meeting of the High Commissioner's Forum in June 2003.³ As Canada highlighted, resettlement serves three equally important functions. First, it can be a tool to provide international protection and meet the special needs of individual refugees whose life, liberty, safety, health or other fundamental rights are at risk in the country where they have sought refuge. Second, it can be a durable solution for larger numbers or groups of refugees alongside the other durable solutions of voluntary repatriation and local integration. Third, it can be a tangible expression of international solidarity and a responsibility-sharing mechanism, allowing States to help alleviate each other's burdens and reduce problems that affect the country of first asylum.⁴ [A fourth significant function of resettlement is that it raises the consciousness of the general population to the plight of refugees - one of the main reasons that refugee resettlement has been so well supported in some of the traditional resettlement countries is that local communities have become directly involved with the reception and integration of refugees through the resettlement programs \(and reduces the vilification so often seen in some media\).](#)

[While perhaps understood, the strategic use of resettlement in many ways focuses on the second function of resettlement, namely its role as a durable solution. The strategic use of resettlement in fact highlights resettlement as a potential means or catalyst to resolve protracted situations and as a means to leverage the other two durable solutions.](#)

¹ A/AC.96/965/Add.1 of 26 June 2002.

² EC/53/SC/CRP.10/Add.1 of 3 June 2003. See para. 6.

³ Resettlement and Convention Plus Initiatives: "How can resettlement be used in the context of [possible *Convention Plus* agreements and what elements related to resettlement might be considered for inclusion in possible *Convention Plus* agreements", Forum/2003/02 of 18 June 2003.

⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 2.

Recognizing the extremely poor circumstances of most refugee camps and refugee urban living environments, resettlement is a vehicle for removing those most vulnerable from the additional danger, stress and trauma that would result through a protracted stay in a dangerous or tenuous situation. Where rescue is an urgent need, resettlement is the response.

Resettlement, if managed according to the principles set forth in this paper, provides evidence that possibilities for safety and recovery do exist. The demoralized circumstances of refugee camps compounded by prolonged stays without the positive movement that resettlement represents can contribute to insecurity for refugees and possible reprisals from host countries. This reality needs to be included in the equation about resettlement as a durable solution.

At the Forum, Canada and UNHCR were requested to convene a cross-section of stakeholders to work on the basic understandings related to resettlement that might be included as part of plans of action to address specific refugee situations comprehensively. Taken together, the principles and elements set forth in this paper are proposed as the framework of understandings to guide the creation of Convention plus comprehensive arrangements. It is important to recognize that NGOs are integral to the development and implementation of any action plans that seek to address resettlement as a durable solution for refugees and as a tool of protection. NGOs, with their frontline activities, programs, and staff are often best placed and are often the best source of information about the refugee populations.

This paper outlines the elements from among which states and other partners could draw to include in a resettlement program in the context of Convention Plus situation-specific comprehensive agreements which will be determined for each unique situation and depending on the circumstances, may incorporate resettlement. It details the elements specific to the task of dealing with refugees in need of resettlement. Not all will be applicable to every situation.

It is important to note what the Strategic Use of Resettlement in the context of Convention Plus is not. It is not a tool to be used as a bargaining chip to hold over first asylum countries or countries of origin in order to force the drafting and application of readmission agreements for failed asylum-seekers or as a means to prevent further migration from the source area (such as, for example, through the imposition of tighter border controls). Nor does the more strategic use of resettlement negate the need for fair, transparent, efficient asylum systems for spontaneous arrivals. Resettlement should not be at the expense of the right to seek asylum. Further, the strategic use of resettlement and the drafting of comprehensive solutions often based on the collaboration of participating and affected parties should not be an excuse for delay or a reason to defer action – while attempting to achieve consensus.

The elements have been divided into those that are the responsibility of individual players i.e. the host country, resettlement country, the UNHCR and implementing

partners, [including NGOs](#). In some cases, responsibility for an element would be shared amongst all parties.

General Principles and Joint Undertakings

1. The strategic use of resettlement should be understood as the use of resettlement to enhance the simultaneous promotion of one or both of the other durable solutions to address protracted refugee situations and, as such, requires the brokering of comprehensive, collaborative, inclusive agreements between resettlement countries, refugee hosting countries and, when applicable, countries of origin facilitated by UNHCR and the partner States ideally with the full participation of civil society (international and local NGOs) and the affected refugee communities.

Resettlement helps more than just those individuals who are resettled. Resettlement also serves a strategic purpose by drawing domestic (in the resettlement countries) and international attention to the human rights abuses that force refugees to flee.

2. Resettlement should be undertaken in a spirit of co-operation, partnership and consultation, and in full compliance with international human rights and refugee law standards

Since the Second World War, co-operative efforts of host countries, resettlement countries and international organizations has led to solutions for millions of refugees around the world. If the strategic use of resettlement as a durable solution within the context of Convention Plus is to succeed, it should be undertaken in this same spirit of international solidarity [and move beyond debate to application](#). Host countries, resettlement countries, UNHCR and implementing partners, [including NGOs](#), should work collectively to pursue the agreed upon goals. [\(At the present time, resettlement is very much a bilateral process between individual resettlement countries and UNHCR; it seldom involves meaningful cooperation among resettlement countries or with countries of first asylum.\)](#)

The role and responsibilities of resettlement countries, host countries, UNHCR and implementing partners should be clearly articulated at the outset of plans of action to address specific refugee situations comprehensively. In order to facilitate co-operation, formal consultations amongst all parties should ideally take place before the start of a resettlement effort and on a regular basis throughout the implementation of a comprehensive arrangement. Consultations should include needs analysis from the perspective of all parties, identification of obstacles and concerns and mechanisms for assuring a constructive decision making process.

For example, resettlement countries should consult and to the extent possible, co-ordinate the allocation of resources, to ensure that a sufficient number and type (e.g. vulnerable cases, women-at-risk, urgent protection etc.) of resettlement places are available to address the needs in the context of comprehensive durable solutions arrangement [and that](#)

services are in place within the receiving countries for refugees who may require additional support and services through NGO partners.

3. All parties will undertake to maintain transparency in order to achieve the internationally agreed objectives of the resettlement process

Transparency of process at the outset and throughout any strategic resettlement effort is essential for all parties. It is through transparency that trust can be established and maintained by all parties to the agreement. This includes the communication of clear information with respect to eligibility and selection criteria, including information on groups or types of individuals identified for resettlement by a particular country. This information should be shared with the refugee population to help manage expectations. Any changes that occur in resettlement or host countries, UNHCR, NGOs, and international agencies, and that may have an impact on resettlement processing, should be communicated to other parties as soon as is practicable.

To support transparency parties should have in place management practices, including sufficient numbers and appropriately trained human resources and generally accepted accounting and audit procedures, to monitor, deter, detect and take appropriate action against fraudulent activities related to resettlement processing, amongst staff and refugee applicants. In addition, the host country officials should take appropriate law enforcement action to deal with refugees who engage in such fraudulent practices, with support as required. It is also essential that unbiased translators be a crucial part of maintaining the integrity of the resettlement process.

4. All parties will endeavour to deliver the resettlement program in as cost effective a way as possible

All parties should make every effort to streamline resettlement processing and make the process less resource intensive, duplicative and expensive. A reduction in the cost of resettlement processing may result in additional money to assist more refugees.

Resettlement processes should be examined jointly to determine if there are tasks which are done more than once by different parties, where sharing of information would eliminate the need to collect it a second time or sharing of resources may help reduce cost and effort. For example, detailed bio-data collected at the time of registration by the UNHCR or host country could be shared by using a standardized universally accepted registration from with the country considering resettlement of an individual while maintaining international standards on data protection.

Several models have been used in the past and can be adapted for all resettlement countries. These include: (1) In the early 1970s, NGOs processing refugees in Southeast Asia for resettlement in a third country often referred those refugees not eligible for their program, to other countries in a joint effort to assist the most vulnerable including facilitating family reunification; (2) Similarly, in Europe, NGOs processing refugees routinely prepared bios, arranged for medicals, and transportation to a resettlement site via IOM (ICEM), and referred cases to a number of resettlement countries; and (3) Utilizing the JVA system used in the US Refugee Program, whereby the NGO does the

administrative casework working closely with IOM for medicals, transportation, etc. These NGOs were/are familiar with the requirements of specific country programs, and were/are able to efficiently refer the refugees for resettlement, including for family reunification. Similarly the choice of a location for a refugee population by the host country may increase costs if the area in question is not easily accessible to resettlement countries, UNHCR and international organizations.

5. All parties should commit to continue to be part of a Convention Plus comprehensive arrangement to resolve, in a timely manner, a refugee situation, including through resettlement

Any comprehensive arrangements will be undertaken within a specific time frame, with the understanding that if solutions have not been found for all (the majority of) refugees in a population, an extension may be made with the agreement of participants. Resettlement countries, host countries, UNHCR and international organizations that enter into a comprehensive arrangement in the context of Convention Plus should make resettlement commitments that reflect their intention of actively participating in resettlement activities until such time as durable solutions have been found for the vast majority of refugees.

Care should be taken to ensure that non protection-related “pull factors” and associated movements are not created by resettlement operations, resulting in new flows of asylum seekers after the situation in the country of origin no longer warrants it. To the extent possible, program parameters should be established which clearly delineate eligibility for resettlement. This information should be effectively communicated to refugee populations at hand. Parties should engage in ongoing monitoring and periodic review of the motivation of new arrivals and take appropriate action to minimize and address “pull factors” and associated movements. In addition, to the extent possible and when appropriate, refugees should be dealt with in the order in which they arrive in the country of asylum, taking into account protection needs, family circumstances and the physical and mental health of the individual. The role of registration, as described later in this paper under “Host Country,” is an important tool in minimizing the “pull” factor.

(NOTE: The first line of this paragraph would seem to suggest that resettlement was being considered when in fact repatriation may be the most appropriate solution (i.e. “the situation in the country of origin no longer warrants it.”) That resettlement can create a pull-factor is almost inevitable. The solution to that is not refusing to use resettlement, but rather clearly identifying the group of individuals being selected for resettlement. “Pull factors”, real or perceived, are probably the primary cause of protracted refugee situations around the world – that is, why these situations haven’t been dealt with previously and allowed to become protracted. It is hoped that any strategic use of resettlement will address this issue and not perpetuate this problem.)

6. All parties agree to work to diversify resettlement opportunities

All parties should make every effort, working in close cooperation with UNHCR, to encourage more States to provide resettlement opportunities for refugees. They should

support emerging resettlement countries with technical and financial support, training, twinning arrangements or other measures aimed at creating or consolidating resettlement capacity. Diversification of resettlement opportunities in all regions of the world can have a beneficial impact in terms of managing migration flows and reducing secondary movements - although resettlement should not be linked with additional requirements on host countries to prevent further migration (either through border controls or through the signing of readmission agreements).

Traditional resettlement countries and NGOs in these countries could/should “twin” with an emerging country of resettlement to ensure appropriate sharing of expertise.

7. Consulting refugees

Consideration should be given to the role of the refugees themselves. The refugees for whom a comprehensive agreement is sought have a right, individually and collectively, to be consulted and should, as far as possible, participate in the decision-making processes.

Refugee communities have the most direct and personal interest in the solutions to be offered and should be involved in the discussions leading to comprehensive agreements, as well as in the implementation of any agreements. The input of refugees can be crucial for the success of initiatives, since they can identify the points that need, from the refugees’ perspective, to be taken into account. All Parties should be encouraged to learn from models used in previous successful experiences of negotiations in which refugees were represented at the table.

Individual refugees also need to be consulted about their wishes with respect to their durable solution, and those wishes, for example, as to which country they would prefer to be resettled to, should as far as possible be taken into account. This is both fair to the refugees and likely to lead to better integration.

Resettlement Country

Main elements and undertakings:

1. Apply selection criteria for individual refugees or groups of refugees, in keeping with the humanitarian nature of refugee protection and the search for durable solutions.

The goal of the strategic use of resettlement and using resettlement as a component of comprehensive durable solutions arrangements is to secure protection and durable solutions for more refugees than would otherwise be the case. It is recognized that the resettlement programs of individual States often rely on selection criteria established by law and that reflect domestic interests. Resettlement countries should be prepared to explore the use of expanded and flexible resettlement criteria in support of shared humanitarian goals and responsibility sharing, particularly in emergency and protracted refugee situations. Countries should work collectively to ensure that sufficient resettlement places are offered, that the response to humanitarian need is geographically balanced and non-discriminatory, and be prepared to make multi-year commitments for resettlement, to ensure sustained commitment to a resettlement effort.

A country [and its NGO partners](#) may have a traditional approach to resettlement that should be examined to see if it can be modified or enhanced to meet the needs of the refugee population at hand. This could include, for example, the selection and processing of groups of refugees within a population on the basis of other than individual refugee assessments. This recognizes that group processing approaches are not inconsistent with countries applying their own selection criteria. In such scenarios it is assumed that individual screening for medical and security concerns will be done by resettlement countries, as required.

The established screening criteria of individual countries may also serve as a basis for burden-sharing arrangements. Certain countries may excel at specific kinds of resettlement (e.g. large numbers, vulnerable cases, etc.). Arrangements may include countries that do not normally resettle but who have a particular interest in the specific situation. In such cases that country will have to establish guidelines for resettlement that are appropriate for the situation in question.

[States should be encouraged to recognize the international dimension of refugee protection by moving away from national selection criteria for resettlement and towards acceptance of international \(UNHCR\) criteria.](#)

[States should commit to the principle of non-discrimination in resettlement selection. Refugees in need of resettlement should not be discriminated against on the basis of religion, nationality or ethnicity. It is important that States collectively and individually not be seen to be favouring some refugees at the expense of others.](#)

[The coordination aspect of resettlement countries should include a mutual understanding of moving away from the present trend of categorising refugees into "first class refugees" and others, which turns into a fight between various resettlement countries on getting the most "attractive" refugees.](#)

2. Recognition of the importance of the integrity of the family unit

It is widely recognized that the presence of immediate family members (spouse and dependent children) is of significant benefit to refugees in terms of both their economic welfare and mental health [and overall sense of security](#), as they endeavour to adapt to life in a country of resettlement. If a family is together a refugee can focus his or her attention on learning a new language, finding employment and making a new home. If immediate family members remain behind, the resettled refugee may have difficulty with these essential elements of adaptation and integration.

It is recognized that resettlement countries do not necessarily share one definition of "immediate family" and that individual states must work within the constraints of their laws. However, in cases in which immediate family members are in the same country of asylum, resettlement countries should make every effort to ensure the integrity of the family when processing applications for resettlement. In cases in which immediate family members are in different countries of asylum, every effort should be made to facilitate

reunification through resettlement of the family in one country. If a refugee has close family members who are already established in a country, that country should be the first to consider an application for resettlement and should do so in the spirit of preserving the integrity of the family.

It is recommended that States use the UNHCR definition of social and economic dependency when defining family units, as well as the UNHCR definition for family reunification. Strong consideration should be given to the cultural norms and definition found in the refugee's country of origin. The argument that adaptation and integration are linked to an intact family unit requires that the definition applied be that of the refugee, and not left solely to the discretion of the country of resettlement.

3. Provide secure legal status to resettled refugees

Resettled refugees should be granted secure legal status in the country to which they are resettled including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights (similar) equal to nationals. Only if a resettled refugee and those granted asylum enjoy the same secure legal status with (most of) the rights of nationals can they be fully functioning and contributing members of the society.

4. Provide appropriate assistance to facilitate integration into the receiving country

The adaptation of a resettled refugee to the country of resettlement is important both for the refugee and the receiving country. It is widely recognized that resettled refugees adapt more quickly if they are given orientation prior to departure as well as assistance upon, and for a period after, their arrival in a new country. In order to promote successful integration resettlement countries should offer appropriate support and services to resettled refugees and ensure that programs are flexible and suitable. Such services may include cultural orientation briefings to understand better the culture in which they will live, language training to acquire the language of the resettlement country, assistance to find work and help with access to health and social services. The support and acceptance of the receiving society is also important for successful adaptation. Experience has demonstrated that public support may be strengthened through public relations campaigns in the country of resettlement, particularly if a significant number of refugees are resettled in a short period of time.

The role of communities, both of refugees and of the host society, in facilitating integration should be recognized. Refugees' adaptation to a new society can be greatly helped by being resettled in a group or to a place where they can find people who come from their region of origin. Local communities also play an important role in welcoming refugees and helping them participate fully in society.

States should be encouraged to address systemic barriers to integration, including barriers related to racism. Concrete assistance given to arriving refugees is not enough by itself if refugees come up against barriers such as discrimination in the workplace or in school.

There is a vast body of knowledge relating to "(best) good practices" in facilitation of integration of resettled refugees. Resettlement countries are encouraged to share their

experience and knowledge. It is recommended that States use the UNHCR International Handbook on Refugee Resettlement – A Handbook to Guide Reception and Integration of Refugees. This was the result of the successful tripartite international conference on the reception and integration of resettled refugees, held in April 2001 in Sweden.

5. Engage in regular consultations to determine the number of refugees and types of caseloads to be resettled by each country.

Resettlement countries should meet periodically to report on their progress, amend caseloads or number to be resettled, identify problems and seek solutions and to assess the success of the resettlement effort. Such consultations will support the general principle that resettlement be undertaken in a spirit of co-operation, partnership and consultation. It is recommended that regular consultations include NGOs in this spirit of partnership and cooperation.

6. Make concrete commitments to enhance resettlement places in order to ensure the viability of this “strategic use of resettlement” and to allow forward planning by UNHCR as well as to make a real impact of the numbers of refugees in limbo awaiting a durable solution

7. Protection of individual refugees is an integral element of all resettlement programs

It is recognized that the primary purpose of resettlement is the provision of individual protection to meet the needs of individual refugees whose life, liberty, safety and health or other fundamental rights are at risk. As such, resettlement countries should continue to provide sufficient resettlement places for refugees not covered by a comprehensive arrangement and for whom resettlement is the only means to guarantee their safety.

It is recommended that States, UNHCR and its NGO implementing partners expand on the effective use of emergency resettlement for high-risk refugees in need of immediate protection. Resettlement States need to note their responsibility to efficiently process resettlement cases. When discussing the protection element of protection, one risk refugees are faced with can be the danger of waiting in camps or in other areas while the resettlement country finishes processing the case, whether for slowness in the administration, security checks or other reasons. Efficiency is important not only on the part of the host or transit country, but equally on the receiving country as well as UNHCR and others involved. (The risk of a long stay and waiting period may be linked to, for example, threat by local population of transit country, by police of host country or by agents from home country).

8. Donor and resettlement country governments should also provide targeted development assistance to refugee hosting countries and countries of origin to support the simultaneous utilization of the other durable solutions – local integration and return and reintegration. Assistance should be targeted to local affected communities where refugee camps are located and those impacted by significant numbers of returnees.

Host Country

Main elements and undertakings:

1. Commitment to the principle of *non-refoulement* as well as physical and legal protection under the law and respect for all aspects of the Refugee Convention

The provision of secure asylum to refugees is an essential element of any comprehensive arrangement. The principle of *non-refoulement* is widely accepted in customary international law. As such, host countries should agree to provide secure first asylum to refugees and adhere to the principle of *non-refoulement* in accordance with international standards, regardless of whether resettlement places are immediately available.

If a refugee is not accepted for resettlement for reasons other than exclusion from refugee status under Article 1 F of the 1951 Convention, secure first asylum should continue to be provided by the host country and all parties should continue to search for an appropriate durable solution for such persons.

Of note is the important political momentum it may have on a host or transit country if resettlement countries act together in condemning maltreatment of refugees. Furthermore, a coordinated international community of resettlement countries can have an impact on securing the respect by the host or transit country for the principle of *non-refoulement*.

2. Co-operation in the identification and registration of a refugee population

The early and accurate collection of information on refugee populations serves the interests of the host country, resettlement countries, the UNHCR and international organizations. It builds confidence, supports needs analysis of the refugee population and increases the likelihood of co-operation amongst partners. To support this, host countries should co-operate with UNHCR and NGO implementing partners for the purposes of registration and identification of a refugee population and to gather information necessary to determine the best durable solutions for the refugees.⁵

(Ideally,) Registration and identification should be done early in a refugee situation in order to facilitate efforts to find a durable solution. Information gathered will normally include details of individuals and groups in need of resettlement **taking into account protection needs, family circumstances and the physical and mental health of the individual**, and will seek to identify individuals who fall under the exclusion clauses of the 1951 Convention **and as per UNHCR's Guidelines on Exclusion**.

3. Facilitate ongoing access by resettlement countries, UNHCR, NGOs and international organizations, to a refugee population

Ease of access in a timely fashion, to a refugee population, will facilitate resettlement processing, the achievement of durable solutions and the strategic use of resettlement. Host countries should provide ongoing access by resettlement countries, UNHCR and

⁵ For detailed information on the different purposes of refugee registration, see ExCom Conclusion No. 91 (LII) (2001)

implementing partners (including NGOs with experience in resettlement processing and programming) to the refugee population identified for resettlement. This includes prompt access for the purposes of pre-screening, selection interviews and follow-up procedures such as medical examinations and security checks. This may involve, for example, timely issuance of visas to a delegation from the capital of a resettlement country, visits to detention centers for the purposes of conducting resettlement interviews, permission for resident diplomats to travel within the host country or authorization for a medical doctor employed with partners such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to visit a refugee camp. Ease of access should not be used to the detriment of those refugee populations that are isolated and in need of resettlement.

4. Facilitate the movement of refugees within the host country, as required by the resettlement process.

The host country, in cooperation with IOM, should support and facilitate the controlled and supervised movement of refugees within their country if it is necessary to support of the resettlement process. For example, in some situations it may be necessary for refugees to travel to another location for resettlement interviews, medical examinations or other procedures that are part of resettlement processing, or for the purposes of reunification with close family members located in another part of the country. Refugees may also have to travel to a point of departure when they are ready to leave for a resettlement country. Permission to travel should ideally be granted well in advance of the planned departure.

5. Facilitate the departure from the host country of persons selected for resettlement.

The host country should facilitate the departure from their country of refugees selected for resettlement. This may include the provision of exit permission where applicable, the issuance of travel documents and co-operation in the movement of refugees to the point of departure for the resettlement country. When required, issuance of exit permission, travel documents and permits to travel within the host country should be granted unconditionally and within a reasonable time before the planned departure for the resettlement country.

6. The host country should also provide access to land and resources for that portion of the population for whom local integration is the desired and appropriate durable solution within a specific time frame so that refugees are not kept in limbo.

UNHCR

Main elements and undertakings:

1. Conduct systematic needs analysis and search for comprehensive and durable solutions

Consistent with UNHCR's mandate of finding durable solutions for refugees, UNHCR undertakes to lead the process of identifying those refugee situations that would benefit from comprehensive solutions, including the use of resettlement. In this context UNHCR, with implementing partners, as appropriate, would conduct a thorough needs analysis of

specific refugee populations. UNHCR would also lead joint consultations [and broker agreements](#) with resettlement countries, host countries and, when appropriate, country(ies) of origin, as well as relevant partners, regarding such a comprehensive approach.

2. Develop mechanisms for identifying groups and populations for resettlement.

In furtherance of ongoing initiatives to use resettlement more strategically and to enhance the use of resettlement as a durable solution, UNHCR will continue to develop and implement the UNHCR Methodology for Group Identification and work with resettlement countries [and NGOs](#) to develop frameworks for the resettlement of groups and large refugee populations. [To achieve the goals of resettlement countries within the Framework of Convention Plus comprehensive agreements, UNHCR should seek to enhance its resettlement referral capacity and consult with NGOs in the development and implementation of the Methodology for Group Identification.](#)

3. Apply tools and techniques for registration.

UNHCR should ensure to the extent possible that complete and accurate family information is obtained at the time of registration and referral in order to ensure the integrity of the family unit for resettlement purposes.

In addition to identifying individuals and groups who require resettlement, UNHCR should make every effort to identify individuals who fall under the exclusion clauses of the 1951 Convention. They should also share information with other parties that may assist with the identification of persons who may fall under the exclusion clauses.

In this context, UNHCR undertakes to introduce new techniques and tools to enhance the registration and documentation of refugees [such as those being developed by Project Profile](#).

4. Co-ordinate resettlement activities, including facilitation of regular consultations among parties

The UNHCR should act as co-ordinator for resettlement activities within the context of a Convention Plus comprehensive arrangement. This role includes calling regular and emergency meetings of all parties to the arrangement and the organization and facilitation of such meetings. It also includes overseeing the process to ensure that all parties are living up to their commitments under the arrangement, identifying problems and attempting to find solutions, and keeping all parties informed of developments relevant to the agreement and to resettlement processing. [Additionally, such coordination and consultation requires reference to and regular updating of the UNHCR Resettlement Handbook.](#)

5. Provide support to the host country and resettlement countries in the resettlement process

UNHCR will provide support to the host country and the resettlement countries throughout the resettlement process. In addition to specific undertakings identified

above, this includes assistance with arranging and facilitating interviews, assistance with the arrangement of medical examinations and [the coordination of transportation with IOM](#), facilitation of exit permission, issuance of travel documents and any other proceedings integral to the resettlement process.

6. Provide structured training to UNHCR Branch Offices and to NGO implementing partners' field staff on the strategic use of resettlement.

7. Create field positions for Durable Solutions Officers, similar to Protection Officers.

8. Informing refugees

It is also important to ensure that refugees affected by any comprehensive agreement are given necessary information. Too often, refugees have very little information about decisions being made about them. One of the effects of this lack of information is that refugees are vulnerable to exploitation by people who claim to be able to sell them benefits, such as a chance at resettlement. Refugees pay unscrupulous persons money for telephone numbers or forms or other supposed services that the refugees are led to believe will give them access to resettlement. All parties to an agreement should recognize their responsibility to see that refugees have the information they need to protect them as far as possible from such vulnerability to exploitation. The parties should also ensure that other measures are taken to guard against such exploitation, through monitoring, effective complaints mechanisms and prosecution of abusers.

Implementing Partners (including International Organizations, Intergovernmental Organizations and NGOs)

Main elements and undertakings:

1. Identify and advocate for the use of comprehensive durable solutions for refugees in protracted and/or forgotten refugee situations, including vulnerable refugees, i.e., refugee women, children, adolescents, and victims of torture with UNHCR and resettlement country governments. NGOs' role in identification applies to both groups in need of resettlement as a durable solution, as well as vulnerable individuals in need of protection.

2. Provide support with resettlement processing

(International organizations) [Implementing partners](#) may support the process of screening, identification, verification, registration and referral of a refugee population, depending on the circumstances. The actual screening may be done by UNHCR or the host country but an implementing partner may assist. As this process is highly resource intensive and therefore expensive, every effort should be made to make it as efficient and cost effective as possible, [including the use of the UNHCR/ICMC Deployment Scheme](#).

3. Provide support to the host country, resettlement countries and UNHCR in the resettlement process

Implementing partners may provide support to the host country, UNHCR and the resettlement countries throughout the resettlement process. This may include assistance

with registration and documentation of refugees, arranging interviews, [preparing files for submission to resettlement countries](#), assistance with arrangements for medical examinations and transportation, [requesting security checks](#), [providing pre-departure cultural orientation briefings](#), facilitation of exit permission, issuance of travel documents and any other process integral to the resettlement process.

4. **Implement development programs** to support refugees for whom local integration in the host country or reintegration in the country of origin are the appropriate durable solutions. These development programs should include funding for local language acquisition, the development of employment skills, and income generation activities.