The Identification of Refugees in Need of Resettlement

UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

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This presentation:

- Highlights the **role of identification of resettlement needs** in the protection strategy;

- Reviews the **identification process;**

- Introduces **tools and methods to assess protection needs and vulnerabilities**; and

- Outlines the **importance of referrals systems and cooperation with key partners** in the identification of refugees in need of resettlement.

Identification

- Proper identification of refugees in need of resettlement is the **most crucial and challenging aspect of the resettlement process.**

Resettlement - a protection response

- Resettlement **cannot be viewed in isolation** from other protection interventions, but must be **incorporated into the overall protection strategy.**

- Identification of resettlement needs must be part of an **ongoing, active, collaborative and systematic effort of all UNHCR staff and partners.**

Identification requires knowledge

Identification of resettlement need requires detailed knowledge of:

- the refugee population and their **specific needs and vulnerabilities**

- the protection environment and **prospects for durable solutions**

Tools to identify protection needs include registration data captured in *proGres*, **participatory assessments,** the **Heightened Risk Identification Tool** (HRIT), and **referral systems.**

The Identification Process must:

- Be **efficient, consistent and transparent**
- **Ensure fair access** to resettlement consideration
- Be **needs-based**, *not* numbers-based
- Be **responsive to urgency of need** for resettlement intervention
- Ensure **oversight and accountability**
- Be sensitive to **age, gender and diversity** factors
- **Manage expectations** effectively

Review: UNHCR Resettlement Submission Policies

To be submitted for resettlement by UNHCR, individuals or families must:

A) meet the **preconditions for resettlement consideration**; *and*

B) fall under one or more of the UNHCR **resettlement submission categories.**

The priority of the resettlement need (**emergency, urgent or normal**) impacts the timing of the submission.

Review: UNHCR Preconditions for Resettlement Consideration

1. the applicant is **determined to be a refugee by UNHCR***; and

2. the prospects for all durable solutions were assessed, and **resettlement is identified as the most appropriate solution**.

* Exceptions can be made for **non-refugee stateless persons** for whom resettlement is considered the most appropriate durable solution, and also for the resettlement of **non-refugee dependent family members** to retain family unity.

Resettlement Priority Levels

Emergency:

- Security and/or medical condition **requires immediate removal.**
- Ideally**, seven-day maximum** between the submission of an emergency case and the refugee's departure.

Urgent:

- Serious medical risks or other vulnerabilities requiring **expedited resettlement within six weeks** of submission.
- Ideally, cases to be submitted within two weeks of identification.

Normal:

- Majority of cases, **without immediate medical, social or security concerns** which would merit expedited processing.

Minimize the time between identification and submission so that normal and urgent cases don't become emergency cases.

The identification process

1) **Initial identification of resettlement needs:**

   a) **Strategic planning** for resettlement within the annual planning exercise;

   b) **Individual identification.**

   -projected global resettlement needs = approximately 700,000 persons

2) **Identification of a case for resettlement submission:**

   Individual case submission takes into account the **priority level**, the **submission category**, the office **processing capacities**, and the availability of **quota.**

   - only 80,000 regular places available globally each year

UNHCR Projected Global Resettlement Needs Document

- Compiled annually from **UNHCR country office's planning forecasts**;

- projects the refugee **resettlement needs**, and UNHCR's **processing capacity**;

- serves as a main **planning tool** for the global resettlement activities of the Office; and the **primary reference document** for dialogue with resettlement partners.
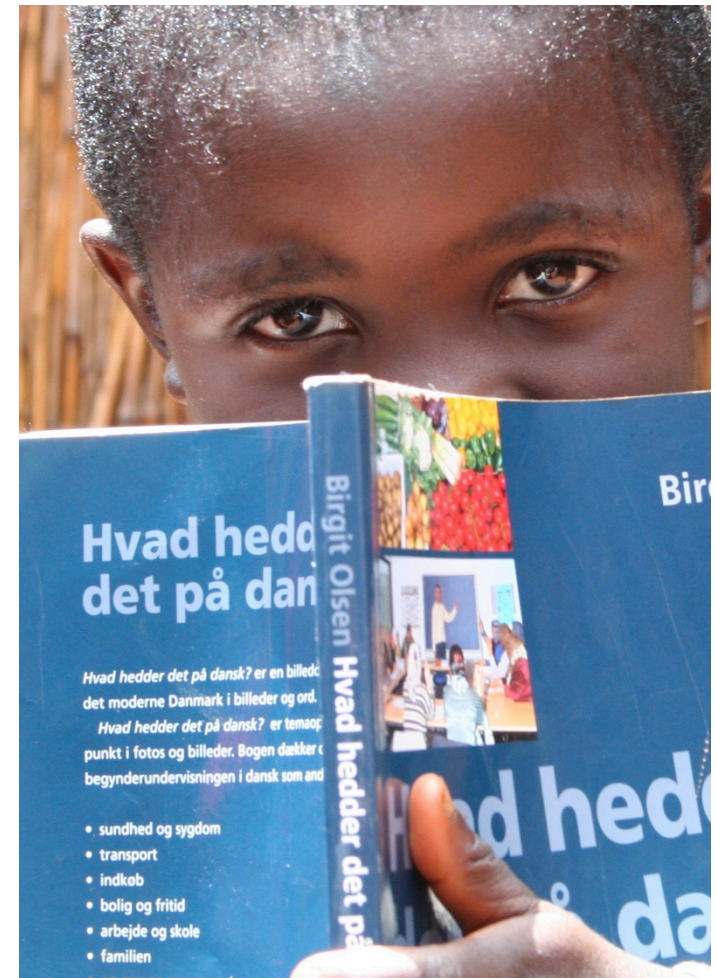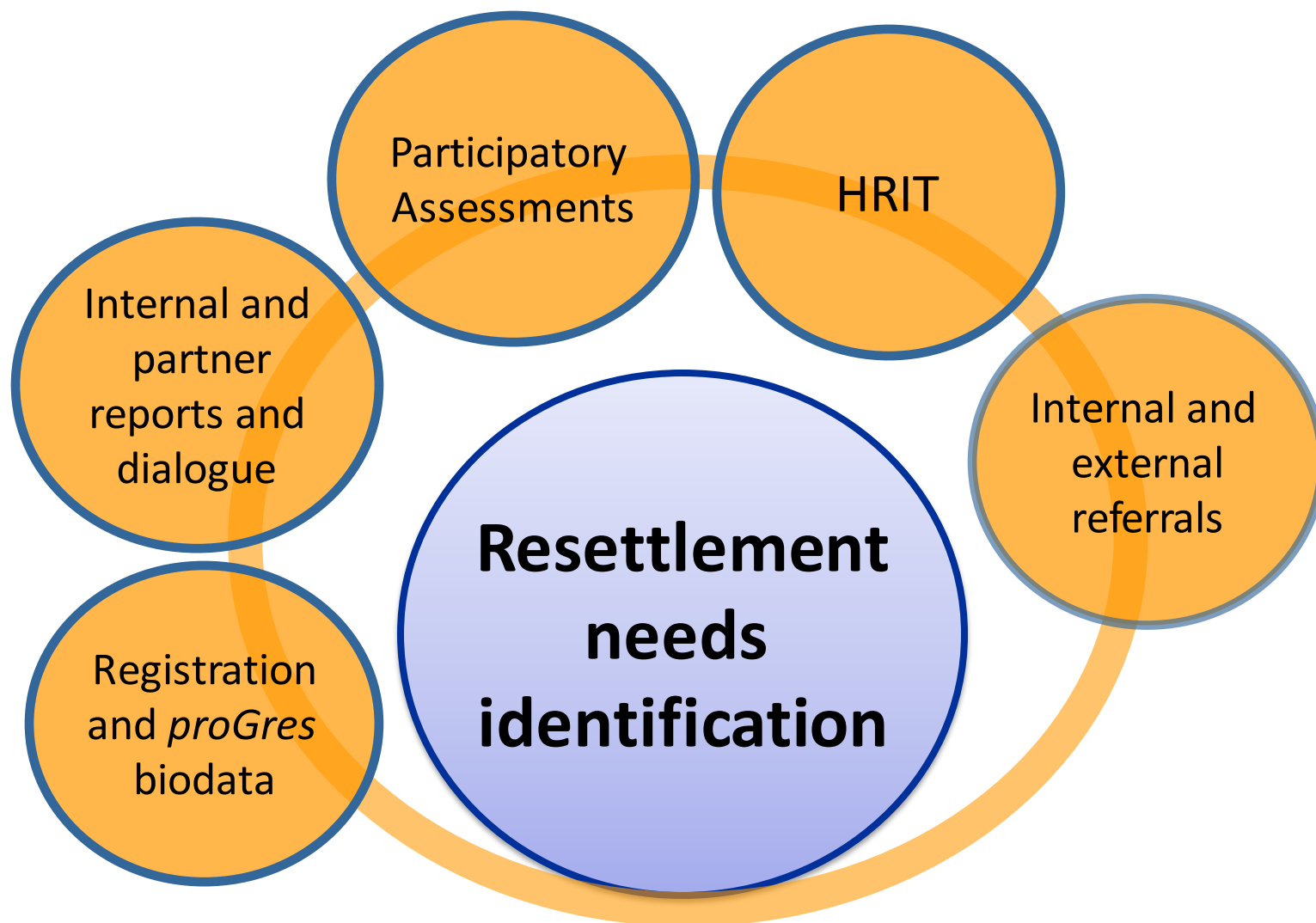
Establishing Identification Systems

- Identification of resettlement needs **is NOT tied only to the planning process;**
- Identification of protection needs, including resettlement, is an **office-wide activity, requiring cooperation** with other units and external partners;
- Can be set up even where resources are limited, by **linking to other ongoing activities** (registration, counselling, document renewal, assistance, etc.);
- Identification systems should be **designed and implemented to suit specific contexts**;
- Internal and external **referral systems** bridge gaps;
- **Training** builds capacity and service excellence.

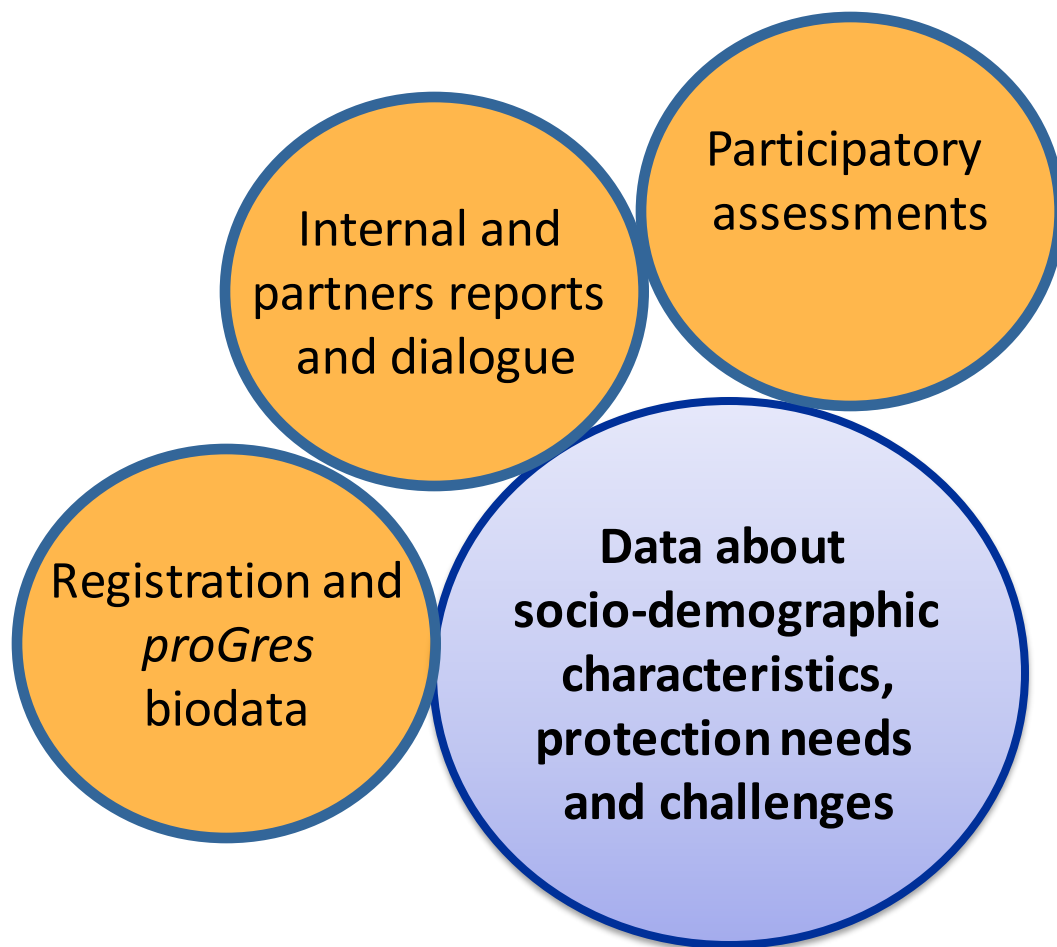# Elements to consider when assessing Durable Solutions

- Durable solutions are **complementary** in nature;
- When applied together, solutions can form a viable and **comprehensive strategy** for resolving a refugee situation;
- There is **no hierarchy** between the solutions;
- **Self-reliance** is a precursor for any durable solution.

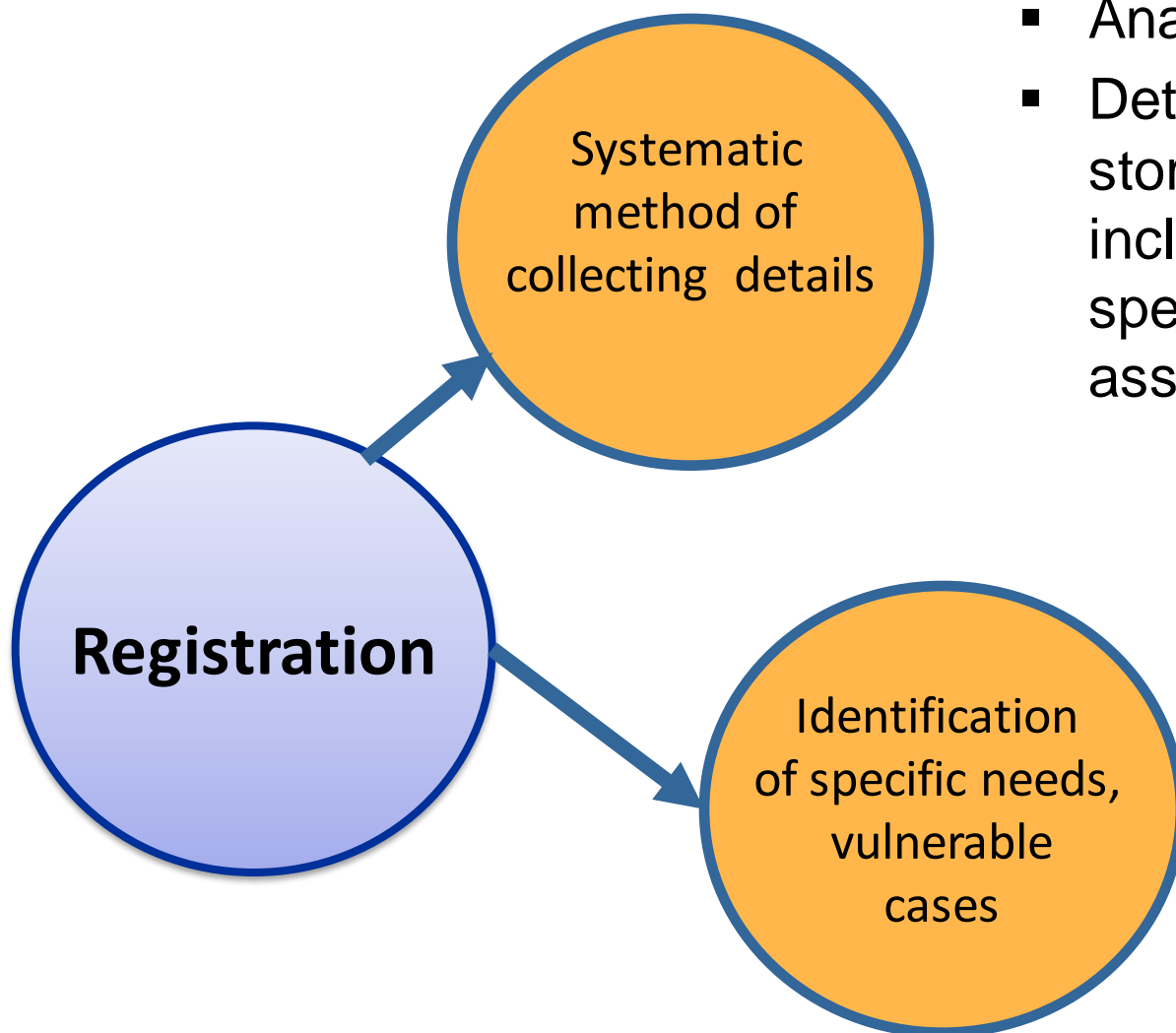# Tools and Methodologies for Data Collection and Needs Assessments

Mapping and profiling refugee needs

Participatory assessments

Internal and partners reports and dialogue

Registration and *proGres* biodata

Data about socio-demographic characteristics, protection needs and challenges

- identifies groups or categories of refugees with **common needs**;

- helps **prioritize** protection and resettlement interventions;

- provides **oversight** for strategic planning to **ensure consistency in responses** to population groups.
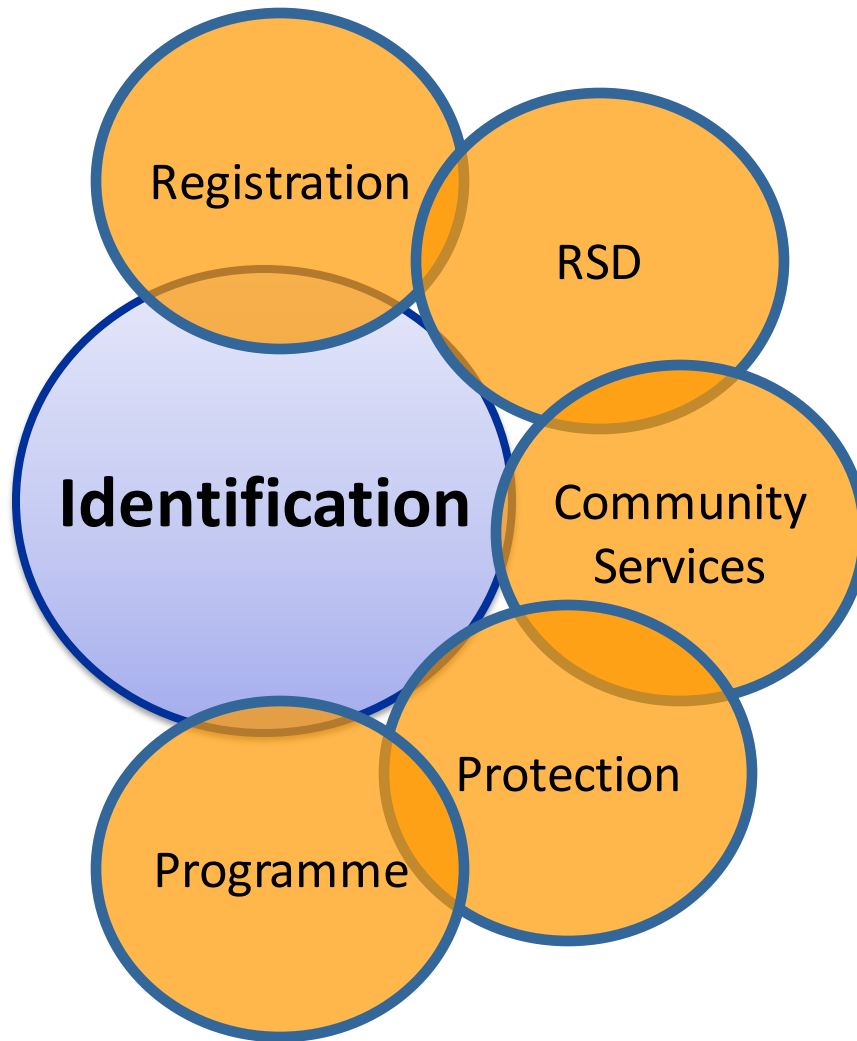
Registration- a starting point for identification

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Systematic method of collecting details

Registration

Identification of specific needs, vulnerable cases

- Analysis of biodata
- Detailed registration data stored in *proGres* includes identification of specific protection and assistance needs
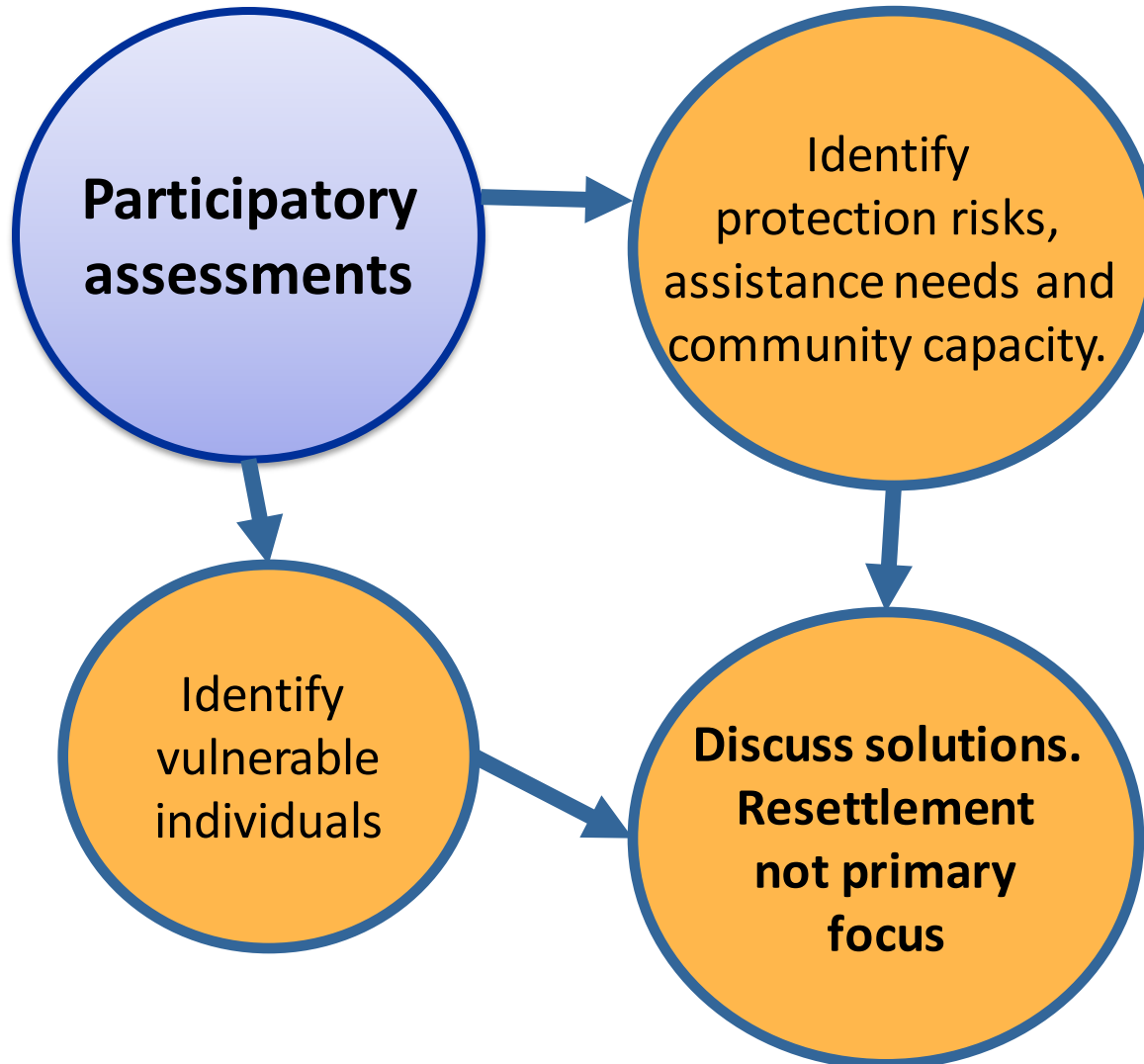
Internal and partner consultation

Identification is an office-wide activity!

- The identification of protection needs including resettlement should be included in all ongoing protection and assistance consultations.

Participatory assessments

Participatory assessments

Identify protection risks, assistance needs and community capacity.

Identify vulnerable individuals

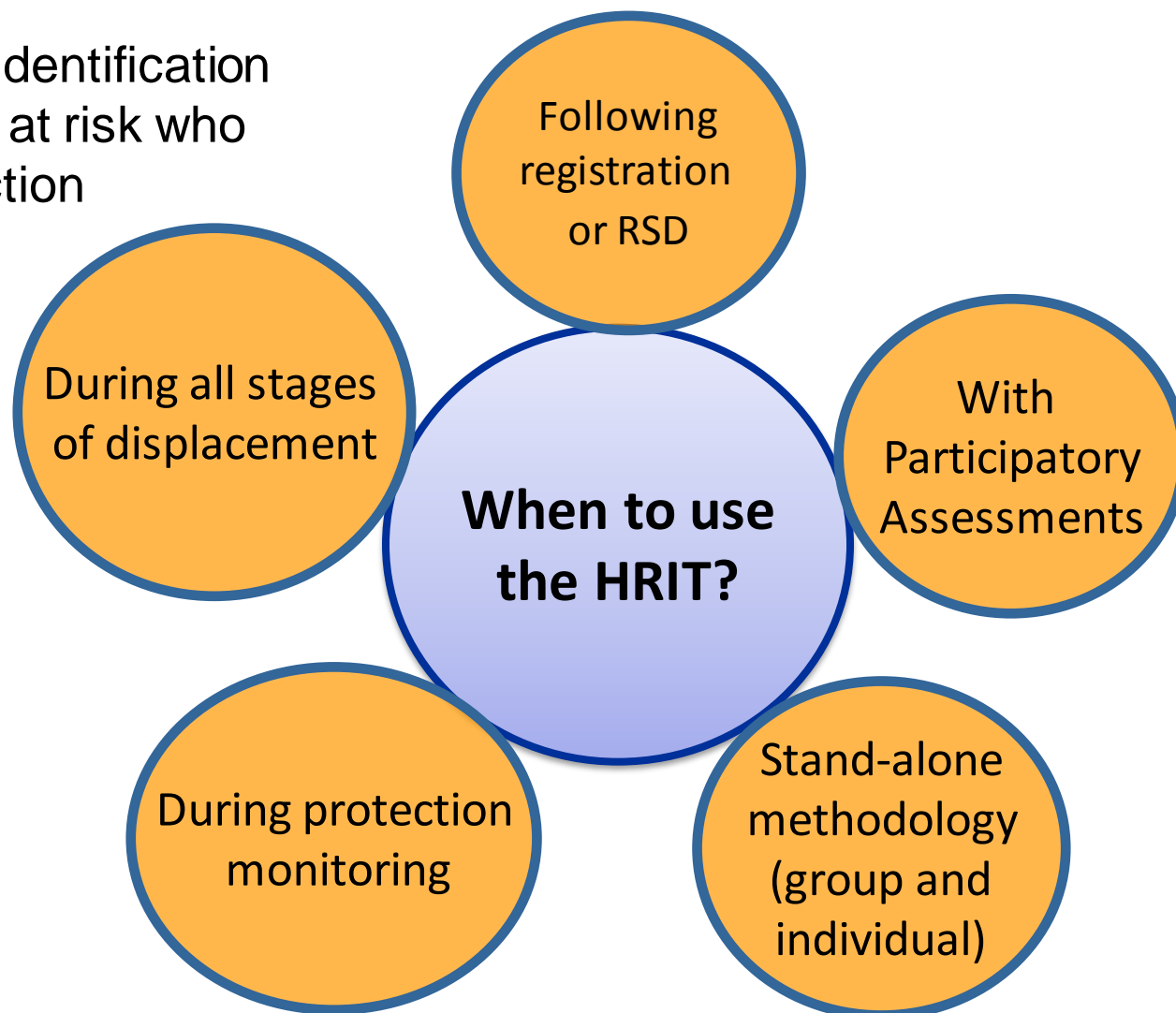**Discuss solutions. Resettlement not primary focus**

Structured dialogues with each group (men, women, boys, girls, young, older, etc.).

Separation between participatory assessments and resettlement referral lessens risk that data will be skewed.

Heightened Risk Identification Tool

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Tool for early identification of individuals at risk who require protection intervention.

When to use the HRIT?

- Following registration or RSD
- With Participatory Assessments
- During all stages of displacement
- During protection monitoring
- Stand-alone methodology (group and individual)

Referral systems

- Formal **means of sharing information on particular refugees** between units, agencies, and partners;

- **Identify refugees in need** of required interventions (including resettlement);

- Referral systems **bridge gaps** in protection and resettlement delivery.

What does a referral system entail?

- Expertise and **knowledge of the refugee population** and of refugees in need
- Effective **coordination, training and communication**
- Designated **focal point** to receive referrals
- Established **standard operating procedures** for documenting, forwarding and assessing the referrals
- Incorporated **safeguards against fraud** and to manage expectations

Internal referrals from UNHCR staff

- UNHCR staff in other units may be aware of refugees with protection needs that warrant resettlement consideration.
- **Coordination and training essential** to ensure a basic knowledge of resettlement in each unit.

Those making referrals should be reminded that:
- All **referrals must be made in writing following SOPs** (referral form, focal point, tracking system etc.);
- Ideally**, family composition** should be confirmed in a non-resettlement context;
- Process must be **consistent and objective.**

External referrals from partners

External partners may be in a position to:
- bring vulnerable cases to UNHCR's attention
- inform on vulnerabilities of specific groups
- assist with the verification process.

Referral partners may be:
- implementing partner NGOs, or
- legal aid institutions
- religious or charitable organizations
- local foundations or government agencies.

- External referrals are an important means of **expanding access to resettlement** and increasing identification capacity
- Partnerships can **range from formal agreements to case-by-case referrals**
- Should **complement** UNHCR's own identification

Key messages

- Resettlement is part of each office's response to refugees' needs for protection and durable solutions.

- **Identification** of resettlement needs must be part of an **ongoing, active, collaborative and systematic effort of all UNHCR staff and partners.**

- Further guidance can be found in the UNHCR Resettlement Handbook

UNHCR Resettlement Handbook