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A Quick Guide to the Global Needs Assessment, Results-Based Management and *Focus*

In early 2009, integrated change initiatives to improve and streamline UNHCR's operations will come into force for the 2010-2011 planning cycle – the Global Needs Assessment and Focus results-based management software.

What is the Global Needs Assessment?

- The Global Needs Assessment, GNA, is a way for UNHCR to fully express the needs of refugees and others of concern under its mandate.
- It is part of a fundamental shift by UNHCR to communicate and advocate more clearly the needs of its beneficiaries.
- The GNA shows what is not being done and what are the human consequences of unmet needs.
- The GNA includes an assessment of needs along with plans and budgets to meet those needs.
- It was piloted in 2008 in eight countries and after some refinements is being rolled out worldwide for the 2010-2011 planning cycle.
- It is not a new assessment tool.

Full details on planning and budgeting for 2010-2011 are in the Planning Instructions to be issued in December 08.

Why do we need the Global Needs Assessment?

- To better understand and prioritize needs, UNHCR must develop a comprehensive methodology for determining needs.
- To clearly present the needs of refugees and others of concern in our advocacy efforts and show the negative human impact of needs not being met.
- A pilot GNA in eight countries in 2008 showed that 30 percent of needs of

UNHCR's populations of concern were unmet.

For more details on the GNA pilot and the Refugee Realities report go to www.unhcr.org/gna

What does UNHCR expect the GNA will achieve?

- Expectations on the immediate resource benefits of the GNA have to be managed. UNHCR expects a progressive increase in its budget over time, as donors respond to a better expression of needs laid out in the GNA.
- The GNA is also expected to result in better plans, better resource allocation and more targeted advocacy.

Are staff being asked to do more for no immediate prospect of a return?

- Initially, this may happen. But we have to start somewhere and staff in different parts of the world have been very supportive of the idea of clearly presenting what we need because every day they see the negative impact of needs not being met.

In this tough financial environment, isn't this the wrong time to ask for more funds?

- It is more important than ever for UNHCR to clearly show what the needs of refugees and others of concern are, and the very negative consequences if those needs can't be met. Otherwise, donors might assume UNHCR's beneficiaries can live with budget cuts.

What is *Focus*?

- *Focus* – UNHCR's new results-based management software will be used to carry out planning and budgeting for the GNA based on the New Budget Structure and Results Framework.
- The *Focus* software has been developed in-house to support the planning (assessment and design), management and monitoring of our operations worldwide.
- *Focus* is being rolled-out worldwide in 2009.

How do the GNA and *Focus* knit together?

- They work hand-in-hand. The comprehensive assessments, planning and budgeting that are part of the GNA are recorded in *Focus* as an integral part of the results-based management format – laying out objectives, plans, budget and expected measurable results.
- All country operation plans for 2010-2011 must be done in *Focus*.
- *Focus* is user friendly, say staff who have already been trained.
- Training on *Focus* and the GNA will be carried out together for selected UNHCR staff at headquarters, in regional offices and in the field.

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What is Results-Based Management and how does this fit with *Focus* and the GNA?

• Results-Based Management, RBM, is essentially about showing measurable results and ensuring UNHCR is a performance-driven organization. RBM is already integrated into many aspects of UNHCR's operations and is fully reflected in the framework of the New Budget Structure and in the GNA. *Focus* is an RBM software tool.

Where does MSRP fit into this?

• An interface between MSRP (the accounting tool) and *Focus* (the planning and budgeting tool) is currently being developed and is expected to be finished by early 2009.

What changes will the GNA and *Focus* mean for UNHCR staff?

• The assessment of needs will be similar to current practice but closer attention will be paid to communicating comprehensive needs and the negative consequences of needs that are not met. As usual, partner consultations are crucial, but with added emphasis on examining what could be done with additional resources.

• For the 2010-2011 planning cycle all field operations will be asked to do a Comprehensive Plan in *Focus*, addressing all needs under UNHCR's responsibility - to the objective/sector level. From this plan, they will be required to extract a Prioritised Plan.

For full details check the Planning Instructions to be issued in December 08.

GNA/FOCUS TIMELINE

- **Dec 08**
UNHCR planning instructions issued
- **Jan-March 09**
Focus/GNA workshops for field and bureaux
- **Consultations with partners**
- **31 March 09**
Country operations plans for 2010-2011 completed in *Focus*
- **April-June 09**
Annual Programme review at HQ
- **October 09**
Budget 2010-2011 presented to ExCom, Geneva

When will training on *Focus* and the GNA start for UNHCR staff?

• A first phase of training in *Focus* for both bureaux and selected staff around the world took place in 2008. The *Focus* team carried out a training and modelling exercise of the 2009 budget in the New Budget Structure with two or three UNHCR national staff from each country. The exercise went smoothly and now these staff are an important resource for the *Focus* global roll-out.

• In late 2008 and early 2009, a series of workshops are scheduled to be held worldwide to ensure staff in headquarters, regional offices and in the field are familiar with *Focus* and the GNA, and feel comfortable and confident about what is expected and using the software.

The Focus team, together with the bureaux, will notify the field on the workshop schedule.

How will the field get support to help with *Focus* teething problems?

- An extensive online *Focus* User Guide for troubleshooting will be available on the *Focus* homepage on the Intranet.
- The Global Service Desk is the first line of support for technical problems about *Focus* access, connectivity and navigation. ■

• Contact the Global Service Desk on globalsd@unhcr.org or +41 22 739 8888 in Geneva.

• Bureaux in Headquarters will provide the first line of support for policy guidance on issues related to the results based framework and *Focus*.

• The *Focus* team at HQ are available as a second-line of support for technical and policy issues. Contact hqfocus@unhcr.org