

Working with the internally displaced

UNHCR has been protecting and assisting internally displaced persons (IDPs) for more than 30 years. Today it is a partner in the inter-agency collaborative response to the humanitarian needs of IDPs. Following a review of such responses that began in late 2004, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) agreed in December 2005 to establish the “cluster leadership approach”. This approach aims to fill capacity and response gaps in up to 11 critical sectors by designating global and country-level “cluster leads.”

Global clusters are inter-agency groups at the headquarters level that build overall capacity, set common standards and develop policies and tools to support field operations. Besides UN agencies, they include NGOs and non-UN intergovernmental organizations. Within this system, UNHCR leads the global protection cluster. It also co-leads the global camp coordination and camp management cluster (CCCM) with IOM, and the global emergency shelter cluster with IFRC. In the clusters it co-leads, UNHCR is responsible for conflict-induced internal displacement, while IOM and IFRC are responsible for situations arising from natural disasters.

UNHCR, OHCHR and UNICEF have the responsibility to decide, under the leadership of the relevant Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator, which agency will be in charge of protection at the country level in natural-disaster situations. The same process applies in non-displacement situations where populations have acute protection needs requiring an international response.

UNHCR is currently engaged in 24 IDP operations, of which nine are ongoing humanitarian emergency operations using the cluster approach: the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire (protection cluster only), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Liberia, Somalia, and Uganda.

UNHCR's IDP Policy Framework and Implementation Strategy

Since June 2006, UNHCR has regularly consulted its Executive Committee (ExCom) on its role within the inter-agency cluster approach, and in June 2007 presented its new IDP Policy Framework and Implementation Strategy.

In 2007, UNHCR conducted five internal Real Time Evaluations of its engagement with IDP operations and the cluster approach in Chad, the DRC, Liberia, Somalia, and Uganda. In addition to the five evaluations, an overall analysis of their findings and recommendations was presented to UNHCR's Standing Committee in September 2007. These have also been shared with the OCHA-led independent evaluation of the cluster approach which is currently under way.

UNHCR recognizes the importance of having skilled staff capable of effectively leading clusters, and its training increasingly incorporates IDP and cluster-related elements. For example, the Workshops on Emergency Management and the Operations Management Learning Programme now address the cluster approach, strategic partnerships, and cluster leadership and coordination skills.

UNHCR has been working to improve its collaboration and cooperation with other humanitarian actors. For example, the Office's IDP Advisory Team joined the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) to organize a panel on “Responding to IDP situations in non-cluster countries” during the 2007 Annual Consultations with NGOs. This was part of an effort to strengthen partnership in non-cluster operations. The IDP Advisory Team also contributed to the Third Annual San Remo Course on Internal Displacement which targets senior government officials and policymakers. In June 2007, the IDP Advisory Team and the Brookings Bern Project on Internal Displacement held a joint seminar at which some 20 individuals with a range of academic and practical expertise discussed durable solutions for protracted internal displacement situations. The Office also welcomed the secondment to UNHCR of a staff member from the office of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons.

Camp coordination and camp management cluster

UNHCR co-leads the CCCM cluster with IOM. The CCCM cluster has been active in Liberia (completed in 2007), Chad, Uganda, and the DRC, and CCCM principles are being applied in West Darfur and Georgia (in the context of collective centres). As of June 2007, more than 170 field and headquarters personnel from

different UN agencies and NGOs and national/local authorities have been trained in CCCM techniques.

To reinforce CCCM capacity in the field, UNHCR has deployed experts to West Darfur, Chad, the DRC, Georgia and Somalia. To facilitate systematic data gathering, analysis and dissemination, UNHCR has supported information-management projects in Uganda and Somalia, while assessments of similar support were undertaken in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire and Iraq. In Uganda, cluster information and data sharing at the operational level focused on providing GIS mapping and database support to agencies involved in camp management, while in Somalia it focused on information management and the tracking of population movements.

In partnership with the protection cluster, the CCCM cluster supported the inter-agency development of IDP profiling guidelines, and participated in a successful IDP profiling exercise in Chad. Best practices for camp management in IDP collective centres have been compiled and a guidance note has been issued to field operations. By the end of 2007 the CCCM cluster will also develop best practices for phase-out and camp closure. To raise the quality of CCCM training sessions, new modules have been developed on the roles of cluster leads and camp coordinators, while existing modules on camp management will be updated.

Emergency shelter cluster

UNHCR and IFRC co-chair the emergency shelter cluster, which has been activated in Chad (conflict), Lebanon (conflict), Liberia (conflict), DRC (conflict/natural disaster), Mozambique (natural disaster), Pakistan (natural disaster), Philippines (natural disaster), Somalia (conflict) and Indonesia (natural disaster). In 2007, the cluster devised a toolkit to help cluster coordinators fulfil their leadership responsibilities. It also developed a performance management system to monitor the effectiveness of an emergency shelter cluster operation's response. The cluster has drafted standard non-food item requirements for an emergency response targeting up to 500,000 people.

Both UNHCR and IFRC have established rosters of emergency shelter coordinators who can be mobilized in emergencies. Since April 2007, UNHCR and IFRC have jointly led three cluster coordinator training sessions in



Uganda. Returned IDPs with teachers and a UN team in Lira district.

Geneva, Panama and Bangkok, and technical specialists' training in Geneva. UNHCR also supported a pilot field training workshop on emergency shelter in support of the Somalia operation. As of October 2007, the global emergency shelter cluster had trained 150 individuals, including 64 cluster coordinators and a total of 28 technical specialists, government officials and NGO representatives. To meet its commitments in emergency shelter response, UNHCR is seeking resources to procure additional blankets and lightweight and communal tents.

Protection Cluster

As the global cluster lead, UNHCR chairs the global Protection Cluster Working Group (PCWG) and has led the development of inter-agency tools to improve protection in IDP operations. For instance, it has produced an inter-agency *IDP Protection Handbook*. Provisionally released in November 2007, the Handbook is the first comprehensive and practical field guide on the subject for both UN agencies and NGOs. UNHCR has also coordinated the development of an inter-agency protection-assessment framework. Complementing these tools, an inter-agency IDP protection learning programme will be developed and delivered in four key operations in 2007-2008.

In partnership with the NRC and OCHA, UNHCR contributed to five IDP protection workshops for humanitarian workers (Uganda) and national and local authorities (Somalia and Côte d'Ivoire) in 2007. UNHCR and NRC plan to hold two more field workshops in late 2007 to reinforce UNHCR's protection-leadership capacity in Chad, Ethiopia, Somalia and Uganda. Working with the CCCM Cluster, the PCWG supported IDP profiling surveys in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Somalia and Sri Lanka. Furthermore, it is developing inter-agency Field Monitoring Guidelines, for dissemination in early

2008, to assist operations in setting up monitoring systems.

UNHCR collaborates with the International Refugee Committee (IRC) on the SURGE project, which is designed to provide emergency staffing support for protection. By September 2007 the project had deployed 17 experienced Protection Officers to various complex emergencies, including the CAR, Chad, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC, Liberia and Somalia. The SURGE roster is composed of 263 individuals, representing some 62 nationalities, more than 50 per cent of whom are women. UNHCR remains an active member of the Steering Committee of the Protection Standby Capacity Project (ProCap), which since March 2007 has deployed senior protection officers to assist eight country operations, and has trained 34 members of standby rosters from partner agencies.

Other global clusters

UNHCR also participates in global clusters led by other agencies. Given its operational expertise in forced displacement, its participation ensures that its efforts to assist refugees and the clusters' IDP interventions are aligned and mutually supportive. In this respect, UNHCR technical staff play important roles in shaping the various clusters' policies, tools and training.

UNHCR believes the **early recovery cluster** provides a direct link to creating durable solutions for IDPs, and in facilitating practical and sustainable humanitarian exit strategies. UNHCR contributes to the cluster with interventions on return and reintegration, and by promoting the inclusion of NGOs.

As an active member of the **logistics cluster**, UNHCR has strengthened its logistics-training and human-resources capacity to ensure the Office can effectively contribute to inter-agency humanitarian response efforts.

Over the past two years, UNHCR has provided substantial inputs for the **water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) cluster's** policies and documents. UNHCR leads a sub-project to strengthen technical advice and support to field operations, and is a member of the capacity-building steering committee, which is developing a cluster coordinators roster and a technical experts training programme. UNHCR has also helped the Cluster develop guidance tools to facilitate inter-cluster coherence and compatibility between the WASH, CCCM, shelter, nutrition and health clusters.

In the **health cluster**, UNHCR participates in all sub-working groups, and is a member of the steering committee responsible for developing the

Health-Nutrition Tracking System. The Office also worked closely on the creation of three cluster-assessment tools.

In the **nutrition cluster**, UNHCR contributes to the thematic working groups on assessment and capacity-building and to the development of cluster-specific tools. UNHCR is exploring ways to increase participation in field-level clusters.

With the **education cluster** just getting under way, UNHCR has contributed to the formulation of its work plan and identification of sector-specific capacity gaps, tools and guidance.

HIV and AIDS is a cross-cutting issue which affects all sectors. Under the UNAIDS division of labour, UNHCR is the lead technical agency for HIV and AIDS in refugee and IDP emergencies. The Office has organized inter-agency and technical field support missions to the CAR, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC, and Nepal. Furthermore UNHCR has developed a multi-sectoral inter-agency assessment tool for HIV and IDPs.

Plans for 2008-2009

In 2008 and 2009, UNHCR will review its progress in mainstreaming IDP-related functions and ensuring it has the capacity to carry out its cluster-leadership responsibilities. Currently, the Office is reviewing options for internal structures for global cluster coordination, mainstreaming IDP related functions, addressing critical budget and staffing issues, and training and security requirements in IDP operations. UNHCR will also review and revise its policies to address outstanding and emerging issues related to its role in the inter-agency response to internal displacement.

Within its ongoing Structural and Management Change Process, UNHCR has put forward a proposal for a new budget structure for discussion with government stakeholders. The proposal recommends funding the Global IDP Programme on a project basis to safeguard the resources needed for refugee responsibilities. Consultations with ExCom members are under way to reach a consensus on how the funding of IDP operations can be most effectively managed.

UNHCR will further strengthen its roster of experienced staff members with the leadership skills and understanding of inter-agency responses to fulfil its cluster responsibilities to lead, build coalitions, and develop and implement joint strategies. The Office will also review security measures and training to ensure the safety and security of UNHCR staff members and internally displaced persons.

As a global cluster lead, UNHCR will continue in 2008-2009 to work with cluster partners to develop standards and tools, share good practices, support country IDP operations, and review the tools' effectiveness and revise them as needed. It is currently working to strengthen data-management systems and rosters of technical experts and cluster coordinators.

In clusters where UNHCR is not the lead, it will ensure that: (1) policies and guidelines address displacement-related issues; and (2) interventions in emergency settings improve the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of humanitarian operations. Although UNHCR is not the leader of these clusters, each is essential to the well-being of people of concern to the Office. Indeed, to demonstrate its commitment to these non-lead clusters, as of 2008 the Office will dedicate staff to work on deepening its ties with them.

IDP country operations

Based upon its established competence and capacity, UNHCR aims to provide support to national and international responses to situations of forced internal displacement. The number of people who have been internally displaced as a result of armed conflict has increased substantially over the past decade, and now stands at approximately 25 million. UNHCR is presently engaged in 24 operations, nine of which have activated the cluster approach. In all IDP operations, the Office works in partnership with governments, other international organizations and NGOs, regardless of whether the humanitarian country team has adopted the cluster approach or not.

In Uganda, UNHCR and the protection cluster played an essential role in developing a coherent IASC Country Team protection strategy for IDPs, and in re-casting key protection concerns within the context of the right to freedom of movement. The protection cluster has given practical effect to freedom of movement through a variety of activities, designed to promote the physical, material and psychological welfare of IDPs. These include returnee monitoring, repairing access roads to new settlement and home-site areas, de-mining, and supporting police by providing bicycles and communications equipment.

In Georgia, UNHCR's key interventions focus on advocacy, durable solutions for displaced communities, and small-scale humanitarian assistance. In particular, UNHCR seeks to overcome the obstacles to return by addressing discrimination, security concerns and the lack of regional political solutions. On the recommendation of the Representative of the Secretary-General for the human rights of internally displaced persons, UNHCR helped the Government of Georgia to draft the national IDP strategy which was adopted in February 2007.

In Nepal, UNHCR developed programmes which acknowledge that better cooperation and dialogue between local authorities, IDPs and host communities are vital to mutual understanding, reconciliation and the return of a sense of security. UNHCR, with the cooperation other

agencies, facilitated workshops on these issues in the country's eastern and mid-western regions. The workshops, conducted in 15 districts, were instrumental in promoting reconciliation and dialogue among district-level stakeholders on IDP issues. More practically, task forces were established in each of the districts to facilitate the return of IDPs.

In Liberia, UNHCR successfully led a dynamic and results-oriented protection cluster, which superseded the pre-existing national Protection Core Group (PCG) when the cluster approach was adopted. Following the restructuring of the cluster approach in the country, the Ministry of Justice now chairs the protection cluster at the national level, and plans are under way for local authorities to take over the 11 PCGs at the regional level. A protection framework has been developed to focus on returnee monitoring, child protection, sexual and gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, advocacy, and legal reform. The protection cluster has developed links with the early recovery cluster, particularly in the area of rule of law. The UNHCR-funded field protection monitoring network now consists of more than 400 monitors trained and employed by one of the PCG members. Discussions are under way to see how the monitoring network can be linked to UNDP activities in support of the Government's decentralization policy, and specifically the Country Support Teams.

In Colombia, IDPs often require legal advice and support, particularly in order to avail themselves of assistance programmes. Consequently, UNHCR established a number of legal aid clinics staffed primarily by final-year law students to provide IDPs with free legal advice. These clinics empower the displaced population while also providing a mechanism to hold public institutions accountable. To date, eight university law faculties have established legal aid clinics, and in 2006 alone they processed 2,949 cases. In addition, four of the participating universities have agreements with their faculties of psychology and social work to offer psychological care to complement their legal advice.