

Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement Geneva, 28-30 June 2007

Agenda Item 3g

Information Note: Enhancing the Role of NGOs in Resettlement

Since the June 2006 Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) the Resettlement Service has made efforts to strengthen the effective role of NGOs in resettlement; in areas of advocacy, capacity building and operational support. This is consistent with UNHCR's global strategic objectives.

UNHCR planning meetings and workshops

To enhance and support the NGOs' role in these areas, the Resettlement Service has opened its regional meetings and training events to NGO participants. Since the 2006 ATCR, events hosting NGO staff include: Regional Strategic Planning Meetings in Accra, Beirut and Nairobi (November 2006), Bangkok (December 2006)¹ and Buenos Aires (June 2007); Advanced Resettlement Training in Accra (November 2006); and, Anti-Fraud Workshops in Geneva and Nairobi (November 2006) and Istanbul (March 2007). The participation of NGOs in these activities aims to strengthen coordination with UNHCR and build capacity at the operational forefront of resettlement.

Collaborative endeavours

The Resettlement Service has worked closely with the NGO sector to explore new models for the identification and referral to UNHCR of refugees in need of resettlement, pursuant to the recommendations of the workshop '*Strengthening Partnerships: Enhancing the Role of NGOs in the Resettlement Process*' (Washington, D.C., 23-24 March 2005) and, more recently, the joint ECRE-UNHCR workshop '*Enhancing the Role of European NGOs in Resettlement*' (Geneva, 11 September 2006) and pre-ExCom meeting with NGOs. The RCUSA and ECRE have shown leadership in this process, which UNHCR acknowledges and appreciates.

Enhancing the Deployment Scheme

In consultation with NGO partners, ICMC and UNHCR have worked jointly to develop a revised framework for enhanced NGO participation in the Resettlement Deployment Scheme. This revision allows for short-term deployments under a cost-sharing arrangement (pursuant to a recommendation of the Washington workshop in March 2005), which paves the way for NGOs to resourcefully contribute to resettlement field work. This framework provides scope for NGOs to be proactive in presenting project proposals to UNHCR for enhanced resettlement delivery.

Furthermore, in discussion with ICMC, the Resettlement Service has reviewed the eligibility criteria and profile of candidates to be recruited to the Scheme, allowing greater flexibility for NGO staff working with resettled refugees in countries of resettlement. It is furthermore anticipated that the UNHCR offices in countries of resettlement will have a more active role in the recruitment of qualified people to the Scheme; efforts are already underway in Washington and Ottawa, jointly undertaken by ICMC and UNHCR.

¹ NGOs did not attend the meeting although invitations were sent.

New and strengthened partnerships

UNHCR continues to explore ways to strengthen its partnership with NGOs. This includes situations where sub-agreements with implementing partners in the areas of legal, social and medical assistance to refugees have been amended to assist UNHCR identify vulnerable refugees and mainstream organisational priorities (e.g. 2006 ExCom Conclusion 105 on Women and Girls at Risk). In addition, proposals for enhanced operational partnerships with NGOs are being examined in Africa, Middle East and Latin America with a view to strengthening collaboration and capacity at the field-level. The Resettlement Service remains committed to its strategic objectives to engage proactively with the NGO sector to further develop innovative ways to combine resources and activities to improve resettlement delivery.

Resettlement Service
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