**Executive Committee of the
High Commissioner's Programme**

Standing Committee
56th meeting

Overview of UNHCR's global programmes and partnerships

A. Purpose

This paper provides an overview of UNHCR's efforts to improve the quality of its programmes in the following sectors: shelter and settlements; information management; education; self-reliance and livelihoods; public health; reproductive health and HIV; nutrition and food security; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); and the environment. It also highlights initiatives to facilitate durable solutions for refugees and other persons of concern.

B. Strengthening technical quality, capacity and impact

UNHCR's global programmes are managed from headquarters and rely on strong partnerships. Technical networks, which consist of expert staff from UNHCR and partners, enhance the Office's capacity to respond to emergencies and improve the technical quality of its interventions. New strategies, tools, and training, the sharing of good practices between operations, and innovative approaches developed to keep pace with changing realities on the ground, help UNHCR maintain high standards and quality programmes.

Assessing the impact of UNHCR's programmes is dependent upon enhanced mechanisms for data and information gathering, which contribute to evidence-based programming. Global strategies for education, programme management, information and data management, public health, nutrition, WASH and HIV, provide direction to operations and help ensure their technical quality and integrity through monitoring and evaluation. Global strategies in the areas of shelter and settlements, livelihoods and domestic energy are under development.

C. Updates on the technical sectors

Shelter and settlements

The Shelter and Settlements Section is improving UNHCR's ability to provide adequate, timely and efficient shelter and settlement options to refugees and other persons of concern by enhancing partnerships and coordination, building technical capacity and developing a monitoring and evaluation framework. UNHCR works with several partners to develop innovative and cost-efficient emergency shelter and settlements options. Partners include the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector and academia.

UNHCR has developed a shelter prototype in cooperation with Refugee Housing Unit (RHU), a subsidiary of the Swedish non-profit foundation SVID (Stiftelsen Svensk Industridesign), in partnership with the IKEA Foundation. Fifty shelter units with innovative design features, including possibilities for gradually evolving into a more sustainable option, will be field tested in 2013. In collaboration with Stanford University, UNHCR will also take forward a new concept for linking camps to surrounding communities, infrastructure and development planning.

In 2012, 35 shelter specialists, deployed through stand-by arrangements with RedR Australia, the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and CANADEM, provided life-saving assistance in 22 emergencies. UNHCR will continue to strengthen its shelter capacity in 2013 by complementing these arrangements with training initiatives.

Also in 2012, 21 shelter experts were deployed to the field by the global emergency shelter cluster, which is co-led by UNHCR and IFRC. The shelter experts supported field-level clusters with coordination, joint assessments and information management. The emergency shelter cluster will begin implementing its five-year strategy in 2013, with a focus on country-level shelter coordination.

Information management

A new Information and Data Management Strategy is anchoring information management as a significant discipline within UNHCR, and training and tools are being developed to support this effort.

The Office is building a network of expert Information Management Officers at the regional level and in key country operations, while expanding the pool of trained and deployable staff from UNHCR and partners through "Training on Information Management in Emergencies" workshops. Information Management Officers are using a new Emergency Information Management Toolkit and managing UNHCR web portals for refugee situations in the Horn of Africa, Liberia, Mali, Sudan/ South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

UNHCR will continue to strengthen its role in humanitarian population data management through a new version of its registration software *ProGres* and the development of a new biometric tool. The Office is also piloting profiling tools for refugees in urban areas, drawing on the extensive experience of the Joint IDP Profiling Service (JIPS), an inter-agency partnership platform hosted by UNHCR.

Education

Twenty UNHCR country operations with substantial educational programmes are implementing the education strategy 2012-2016 by developing country-specific five-year plans with partners, including ministries of education, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Global Partnership for Education, as well as with local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as Save the Children, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Educational programmes include both pre-primary through tertiary and non-formal education. A solutions approach underpins the activities, focusing on strengthening the skills of concerned populations ahead of voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement.

UNHCR will address challenges in the quality of education through an assessment of learning achievement, particularly a child's capacity to read, as well as targeted programmes to strengthen teaching skills and improve the capacity of UNHCR staff and partners to effectively manage educational programmes.

Support for education in emergencies is a priority and considered a crucial protection measure. Innovative approaches that make use of technology in education will strengthen teacher quality, access to reading materials, language learning and distance education. UNHCR will monitor progress of improved programming by using baselines established in 2012. Including refugees in national educational systems remains a key priority, especially in urban environments.

Self-reliance and livelihoods

New operational guidelines and training, with a focus on developing microfinance, entrepreneurial and job creation skills, have contributed to a coherent approach to livelihood interventions. Building on these achievements, a new multi-year strategy being developed in 2013 will provide direction for future livelihood interventions. The strategy will include measures to build the technical capacity of UNHCR staff and partners through training, the creation of a knowledge network and the piloting of new operational approaches, such as data outsourcing. Evidence-based programming - built upon context-specific assessments of the population, market potential and partners - underpins the strategy. Partners from the private sector, government, academia, international organizations, and international and local NGOs will be involved in putting the strategy into practice.

Livelihood programmes developed in partnership with the NGO Trickle Up and the BRAC Development Institute aim to move people out of poverty by providing grants, capacity-building and microfinance in refugee operations.

The Community Technology Access (CTA) programme, with 47 CTA centres in 25 countries, is providing access to computer skills, certified education courses, non-formal education and language classes for school children, youth and adults. The programme will establish a more effective link between education and livelihood, taking into account recommendations from an internal review that was carried out in five countries with CTA centres.

Public Health

A rapid public health response in emergencies remains a priority, with particular emphasis on the increased presence of public health experts and improved coordination at the point of delivery. UNHCR will pay particular attention to developing and implementing regional public health strategies that focus on a coherent response across multiple countries hosting refugees from the same country of origin, such as refugees from Mali and the Syrian Arab Republic. Country-specific epidemic outbreak plans and weekly monitoring of all outbreaks enable UNHCR to more rapidly detect, contain and respond to communicable diseases.

UNHCR continues to build the capacity of national public health systems in urban and protracted refugee operations. This includes further expanding refugee access to health insurance schemes and increasing access to mental healthcare, psychosocial support and non-communicable disease treatment through new operational guidance.

The web-based Health Information System (WebHIS) has been renamed Twine[1] and has been upgraded to include a fuller integration of the information management tools that are used to assess, monitor and evaluate public health, nutrition, WASH, and HIV and reproductive health interventions. Twine also includes new tools to monitor urban health programmes, leverage mobile technology and monitor sectors such as food security. These tools include the Balanced Score Card methodology, successfully piloted in Ethiopia, Ghana and Uganda, to assess the quality and capacity of health care programmes.

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[1] More information on Twine can be accessed from http://twine.unhcr.org.

Reproductive health and HIV

Based on the successful use of maternal death audit systems in Africa and Asia, UNHCR now monitors all maternal deaths in refugee camps. An ongoing review of neonatal outcomes will strengthen the maternal and neonatal programmes in Chad and the United Republic of Tanzania. By closely linking reproductive health and protection activities, UNHCR is committed to reach the standard of 100 per cent of rape survivors in camps receiving post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) within 72 hours.

The number of refugees receiving HIV anti-retroviral therapy has continued to grow over the past five years. Continued efforts are required to improve the coverage and quality of HIV and AIDS programmes.

As co-lead with the World Food Programme (WFP) in the UNAIDS Division of Labour area "Addressing HIV in Humanitarian Emergencies," UNHCR seeks to identify and address HIV-related needs from the early stages of emergencies through the post-emergency phase to ensure integration into development programmes.

Nutrition and food security

A UNHCR strategy to address anaemia is being updated, following a comprehensive review in seven pilot countries by the Emergency Nutrition Network and the Institute of Child Health. Operational guidance on the use of new nutrition products will reinforce programme monitoring in ten countries. UNHCR will also replicate in other operations best practices from nutrition programmes in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Nepal.

The use of mobile technology to collect data for UNHCR's standardized Expanded Nutrition Surveys (SENS), developed with the NGO CartONG will expand in 2013 with further investments in training and translating the survey into additional languages.

Multi-sectoral guidance and standard operating procedures will support the expansion of cash-based interventions for refugees and other persons of concern. Applying lessons learned from 43 countries that are using cash and voucher schemes, UNHCR operations continue to expand the choices available to beneficiaries. Joint Assessment Missions with WFP to assess the food and non-food needs of refugees and other populations of concern will be informed by guidance and training developed jointly in 2012.

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

UNHCR has established expert WASH positions in 20 countries in order to reinforce its technical network for emergencies. Comprehensive WASH and shelter training in 2013 will target the response and preparedness capacity of UNHCR staff and partners. UNICEF and UNHCR are assessing possible opportunities for collaboration in responding to WASH needs in refugee emergencies.

Building on the successful roll-out of the WASH Monitoring System in 2012, UNHCR is closely monitoring the WASH response in eight pilot countries through monthly report cards. The Monitoring System will be expanded to two additional countries in 2013. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and UNHCR are developing a standardized "knowledge, aptitude and practice" survey to ensure adequate baseline data on WASH.

The UNHCR operation in Ethiopia is revising its strategic WASH plan based on an assessment conducted by the Veolia Environnement Foundation. A pilot project with the University of Neuchâtel to monitor the quality of the aquifer in the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya using satellite technology is already demonstrating positive results.

Environment

The ProAct Network is undertaking a domestic energy assessment for UNHCR in Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Sudan, which will provide the basis for a new strategy and operational guidance on domestic energy. The assessment will build upon the results of a UNHCR-NRC domestic energy technology survey that was conducted in 14 countries.

The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, the Women's Refugee Commission, WFP, UNICEF and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) remain important partners in the area of domestic energy. In 2013, UNHCR will pilot carbon-financing initiatives, which are expected to reduce carbon emissions and be more cost-efficient, replacing fuel stoves.

Community Environmental Action Plans, which have been implemented in Burkina Faso and Niger, will be expanded in 2013. The plans are based on impact assessments conducted by the Environmental Foundation for Africa and are aimed at involving communities in environmental issues. Both SDC and NRC contribute significantly to environmental programming for refugees. UNHCR is testing innovative energy technologies with Project Gaia and the Aprovecho Research Institute.

D. Working towards solutions

There has been growing awareness in recent years that relief and development initiatives should occur concurrently in order to facilitate durable solutions for displaced populations. At the inter-agency level, UNHCR works with the Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER), which is led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as with the World Bank and the United Nations Development Group to promote the inclusion of displaced persons in development initiatives. At the country level, UNHCR, the World Bank and UNDP are collaborating on the Transitional Solutions Initiative (TSI) to build self-reliance among affected populations in Sudan, while UNHCR and UNDP are engaged in a TSI pilot in Colombia. UNHCR also collaborates with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to support displaced populations in more than 30 countries through development funding.

The Secretary-General's Policy Committee Decision on Durable Solutions is being piloted in Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, and Kyrgyzstan with technical support and guidance from UNHCR, UNDP and through the Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery and the Global Protection Cluster. The Decision aims to promote durable solutions for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees by strengthening partnerships to better support peacebuilding efforts in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

UNHCR has launched efforts to strengthen the M&E framework for solutions, with a view to improving monitoring and demonstrating progress on integration and reintegration situations. This feeds into the larger objective of developing a solutions-oriented methodology for interventions that focuses on context analysis, early linkages with development actors and the private sector, and building self-reliance as early as possible.

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