



## **Evaluation of Resettlement Programmes in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay**

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“In line with the actions proposed in the Chapter on Comprehensive, Complementary and Sustainable Solutions in the Brazil Plan of Action, this document was prepared with the financial and technical support of UNHCR. The points of view expressed in this document are not necessarily those of the States concerned or of UNHCR”.

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## I. BACKGROUND

In 1984, during a period of crisis in Central America that involved violence and displacement, the States of Latin America and the Caribbean summoned a “Colloquium on the International Protection of Refugees in Central America, Mexico and Panama: Legal and Humanitarian Issues.” The colloquium, held in Colombia with the objective of improving protection for refugees, displaced and Stateless persons in the region, led to the adoption of the “1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees.”

The Declaration emphasized the importance of the principle of non-refoulement and the “non-political and exclusively humanitarian nature of grant of asylum or recognition of the status of refugee and to underline the importance of the internationally accepted principle that nothing in either shall be interpreted as an unfriendly act towards the country of origin of refugees.” The Declaration additionally promoted “the adoption of national laws and regulations facilitating the application of the Convention and the Protocol and, if necessary, establishing internal procedures and mechanisms for the protection of refugees.”<sup>1</sup>

A significant achievement of the Declaration was the extension of the concept of refugee in Latin America. “Hence, the definition or concept of a refugee to be recommended for use in the region is one which, in addition to containing the elements of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, includes among refugees persons who have fled their country because their lives, safety or freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order.”<sup>2</sup>

In 2004, on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cartagena Declaration, the Latin America States met again in Mexico City. The States convened acknowledged “the importance of the principles contained in the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees to the provision of protection and finding durable solutions and the need to carry out a more detailed analysis of its recommendations.” The States undertook to intensify “their efforts to provide protection, assistance, and find adequate solutions for refugees in the region, within a spirit of international solidarity and responsibility sharing with the support of the international community...., including the programmes relating to durable solutions.”<sup>3</sup>

The States noted that, “the Government of Brazil proposed the creation of a regional resettlement programme for Latin American refugees, in the framework of international solidarity and responsibility-sharing. This initiative opens the possibility for any Latin American country, at the opportune time, to participate and to receive refugees who are in other Latin American countries.” The ‘Solidarity Resettlement’ programme in Latin America issued one of

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<sup>1</sup>1984 *Cartagena Declaration on Refugees*, Cartagena, Colombia, 22 November 1984.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

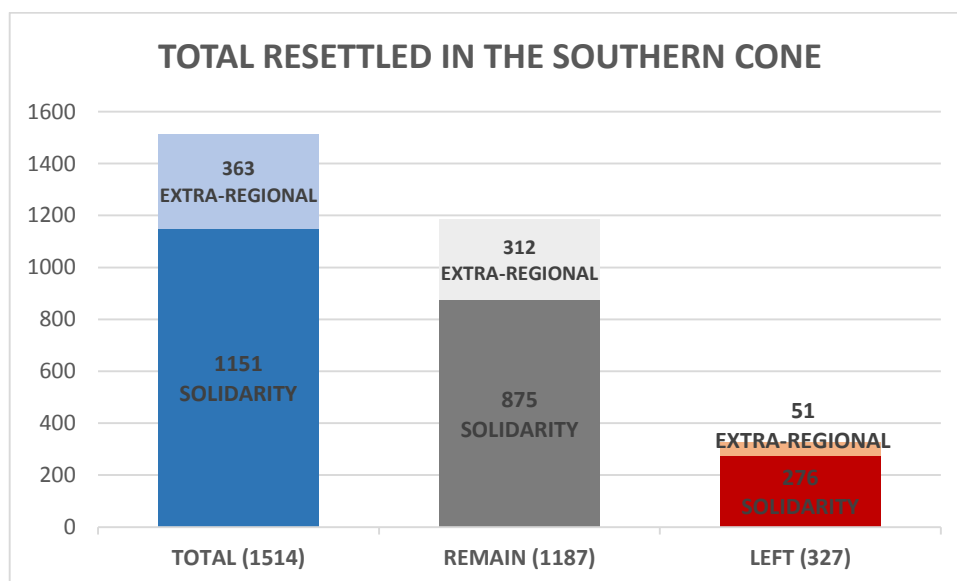
<sup>3</sup>*Declaración y Plan de Acción de México Para Fortalecer la Protección Internacional de los Refugiados en América Latina*, Mexico City, 16 November 2004.

the key proposals of the “Mexico Declaration and Plan of Action to Strengthen the International Protection of Refugees in Latin America.”<sup>4</sup>

According to the Mexico Plan of Action, the announcement of the Solidarity Resettlement programme “was well received by the countries of the region who currently host an important number of refugees, as a tool to help to mitigate the effects of the humanitarian situation these countries face.... Furthermore, based on the experience of Brazil and Chile as emerging resettlement countries, they appeal to the international community to support the strengthening and consolidation of these initiatives, in order to improve and replicate them in other countries of Latin America.”<sup>5</sup>

The Plan of Action pointed out that, “Resettlement, as a durable solution in the region and for the region, should not be viewed as “burden-sharing” but, instead, as a duty deriving from international solidarity, and the need for technical and financial cooperation from the international community for its strengthening and consolidation was reiterated.”<sup>6</sup>

During the years that followed, Brazil and Chile continued their resettlement programmes, and Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay also established Solidarity Resettlement programmes. From 2005 to 2014, some 1,151 refugees, mostly Colombian, were resettled from Ecuador and Costa Rica to the five countries of the Southern Cone. Another 363 refugees from outside Latin America, mostly Palestinians and Syrians, also resettled in the region. In recent years, Solidarity Resettlement programmes have been at least temporarily suspended or delayed for different reasons in Argentina, Chile, and Paraguay.



On 3 December 2014, to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cartagena Declaration, the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean met again in Brasilia, where they agreed on “The Brazil Declaration: A Framework for Cooperation and Regional Solidarity to Strengthen the International Protection of Refugees, Displaced and Stateless Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean.”

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

Prior to the meeting in Brasilia, a dialogue process was conducted through four sub-regional consultations held during 2014 in Buenos Aires, Quito, Managua and Great Cayman. The sub-regional consultations highlighted the importance of resettlement as an instrument for protection, solidarity with the countries that receive a large number of refugees, and regional and international cooperation.<sup>7</sup> With the aim of strengthening and granting dynamism to the Solidarity Resettlement programme, the sub-regional consultations proposed: the identification of priority situations that could require support from the Solidarity Resettlement programme at present and in the near future; to support the Republic of Ecuador as the country that currently hosts the largest number of refugees in Latin America and the Caribbean; increase resettlement possibilities for refugees in the region; show solidarity with international humanitarian crises, by granting humanitarian visas or resettlement quotas; and explore the possibility of establishing a voluntary *Cooperation Fund* for strengthening the Solidarity Resettlement programme with contributions from the international community, including Latin America and the Caribbean.<sup>8</sup>

Lastly, the States that had participated in the Solidarity Resettlement programme from its launch, following the Mexico Plan of Action, recommended that a joint evaluation be carried out, with the technical support and advice of UNHCR, to share experience and good practices, and consolidate the programme in line with the current situation in the region.

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<sup>7</sup>BRAZIL DECLARATION “A Framework for Cooperation and Regional Solidarity to Strengthen the International Protection of Refugees, Displaced and Stateless Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean” Brasilia, 3 December 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

In the Brazil Action Plan, the participating countries proposed an evaluation of the national resettlement programmes to “identify obstacles and good practices during the selection and profiling phases and in the integration process.”<sup>9</sup> The evaluation would have the technical and advisory support of UNHCR.

UNHCR, which supported the Solidarity Resettlement programme since its creation, accepted the mission of providing technical assistance and advice for the evaluation. According to the agency:

*As outlined in the framework agreement, “The Integration of Resettled Refugees: Essentials for Establishing a Resettlement Programme and Fundamentals for Sustainable Resettlement Programmes”, UNHCR welcomes the establishment of resettlement programmes by the States that have put in place the essential elements. In this context, it is reminded that the States that are recipients of resettlement are expected to adapt and improve their programmes over time, to ensure sustainability and receptivity in the provision of support for resettled refugees, in order for these to reach their potential as productive citizens and find a truly lasting solution. The recipient States are also encouraged to work towards securing the resettlement fundamentals in their legislation and policy instruments, ensuring stable funding, developing receptive integration programmes, and encouraging local support to establish welcoming communities and multi-year commitments.<sup>10</sup>*

UNHCR hired a consultant to carry out the evaluation. The agency noted that, “this analysis will evaluate the progress made under the programme toward the establishment of a sustainable programme that will provide refugees with a legal statute and with material and social support to ensure that resettlement provides a lasting solution”<sup>11</sup> in the countries, and identified the following purposes of the evaluation to be conducted by the consultant:

- Analyse and review the design and implementation of the resettlement programmes in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, taking into account their approach, objectives, opportunities, resources and limitations;
- Measure the convenience and effectiveness of the mechanisms established, and the support offered to achieve the general objective of a lasting solution for resettled refugees in these five countries, with a specific focus on the economic and social integration of resettled refugees;
- Identify lessons learned, good practices, gaps and limitations in the selection process and in the integration programmes in general;
- Issue recommendations to improve the efficiency of the programme and strengthen the fundamentals for sustainable resettlement programmes.<sup>12</sup>

Prior to hiring the consultant for the evaluation, UNHCR had prepared “Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of the Solidarity Resettlement Programme”, which it presented to the National

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<sup>9</sup>BRAZIL DECLARATION “A Framework for Cooperation and Regional Solidarity to Strengthen the International Protection of Refugees, Displaced and Stateless Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean” Brasilia, 3 December 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Draft Terms of Reference, Evaluation of the ‘Solidarity Resettlement’ programme.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

Committees for Refugees (CONARES) of the Governments of the five resettlement countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay) for approval.

A key component of the Terms of Reference was a series of questions that UNHCR proposed as “guides for the evaluation.”<sup>13</sup> The questions cover five stages of the Solidarity Resettlement programme: Planning and preparation; Implementation; Monitoring; Situation of Refugees; and Evaluation and sustainability. The consultant included these questions in questionnaires which were presented to the CONARES, UNHCR, and UNHCR partner agencies, for them to answer as part of the evaluation process.

On 22 July 2015, UNHCR called a meeting in Buenos Aires with the Focal Points of the CONARES (individuals previously identified by each CONARE to act as liaison with the consultant during the evaluation). The Regional Representative of UNHCR for the South of Latin America, Mr. José Samaniego, introduced the consultant and chaired a discussion regarding the objectives and methodology of the evaluation.

Samaniego agreed that, although UNHCR was providing technical assistance and advice, the evaluation pertains to the Governments, therefore, the objectives and expectations should be defined by them. Samaniego asked the CONARES if they preferred the evaluation to focus solely on the resettlement that took place as from 2005 under the Solidarity Resettlement programme, or whether the evaluation should additionally comprise other resettlements that the countries had carried out during the period, including extra-regional population. The Focal Points agreed that the evaluation should comprise all the resettlements carried out, and not only those that occurred under the Solidarity Resettlement programme. Some of them additionally suggested that the consultant should conduct the evaluation in the light of the overall migration policy in the region, given the existence of an open migration policy in the framework of MERCOSUR.

The Brazil Plan of Action envisages, as an objective of the evaluation, “conducting a joint evaluation to share experiences and good practices, and consolidate the programme in line with the region's current reality”, and “encouraged other countries in the region to join the Programme.”<sup>14</sup> The Terms of Reference for the Solidarity Resettlement Programme similarly identify, as an objective of the evaluation, the “strengthening of the Solidarity Resettlement Programme to be implemented during the following decade.”<sup>15</sup> However, the consultant understood that the Governments of the resettlement countries also envisaged using the analysis and recommendations to be included in the evaluation to assess the feasibility of continuing their regional -through the Solidarity programme- and extra-regional resettlement programmes. Therefore, the evaluation will additionally include the objective of providing the States with information, analysis, advice and recommendations that may be of use when considering these decisions.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> BRAZIL DECLARATION “A Framework for Cooperation and Regional Solidarity to Strengthen the International Protection of Refugees, Displaced and Stateless Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean” Brasilia, 3 December 2014.

<sup>15</sup> Draft Terms of Reference, Evaluation of the ‘Solidarity Resettlement’ programme.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

The consultant engaged to undertake the evaluation arrived in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 7 July 2015. In discussions with the UNHCR Regional Representative for Southern Latin America and senior UNHCR programme staff, it was determined that the evaluation would be carried out in three phases:

- Documents Review and Initial Consultations with UNHCR and Focal Points of the CONARES
- Field Visits to the five resettlement countries
- Writing of Evaluation Report.

#### **A. DOCUMENTS REVIEW**

During the Documents Review phase, the consultant reviewed earlier evaluations of resettlement programmes carried out in the region's five resettlement countries by UNHCR, UNHCR's partner agencies, CONARES, universities, and other entities; UNHCR documentation relating to the resettlement programmes; UNHCR partner agencies' periodic reports to UNHCR on their programmes and activities; media reports; and other available documents regarding the resettlement programmes.

Also during this phase, UNHCR convened a meeting in Buenos Aires with the Focal Points of the region's CONARES, UNHCR staff from Buenos Aires (Argentina), Brasilia (Brazil), Santiago (Chile), and Montevideo (Uruguay), and the consultant. The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Background: Comments in the Brazil Plan of Action regarding the Solidarity Resettlement programme, and request by the Governments for an Evaluation of the programme.
3. Objective of the meeting
4. Objectives of the Evaluation (Expectations and requirements of the States)
5. Methodology for the Evaluation
6. Assistance required by the consultant during his visits to the resettlement countries.

#### **B. FIELD VISITS**

Between 28 July and 7 September 2015, the consultant undertook site visits to each of the five resettlement countries, visiting the following countries and cities:

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|-------------------|---|
| 29 July-5 August: | Argentina (Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Rosario)  |
| 10-14 August:     | Uruguay (Montevideo, 25 de Agosto, Raigon, Punta de Valdez)   |
| 17-26 August:     | Brazil (Brasilia, Sao Paulo, Guarulhos, Mogi das Cruzes, Porto Alegre, Serafina Correa, Lajeado, Santa Cruz do Sul) |
| 27-28 August:     | Paraguay (Asunción)   |
| 30 Aug.–7 Sept.:  | Chile (Santiago, Quilicura, San Felipe)   |

In each country, the Consultant's agenda was either coordinated by or approved by the CONARE. UNHCR and UNHCR implementing partners as well as the CONAREs provided logistical support for the missions, including transportation, staff to accompany the consultant, and, where needed, interpretation. The consultant met with a wide range of individuals and groups directly or indirectly involved in, or connected to, the resettlement programmes and/or the refugees.



Among those with whom the consultant met were: Presidents and members of the CONARES in each resettlement country; Government ministers; other national, State, and municipal Government officials; UNHCR staff; directors and staff of current and former UNHCR partner agencies; academics; and other members of civil society.

In addition to the questions in the questionnaire developed by the consultant for the CONARES, which were also addressed during the consultant’s meetings with CONARE presidents and members, the consultant developed a similar questionnaire that he also used during interviews with current and former UNHCR partner agencies [See Attachments].

The consultant also interviewed 58 refugee heads of household, most often in their homes, sometimes individually, and, at other times, with family members. He interviewed men and women of varying ages, and also sought input from their children, when present. Of the 58 refugees interviewed, 46 arrived through the SRP and 12 were extra-regional. The total number of family members in the households of refugees that the consultant interviewed was 183 (162 SRP and 21 non-SRP).

	Total Cases Interviewed	Total persons	Total Cases SRP Interviewed	Total persons	Total Cases No SRP Interviewed	Total persons
Argentina	17	62	17	62	0	0
Brazil	23	50	13	37	10	13
Chile	10	36	8	28	2	8
Paraguay	1	6	1	6	0	0
Uruguay <sup>16</sup>	7	29	7	29	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>

Ecuador had been the country of first asylum for most of the Latin American refugees, but a number had also been resettled from Costa Rica. While a large majority of the refugees interviewed by the consultant were Colombian, he also interviewed Palestinian, Syrian, Sri Lankan, Salvadoran, Venezuelan, and Afghan refugees.

For his interviews with refugees, the consultant developed a different questionnaire [See Attachments] which he completed during the visits. Most of the consultant’s interviews with refugees lasted one to one-and-a-half hours. UNHCR staff and interns also interviewed additional refugees using the consultant’s questionnaire.

The questionnaire used by the consultant during his interviews with refugees incorporated some questions from the Terms of Reference for the Evaluation developed by UNHCR and endorsed by the States, and included additional questions that the consultant determined would help provide a more comprehensive understanding of the refugees’ experience and current situation. The questionnaire had questions on different aspects of the resettlement process and experience, including pre- and post-arrival information received by refugees, reason for resettlement, legal documentation, financial assistance, access to health care, schools and education, housing, employment, local integration, language acquisition (where relevant), and their assessment of the resettlement programme and of the resettlement country.

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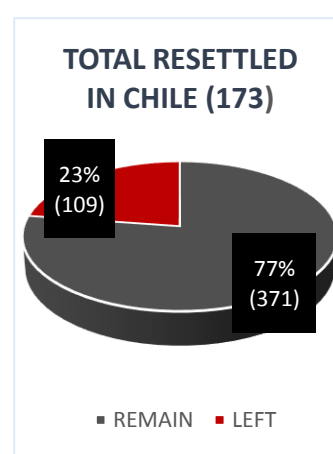
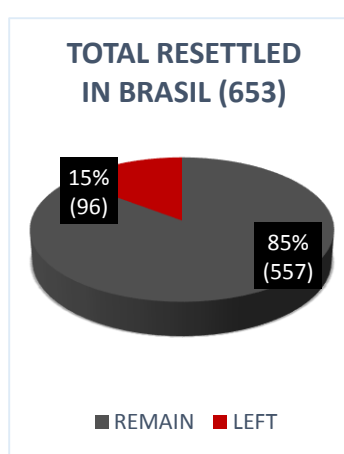
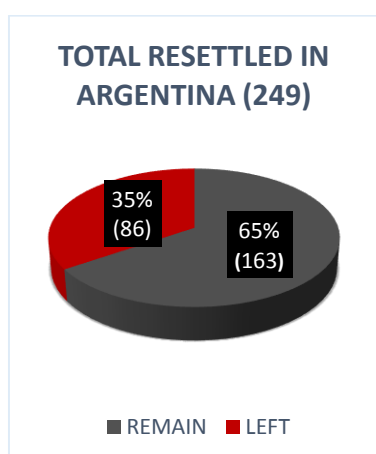
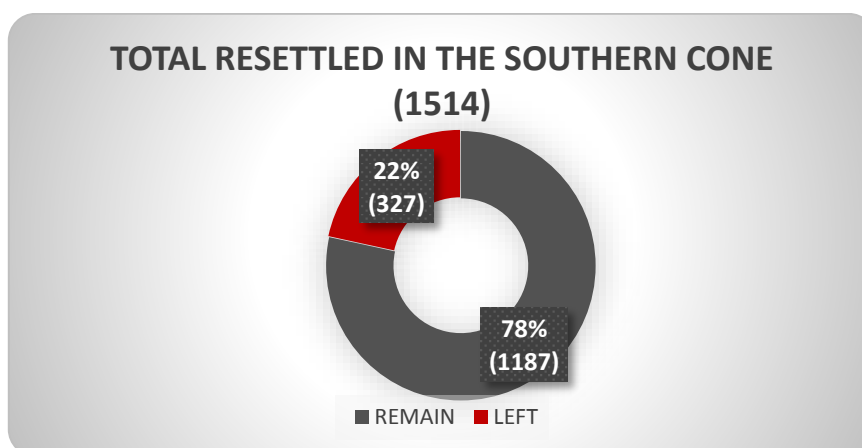
<sup>16</sup> The consultant interviewed three Syrian families in Uruguay, but they did not complete the questionnaires that other refugees completed.

## IV. SUMMARY OF KEY REGION-WIDE FINDINGS

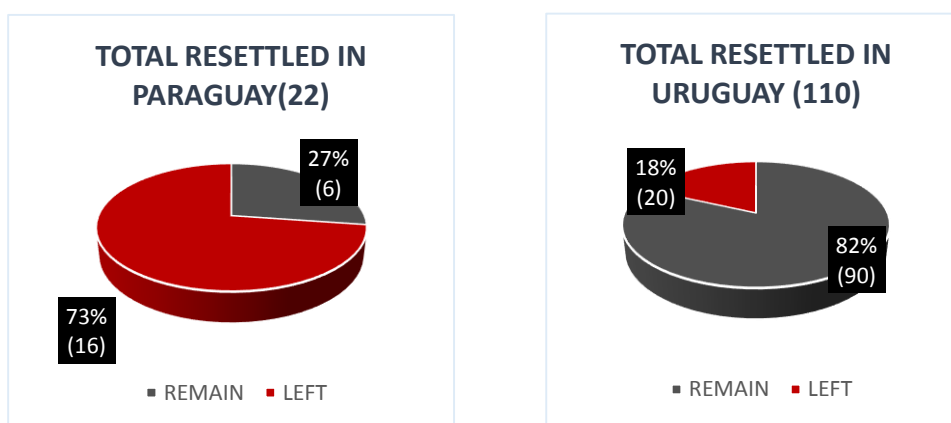
### A. BACKGROUND

1. In 2004, Latin American States adopted the Mexico Plan of Action that called for the creation of a Solidarity Resettlement Programme (SRP) for refugees in first asylum in Ecuador and Costa Rica. Brazil and Chile had already begun resettling Colombian and other refugees from those countries; Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay subsequently began resettling through the SRP. From 2005 to 2014, an estimated 1,151 refugees, mostly Colombians resettled from Ecuador and Costa Rica, arrived in those five countries through the SRP. Another 363 extra-regional refugees, mostly Palestinians and Syrians, resettled in Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay.

2. Of the 1,151 SRP refugees who arrived in the Southern Cone States, 276 left the countries in which they were resettled and returned to Colombia, their country of first asylum, or migrated elsewhere. Of the 363 extra-regional refugees, 51 left the countries of resettlement. Therefore, of the total number of refugees resettled to the Southern Cone, 1,514, 78 % remain in the countries they were resettled in and 22% left those countries<sup>17</sup>.



<sup>17</sup> “Left” statistics include people who lost their refugee status. In Chile, the Department of Foreigners and Migration (DEM) is currently completing a full revision of its statistics, particularly focusing on the number of resettled refugees, who remain in the country. While the total number of resettled refugees will not vary, it is highly likely that the number of resettled refugees living in Chile decreases.



3. In December 2014, Latin American States met again in Brasilia and, in the Brazil Plan of Action, recommended an evaluation of the regional SRP. Subsequently, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) drafted Terms of Reference (TORs) for the evaluation, endorsed by the States, which included recommendations for strengthening the programme. However, in subsequent discussions with representatives of the refugee commissions of resettlement countries, it became evident that some States also envisioned using the evaluation’s findings to assess the feasibility of continuing to offer resettlement to regional or extra-regional refugees, whether through the SRP or other resettlement programmes.

4. The States also asked that the evaluation include other resettlement programmes they had carried out for extra-regional refugees. They also asked that resettlement programmes be evaluated within the context of broader regional migration policies, but time did not permit a substantive focus on this broader perspective.

5. The main body of this report details the consultant’s findings in each of the five countries of resettlement based on a review of existing documentation<sup>18</sup>; responses from the States’ National Refugee Commissions (CONAREs), UNHCR, and UNHCR’s partner agencies to questionnaires about the resettlement programmes; more than 70 meetings and interviews with individuals and groups in both Government and civil society; and interviews with 58 resettled refugees, often including other family members. [NOTE: *Distribution of the individual country reports is limited to the five States and to UNHCR. However, the “Refugees’ Perspectives” sections of the individual country reports are being distributed with the Regional Overview and Recommendations sections of the full report.*]

6. Following is a synthesis of the consultant’s main region-wide observations, findings, and recommendations regarding six key aspects of the resettlement programmes: selection and orientation; role of UNHCR, Government, partner/implementing agencies; financial assistance; employment; and housing. Also included are some best practices observed in the region, an assessment of the achievements and challenges faced by resettlement programmes in the five countries visited, and recommendations regarding future resettlement in the region. (Additional

<sup>18</sup> It should be noted that a number of studies and evaluations of the SRP and other resettlement programs have been carried out by UNHCR, academics, and government entities in various countries in the region during the past 15 years. Many of these contain detailed findings and recommendations regarding different aspects of the programme. Some are listed in the bibliography accompanying this report and should be consulted by those planning and/or implementing future resettlement programmes in the region.

areas such as legal documentation, access to health care and education, language training, and local integration are addressed in the individual sections on the five countries.)

## **B. SELECTION AND ORIENTATION**

1. There was widespread region-wide agreement that selection functioned best when done through selection missions traveling to the countries of FIRST asylum to interview and select refugee candidates for resettlement and to provide them with accurate and detailed information about the programme and the resettlement country. To the extent possible, such information should be provided to the refugees in writing in their native language to ensure that they understand it clearly. It is also clearly vital that Governments send representatives on selection missions and that those representatives should be individuals familiar with the country's refugee programmes, preferably members or staff of the CONAREs. It is also vital that the delegation include a representative of the agency that will implement the programme day-to-day (historically UNHCR's partner agency).

2. Refugees interviewed who said they received clear, accurate information about the resettlement country and the programme said it enabled them to make an informed decision about resettling and deal with the challenges they faced once they arrived in the country of resettlement. Refugees who felt they had not received such information often said they were frustrated and sometimes angry when they found that the reality in the country of resettlement did not conform to their expectations. Some said they might have chosen not to resettle had they better understood the challenges and difficulties they might face.

3. Several of the CONAREs—most emphatically Argentina's—raised concerns about the selection process, specifically regarding the profile of the families that UNHCR put forward for the States to interview during selection missions. The States had provided UNHCR with profiles of the families they wanted to prioritize for resettlement based on vulnerability (e.g. refugees with protection problems; women at risk) or prospects of success in their countries (in some cases refugees with urban backgrounds and in other cases with rural backgrounds). But, too often, States said the cases UNHCR identified for interview did not meet the desired criteria.

4. The States also expressed concern that too many of the refugees proposed for resettlement by UNHCR did not face security problems in the first country of asylum, but rather were having difficulty integrating in that country. Additionally, although the criterion of "integration problems" was generally included among the criteria used for considering refugees for resettlement, the States believed that a disproportionate percentage of the refugees proposed for resettlement fell into this category.



5. One factor that may have contributed to UNHCR being unable to identify sufficient candidates for resettlement that met States' criteria is that some refugees in need of resettlement have their sights set on resettling to Europe or North America and do not want to be considered for resettlement by South American countries.

6. Nevertheless, once the selection missions were in the first countries of asylum to interview refugees, it was too late for UNHCR to propose additional families to interview. Therefore, States wound up offering resettlement to refugees who were not in their priority groups or who the States felt stood less of a chance of successfully resettling in their countries.

7. States also perceived that when "integration problems" rather than security concerns were the reason for resettlement, selected refugees too often chose not to pursue resettlement, causing resettlement slots to go unused. Also, those who did resettle based on that criterion appeared to more frequently not have a strong commitment to firmly establish themselves and integrate in the resettlement country or, when faced with challenges and difficulties in the resettlement country, left the country instead of staying and trying to overcome challenges.

8. For the resettlement countries, the departure of many resettled refugees to their home country, first country of asylum, or elsewhere engendered a sense that the programme was failing or that resettlement was not the needed protection tool the States believed it to be when they committed to the SRP. Those impressions were key in the decisions of some States to suspend resettlement through the Solidarity programme, at least until after an evaluation.

9. In the course of this evaluation, the consultant observed that most—but not all—of the refugees who resettled due to lack of security in the first country of asylum did appear determined to overcome challenges, and many had done reasonably well integrating economically and socially. To be fair, however, some refugees who resettled because they hadn't integrated well in the first country of asylum also worked hard to integrate in the resettlement country and did so successfully. There were also some cases in which the factors or situations that caused refugees to have integration problems in the countries of first asylum were such that resettlement exacerbated rather than helped resolve their problems. Refugees with complex personal or family problems should not be referred for resettlement unless there are concrete plans or facilities in the countries of resettlement ready and able to help address those problems.

10. In the future, when proposing refugees for possible resettlement to States with small and relatively young resettlement programmes, UNHCR should first establish that the refugees need and want resettlement. Then it should work closely with the countries offering resettlement to ensure that the refugees proposed meet the criteria put forward by States. There are hundreds of thousands of refugees worldwide in need of durable solutions who would eagerly welcome an offer of resettlement. Precious resources and limited resettlement slots should not be spent resettling refugees who may not be in urgent need of protection or eager to make a new life in a country willing to welcome them.

### **C. ROLES OF UNHCR, GOVERNMENT, AND UNHCR PARTNERS**

1. Throughout the region, the basic framework for the implementation of the Solidarity Resettlement Programme was that States would select refugees for resettlement (in collaboration with UNHCR and UNHCR's partner agencies); UNHCR would fund the costs of selection missions and refugees' transportation from first countries of asylum to the

resettlement countries; States would accord resettled refugees legal status and provide them with documentation; States would grant resettled refugees access to State health and education systems; and UNHCR would contract a partner agency to implement the resettlement programme and provide the necessary funding. The basic elements of the resettlement programme were: reception and provision of temporary shelter upon arrival, orientation, distribution of the financial assistance, case management, and limited support in the search for employment and housing (although some UNHCR partner agencies arranged refugees' initial housing).

2. Each of the three entities (States, UNHCR, and implementing agencies) carried out their functions region-wide, albeit with differing approaches, levels of engagement, and success. Communication, cooperation, and coordination among and between the entities varied significantly. In most cases, UNHCR and its partner agencies had close communication and good relationships. Where that was not the case, the two entities eventually parted ways and UNHCR contracted new partner agencies. UNHCR and the CONAREs appeared to have reasonable communication and working relationships throughout the region, but communication and coordination between the CONAREs and the implementing agencies appeared to be very weak or non-existent in most countries. One of the few links between the CONAREs and UNHCR partner agencies was that the latter were usually members of the CONAREs.

3. Several key problems were evident during the evaluation in the general arenas of roles, responsibilities, communication, and coordination. The most striking was the lack of interaction and engagement among the three entities as a group on an ongoing basis. A notable exception was in Chile, where the Government established an Interinstitutional Working Group—*Mesa de Trabajo Interinstitucional*—with UNHCR and UNHCR's partner agency to coordinate the Palestinian resettlement programme. Even there, however, the group focused only on Palestinians, and not on Solidarity programme refugees.

4. Whether intentionally on the part of only marginally committed Governments (as some UNHCR partner agencies suggested), or as a result of a system that handed almost total implementation of the resettlement programme to the UNHCR-funded partner agencies, Governments and their CONAREs were almost totally disconnected from the resettlement programme post refugee arrival, and both the resettlement programmes and refugees suffered as a result. Mechanisms for individual case follow up by the CONAREs were invariably lacking or ineffective.

5. Among the effects of this lack of engagement on the part of the CONAREs was that other Government ministries, including important ministries such as labour and housing, remained largely uninformed about, and disconnected from, refugees and their needs. Also, because of the national Governments' lack of involvement, in most towns and cities where refugees were resettled, local Governments sometimes also remained unengaged with refugees, who in turn sometimes did not know about -and did not access- available local services. It should be noted that while the above refers specifically to resettled refugees, the same dynamic applies when it comes to services and programs for spontaneously arrived applicants for refugee status.

6. There are, of course, exceptions to the above that can serve as models for the future—for example the already-referenced Interinstitutional Working Group coordinating the Palestinian resettlement programme in Chile. Besides convening that group, the Government appointed an official to chair the Working Group and actively support the programme. Both the Government and UNHCR's partner agency also reached out to and engaged local Government officials in the communities where refugees were to be resettled, with positive results for the refugees.

7. Similar, also fruitful, engagement of local Government officials occurred in Brazil's Rio Grande do Sul State, although that outreach was an initiative of UNHCR's implementing partner; the national Government had no role in the process. Conversely, in Mogi (Sao Paulo State), Brazil, local Government officials said that they only learned of the presence of refugees in their communities (they had been there 1-2 years) when UNHCR's partner agency exited the programme and the refugees sought assistance from the Mayor.

8. If the States are to continue to provide resettlement, it is imperative that future programmes are structured so that the State is involved and engaged at every stage of the resettlement process, from planning to integration, even if day-to-day implementation of the programme is in the hands of a partner agency from civil society. While that should be the case even if there is continued international funding via UNHCR, it would be an absolute must if primary funding in the future is primarily provided by Governments.

9. Successful resettlement—and integration of spontaneous refugees—depends on Government engagement, support, and most importantly ownership at both the national and local level, and on the establishment of mechanisms for effective, on-going coordination and communication between the CONAREs, UNHCR, and partner agencies.

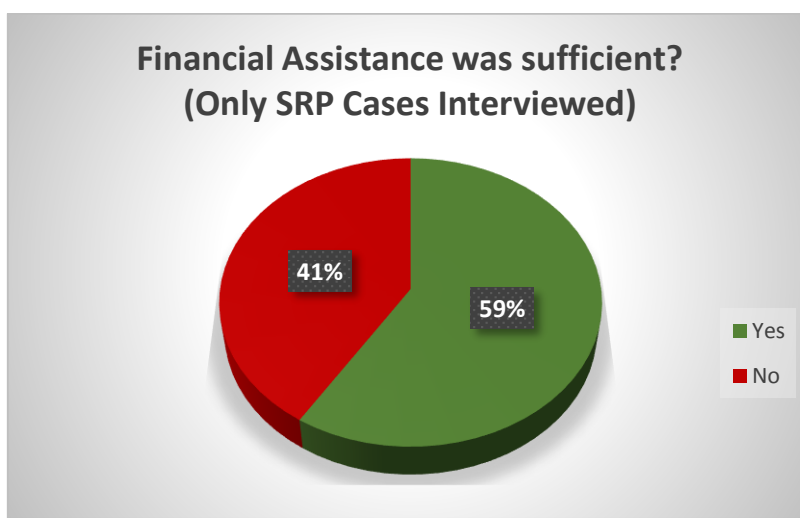
10. Also of great importance, however, is the role and support of civil society. UNHCR partner agencies past and present have developed valuable expertise in resettling refugees, and that expertise should continue to be utilized. Individual agencies, such as SEDHU in Uruguay, ASAV in Brazil's Rio Grande do Sul State, and the *Vicaría* in Chile, have done particularly effective work in different arenas. However, the resources of other sectors of civil society have not been effectively tapped. That has been a major deficit of all the programmes and a major loss for refugees.

11. Again, exceptions exist. In Brazil's Sao Paulo State, links with an employment training institution enabled several refugees to receive training to find jobs, and a university in Guarulhos helped provide counselling and mental health services to refugee families. In Chile, local Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim organizations supported Palestinian refugees in a variety of ways. And in Argentina, Jewish organizations supported the work of UNHCR's partner agency. Both resettlement programmes and refugees would greatly profit from greater engagement of the vast range of civil society entities that offer services that could benefit refugees.

## **D. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE)**

1. Throughout the region, the programmes provided financial assistance for one year, although most extra-regional refugees and vulnerable refugees, such as women at risk and disabled or seriously ill refugees, were generally assisted for two years or longer, sometimes at a reduced rate beginning in the second year. In most countries, the programme also paid resettled refugees' rent (in Chile refugees received a higher level of financial assistance and paid the rent themselves). The level of assistance varied from country to country, and sometimes groups resettled in the same country received higher levels of assistance compared to others. This was most striking in Uruguay, where resettled Syrian refugees were provided significantly higher levels of assistance than Colombian refugees.

2. About two thirds of all the refugees interviewed (but only 59% of the SRP cases interviewed) during the course of this evaluation said that the amount of cash assistance they received was enough to cover their basic needs. Many, however, noted that it just barely covered expenses and that they often went without essentials, including food. Refugees who found jobs during the period they were receiving assistance were allowed to keep the full amount of their assistance and supplement their income. In the few cases where more than one family member found a job, the families even managed to have savings at the end of their year or more of assistance. Refugees should be encouraged to start working as soon as possible (taking language issues into consideration), and assisted in the process, to supplement their assistance and better prepare them financially to meet the challenges they will face when financial assistance and rent subsidies end.



3. Throughout the region, but particularly in Argentina and Uruguay, refugees said that the cost of living was much higher than they expected, even when they had been warned about the high costs prior to their resettlement. Some refugees—and others connected to the programme—said that one year was not sufficient time to get settled and become self-sufficient in the country of resettlement, and argued that financial assistance should be provided for a longer time period.

It is of course difficult for refugees to become oriented and start functioning in a new environment, especially when they come from very different cultures and speak a different language. Nevertheless, with the exception of vulnerable cases, one year is a reasonable amount of time during which to provide refugees financial assistance and subsidized rent to help them become oriented, look for employment, and get settled.

4. During the course of the SRP, some refugees did not become employed by the end of their first year. The solution to that should not be prolonged assistance. Instead, future resettlement programmes should make job development and job placement central components of resettlement assistance to ensure that refugees are employed by the end of their first year—if not well before then.

5. Future programmes will also need to thoroughly assess if extra-regional refugees require additional and/ or more prolonged financial assistance. While linguistic and cultural differences can indeed pose greater challenges for extra-regional refugees, providing them unconditioned

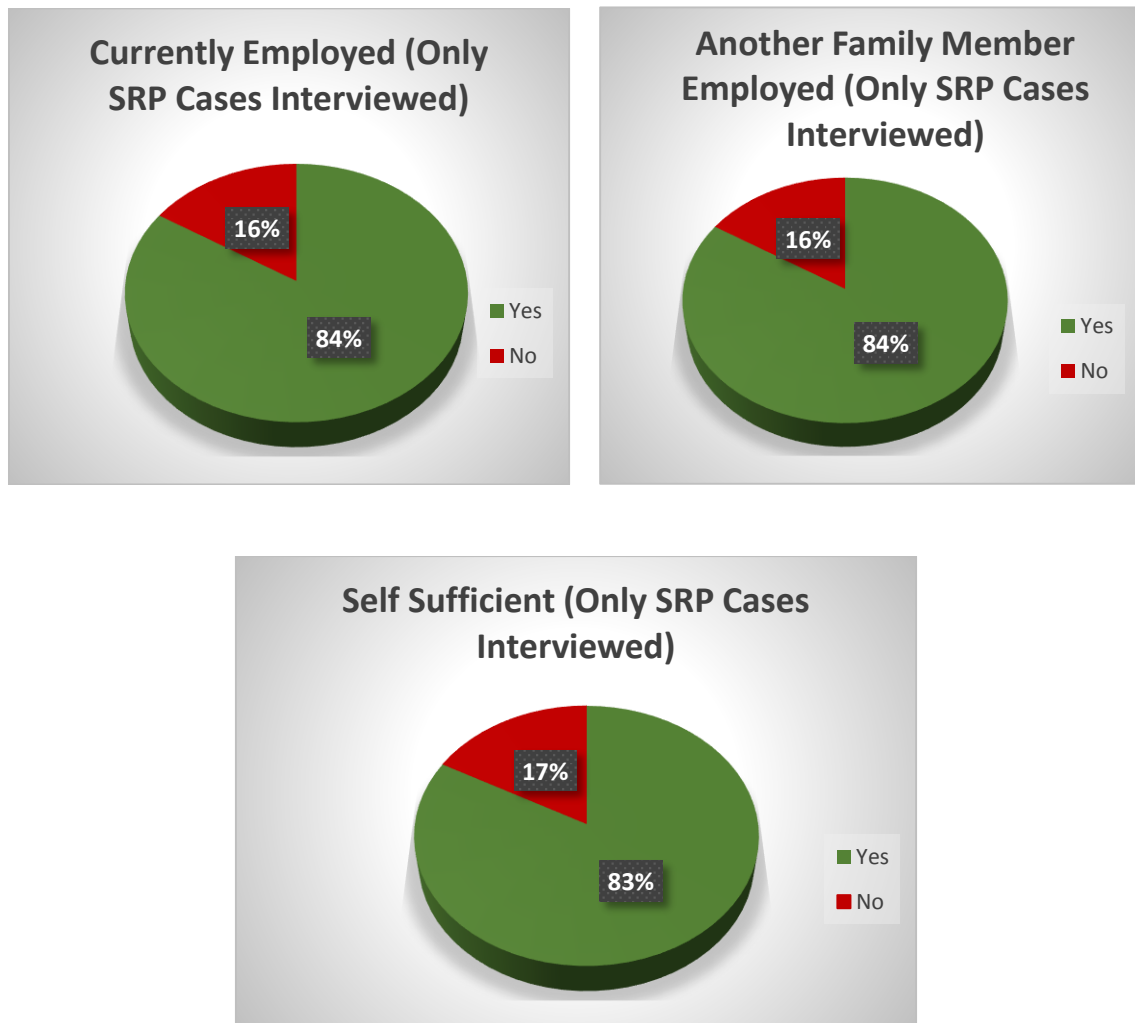


financial assistance and rent subsidies for two years may also prove a disincentive to find work and become self-sufficient.

## E. EMPLOYMENT

1. Employment is of course the basis for achieving economic self-sufficiency, and thus integral to successful resettlement and local integration. For many resettled refugees throughout the region, however, finding stable, full-time employment with sufficient wages to cover the costs of even a modest lifestyle has proved a challenge—sometimes an insurmountable one. According to Colombian refugees interviewed, compatriots who left the resettlement country often cited their inability to find good jobs as one of their main reasons for leaving (housing issues and family problems being other key factors).

2. Nevertheless, 80% of the refugee families surveyed (84% of the SRP refugees) had at least one family member working, and in 58% of families (also 84% in the case of SRP families) at least two family members were working. Most refugees (81 % of all refugees and 84% of SRP refugees) interviewed said that their current family income was sufficient to cover their expenses.



3. Refugees generally found their first job within the first year in the country of asylum, and many had held several jobs over time (sometimes because they lost their job and other times to

move on to better jobs). However, many refugees said that the first, and even subsequent, jobs they found were low-skill, entry level jobs, very often under the table (informal employment). These types of jobs were not only unstable, but prevented them from receiving the benefits, e.g. private health insurance, that often accompany legal, full-time jobs (formal employment).

4. Some refugees said that they found it particularly difficult to get jobs due to employer xenophobia, although others said they did not experience any discrimination. While many refugees across the region spoke of the difficulties they had finding employment, a few extolled the availability of work in the resettlement countries. Strong educational backgrounds or work skills often helped refugees find employment, but sometimes refugees were frustrated that, despite their education or skills, they could only get manual or unskilled work.

5. One factor in this was that refugees throughout the region all too often experienced difficulties having degrees or other educational certificates from their home countries recognized in the countries of resettlement. CONAREs should work closely with Ministries of Education and Labour to facilitate the recognition or revalidation of refugees' degrees and certificates, even if those can only be partially recognized or validated and refugees have to take additional courses to achieve full recertification. Doing so will enable well educated and skilled refugees to pursue more rewarding employment that will help them to become self-sufficient and contribute to their new communities rather than work in entry level positions with few prospects for the future.

6. A number of the refugees interviewed had previously worked in informal sectors, for example in street sales, making and selling handicrafts, etc. Some tried to re-establish themselves in these sectors in the country of resettlement, even receiving assistance from UNHCR and its partner agencies in the form of microenterprise grants. But, aside from a few notable exceptions, most found that it was difficult to make a living in the informal sector, particularly in larger cities.

7. It should be noted that some refugees did eventually get good jobs or succeed with microenterprise projects, and some fared exceptionally well. A number of refugees interviewed have their own business (restaurant, internet shop, home bakery/catering, food kiosk, handicrafts, furniture making, etc.), sometimes hiring other refugees or local people to work for them. Others have good jobs in telecommunications, health, mechanics workshops, hospitality, electrical engineering, etc. Many of these successes did not come in the first year, or even the second or third year. However, it is an indication that, with hard work and perseverance, refugees often managed to be successful in the countries of resettlement.

8. A number of issues surfaced regarding employment – in the form of lessons learned - that need to be considered by any future resettlement programmes. The single most important of these is that leaving job hunting up to newly resettled refugees is poor policy and practice. UNHCR's partner agencies generally supported the refugees' job hunting process by providing orientation to the local labour market, helping them prepare resumes, giving them access to the internet to look for jobs online, referring them to employment agencies, and sometimes referring them to specific employers. Refugees were grateful for that help when they received it. But the agencies were not charged with actually finding jobs for refugees, which meant that, ultimately, it was up to the refugees to find their own jobs. Most of the refugees interviewed, whether or not they had been successful finding employment in their first year, said they were dissatisfied -and often very dissatisfied- with this aspect of the resettlement programme. Many said they had expected much more direct assistance from the resettlement agencies.

9. States planning future resettlement programmes should make job development and job placement core components of the resettlement programme. Job development would entail

identifying employers in the community—including large corporations, factories, agricultural concerns, etc.—that could potentially hire refugees, educating them about refugees, and seeking their commitment to hire suitable refugees. It would also require identifying the language or vocational training required by refugees to be hired by those employers, and provide that training. Job placement would entail the preparatory work needed to ensure that refugees are equipped to look for jobs (orientation, resumes, language and/or vocational training), then, most critically, labouring to place them in positions identified by job developers.

10. In mid-2015, Argentina’s CONARE and UNHCR launched an initiative, “Work to Integrate” (*Trabajar para Integrar*), aimed at persuading large companies with a history of social responsibility to offer or finance job training and jobs for refugees. Hopefully, this initiative will prove fruitful and serve as a model for the region.

11. Ensuring that resettled refugees are placed in stable, full-time employment with sufficient wages to cover their living expenses is quintessential to successful resettlement (also considering the possibilities of self-employment or microenterprises). This should be at the core of any future resettlement programmes.

## **F. HOUSING**

1. Although employment is the single most important element for successful resettlement, more refugees cited their inability to find and keep stable, affordable housing as the greatest ongoing challenge they faced. Even years after resettling and becoming economically self-sufficient, refugees experienced serious problems with housing. The inability to secure stable housing appeared to be one of the primary reasons for resettled refugees to leave the countries of resettlement —failure to find adequate employment and family issues being the others (according to information provided by refugees who remained).

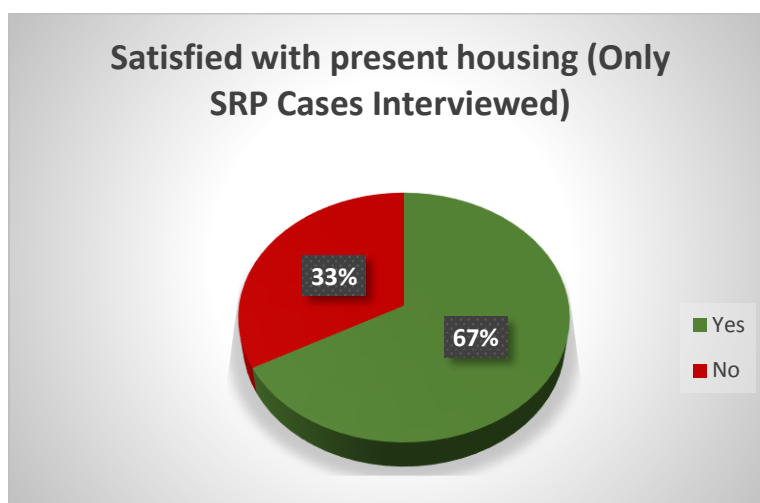
2. The high cost of rent, particularly in large cities, is an important aspect of refugees’ housing challenge. The most significant factor, however, is the so-called *garantía*, a landlords’ requirement throughout much of the region for prospective tenants to provide a “guarantor” with property or other resources who agrees to pay the prospective tenant’s rent for the period of the lease should the tenant fail to do so. Some landlords or their realtors may accept a deposit in lieu of a guarantor, but this may amount to six months or even one year’s rent in advance.

3. In some countries, refugees did not initially face the requirement to provide a guarantor because UNHCR’s partner agency arranged housing for the refugees’ when they first arrived (although that housing invariably proved untenable long-term because of its high rent). Where refugees had to find and arrange their own housing, as was the case of many refugees in Chile, refugees had to find landlords willing to rent to them without a guarantor, a major hurdle that many said was compounded by landlords’ unwillingness to rent to foreigners. Although the resettlement agencies assisted and supported refugees during their search for housing, nearly half (42%) of the refugees interviewed said that assistance was insufficient and that the process was very stressful.

4. In locations where resettlement agencies arranged housing for the first year, the agencies developed varying methods to address the issue of the guarantor; often providing the landlords with one year’s rent in advance in lieu of a guarantor. Other agencies created a fund that was set aside to serve as a guarantee to the landlord. Regardless of the method used to get around the guarantor issue, at the end of the first year, when most refugees wanted to move out of the first house or apartment that had been arranged for them (almost always because they were unable

to afford the rent once the programme's housing subsidy ended), they were faced with the obstacle of providing a guarantor.

5. Some resettlement agencies also established systems to help refugees have funds available at the end of the first year to provide deposits in lieu of a guarantor for their next rental. That proved helpful, but refugees who tried to move again in future years found that they were back to square one, without a guarantor or funds to make a large deposit. Some refugees developed relationships with people willing to act as guarantors, and others were successful in negotiating rents without guarantors. However, most refugees interviewed throughout the region said that, while they were satisfied with the housing they were living in, not knowing if they would be able to find a guarantor or have funds to give a large deposit the next time they have to move is a source of great anxiety.



6. Some solutions to the housing challenge have been found throughout the region. The rural resettlement programme in Uruguay provided several refugee families with houses through MEVIR, a Government funded programme. MEVIR provided the houses free of rent for the first two years and in theory the refugees would be able to remain in those houses permanently, paying low monthly instalments to purchase them. However, the refugees still have nothing in writing that guarantees their long-term possession of the houses nor have they been asked to start making payments towards the purchase.

7. In Chile, all the families of Palestinian refugees were able to buy housing by accessing a Government subsidy for vulnerable, low income people, which covered a fixed amount (approximately 60% of the maximum cost of housing under the government housing programme). Under the programme, the full price had to be paid at the time of purchase. Following a period of extensive search, it was determined that the amount of the subsidy, added to the funds put forward by the refugees, was insufficient to acquire housing in areas that were not far-lying and sufficiently safe for the Palestinian refugees. According to the DEM, UNHCR and the Government agreed to redirect funds available for microenterprise projects for Palestinian refugees to assist the refugees in buying houses. Refugee families were thus able to buy their housing by covering close to 20-25% of the value of the property with their own funds. This was one of the main factors that made the Palestinian resettlement programme an all-round success. When they saw a solution to their housing problem, refugees who had complained about their situation during the first year displayed a positive change in attitude toward their responsibility in achieving integration and self-sufficiency. They have currently attained economic stability and all the adults have adopted Chilean citizenship. However, the

cost was too great, and it may not be possible to offer this level of assistance to resettled refugees in the future. This action also generated significant resentment among Colombians resettled in Chile, who did not receive this type of assistance. However, the concept of helping refugees solve the housing issue as an integral part of the resettlement programme seems to have taken root in Chile.

8. Paraguay offered houses to several refugee families through a programme in that country. In Argentina, there was a proposal to provide refugees with houses in Mendoza through a Government programme. But, several years later, none of the houses have been made available to the refugees. Observers differ on the reasons for this, but the most commonly cited were bureaucracy and lack of political will on the part of the relevant Government authorities.

9. In Chile, a Colombian family interviewed had managed to access the same Government housing programme offered to the Palestinian refugees by finding a way to pay the share of the cost not covered by the subsidy largely on their own. They obtained a 30-year bank loan for most of the funds they needed to buy an apartment through the programme, and also sought and received a modest level of financial assistance from UNHCR. A refugee family interviewed in Brazil accessed a similar Government programme there by borrowing the money it needed for its share of the cost of the house.

10. CONAREs, UNHCR, and implementing partners should work together to help refugees access Government housing programs that could provide them the long term housing stability many now lack. However, they must also help refugees explore and pursue options such as bank loans, and perhaps even facilitate those options, to enable them to meet the requirements of these programmes.

11. In most of the resettlement countries, there appear to be housing programmes that help low income or other vulnerable families obtain permanent, low-cost housing. These programmes differ from country to country and may or may not be appropriate for refugees, or may require changes to eligibility criteria in order for refugees to participate in them. Whether by providing access to such programmes, or developing other systems to enable refugees access to long-term affordable housing, States that plan to offer resettlement in the future must first identify ways of ensuring that refugees have access to stable, affordable, long term housing. It is a *sine qua non* for future resettlement.

## **G. BEST PRACTICES**

1. Resettlement programmes in the region have had a number of elements that worked well and benefitted refugees. Provision by Governments of legal status and documentation to refugees, and their funding of public health and education benefits for refugees have been essential and should be applauded. Governments have also provided support through other channels, including public housing programmes. Uruguay fully funded the somewhat shaky Syrian resettlement programme.

2. The international community's funding of resettlement programmes in the region through UNHCR has also been fundamental. UNHCR's partner agencies' direct support to refugee families has been vital in helping them negotiate the very challenging task of adapting to a new situation and working towards self-sufficiency and local integration.

3. Governments, UNHCR, and partner agencies have shaped programmes aimed at enabling refugees to succeed. Some components of those programmes have worked well and others

have not. Following are examples of a few practices in the region that had very positive results for refugees and should be considered in planning future resettlement programmes.

4. As previously mentioned, Chile's establishment of a Working Group convened by the CONARE to coordinate the Palestinian resettlement programme proved very effective in planning and implementing the programme, and especially in addressing challenges that arose along the way. The "Work to Integrate" (*Trabajar para Integrar*) initiative launched recently by Argentina's CONARE and UNHCR to persuade large companies with a history of social responsibility to employ refugees is another positive venture that, if fruitful, could serve as a model for the region.

5. Two programmes stood out for their outreach to and engagement of local Governments and civil society, when most often the norm was for local Governments and civil society to be left out of the planning for resettlement in their communities (a major failing that weakened the resettlement process and deprived refugees of potentially valuable support in the areas where they lived).

6. In Rio Grande do Sul State in Brazil, the *Associação Antonio Vieira* (ASAV), which places refugees in assorted small cities throughout the State, meets with local Government officials prior to placing refugees there. Their objective is to educate local officials about refugees and the resettlement programme, and seek their consent and support for resettling refugees in the community. Where the response is negative, ASAV does not pursue resettlement. Where officials are receptive, ASAV engages the local Government and enlists support from local civil society to assist and support the refugees. This is particularly important for the refugees as the cities are spread over a large geographic area, and ASAV, which is based in the State capital, Porto Alegre, does not have a permanent presence in the resettlement cities.

7. The use of volunteers proved effective both for the refugees who benefitted from their assistance and for the communities, which had greater involvement with the refugees. In Chile, the Arab community provided "godparents" to each of the resettled Palestinian refugee families to help orient them to their new communities. In Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, a group of local citizens helped refugee families find jobs and access services, and also offered them social support. Today, the families are thoroughly integrated in that community and one refugee interviewed is now part of the network of local people assisting asylum seekers and immigrants in the city. In Guarulhos, Brazil, university students supervised by psychology professors offered counselling to the refugees and in Santa Cruz, Brazil, students helped refugees to learn Portuguese and to look for jobs.

8. Similar outreach to local Government officials and communities was done by the *Vicaría* (Vicariate) and the CONARE in Chile prior to the resettlement of Palestinian refugees. The *Vicaría* focused their outreach on towns and cities where there were concentrations of Palestinian or Arab migrants and their descendants, which in some cases had mayors of Palestinian or Arabic descent. Besides engaging the local authorities, who often actively supported the refugees, they also enlisted the support of local Arabic associations. Members of these groups "accompanied" the refugees, helping them get oriented to their new communities, and helping them access local services. In some cases, they also offered refugees jobs.

9. Mention has already been made of efforts in Uruguay, Paraguay, and Chile to help some refugees find solutions to housing challenges. In each of the three cases, UNHCR's partner agency and the Government worked together to secure refugees' participation in existing Government or Government/private partnership programmes. In the case of Uruguay, the Government paid rent on behalf of the refugees to the Government-funded MEVIR housing

programme; and, in theory, the refugees will continue to pay an affordable monthly amount for twenty years, at which time the house will become fully theirs.

10. In Paraguay, all five refugee families resettled in that country were provided houses in a remote suburb of Asunción, the capital, through the Government's National Housing and Habitat Secretariat programme (SENAVITAT - *Secretaría Nacional de la Vivienda y Habitat*). The houses were provided free for the first two years, with the possibility for the refugees to subsequently purchase them through low monthly instalments. Four of the five families did not remain in Paraguay for various reasons, and the houses were given to other refugees who had not been resettled in Paraguay but had arrived in the country seeking asylum. The arrangement for Palestinians in Chile is described in the above subsection on housing.

11. Argentina's CONARE and UNHCR undertook a positive initiative regarding employment in August 2015 when they met with representatives of a number of companies known for their high level of social commitment to promote joint efforts to employ refugees. The initiative, termed "Work to Integrate" (*Trabajar para Integrar*) will educate and sensitize companies regarding refugees and the international experience, diversity, and motivation they can bring to the workforce. Companies are encouraged to provide training and employment for refugees.

## **H. "SUCCESS" OR "FAILURE"?**

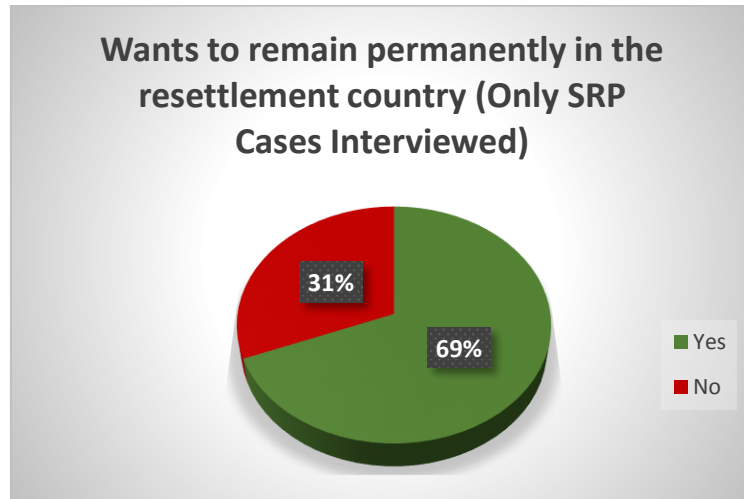
1. In meetings with the many stakeholders in the resettlement programmes, discussion about the future of resettlement in the region often centred on whether the programmes to date had been successes or failures.

2. But how is "success" or "failure" measured? And "success" or "failure" for whom? The refugees? The resettlement programmes? For the countries that offered resettlement?

3. The terms are in quotation marks because both concepts are relative and neither is absolute. For the refugees, there are many spheres of their lives in which we could measure success or failure. Are they safe? Do they have access to health care and education for their children? Are they self-sufficient? Do they have stable, affordable housing? Are they well integrated in their communities? Are they "happy"?

4. All of the 58 individual refugees and families interviewed could answer yes to some or most of those questions. Some of those refugees would say their resettlement was successful, some not; most might say it has been somewhere in between, depending of course on their own definition of "success" and "failure." Based on visits to all-but-a-handful of the refugees in their homes, seeing how they live, and spending on average an hour and a half talking to them about their resettlement experience, it can be said that most are doing better than not. Of the families interviewed in the five countries, 81% have at least one family member and of those 83% have two or more family members working. Across the region, 89% of refugees interviewed said that they are able to pay their rent and 81% said that they have sufficient income to meet their needs.

5. Some refugees own their homes or have their own business, some have children attending university, are well integrated in their communities, and plan to remain permanently in their resettlement countries. Region wide, 80% of the refugees surveyed said that they have made friends in their neighbourhoods and at work, and 73% (69% of the SRP refugees) are sufficiently satisfied with their situation that they plan to remain permanently in the country of resettlement.



6. At the other end of the spectrum, some are living in very precarious conditions, struggling to make ends meet, unemployed or underemployed, lacking housing stability, and a few plan or wish to leave their resettlement countries. But it is a spectrum, not an either/or.

7. Likewise, few of the programmes can be said to have failed or succeeded completely. Less than a year into the Syrian resettlement programme in Uruguay, it appeared to be faring poorly. In Chile, seven years after their resettlement, Palestinians are doing very well, but a year and a half into their resettlement most of them were dissatisfied and wanting to leave the country. There is much that is relative when gauging success or failure.

8. Several of the CONAREs seemed to gauge the “success” or “failure” of resettlement primarily in terms of whether or not refugees remained in the country of resettlement. Certainly, a resettlement programme could be considered to have failed a given family if it leaves the resettlement country because it was unable to support itself or did not have a place to live. If many families leave a resettlement country because they did not have jobs or housing, it is an indicator of weakness in the resettlement programme. But refugees’ reasons for leaving the countries of resettlement reportedly also included family problems, cultural differences, dislike of the climate, and other reasons not related to the programme itself. Some of those who left may not have needed the security that the resettlement country offered and were perhaps not prepared to make a strong enough effort to overcome the challenges they faced; challenges that other refugees did overcome.

9. It was only possible to interview two refugees who left the resettlement countries; one had been in Argentina and the other in Paraguay. Both returned to Colombia, where UNHCR carried out the interviews. One of the refugees said that the principal reason he and his family of four left was “family issues.” He added, however, that his income was not enough to meet his needs and that he had not understood that the housing subsidy would end after one year. The family left ten months after being resettled. The family that left Paraguay, a single mother with four children, had remained in Paraguay for nearly four years. She also gave “family issues” as the reason for her departure (the authorities had been involved with the family in Paraguay). Although the family had been provided a house near the capital, the mother said that the location was too remote for a single mother with children. She did not, however, cite that as a reason for deciding to leave.



10. Some observers interviewed argued that families departing the resettlement country, for whatever reasons, need not be viewed as a failure. The director of a former UNHCR partner agency said, “If people are resettled because of their vulnerability, they come here and after a period of time they feel strong enough to go back, is that not a success also? Because their experience here empowered them to return.” Indeed, a number of the families that left the countries of resettlement moved to other nearby countries where they presumably hoped to find better prospects. For example, 36 of the refugees who left Argentina went to Chile, a country that ironically other resettled refugees left (although it is not known how many of the 36 remained in Chile or continued on to other destinations). Some observers might categorize the departure of those refugees from Argentina as a “failure”, but others might argue that it was a “success” because the refugees felt empowered to make their own life decisions and act on them.

11. The States that offered resettlement, and UNHCR, which provided most of the funds, may well ask whether the time and money invested to provide durable solutions for refugees who subsequently left was worthwhile, especially in the light of limited resources and competing needs. That is a complex question to which there is no single answer. Each State will undoubtedly evaluate that question as it determines whether to continue offering resettlement in the future, either through the Solidarity Resettlement Programme, or via a generic resettlement programme for either regional or extra-regional refugees. The following section addresses future resettlement.

## **I. FUTURE RESETTLEMENT**

1. The Mexico Plan of Action created the Solidarity Resettlement Programme in 2004 to provide durable solutions for Latin American refugees, primarily Colombians in first asylum in Ecuador and Costa Rica, countries that were struggling with large refugee populations. Beginning 2005, 1,151 refugees, mostly Colombians, have been resettled to Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay through the SRP. Another 363 extra-regional refugees have resettled in Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay.

2. Today, some 122,000 Colombian refugees remain in Ecuador and another 20,000 are in Costa Rica. More than 5.8 million Colombians remain internally displaced. Peace negotiations between the Colombian Government and insurgent groups have made progress and offer hope for the future, but meanwhile political violence and displacement continue and many Colombians will still need protection for the foreseeable future. Resettlement should therefore remain a tool to provide protection and durable solutions for Colombians and others in the region that may need it.

3. However, the world is much changed since 2004. The Syrian crisis has resulted in an explosion in the number of refugees in urgent need of protection and durable solutions. Indeed, there are more refugees in the world today than at any time in decades. The Solidarity Resettlement Programme has met important needs, but as worldwide needs and conditions change, so should the SRP. Other refugees outside the region also need the protection and durable solutions that the SRP can afford. Indeed, the Brazil Plan of Action foresaw such a need and opened the door for solidarity resettlement to extend to extra-regional populations. The Plan said that “expressions of solidarity and cooperation” should include demonstrating “solidarity with international humanitarian crises through either the use of humanitarian visas or resettlement quotas.” Indeed, some Latin American States have already offered resettlement to refugees from outside the region, including Syrians and Palestinians.

4. The Solidarity Resettlement Programme should expand its purview from a strictly regional programme to one that can respond to urgent protection needs wherever they may arise. While that continues to include Colombians and occasionally other Latin Americans, it should also include Syrians and other highly vulnerable populations in other regions of the world.

5. As Latin American States consider a Solidarity Resettlement Programme that serves both regional and extra-regional refugees, they must take into account another reality. While to date UNHCR has financed most of the SRP with funding from the international community, UNHCR's resources are greatly stretched, largely due to the massive Syrian crisis, and it would seem likely that the agency will not be able to continue to fund the SRP, certainly not at the level it has to date.

6. Moving forward, States that continue to provide resettlement would need to more fully cover the costs of the resettlement programme and assume greater responsibility for planning, coordination, and implementation of the programme.

7. They should assign a single Government entity responsibility for the planning, coordination, and implementation of resettlement and local integration, so that States develop expertise and the programmes have continuity. That entity should not only work closely with other national Government entities but also with local Governments and civil society to create a comprehensive, effective resettlement programme.

8. It should be noted that there are also other options available within the region that offer varying levels of refugee protection or migration relief. Spontaneous arrivals from both within the region and from outside the region can apply for refugee status in all five countries that have provided resettlement. Brazil and Argentina have provided humanitarian visas for Syrians that enable individuals to leave the Middle East by their own means and apply for asylum if they so wish after arriving in the region. Four of the five countries that have offered resettlement through the SRP are full members of MERCOSUR and parties to the MERCOSUR Residency Agreement, which permits citizens of any MERCOSUR country, including Colombians, to apply for residency in those countries.

9. It is important to note, however, that this alternative migratory option should complement and not replace traditional solutions, particularly resettlement which is addressed to specific protection profiles. On the other hand, residence does not offer the same level of protection as refugee status. Furthermore, another option for Colombian refugees is under consideration. The so-called "fourth durable solution" is a Mobility Labour Plan that would enable Colombian refugees to migrate from first countries of asylum to MERCOSUR countries and work there while retaining refugee status and the protections it accords. Brazil and Ecuador have discussed a trial implementation of the programme, but as of late 2015 had not reached an agreement to that effect.

## **V. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The need for protection and durable solutions for refugees worldwide has never been greater. States that have the impetus, capacity, and political will to fully or primarily fund resettlement would certainly make a very significant contribution to international refugee protection by doing so. States unable to make that long-term commitment should pursue solidarity through other means.

2. States that determine that they are not well placed to provide resettlement are encouraged to provide protection and solutions through other available means, including providing asylum, offering humanitarian visas, pursuing emerging strategies such as labour migration, and supporting international organizations such as UNHCR.

### ***Role of the States***

3. The State must be involved and engaged at every stage of the resettlement process, from planning to integration, even if day-to-day implementation of the programme is in the hands of a partner agency from civil society. While that should be the case even if there is continued international funding via UNHCR, it would be an absolute must if primary funding in the future were to be predominantly by the Government.

4. In order to achieve successful resettlement, both national *and* local governments must take ownership of the programme. The Government must establish mechanisms for effective, on-going coordination and communication between the CONAREs, UNHCR, and partner agencies.

5. States must view the offer of resettlement program as a humanitarian commitment on the part of the State, not of any particular Administration or political party. Efforts should be made to secure support for a resettlement program from across the political spectrum to ensure that the program, and refugees who are resettled, have continuity and stability.

6. States should have a single refugee resettlement programme through which they can offer resettlement to refugees from any part of the world, including the region, depending on international protection and resettlement needs as well as national interests.

7. The Government agency tasked with managing the resettlement program should play both a planning and a coordinating role, serving as the liaison between involved Government entities at the national level and between the national Government and local authorities. It should be fully staffed with experienced personnel and be given the authority it needs to carry out its functions.

8. States are encouraged to contract experienced nongovernmental organizations to implement the program on a day to day basis.

### ***Selection Missions***

9. States should send representatives on selection missions to countries of first asylum. Those representatives should be familiar with the country's refugee programmes, preferably members or staff of the CONAREs. The mission should also include a representative of the agency that will implement the programme day-to-day.

10. The selection of families to be resettled should not be rushed. UNHCR should propose families for consideration that are in need of protection as well as a durable solution, that meet criteria put forward by States, and that are motivated to resettle in the country offering to receive them. Precious resources and limited resettlement slots should not be spent resettling refugees who may not be in urgent need of protection or eager to make a new life in a country willing to welcome them.

### ***Financing***

11. States should assess the many costs of a resettlement programme and make available sufficient funds (whether from domestic or international sources) to implement the programme effectively.

12. States should carefully and objectively assess the level of cash assistance provided to resettled refugees, the time period for which that assistance is given, and whether certain refugee groups require a different level of assistance for a different time period. The level of assistance that is provided must permit refugees to provide for their basic necessities but should not serve as a disincentive to work.

### ***Employment and Housing***

13. Ensuring that resettled refugees are placed in stable, full-time employment with sufficient wages to cover their living expenses is quintessential to successful resettlement. Job development and job placement services must be at the core of resettlement programmes to ensure that refugees are employed by the end of their first year—if not well before then. Job developers should identify potential employers in the community, educate them about refugees, and seek their commitment to hire suitable refugees. Job placement specialists should ensure refugees are job ready by providing them orientation, language and/or vocational training, and helping them compose resumes. Most critically, they must be responsible for placing refugees in positions that job developers have identified.

14. Self-employment (microenterprise) has proved an effective means for some resettled refugees to achieve self-sufficiency and assisting refugees to pursue these efforts, including assessment of capacity, training, and funding, should also be considered by employment programmes.

15. Refugees should be encouraged and assisted to start working as soon as possible (language issues notwithstanding) to supplement their assistance and better prepare them to meet the challenges they will face when financial assistance and rent subsidies end.

16. The CONAREs should work closely with Ministries of Education and Labour to facilitate the full or at least partial recognition or revalidation of refugees' degrees and certificates from their home countries, to enable them to pursue rewarding employment in their professions or areas of expertise rather than work in entry level positions.

17. Resettlement programmes must ensure that refugees have access to stable, affordable housing once rent subsidies end. That is a *sine qua non* for future resettlement. The CONAREs should help refugees access Government housing programs that can provide the long term housing stability many refugees now lack.

### ***Local Integration***

18. Both States that continue resettlement and those that do not should focus greater efforts on strengthening programs to enhance the economic and social integration of all refugees, including the growing number of spontaneous refugees and recipients of humanitarian visas applying for refugee status, who, combined, now significantly outnumber refugees resettled since the start of the SRP.

19. Resettlement programmes should reach out to, and engage, the vast range of entities in civil society offering services that can benefit refugees.

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*The Solidarity Resettlement Programme has been a specifically regional programme. Nevertheless, during the time of its implementation, some of the States have also offered resettlement to extra-regional refugees. In light of the experience of the States that have offered resettlement to extra-regional refugees, those or other States could consider expanding of resettlement programmes to highly vulnerable regional or extra-regional refugee populations with the appropriate programmatic characteristics for each group. The preceding recommendations would have applicability to resettlement of any population, be it regional or extra-regional.*

## **ANNEX I: THE REFUGEES' PERSPECTIVE**

The following section focuses on feedback from the refugees about the resettlement process. The refugees responded to questions developed for the evaluation regarding their resettlement experience, including: their reason for resettling; the information they received about Argentina and the program before their arrival in Argentina; legal documentation; access to health care and schools for their children; financial assistance; housing; employment; and local integration. The refugees also provided feedback regarding the program itself and about Argentina as a resettlement country. In several of the five countries, earlier assessments and evaluations of resettlement programmes had similarly included feedback from refugees. Where available, refugees' feedback during those earlier evaluations is also included for comparison.

### **A. ARGENTINA**

This section focuses on different elements and stages of the resettlement process and the program. It includes findings from two earlier evaluations carried out by UNHCR in 2011 and 2014, based in large part on interviews with refugees. It also includes feedback from 17 refugees interviewed in their homes, often along with other family members participating in the interview.

The 17 refugees interviewed, 16 Colombians and one Salvadoran, are a sample of the 163 resettled refugees who remain in Argentina of the 249 resettled there between 2005 and 2014. Although the majority of refugees that reached the country during the first years of the Solidarity Resettlement Programme settled in the Buenos Aires area, only four of these, all of whom arrived between 2005 and 2008, were interviewed, as contact information was not available for the others. The 17 interviewed did, however, include almost all the refugees (13) who were resettled most recently, between 2010 and 2014, in the cities of Mendoza and Rosario. Those interviewed included men and women ranging in age from 27 to 67, and sometimes their young adult and teenage children.

#### **1. Reasons for Resettlement**

##### *Findings from UNHCR's 2011 and 2014 Evaluations*

In general, interviewed individuals appeared satisfied with the information received in the first country of asylum and indicated that no specific information was missing.

##### *2015 Findings and Refugee Feedback*

The reasons for resettling stated by refugees varied. Of the 16 refugees who responded, six said they resettled because they had faced security problems in the country of asylum. Five others said they asked for resettlement because they had been denied asylum in Ecuador or Costa Rica, and were either told to leave the country or wanted to leave because they had no work authorization, or documents. The remaining five gave varying reasons for resettling. The fact that only six of 16 of the refugees said they resettled for security reasons supports Argentina's assertion that its resettlement criteria of refugees in need of protection was not adhered to.

One refugee who resettled because of insecurity in Ecuador said, "The safety of my family is the most important thing in the world to me, and I'm grateful to UNHCR for getting us out of Ecuador." However, he added that he was disappointed because he also felt unsafe in Argentina, not because of political violence like in Colombia, but because of the high level of ordinary crime.

“In Costa Rica, we had no documentation, no work authorization,” another refugee said. “I applied for asylum but was rejected and was told to leave the country by a certain date. We went to UNHCR and they offered us resettlement.”

## **2. Information Provided Pre Arrival**

### *Findings from UNHCR’s 2011 and 2014 Evaluations*

In general, people appeared satisfied with the information obtained. However, many noted that finding work was a critical issue. During the selection mission they were not told that it would be so difficult to find work. Several expressed that, had they known how hard it would be to find work, they would not have opted to go to Argentina.

### *2015 Findings and Refugee Feedback*

Nine of the refugees said that the information they received about the program and Argentina was clear and correct, while five said it was not, and two others gave mixed responses. A comment typical of those made by refugees satisfied with the information was, “What they told us is what it was.”

One of those who gave a mixed response said, “The information was correct, but not totally. Some things they told us didn’t turn out as we expected, like with work. The information on the work situation was not what it turned out to be. The help was poor.” A refugee who was resettled in 2011 added, “We were told we could probably re-establish our professions, but as it turned out, that was not easy, it took four years.” Another added, “Only part of the assistance they told us about materialized. That was the financial assistance and rent. But regarding education and employment, the help was minimal. It’s not what it should have been.”

## **3. Legal Documentation, Health Care, and Education**

### *Findings from UNHCR’s 2011 and 2014 Evaluations*

In general, obtaining the DNI works smoothly. However, in some specific cases there were worrying delays. As regards health, most of the people interviewed were satisfied with the public health system in Argentina. The programme provides psychological support and guidance for resettled refugees. While for some this assistance was essential to their wellbeing, others stated that they did not appreciate the benefit offered by this support. As regards education for children, in general there were no problems. Adults that decided to supplement their secondary education were able to access the system without trouble. Some even received scholarships.

### *2015 Findings and Refugee Feedback*

Almost all of the refugees interviewed (14) said they had no problem with their initial documentation, or in obtaining adequate health care (15), although a few had problems or faced long delays getting their permanent residence documentation after two years in the country. One of the few refugees who had problems with documentation said, “It took six to eight months to get a DNI [National Identity Document] because the documents I had brought from Ecuador got lost. Nobody helped me resolve it, I had to do it all on my own.”

None had problems getting their children enrolled in schools, but four of the families said their children initially experienced discrimination or bullying at school. A family that arrived in 2008 said they had complained to their son's school because a boy was abusive towards him, but "the school didn't care much." So they spoke to the boy's mother, who was more responsive, and the problem soon ended. Another said that at first it was difficult for his daughter because other kids were not nice to her and hit her. They too complained to the teachers, who did nothing. They said that after a time the situation calmed and "now she's fine and has many friends."

Several families who have been in Argentina for some years reported being pleased that their children had done well in school. A refugee in Buenos Aires said her son graduated from high school and is studying music at the university, and plays with the city's youth orchestra. A couple in Rosario said, "All three of our children went to school. One is now working, another is at the university, and the third is attending night school to complete high school." The son who is in high school wants to go to the university but doesn't know if he will be able to. "It will depend on the family's overall financial situation," he said. Another young refugee who recently graduated from high school also said that he wants to attend university, but although the university is free, he may need to have to work instead to help the family.

#### **4. Financial Assistance**

##### *Findings from UNHCR's 2011 and 2014 Evaluations*

The people interviewed expressed that the amount of financial assistance was very low, and that subsistence was not enough to eat balanced meals.

##### *2015 Findings and Refugee Feedback*

Most refugees (12) said they received financial assistance for one year, although two who arrived early in the program said they received it for less time and two others—women at risk—received assistance for a longer period. Less than half (seven out of 16) said that the assistance was enough to meet basic needs. Seven others said that it was insufficient, and two said that they got by but with great hardship.

A few refugees said that during the year they received assistance there was a lot of inflation, however, the amount of assistance remained the same, which made it more difficult to manage with the amount given. A refugee woman who arrived in early 2012 said, "The first few months it was ok, but then, due to inflation, the money became short. We survived because we found jobs." Another added, "I'm not sure if the program understands whether people are able to get by on the assistance."

#### **5. Housing**

##### *Findings from UNHCR's 2011 and 2014 Evaluations*

Housing is one of the most critical aspects in order to achieve full self-sufficiency. Even with enough income to subsist, it is very difficult to rent in Argentina without providing a guarantee. Of all the people interviewed, the only ones that were able to rent without furnishing any type of guarantee were those living in a boarding house ("pensión") or in a shared apartment.

Many moved out of their first home because they could not cover the cost of rent. Housing conditions did not improve after living in Argentina a few years for any of the cases interviewed.



With only one exception, all interviewees displayed concern regarding their housing situation, and are afraid they may end up in precarious conditions.

### *2015 Findings and Refugee Feedback*

Housing was the area in which refugees experienced the greatest difficulty for the longest period of time. Even refugees who had been in Argentina for many years said housing remained a major issue. Two families that are quite well established financially (one has been in Argentina for eight years and another for three) said that they plan to leave the country wholly or partly because of housing issues.

Most (10) refugees were satisfied with the first house or apartment they lived in (which was sometimes arranged by HIAS), but eight of 13 who responded said that they had to move at the end of the year of housing subsidy because they could not afford the rent. Two of those who did stay in the same housing said they only did so because they could not find a guarantor for another apartment and their current landlord allowed them to remain without a guarantor or by giving several months' deposit. Less than half (seven of sixteen) said they are satisfied with their current housing, either because the condition of the housing is poor, because it is located in an unsafe area, or both. All said they live there however because it's what they can afford, or because it's the only place they could rent without a guarantor.

A family in Mendoza noted, "Our house has only one bedroom for five people; we got it through a realtor. It's expensive and small, but without a guarantor it's all that we could get. The guarantor is still a huge problem. Our lease ends in a few months and we are not sure what we will do then, because we do not have the money for a deposit on another house. Some families have left the country because of the housing problem."

Another woman in Rosario said that she is still living in the first house HIAS got for them when they arrived because she doesn't have a guarantor or deposit money to get another house, and her current landlord has allowed her to remain without a guarantor. But in the four years she has lived in the house, her rent has gone up from \$1500 pesos (US\$ 157 at the official exchange rate) to \$4000 pesos (about US\$420), and she's worried that she will not be able to move to another rented place without a guarantor or deposit money if her current rent goes up any higher.

A third family in Rosario that has stayed in their first apartment for similar reasons commented that it is in a good building and the location is very central, but just half a block away from a very bad area. "I have been assaulted three times all on our street," the husband said. "The first time they put a gun to the head of one of my sons."

Another refugee in Rosario, whose dismal housing was one of the two poorest of all those interviewed, said: "At the end of the first year I stayed three or four more months at the apartment without paying rent. I asked HIAS for help but they refused it and said that I needed to vacate the apartment. I left without paying. By then I had got a job as a security guard and was able to rent a room in a boarding house."

## **6. Employment**

### *Findings from UNHCR's 2011 and 2014 Evaluations*

In general, getting work is a challenge. Of the 7 cases from the 2011 selection mission, by the end of that year only 3 had found stable employment. In the case of Mendoza, many people

expressed their willingness to work in any field; however, they often only found informal work with very low pay that was insufficient to cover their basic needs.

In view of the characteristics of the Argentine labour market and the high cost of living, microcredit is not the best option to generate an income. Nevertheless, given the difficulties in finding employment, in some cases it was decided to grant microcredit to enable people to generate their own income. Several people were dissatisfied with the way the microcredit programme worked, among other reasons due to the amount offered, the waiting time, and the refusal of applications.

### *2015 Findings and Refugee Feedback*

As noted a number of times elsewhere, employment is the other most crucial problem area for refugees. Only three of the refugees interviewed said they were assisted in finding a job when they first arrived. Many were critical of the lack of assistance and described it as one of the program's biggest failings. "The lack of concrete employment assistance has been the Achilles heel of the program," declared one of the refugees interviewed.

Nevertheless, 14 of the 17 refugees interviewed were working, and, in ten families, two or more family members were working. Some had good jobs, in a few cases in their professions, others in new spheres of work. Several were self-employed, most often doing well. Others were very dissatisfied, working in jobs that pay poorly or are only part time. Thirteen of the families said their combined incomes were satisfactory or enough to get by, though only two of the families had any savings.

Among those who did not complain about the level of help finding employment was a refugee who said, "HIAS was always clear that their role was to provide information and to try to connect us with jobs but not to give us a job. They provided three-day training on how to find jobs." A refugee in Mendoza added, "They told us they would orient us but that they would not find work for us, although some HIAS people did try to link us to jobs". A third refugee who was resettled in Rosario in 2008 said that HIAS referred him to another agency, AMIA, which helped him find a job that he has remained in for five years.

Conversely, a woman in Rosario said, "We didn't expect to be given a job when we arrived, but at least we expected help to get a job, but we were left alone." A couple who arrived in 2008 said, "We never had the help we needed, so we had a lot of difficulties."

Dependent largely on their own resources to find a job, refugees pursued varying strategies. A man who now works in a bar said that he got his job after doing training in bar-tending, which he paid for in monthly instalments. He said paying for the training was difficult financially but that it was worthwhile, because it helped him get the job.

A refugee who was an insurance professional in Colombia said that the first thing he did when we arrived was get connected to the internet, "because I knew that would be the most valuable job search tool." He did all job searching on his own. He noted, however, that in one of his first jobs the employer took advantage of his situation, something that he said was not uncommon. "I worked at a hostel for 14 hours a day, seven days a week, for \$2000 pesos (ca. US\$153) a month." Later, however, he found a good job through the internet. He works in a legal, full-time job helping manage a country club. His wife is also working part-time as a biochemist at one clinic and part-time as a phlebotomist at another clinic, and their eldest son, aged 23, who is a fluent English speaker, works at a call centre.

Another family described that they have done well thanks to their own efforts. The wife works as a dental assistant. She had done the same work in Colombia but said that when she asked HIAS for help to re-establish herself in her profession in Argentina, HIAS ignored her and “pushed” her to “get any job.” She then did a dental assistant course on her own and the place where she trained helped her get a job. She said that people who have professions should be assisted to revalidate their degrees and to take courses to re-establish their careers, because “if you’re pushed into taking an entry level job you can get stuck there.” Her husband is working as an electrical engineer, the same work he did in Colombia.

A major problem area for some refugees was that they could only get jobs that paid under the table (“*en negro*”), as opposed to legal full-time jobs (“*en blanco*”) that provide paid benefits such as health insurance (“*obra social*”). A refugee in Rosario lamented, “It’s been difficult and it’s still difficult. I never had a registered job. I tried, but no luck. My wife has worked in houses taking care of children, but that has not been stable. My oldest son is the only one with a registered job. He works at night in a casino.”

One of the most financially successful refugees interviewed said his success was due to hard work and determination. After arriving in Argentina he taught himself carpentry and began making furniture to sell. In less than three years, he has grown his business and even provides work for other refugees. He has a workshop at the back of his house where he makes the furniture and other refugees sell it for him.

Another refugee who has done well through self-employment is a 67 year old man who had a handicrafts business with 15-20 employees in Colombia. The day after he arrived in Argentina he collected some pieces of discarded wood and, with a few tools he had brought from Ecuador, he made a model truck that he was able to sell quickly. He invested the money from that first sale in more supplies, and gradually built up a business. He now makes different size wooden model cars and trucks, and has bought a motorcycle to take his goods to sell in local craft fairs and markets. He became friends with an Argentinian man who helped him find a workshop and even paid his first month’s rent there. He has applied -and been approved- for a \$7,000 pesos (about US\$540) grant from the Ministry of Social Development, but has not yet received it. He said that you have to work hard to get ahead, “but not everyone does it.”

## **7. Local Integration**

### *Findings from UNHCR’s 2011 and 2014 Evaluations*

In general it is easy to establish connections with the surrounding community in small towns, as there are fewer foreigners and the local population is fairly interested in the cultural exchange. The most important factor for social integration is employment. Most interviewees have more contact with their colleagues than with their neighbours. It should be noted that a large number said they feel lonely in Argentina.

### *2015 Findings and Refugee Feedback*

In terms of local integration, a majority of the refugees, 12, indicated having Argentinian friends, usually neighbours and work colleagues, but sometimes people from church or elsewhere. Almost the same number reported not feeling as “foreign” as they had earlier. Four of the seventeen do not want to stay in Argentina, and three others are undecided about the future. Ten, however, plan to stay in Argentina permanently; and in one family where the parents plan to return to Colombia, the eldest son, who is married to an Argentinian woman, said he will remain in Argentina permanently. Several refugees said that they were grateful to be far from

the conflict and security concerns in Colombia and the country of first asylum. One noted, “It’s a place where you can live. You may have to struggle, but relative to where I came from, it’s safer.” A refugee in Buenos Aires who described her family as well integrated, said it was because they “reached out to Argentinians instead of interacting only with Colombians, because we felt they could help us more.”

The refugee with the successful furniture business referenced earlier said that Argentina is not safe because there is a lot of crime and delinquency. He says he constantly feels under threat. He and his wife also said they don’t feel very integrated because they don’t have Argentine friends and that “people don’t even give you a chance to get to know them.” They said that because of a popular *telenovela* show on television about a Colombian drug lord, “Colombians have a reputation in Argentina for being mean or criminals,” and that results in a lot of discrimination against them. The husband said that, because of the insecurity due to crime and the family’s inability to secure good, stable housing, they are planning to return to Ecuador despite potential security problems there.

Another of the families that does not want to stay said, “We’re here because we have to, but if we could return home we would. Housing is the biggest issue. If we could resolve that we would feel better being here.”

## **8. Refugees’ Feedback on the Program and Argentina as Resettlement Country**

### *Findings from UNHCR’s 2011 and 2014 Evaluations*

For most interviewees, the success of the programme lies in their opportunities of labour insertion. While they cannot get employment, they are unable to see any other benefits under the programme (such as access to public health and education).

The people who arrived in previous years and are currently working are more concerned about housing issues. Many have difficulties in paying their monthly rent, as their income is very low, which makes it difficult for them to cover their basic needs. Additionally, several said that they can’t rent on their own. The desire to have access to public housing programmes is evident in most cases.

### *2015 Findings and Refugee Feedback*

Opinions about the resettlement programme itself were mixed, but generally not positive. Only four of the refugees interviewed said they were satisfied with the level of support and assistance from the programme. Four had mixed feelings, and eight said they were dissatisfied with it. One of the most commonly expressed grievances was the lack of ongoing support after the end of the one year of assistance.

A woman in Rosario said that “after the first year we were erased from the map. They [the programme] were the only ones we knew to turn to; we felt so abandoned.” She added that if resettlement were to continue in the future, it would need to provide stable housing, concrete employment assistance, and ongoing support after the first year, even if only to make referrals. Another refugee in Rosario concurred, saying, “When assistance and rent are ending, they need to try to help refugees, rather than abandon them, leaving them jobless and with no housing. They need to make sure the person is stable, not just leave them on their own.”

When asked if they would recommend Argentina as a resettlement country, ten of the 16 refugees who responded said they would not; three others were uncertain whether they would

or not. A woman in Buenos Aires said that Argentina can be a good resettlement country for people who come ready to work. "Some people are not very well equipped to make it; some are even lazy," she said. "We came very conscious that aid would be limited and that afterwards we would be on our own." She added that refugees should also mix with Argentinians, as her family did. "When you come to a new place you also have to make an effort to learn the culture, how people are, adapt to new ways of doing things, not focus negatively on what's different from home, not dislike the place because you can't find Colombian food or music." She thought that, in the future, pre-departure information should be even clearer about how difficult it is here and how one has to adapt. She also noted the importance of "a more structured employment program, with more direct help finding jobs."

A woman in Rosario said that the basic program was good, that they got health care and education and goods such as a bed and household appliances. "But employment and housing are huge problems, and they are the key factors for success. Support in those two areas must be more solid," she said.

Asked whether they would recommend Argentina for future resettlement, only three of the refugees said yes, while ten said no or that they weren't sure. Among those who were uncertain, one said, "It depends. We're ok, others are not, others left. So it's hard to say". He recommended that assistance should be for a longer period of time and there should be more help to get work. There should also be more orientation on the difficulties here, especially regarding work."

Another refugee very emphatically said "no, Argentina is not good for resettlement, specifically because of the housing issue." She added that she was also "negative about the program because they abandoned us to our own devices after one year. It was very difficult." Another concurred, "Argentina is not for resettlement. It can't even take care of its own people." He lamented, "I live in a terrible place and I have a low paid job."

## **B. BRAZIL**

Altogether, 23 refugees (whose families include 27 others) were interviewed in Brazil, including 12 Colombians, eight Sri Lankan Tamils, two Syrians, and one Afghan. Unlike in the other four countries visited, where the consultant personally carried out almost all the interviews, in Brazil UNHCR staff in Sao Paulo and staff of UNHCR's partner agency in Rio Grande do Sul, ASAV, carried out ten of the interviews.

### ***1. Reasons for Resettlement***

All 23 of the refugees interviewed responded to this question. More than half, 13, said that lack of security in the country of first asylum was their primary reason for resettling. The security issues ranged from actual incidents in the first country of asylum, to threats, to concern because of the presence in the country of first asylum of members of the Colombian groups that had caused them to flee their homes.

Two refugees said they resettled because they had not been granted refugee status in the first country of asylum, and two said they had economic reasons for resettling. A refugee now living in Sao Paulo state said that he had approached UNHCR for help because Ecuador had denied him asylum and he feared that he might be deported back to Colombia. He was not familiar with the resettlement programme but said that UNHCR referred him for resettlement to the United States, although he was rejected. When he was referred to Brazil and accepted he said it as "a blessing from God."

The eight Sri Lankan Tamils interviewed had all been rescued from a disabled ship they had taken to try to get from India (where they had been living as refugees) to Australia. The ship took them to Dubai, where they were confined to the port area for two years, until UNHCR arranged for their resettlement. The two Syrians interviewed had been medical students in Cuba for 14 years. When they completed their MD training, they could not return to Syria because of the conflict there. They applied for asylum in Cuba but the Cuban Government does not grant asylum; therefore, UNHCR resettled them.

Among those that said they resettled for reasons other than security, one said she and her family resettled in 2014 for economic reasons, because there were no jobs in Ecuador.

### ***2. Information Provided Pre Arrival***

Thirteen refugees said that they were satisfied with the information they received about Brazil and the resettlement programme prior to their resettlement, while six were dissatisfied with the information and four gave ambiguous responses. One refugee said that she was told that education and training would be available, but were not. Another said that information about the cost of living in Brazil was "lacking." Yet another refugee expressed concern that she was asked to sign papers acknowledging the goods she would receive through the programme, but said that she did not understand what she was signing.

### ***3. Legal Documentation, Health Care, and Education***

All 23 refugees said that they received their legal documentation quickly and without problems. Regarding health, one refugee said that receiving services through the public health system was

slower than he expected, while another refugee said that the health system did not respond to her needs as she had expected. However, 20 of the refugees said they had accessed health care without problems.

Of the eight interviewed refugees who had school age children, seven said they were able to enrol their children in schools without problems and that their children did not face problems in the schools. One commented on how happy her children have been in Brazilian schools. In their country of first asylum the children had been bullied because they were Colombian, but in Brazil “they have been received with much affection. They have friends and feel so safe they even walk to school alone.” Among the adults, five said that they had pursued some sort of further education or training since arriving in Brazil. Several refugees in Guarulhos took courses offered by SENAI that enabled them to get jobs. Many of the refugees interviewed had taken some Portuguese classes, although almost all said they were not enough to learn sufficient Portuguese to work or communicate with others.

#### **4. Financial Assistance**

More than a third of the refugees interviewed (eight of 23) said that the amount of financial assistance they received was not enough to cover basic needs. Four more said that they were able to get by, but with great difficulty. Only 47 percent (11 of 23) said the amount of assistance was enough to meet needs. Among those that said that the assistance was enough to get by on, several had got jobs within their first months in Brazil so the assistance was a supplement to their income rather than being their only income.

A single refugee in Porto Alegre said that the assistance was “the minimum with which someone could survive.” He said that he received 490 Reales per month (US\$127) and that, after paying for his utilities, he was left with 425 Reales for food and transportation (US\$110). Another refugee also mentioned that the cost of utilities impacted the budget, although he—and others—said that inflation in Brazil also made it increasingly difficult to stretch the assistance to the end of the month.

A woman with a family of five (herself, her husband, and three children) said their assistance was not enough. “We get 800 Reales (US\$206) and have to buy food for five people, pay electricity and water, and pay for other personal needs. The amount is too limited. We ran out of food in our second month and had to ask our neighbours for money to buy food for our children” Another family also said that they asked people they had met for food at the end of some months. Others mentioned that the cost of food, particularly vegetables and children’s food, medicines, and transportation to bigger cities to get their documents, were challenging expenses.

#### **5. Housing**

All 23 refugees interviewed said they were satisfied with their initial house or apartment in Brazil. More than half of the refugees interviewed were resettled in Brazil in 2014 and 2015, and most of those remain in their original housing. Of those that arrived in prior years and have moved to other housing, all but two are satisfied with their current housing.

One of those who remained in his original apartment after the programme stopped paying for the rent said that the landlord allowed him to remain without having any guarantor as long as he continued to pay his rent regularly, which he has been able to do without any problem as he has a good job. Another couple was able to get a very inexpensive house through their church.

The house was in very poor condition but they did a lot of remodelling work on the house and are now very satisfied with it.

Two single refugees in Porto Alegre also have no idea what will happen when their period of rent assistance ends. One commented, "I think I will be in a very critical situation." Nevertheless, he appeared to be doing little to plan or prepare for that eventuality.

A family that has been in Rio Grande do Sul for less than a year has the same concern that refugees in other countries expressed regarding housing when the one year of free rent ends. They will not be able to remain in the house they are in because they won't have a guarantor, and the realtor requires it, and they don't know what housing they will be able to find without a guarantor. But in another small city in Rio Grande do Sul, a couple with a small child said they were able to find a good apartment without a guarantor and are very happy with it. Rent and water cost about a third of her husband's salary, but as she also works part-time cleaning houses, they are able to cover all their needs.

In a small city in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, several related families who arrived in the early years of the SRP have fared very differently. The parents, now retired, live with a son and his family in a very good apartment near the town centre. A daughter and her children live in a nice -though smaller- apartment, but she is having trouble paying rent because she has lost her job. A third daughter and her children are living in their own home. The woman, who has a good job with the city Government, successfully applied for assistance under a government housing program (My Family My Life) that provides families the funds to build a house—60,000 Reales or about US\$8,000 in her case—which can be repaid over a 30-year period. The families have to pay 10 percent of the cost as a deposit, which she was able to pay by borrowing money from relatives and friends.

## **6. Employment**

Of the refugees interviewed, 15 said UNHCR's partner agency assisted them to look for employment, although some of those who were assisted eventually found jobs on their own. Five said they were not assisted and looked for employment by themselves. At the time of the interviews, 16 of the 23 refugees were employed and at least nine said one or more of their family members were working (not all 23 of the refugees responded to the question). Seventeen said that their current income is enough to meet their basic needs, while three said it was not. Only 13 of the refugees responded when asked if they are able to pay their rent, and, of those, 11 said yes and two said no. Only eight of the refugees had any savings.

Among those expressing concern about employment was a man who said that, while he had been told in Ecuador that the programme would not find a job for him, he had anticipated he would at least get some assistance, but he did not. He said that "it's very difficult to find a job in a place when you don't know anybody."

On the other hand, a refugee who arrived in Porto Alegre in mid-2014 described having had several employment options. He said that shortly after he arrived, ASAV found him a job in a hospital. After three months, that job ended but he found another job on his own in a supermarket. However, since he had experience as a painter, ASAV helped him obtain some basic materials to be able to do house painting, and he is now self-employed as a painter. Because he is still receiving cash assistance from the programme, his income is enough to meet his needs (he even has 1,000 Reales—US\$263 saved), but, unless he can increase his painting business, he said he would have trouble getting by once his cash assistance ends.



Another refugee described having had good opportunities, as a result of which he was able to get a good job. He was an electrician in his home country and, shortly after he arrived in Guarulhos, Sao Paulo state, in 2013, a contact at a church helped him enrol in a training course that led to a certificate that enabled him to work in his field. The firm that employed him subsequently paid for him to attend two additional courses which have enabled him to get promotions at work. Although he was very satisfied with how his work situation evolved, he said that his success was due to friends he met and his own effort, and that he thought the program itself should have done more to help him when he first arrived.

Although not all of the families resettled in Guarulhos have done equally well, at least three others are, thanks in large part to the availability of work at the large Sao Paulo international airport in Guarulhos. One refugee works there in client services, another works at an airline check-in counter (she paid for a training course that helped her get the job), and two others, a married couple who are both chefs by training, work in airport restaurants. The wife of the latter couple said that she got her job by going to every restaurant and food concession stand in the airport and handing them her resume. Since hiring for many of those establishments was done by the same company, when they saw her resume numerous times they took interest in her perseverance, invited her for an interview, and hired her. While she and her husband are both grateful that they found work in their fields, they were disappointed that the programme did not facilitate advanced courses, which would have enabled them to get higher level positions. She added that she and her husband have a long-term goal of establishing their own restaurant.

Motivation, perseverance, and willingness to work hard are intangible factors that sometimes shape how refugees fare. A young, single Sri Lankan refugee in Rio Grande do Sul highlighted this. He arrived in Brazil in late 2014, so had been in the country less than ten months when he was interviewed. ASAV helped him get a job as a cleaner in a hospital shortly after his arrival, and he is still working there. He works 12 hours a day, six days a week. His overtime pay doubles his salary and he still receives financial assistance from the programme. Not only does he cover all his expenses and save money, every month he sends money to his mother who lives in a refugee camp in India.

## **7. Local Integration**

Half of the 23 refugees interviewed (12) said they now speak enough Portuguese to hold at least a brief conversation. Five are fluent in Portuguese while five others said they only speak enough Portuguese to communicate in an emergency. Only one person said that they did not speak any Portuguese at all.

Access to Portuguese language classes varied, especially according to the location. A refugee living in Porto Alegre said that he had received Portuguese classes for four months, but that it was not sufficient to learn enough of the language. He would have liked classes for one year. Another refugee who arrived in Guarulhos in Sao Paulo state in 2013 said they he did attend Portuguese classes for one year and is now fairly fluent in Portuguese.

A substantial majority of the refugees, 19, said they have made local friends in Brazil, and more than half (13) said they no longer feel quite as foreign as they did when they first arrived. Encouragingly, 18 of 22 refugees said that they would like to remain in Brazil permanently. This is consistent with data that indicates that 85% of the 653 refugees resettled in Brazil remain in the country, the highest percentage of any country in the Southern Cone.

One Sri Lankan refugee said "I am very comfortable in Brazil, I like it. My only problem is money." A Colombian refugee said that he has many Brazilian friends but also other Colombians. He

noted that there are many Colombians in Sao Paulo and that there's even a "Colombians in Sao Paulo" group whose members help each other out.

Among those who appear to have integrated most successfully are families resettled in smaller cities in Rio Grande do Sul state. Some of the communities they are in have either a municipal government office that assists migrants and refugees, or a network of private individuals that also supports migrants and refugees (as noted elsewhere in this section on Brazil, the number of resettled refugees in Brazil is minimal compared to the number of refugees and migrants who arrive by their own means). One older refugee said, "I can't emphasize enough how collaborative and friendly people were. We were a very fortunate family to have arrived in such a good place."

But in one small city in Rio Grande do Sul another refugee said she had struggled considerably to find employment, particularly because she was not able to get Portuguese classes in her city and, when she did get classes, it was only for 36 hours in a class with both adults and children. Because of her lack of Portuguese, she lost a job in a bakery and was only able to get work cleaning a house. After eight months in Brazil she got a job with a bilingual company that ASAV had referred her to some months earlier.

However, several other refugees in different areas said that they did not feel so welcome. One described having experienced xenophobia, and another said that she was not happy at her workplace, a supermarket, because she suffered discrimination.

### ***8. Refugees' Feedback on the Program and Brazil as Resettlement Country***

Asked whether they were satisfied with the level of support and assistance provided by the resettlement programme, 73% (16) said they were, while only four said they were not (two said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied).

One refugee in Sao Paulo state listed various concerns about the programme. She said that the staff of UNHCR's partner agency was "judgmental and not helpful." She also said the level of financial assistance was low relative to the cost of living, and that she had trouble obtaining the specialist health care that she needed. She also said that, because of the trauma she had experienced in her home country, she would have benefitted from mental health counselling (other refugees reported the same need), but she did not receive it. Another refugee in Sao Paulo state also said the amount of financial assistance was too low, especially for families with several children, and that she thinks the programme should offer more help finding jobs.

While some said that receiving assistance for one year was a sufficient period of time, others said this might not be the case depending on whether people have jobs and how big their families are. One family suggested that assistance be provided at a reduced rate after the first year.

Among other recommendations refugees made for improving the programme were: additional orientation, resettling refugees who want to pursue higher education in cities that have those services, more language classes, and providing more assistance finding work.

Only 13 of the 23 refugees responded when asked if they would recommend Brazil to other refugees as a country for resettlement. Of those 13, seven said that they would recommend Brazil; two said they would not; and three were uncertain.

One of those who would recommend Brazil, a Colombian in Sao Paulo state, said that the area is very expensive and very urban, but that if people know what to anticipate and are comfortable

with that, it's a good place for resettlement. A woman in Rio Grande do Sul said that it has not been easy for her in Brazil, and at times she wants to leave. But she said she had faced security problems in both Colombia and in her first country of asylum, and now she and her daughter are safe and have stability, so she is grateful to be in Brazil. Because Brazil offers security, she would recommend it as a country for resettlement—for those who really need it.

Another family also said that, ultimately, they would recommend Brazil because of the security it affords. They had only been in Brazil for a few months and said that “they are still in crisis.” However, after what they had experienced in Colombia, they are appreciative of the peace and security in Brazil.

## **C. CHILE**

Ten refugee families and individuals were interviewed (nine Colombian and one Salvadoran family). Four were resettled in Chile between 2004 and 2006 and the other four arrived in 2011.

### ***a. Reasons for Resettlement***

Four of the ten refugee families said that their primary reason for resettling was lack of security in the first country of asylum. Most often, that was because in the first country of asylum they had seen members of groups that had threatened them in their home country. Three others said it was because they had been denied refugee status by the Government of the first country of asylum, which made their continued stay there difficult.

### ***b. Information Provided Pre Arrival***

Six of the families were satisfied with the information they had received, two had mixed opinions, and two were dissatisfied. Comments made by two families that were in the first groups to resettle in Chile differed significantly in their perceptions. One said, "They were direct and sincere and honest about the problems, they told us the harsher realities about Chile. I think that is a good idea so people won't become disillusioned." The family that was dissatisfied said, "The things they told us weren't the same as what we found. There was much racism here when we arrived and employment and housing were very difficult."

### ***c. Legal Documentation, Health Care, and Education***

None of the ten families reported problems in obtaining legal documentation or accessing health care. However, four families said they experienced problems with the education system. One of these said that they had many problems with the school system because the (school authority) wanted evidence of their ten year old son's grades from the schools he attended in the first country of asylum, which the family did not have. Eventually the boy was given a test and placed in a school, where he was bullied during his first year because he was foreign. Another family with several school age children upon arrival said their children did very well and three of them are now attending university, one in Chile and two in Colombia (because universities are very expensive in Chile, they explained).

### ***d. Financial Assistance***

A majority of the families interviewed (seven) said that the assistance they received was sufficient to cover basic needs; one said it was not; and two gave mixed responses. One family said that in the orientation session after they arrived they were told about places where they could buy goods more cheaply and also received help preparing a budget. Another family said they were only able to make it because they shared a house with relatives who were resettled in the same group with which they arrived.

### ***e. Housing***

Although many families said that finding and keeping affordable housing had been a major problem for them, eight out of ten said they were satisfied with the first homes they obtained. However, only three of the families remained in those homes after their financial assistance ended due to the high cost of rent. One single mother said that the Vicariate had helped her

look for a house, going out with her every day to look for houses. She stayed in the house she found for one year; after that her daughter helped her find a more affordable house via the internet. A respondent from another family said that, after the first year, the only house she was able to afford was “a shack in the yard of another house,” which she stayed in for several years because it was all she could afford.

Yet another family complained that they got no help finding housing, that it was difficult because they had no ‘guarantor’, and that being black compounded those problems. That family later moved to an apartment which they were eventually able to buy through a Government programme. The Government subsidized part of the cost, they paid another part with money they had saved, the Vicariate helped with some funds, and they took out a 30-year high-interest bank loan for the remaining third of the funds needed to make the purchase. Their apartment is modest, but they feel that at least they have security.

### ***f. Employment***

All ten families interviewed have at least one family member who is employed or self-employed, and in seven of the ten at least two members are employed. Eight of the families say they are self-sufficient, though only three have any savings. However, the road to reach their present situation was often rocky. Six said they received assistance looking for their first job, while four said they did not. One refugee said, “It took me six months to get a job. There was a lot of discrimination.” Others also said they faced discrimination, either because they were foreign, black, or, in some cases, both. One of the refugees received a microenterprise loan from the Vicariate and UNHCR, and over the years has built his initial enterprise into a successful business in two locations.

### ***g. Local Integration***

All ten families interviewed have been in Chile more than four years, and several for more than nine years. Today, all of them say they feel much less foreign than they did when they first arrived in Chile, though only eight said they have friends in Chile. Seven of the families plan to stay in Chile permanently.

One refugee said that there are many more foreigners and black people in Chile now than there were when he arrived, so that local people “are more accustomed to us now and are less hostile, even at public institutions.” A family that has been in Chile many years added, “We recently visited Colombia and felt uneasy. When we got back to Chile we felt relieved.” Yet another expressed a similar feeling, saying, “I think if I went to Colombia now I’d feel foreign there.” And another added, “We’re integrated in every sense.”

One of the less integrated resettled persons said she has few friends, and it’s very “lonely”. “People are in their own space,” she said, “and we’re in ours; you just get used to it.” Another man who claims to have no friends said he feels stuck because he can’t go back to his native country or to the first country of asylum for security issues, so all he can do is “just keep going forward.”

### ***h. Refugees’ Feedback on the Programme and on Chile as Resettlement Country***

Eight of the ten families said they were satisfied both with the programme and with Chile, and would recommend resettlement in Chile to others. Nevertheless, there was both positive and negative feedback and a few recommendations for the future.

“For refugees, security is primordial, and here there is security,” a refugee noted. “It’s not ‘safe’ because of the crime [he has been robbed three times], “but the lack of security is not political.”

Another refugee said, “The support was a lot. I expected less.” She said that she would have liked more social programmes for children and adults because the ones they participated in were very helpful. A single man said that “the programme should last longer, because people still need support after one year.” Another refugee made a similar observation, expressing concern that “when the programme ended, support ended.”

Several of the families were unhappy with the lack of assistance in finding jobs and housing, and recommended that future programmes should provide greater assistance in those areas. One of them noted that “when refugees arrive we know nothing about Chile; we have no contacts to help us find work, and have no references.” “We need help to find jobs,” he added. Two families said that more should be done to help refugees purchase their own homes. One commented, “We thought the programme would help us to get long-term housing, like help to buy a house. That’s what they told us before we came. But that did not materialize.” The cost of education was mentioned as a concern, not just at the level of higher education. “There are costs at public schools too, they’re not totally free.”

Several of the families interviewed talked about the families that left Chile and returned to either Colombia or the first country of asylum. “Some were put off by the climate or by the economic situation,” one family said. “It makes you wonder how many of them really needed resettlement.” Another said that two of the families that left had found work and housing, but had encountered problems with the care of their children because of the high cost of after-school care. Another refugee said that “some people came thinking that there would be more assistance and for longer, and they expected things to be given to them. They were not prepared to fight as hard as is needed to get ahead.” This refugee added, however, that another factor was that they were not integrating. “If people don’t know you, they don’t seem friendly. Some people couldn’t get used to that.”

## **D. PARAGUAY**

Only one of the families resettled in Paraguay remains in the country and that family was interviewed. This section notes findings of an earlier evaluation done by UNHCR in 2012, and then reports on the current situation of the one remaining family.

### ***1. Reasons for Resettlement and Information Provided Pre Arrival***

With regard to the information received in the first country of asylum, in 2012 UNHCR noted that people were generally satisfied with the information received in the first country of asylum, although they did note that they had expected integration to be easier, and had also expected to receive support from the different State institutions. In terms of labour insertion, they also had expectations that the process would be less complicated. The family that remained in Paraguay said they had been shown a video in Ecuador which they did not consider a realistic depiction of the country once they arrived in Paraguay. As a result, they were very surprised when they arrived in Paraguay. With regard to the reason for resettlement, the family said it was due to lack of safety in Ecuador.

### ***2. Legal Documentation, Health Care, Education, and Financial Assistance***

The 2012 report said that the obtainment of the national Identity document had delayed beyond what the families had been informed. This was mainly attributed to the fact that the CONARE waited for the last family to arrive –almost three months after the arrival of the first three cases– to request the documents. All the refugees had access to the public health system in Paraguay and used its services for common illnesses with no problems. Education for the children was not a problem, either. However, all the families found that care for small children is an issue, even for families with older children (aged 10 to 15). With regard to financial assistance, all the cases received the subsistence allowance but expressed that it was too low, especially in view of costs relating to education, health and small children. The two families interviewed indicated that the subsidy was not sufficient to provide a balanced meal, and sometimes was not enough for basic food.

The information obtained during the interview that formed part of this evaluation ties in with what was noted in 2012. The family's older son has already graduated from high school and wanted to attend university, but had to get work to help the family. As regards financial assistance, the family added that when the five families first arrived, they all received the same amount, although some families only had three members, while theirs had six. As a result, they suffered greater hardship than other families. This family also noted that the father had been held up a few months back outside his job, and had suffered a bullet wound. The family requested help from the CIPAE and the latter was once again providing them with financial assistance using funds from UNHCR.

### ***3. Housing and employment***

#### *Findings from UNHCR's 2012 Evaluation*

All the families received houses from the public housing programme run by the National Secretariat for Housing and Habitat (SENAVITAT) which were free during the first two years, with the possibility of being purchased after that at low instalments. There was also a possibility of

extending their stay for a third year without pay. The houses are located in Areguá, a small city next to Asunción, approximately a two hour ride from the capital by public transport, in a neighbourhood built entirely by SENAVITAT.

Only one of the people interviewed managed to get formal work for a time, with the minimum wage. The cases that left the country had not found any formal work; however, only one of them had done what was necessary to obtain a Paraguayan identity document in order to work legally in the country. The cases that left the country based their decision on the lack of work opportunities.

#### *2015 Findings and Refugee Feedback*

The family continues to live in the house provided by SENAVITAT in La Calera and is satisfied with it. Although the other 4 families left the country, CIPAE assigned the vacant houses to spontaneous refugees, and the family gets along well with the new neighbours. The family says they have been living in the house for five years without paying rent or paying toward the purchase of the house, and they do not know when they should start paying.

When the family arrived in Paraguay, CIPAE assisted the father in his search for work, although he made all the necessary efforts. He had experience as a security guard in Colombia and managed to get work in this field in Paraguay calling door to door with his CV. After he was wounded in May 2014, the company assured him it would keep the post for three months, but he still can't return to work and he is not certain that the company will have a job for him when he returns, although it should by law. UNHCR and CIPAE were helping the family. The wife was not working, and only one son had an income, although at the minimum wage, which did not allow the family to cover their expenses.

#### **4. Local Integration and Feedback on the Program and Paraguay as Resettlement Country**

In 2012, except for one child who was discriminated by a teacher in school, the families said they felt welcome in Paraguay and that there was no xenophobic behaviour against them. Only one out of five resettled families expressed satisfaction with the programme. However, even this case expressed concern over their economic situation.

During the interview for this evaluation, the family stated that they have a good relationship with their Paraguayan neighbours and with the refugees. Nevertheless, the father says that if he could move to another country he would. "There is no future for my children here," he stated. "Compared with other countries, Paraguay is far behind, and there is a lot of crime," he added. He would even consider returning to Colombia where his son would be able to continue his studies.

With regard to the programme and Paraguay as a resettlement country, they said they were satisfied with the help received, but they would not recommend further resettlement in Paraguay. He concluded saying, "I don't want others to go through what we have been through, and besides, there is no future here."



## **E. URUGUAY**

Of the 19 families resettled in Uruguay, 12 remain in the country, seven of which were interviewed for this evaluation. The families interviewed arrived in Uruguay between 2011 and 2014 (2011: 1; 2012: 1; 2013: 3; 2014: 2); six of the families were resettled from Ecuador and one from Costa Rica. Most interviews were conducted with more than one (in some cases all) family members present. In three of the interviews the lead respondent was the male head of household, while women were the lead respondents in four of the interviews (three of whom arrived through the women at risk program).

This section also incorporates information from a study that UNHCR carried out of the Solidarity Resettlement program in 2012, during which the five resettled families that arrived between 2009 and 2012 and were still living in the country were interviewed (three other families that arrived during that period had left Uruguay). Information from the 2012 study will be clearly identified.

### ***a. Reasons for Resettlement***

*2015 Evaluation:* Four of the seven families indicated that they had sought resettlement because of security concerns in the first country of asylum, while three cited other reasons. One refugee said that she could not get work and the family had become homeless; another cited discrimination against Colombians in Ecuador; and a third said that they were asked if they wanted to be resettled and they said yes.

### ***b. Information Provided Pre Arrival***

*2012 Study:* In general, people said they were satisfied with the information they received in the first country of asylum (relating to housing, health, education, climate and culture). They said it accurately reflected the current situation and the main difficulties in Uruguay. Several people expressed discontent regarding the search process for an apartment or employment, because, from the information supplied during the selection mission, they had understood that SEDHU would solve these issues for them.<sup>19</sup>

*2015 Evaluation:* Of the seven families interviewed, five said that they were satisfied with the information provided. One family reported that the information provided by SEDHU was “very clear about the program and the situation in Uruguay.” Another family said that, while clear information about the high cost of living in Uruguay was given, they “didn’t register just how high it would be”, and that it was only once they were in Uruguay and trying to survive that they fully appreciated what had been said. One of the families with a less positive opinion of the information provided said that “there was work and they could get ahead, but that work was hard to find, salaries were low, and life was very expensive.” They added that they had understood that jobs would be found for them. A family that participated in the rural resettlement program said that, while most of the information they were given was accurate, they thought rural resettlement meant they would be given land to farm, which they welcomed as they had been farmers in Colombia. But when they arrived they were provided a house but no land in an area where little work was available.

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<sup>19</sup> UNHCR, “La integración local en el marco del programa de reasentamiento solidario en Uruguay y recomendaciones para su fortalecimiento,” (*Local integration in the framework of the solidarity resettlement program in Uruguay and recommendations for strengthening it*). Buenos Aires, 2012.

### ***c. Legal Documentation, Health Care, and Education***

*2012 Study:* At some point there were problems in obtaining National Identity Documents (DNI), however, this has been solved and families obtain their documentation within a few weeks. As regards education for children, in general there have been no problems. In relation to health services, most interviewees expressed satisfaction with the health system. In some cases, delays in the health system were so long that the program covered certain costs during the first year.<sup>20</sup>

*2015 Evaluation:* Almost all the refugees were satisfied with each of these three aspects of their resettlement. All seven families interviewed said that they received their legal documentation quickly and, in most cases, without any complication. All seven also said that they had been able to access public health care services when needed. Six of the seven families said they had no problems enrolling their children in schools. The one exception was an older youth who wanted to enroll in high school but was referred to a vocational college. The children generally adapted well to their schools. Some experienced minor problems with other children at first, but most often this was due to being new in the school and not because of their nationality.

### ***d. Financial Assistance***

*2012 Study:* With regard to subsistence, all the families confirmed that the amount provided was sufficient to cover their basic needs.<sup>21</sup>

*2015 Evaluation:* Most families received financial assistance (as well as subsidized rent) for one year, although the women at risk received it for two years, albeit at a reduced rate during the second year. The families received the assistance even if they found employment, so that refugees who worked while they were still receiving assistance had the possibility of saving some money. All seven families said that the amount of assistance they received was enough to cover their basic needs, albeit living frugally and struggling to make ends meet. One woman said that she was able to manage alright the first year, but had much more difficulty once her assistance was reduced in the second year.

### ***e. Housing***

The acquisition of housing is a very complex issue in Uruguay. In order to rent one must furnish a guarantee from an established person in the community, or, alternately, make a bank deposit with joint access restricted to the owner of the apartment and the tenant. For the first year, SEDHU provided the guarantee for the families by allocating part of their financial assistance toward setting up their own guarantee as future savings, which implied receiving a smaller amount of assistance in hand.<sup>22</sup>

*2012 Study:* Rental costs are so high in relation to wages that most families pointed out that it would be impossible to continue renting the same apartment once the program has concluded, and they would need to look for cheaper housing outside Montevideo. One family chose to purchase their own housing, although without legal assurance of ownership. Despite warnings from SEDHU, the family paid a sum to supposedly buy a house that was not legally fit for sale.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

However, they have hopes of legalizing this purchase some day and obtaining ownership from the Government.<sup>23</sup>

*2015 Evaluation:* With the exception of the families that took part in the rural resettlement program, which received houses through MEVIR, housing continues to be a significant challenge for resettled families. Although six of the seven families interviewed were given their first housing in Uruguay, almost all the families resettled in Montevideo had to move to cheaper apartments once the period of rent subsidy elapsed.

One single parent family that is still receiving the rent subsidy, and which is already living in modest housing on the outskirts of Montevideo, said that it would not be able to afford to remain even in that accommodation when the subsidy ends. The head of household said that the rent for her apartment is the same as her salary. She has an adult son who works and his salary covers their expenses but, in order to make ends meet, she will have to move even farther away from the city to find an apartment they can afford. The family that had supposedly purchased a house that was not legally sellable remains happy with its decision. They have added a room to the house and are still hopeful that they will eventually be able to obtain full legal ownership of it.

The families in the rural resettlement program that received the MEVIR houses are all very happy with their houses, but remain uncertain that they will indeed be able to retain them in the long term. One of the rural resettlement families said that the Government has not formalized any process for the refugees to buy the houses, and the refugees do not have any written documentation of their right to be living in their houses.

## ***f. Employment***

*2012 Study:* The current situation of the people interviewed and their profiles are quite varied. In general, finding stable and well-paid employment poses a challenge. Most interviewees sought employment on their own, and at least one of these people was working. As regards the time until employment was found, most interviewees found work within a month or two after starting their search. In most cases, the greatest concern is generating enough income to cover basic expenses, especially in view of the high cost of rent. Although all interviewees confirmed that they had received information regarding the matter during the selection mission, they had not imagined that it would be so difficult, or that the cost of living would be so high in relation to income.<sup>24</sup>

*2015 Evaluation:* The findings of the 2015 evaluation regarding employment remain absolutely consistent with those of the 2012 study. Only one of the seven families interviewed said they received help finding their first job. All but one of the principal interviewees are currently working, and in all seven families at least one other person has a job. Five of the seven families say they are self-sufficient (in the 2012 study, only two of the four families whose financial assistance had already terminated were self-sufficient).

One of the refugees has been working for three years as an electrical mechanic at a glass factory, another is a security guard, a third is a seamstress, and yet another works at a call centre, although only part time. Among the families in the rural resettlement program, in one family the husband works in a car workshop, while the wife and adult son work picking fruit. In another, both husband and wife work in the agricultural sector, while a son fixes computers from home.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

The family has also developed a profitable side business raising and selling chickens. In the third remaining family the husband does odd jobs, the wife sells clothes that she makes with a sewing machine that SEDHU helped her buy, and their two adult children work and study.

However, the refugees' perception of the employment situation in Uruguay depended largely on their personal experience. One family said, "There's work here. We got Jobs within 15 days of arriving." But another said, "Here there are no jobs for locals, less yet for foreigners."

### ***g. Local Integration***

*2012 Study:* People who are connected with some religious institution have been able to create networks. However, several people stated that they do not have a social network in Uruguay for various reasons.<sup>25</sup>

*2015 Evaluation:* Five of the seven families said that they have made friends or are friendly with people in Uruguay, including Uruguayans and other nationalities; four said that they no longer feel as foreign as they once did. Most often these friends are neighbours or co-workers. One said that the night they moved into their house a neighbour came to welcome them and they have been friends since. Another said that he feels much more confident in Uruguay now that he's getting to know the people and the culture. The family that appeared most well integrated said that they made an effort to integrate, and to make Uruguay their homeland. Five of the families want to stay in Uruguay permanently (one was very emphatic, saying "Definitely,"); one refugee is undecided, saying that she would like to stay to provide her kids stability; and one does not want to stay.

One of the two refugees that purportedly had not made friends said that her sense of separateness had increased over time because, as her financial situation worsens, she winds up working alongside people whom she feels discriminate against her. Nevertheless, she would like to stay in Uruguay in order for her family to have stability, but she doesn't know if she can make it financially. The one family that is thinking of returning to Ecuador or Colombia said they have made friends but continue to feel very foreign and experience anti Colombian sentiment and discrimination.

### ***h. Refugee Feedback on the Program and Uruguay as Resettlement Country***

*2012 Study:* For most interviewees, until they have found stable employment they are unable to identify other achievements under the program. Several people expressed that they would have liked to receive greater support in the search for housing. Nevertheless, most of the families emphasized their satisfaction with the program and thanked SEDHU and UNHCR for having given them the possibility of resettling in Uruguay.<sup>26</sup>

*2015 Evaluation:* All seven families interviewed expressed satisfaction with the resettlement program's level of support and assistance, though only five would recommend resettlement in Uruguay.

"Life is expensive but, if one economises, one can survive," said one family that still receives financial assistance. They also said, "we have hopes that when it is over everything will be all right." Another said, "If only one in twenty families succeed as we have, the program is worthwhile. I would like to see it continue." A third added, "We're grateful; for us the program has been good."

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

Several families praised SEDHU. "SEDHU was very helpful. They went above and beyond what I expected. We felt very supported, even after the year of the program ended. They've been very important to us."

A family with mixed feelings about their resettlement experience commented, "The support from the program is excellent, but the cost of living is so high; that must be taken into account. It's been very difficult for us, not because of the program, but because of the situation. I'm glad we came because we had a very difficult situation [in the first country of asylum], but it's been very difficult."

Comments from families that were negative about Uruguay included, "Uruguay is not a good place for refugees. There's no work and it's very expensive here. Housing is a problem. I know other people who need resettlement, but I would recommend that they be resettled elsewhere"; and, "If the country is in such a poor state, why bring people here? You have to study who to send where depending on the opportunities they will have".

Regarding why some families left Uruguay, some of the refugees interviewed said that the departing families told them that the reason was either the difficult housing situation, their inability to find adequate employment, or both. But even within families that stayed, the opinion on why others left sometimes differed. One man said, "Some Colombians come here for a one year sabbatical, they get cash and free rent and at the end they leave. I would say, if they need resettlement, they should come, but be serious about it." Yet his wife said that one friend who left had wanted to stay, but couldn't find work that paid enough for the family to survive.

Asked if they had any recommendations to improve the program for the future, one family said, "The actual program is good. One change should be a greater commitment to give refugees jobs or land to farm." Another said, "The housing issue needs to be studied." A refugee resettled through the women at risk program suggested that assistance should not be reduced in the second year, "because of the difficulty finding jobs." A third said that more accompaniment would be good, especially at the beginning. "We felt rather alone at the beginning. We would have liked more social support".

Of the many sentiments, both positive and negative, expressed by refugees about their resettlement, one in particular stood out: "Thanks to the resettlement program, my children have a future."

## **ADDENDUM A.**

### **INTERVIEWS AND MEETINGS**

#### **ARGENTINA**

José Xavier Samaniego, Representante Regional, Oficina Regional para el Sur de América Latina, ACNUR

Dr. Federico Agusti, Presidente, Comisión Nacional para los Refugiados (CONARE)

María Soledad Figueroa, Asesora, Dirección General de Derechos Humanos, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto

Inés Páez, Asesora en Relaciones Internacionales, Ministerio de Desarrollo Social

María Elena Tomasella, Relaciones Internacionales, Ministerio de Desarrollo Social

Lorena Tassi, Relaciones Internacionales del Ministerio de Desarrollo Social

Enrique Burbinski, Director Regional para América Latina, HIAS

Flavio Lauría, Secretario Ejecutivo, Fundación Comisión Católica Argentina para las Migraciones (FCCAM)

Jorge Fernández, Coordinador Programa Refugiados, FCCAM

Gustavo Maure, Coordinador, Ministerio Desarrollo Social, Mendoza

Cintia Pavone, Trabajadora Social, FCCAM

Virginia Angotzi, Administrativa, Dirección Nacional de Migraciones (ex trabajadora social CONARE)

Carlos Gabriel Spiazzi, Punto Focal CONARE, Dirección Nacional de Migraciones.

Dora Castro, Ex coordinadora de HIAS, Mendoza.

Silvina Santana, Coordinadora, Área de Atención en Violencia de Género, Municipalidad de Rosario

Rubén Chababo, Director Derechos Humanos, Municipalidad Rosario

Karina Belfor, Ex Coordinadora de HIAS, Rosario

Ana Paula Milo, Coordinadora del Ministerio Desarrollo Social, Rosario

Guillermina Sticconi, Trabajadora Social, Ministerio Desarrollo Social, Rosario

#### **BRASIL**

Andrés Ramírez, Representante para Brasil, ACNUR

Beto Vasconcelos, Secretario Nacional de Justicia; Presidente, Comité Nacional para Refugiados

Claudia Anjos, Asesora, Comité Nacional para Refugiados (CONARE)

Joao Guilherme Lima, Director, Departamento de Extranjeros, Secretaria Nacional de Justicia

Eduardo Freitas, División Naciones Unidas, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores

Juliana Armede, Asesora, Secretaría de Justicia y Defensa de la Ciudadanía, Estado de Sao Paulo

Rinaldo Afanasiev, Orientador de Práctica Profesional, Servicio Nacional de Industria (SENAI)

Vera de Freitas, Directora Departamento de Protección Especial, Secretaria de Asistencia Social Mogi das Cruzes (Sao Paulo)

Celeste Gomes, Asistente Social, Secretaria Municipal de Asistencia Social, Mogi das Cruzes

Claudia Dos Santos, Asistente Social, Secretaria Municipal de Asistencia Social, Mogi das Cruzes

Sonia da Silva, Coordinadora de Curso de Psicología, Universidad de Gaurulhos (Sao Paulo)

Carla Mastrobuono, Directora Académica, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, Univ. de Gaurulhos

Cristina Coltro, Supervisora Clínica, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, Univ. de Gaurulhos

María Pereira, Secretaria Adjunta, Secretaria de Justicia y Derechos Humanos, Gobierno del Estado de Rio Grande do Sul

Juarez Santinon, Director Presidente, Secretaría de Trabajo y Desarrollo Social, Estado de Rio Grande do Sul

Miembros del Comité de Atención a Migrantes y Refugiados, Estado de Rio Grande do Sul

Miembros del Comité de Atención a Migrantes y Refugiados, Municipio de Porto Alegre

Roberto Renner, Superintendente Ejecutivo, Asociación Antonio Vieira (ASAV)

Leila Pizzato, Coordinadora de Asistencia Social, ASAV

Karin Kaid Wapechowski, Coordinadora del Programa de Reasentamiento, ASAV

Claudio Souza, Camila Pedro, Raquel Dias Freitas, Paola Schaeffer, Carla Duarte; ASAV

Bruno Mendelski de Souza, Coordinador, Curso de Relaciones Internacionales, Universidad de Santa Cruz

Cristiana Mueller, Coordinadora, Asesoría para Asuntos Internacionales e Institucionales, Universidad de Santa Cruz

Angela Isabel Hects, Asistente Social, Secretaria Municipal de Asistencia Social, Municipio de Santa Cruz, Rio Grande do Sul

Secretaría Municipal, Municipio de Lajeado, Rio Grande do Sul

Miembros de grupo de apoyo a refugiados y migrantes, Municipio de Serafina Correa, Rio Grande do Sul

## **CHILE**

Rodrigo Sandoval Ducoing, Jefe Nacional del Departamento de Extranjería y Migración (DEM), Ministerio del Interior y Seguridad Pública

Aurelia Balcells, Jefa de la Sección Refugio y Reasentamiento, DEM

Alfredo del Río, Sección Refugio y Reasentamiento, DEM

Magda Medina, Jefa, Oficina Nacional Chile, ACNUR

Luis Berríos, Secretario Ejecutivo, Vicaría de Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores

Claudio González, Secretario Ejecutivo, Fundación de Ayuda Social de las Iglesias Cristianas (FASIC)

Juan Carrasco Contreras, Alcalde, Municipio de Quilicura

Yamile Cabrera, Encargada, Oficina de Migrantes y Refugiados, Municipio de Quilicura

Jaime Amar, Ex Alcalde, Municipio de San Felipe

Elizabeth San Martín, Coordinadora, FASIC

Karen Silva y Pablo Piquil, Trabajadores Social, FASIC

Eduardo Rojas, Ex Funcionario, Vicaría de Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores

Héctor Rojo, Ex Responsable del PRS, Vicaría de Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores

Marta González, Ex Funcionaria de Vicaría de Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores

## **PARAGUAY**

Miembros de la Comisión Nacional de Refugiados (CONARE)

Juan Ignacio Livieres, Presidente, Comisión Nacional de Refugiados (CONARE),

Viceministerio de Administración y Asuntos Técnicos, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores;

Viviana Barua, Comisión de Derechos Humanos, Cámara de Senadores

Gloria Paiva, Dirección de Asesoría Jurídica, Dirección General de Migraciones

Juan Pablo Feliciangeli, Dirección de Derechos Humanos, Ministerio del Interior

Martín Paiva, Secretario Ejecutivo, CONARE

Mario Costa, Director Ejecutivo, Comité de Iglesias para Ayuda de Emergencias (CIPAE)

Rodolfo Aseretto, Ex Director de CIPAE

## URUGUAY

Emb. Jose Luis Cancela, Subsecretario, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores  
Javier Miranda, Secretario de Derechos Humanos, Presidencia  
Alejandra Costa, Directora de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Humanitario, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores  
Jimena Fernández, Secretaría de Derechos Humanos, Presidencia  
María Fernanda Carli, Secretaría Permanente, Comisión de Refugiados (CORE)  
Leticia Lueiro, Secretaría Permanente, Comisión de Refugiados (CORE)  
Cecilia Bianco, Presidenta, MEVIR-Vivienda  
Gabriela Cortina, Coordinadora General, Servicio Ecuménico para la Dignidad Humana (SEDHU)  
Christopher El-Hage, ACNUR  
Miembros de la Comisión de Refugiados (CORE)  
    Gloria Rodríguez Santo, Representante Nacional, Parlamento  
    María Santalla, Representante Nacional, Parlamento  
    María Gabriela Chiparelli Bianchi, Policía Nacional, Dirección Nacional de Migraciones  
    Margarita Navarette, UDELAR  
    Susana Novaro  
    Alberto Gianotti, SeDHu



## **ADDENDUM B**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CONAREs**

#### **1. Planning and preparation**

- Were the objectives of the Solidarity Resettlement Program clear to all the interlocutors involved in designing the resettlement program and developing an integration strategy for resettled refugees?
- To what extent was effective collaboration and cooperation assured between the relevant players (Government entities, municipalities, civil society, refugee communities and UNHCR) for the development and implementation of the program?
- Was the division of roles and responsibilities clear to all the players?
- Was communication and coordination between the central Government, the municipalities and the entity implementing the program effective and efficient?
- Were campaigns / preparations carried out with the receiving community to support the arrival and integration of the refugees?
- Were the human and financial resources necessary for program implementation made available? By whom? (Governments, Civil Society, UNHCR)?

#### **2. Implementation**

- How many refugees were resettled? How many refugees continue in the country? What is the profile of these refugees? How many refugees left the country?
- Was the programme implemented according to the agreed plan of action and programme specifications?
- Was the implementation strategy sufficiently flexible to adapt to the challenges that arose during the execution of the program and the changing needs of refugees?
- What were the costs for the program? Was the implementation efficient in terms of costs?
- What (human and financial) resources were used to execute the resettlement program?

#### **3. Monitoring**

- Were monitoring mechanisms / methodologies / criteria established from the start of the program?
- Were evaluations conducted of the resettlement programs? By whom and using what methodology? Were the results of this evaluation shared with the relevant players under the program?
- How did refugees take part in program criteria and management?

#### **4. Evaluation and sustainability**

- Do you consider that there is a long term political vision for the integration and naturalization of resettled refugees?
- What positive and negative lessons were learned by Governments, UNHCR and partner agencies that should be taken into consideration for a future programme?
- Do you consider that the Resettlement Programs addressed the needs of resettled people in terms of protection and lasting solutions?
- What impact has the resettlement program had on the country's asylum policies and attention provided to refugees that arrived spontaneously?
- Do you consider that the program is sustainable? Are resources available to continue the resettlement program? Who could bear the financial cost of implementing the resettlement program?

## ADDENDUM C

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR REFUGEES

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Interviewer name and organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Interview in person \_\_\_\_\_ by phone \_\_\_\_\_ in focus group \_\_\_\_\_

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESETTLED REFUGEES

#### **Biographical Data:**

Name. \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Other family members and ages: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Arrival: \_\_\_\_\_  
First Country of asylum and time spent in that country: \_\_\_\_\_  
City and country currently living in: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Pre-Arrival and Experience upon arrival**

1) What was the main factor that led you to decide to resettle? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
2) In retrospect, are you satisfied with the information you received on the resettlement country and regarding the help you would receive from the resettlement programme?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Legal Status and Documentation**

3) Did you receive the relevant legal documents you needed in a timely manner?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Cash Assistance**

4) For how long did you receive cash assistance? \_\_\_\_\_  
5) Was the cash assistance received sufficient to cover your basic needs during your first year in the country?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If not, how did you resolve your shortage of cash in the first year?

**Health and Education**

6) How soon after your arrival in the country did your children begin attending school and who helped you find a school and enroll your children? \_\_\_\_\_

7) How would you describe your children's experience in school?

\_\_\_\_\_

8) Have you or any other adult in your family studied, or are you still studying (example: high school or university)?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

9) Have you and your family managed to access medical attention when needed?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Housing**

10) If you were lodged in temporary housing on your arrival, how long did you remain there before moving to a house or apartment? \_\_\_\_\_

11) When you moved to your first house or apartment, were you satisfied with the size and location?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

12) For how long did the programme pay your rent? \_\_\_\_\_

13) When the rent assistance period finished, did you stay in the same housing?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

14) If you did not stay in the same housing, what were the reasons?

\_\_\_\_\_

15) How did you acquire your second housing? If you are currently in other housing, how did you acquire that one?

\_\_\_\_\_

16) Are you satisfied with your current housing?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If not, why? \_\_\_\_\_

17) Are you able to pay the rent?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Job Search**

18) When you arrived in the country, did you receive information on the labour market, the types of work that may be available, and the difficulties that could exist in the search for employment?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

19) Did you receive help in the search for your first job?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If not, how did you find your first job? \_\_\_\_\_

20) If you've had other jobs, how did you get them?

\_\_\_\_\_

21) Do you currently have a job?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

22) If you are working in your own productive activity, did you receive any training, material, tools or other support to start your work?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you received support, from whom and in what form? \_\_\_\_\_

23) Is any other member of your family currently employed?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

24) Does your family currently have sufficient income from employment to cover its needs?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

25) Do you currently have any savings?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Language (for resettled refugees who do not speak the language of the resettlement country)**

26) What is your current knowledge of the language of the resettlement country?

No knowledge of the language \_\_\_\_\_

Enough to get around or communicate in an emergency \_\_\_\_\_

Enough to have a brief conversation \_\_\_\_\_

I speak it well \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Integration**

27) Have you made friends during your time in the country?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you have made friends, are they your same nationality or are they also from the country?

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28) Do you still feel as foreign as when you first arrived in the country?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

29) Would you like to stay in this country permanently?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If not, why?

30) Are you satisfied with the level of support and assistance you received during the resettlement process?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If not, what have been the reasons for not being satisfied?

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31) If other refugees that still remain in the first country of asylum asked about resettlement in this country, would you recommend that they resettle here?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

32) What changes would you suggest in the resettlement program for it to be more effective in the future?

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