

Introductory Remarks of Steven Corliss

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Update on Global Strategic Priorities (EC/64/SC/CRP.12)

60th meeting of the Standing Committee

2 July 2014

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to introduce the Conference Room Paper 12, which provides an update on UNHCR's Global Strategic Priorities – the GSPs – and the results achieved against our engagements for 2013. With me on the podium is Ms. Louise Aubin, the Deputy Director of the Division of International Protection, and Mr. Matthew Brook, Chief of the Programme Analysis & Support Section in DPSM.

The Global Strategic Priorities represent important areas where UNHCR is concentrating its efforts to strengthen protection, improve the quality of life and seek solutions for refugees or other people of concern or otherwise bring our programmes into line with the standards that we advocate. The Operational GSPs are complemented by a separate set of Support and Management GSPs, which represent commitments to improving UNHCR's organizational effectiveness in key areas ranging from protection and results-based management to financial accountability, emergency response and humanitarian coordination.

Mr. Chairman,

UNHCR launched the GSP process for the 2010—2011 biennium, so we are now in our fifth year of implementation. We have learned quite a lot along the way and, I believe, have made important progress with the institutionalization of the Global Strategic Priorities within UNHCR's programme management cycle as a key tool for planning, prioritization and results-based management.

The GSPs have their greatest impact in guiding programme planning and budgeting at the field level. Each UNHCR field operation undertakes a comprehensive needs assessment, together with partners, drawing upon all available information, including the results of participatory assessments with refugees and other people of concern. Reporting on the results achieved against targets in the GSP areas during the previous year are a crucial input for planning.

Field operations select the GSPs that are relevant to their specific context and the needs of the different population groups they serve. UNHCR's Kenya operation, for example, selected different GSPs and relevant impact indicators for the Somali refugees in Dadaab and urban refugees in Nairobi. The engagements in Annex I to the update before you represent the total number of situations where a field operation has selected a GSP indicator and pursued improvements during 2013.

The GSPs also provide an extremely important lens for the Annual Programme Review of operational plans submitted by the field at Headquarters – first within the Regional Bureaux

and then by the Assistant High Commissioner (Operations) and by the Deputy High Commissioner, as Chairman of the Budget Committee, leading to approval of the plans by the High Commissioner. Technical specialists at Headquarters serve as GSP focal points. They support the process by engaging with field counterparts on a continuing basis, reviewing reporting, analysing plans and budgets and making recommendations aimed at ensuring that operational strategies and resource allocation and staffing proposals are aligned in support of the GSPs.

The GSP process has matured considerably over the past few years. We are able to report significant progress in our efforts to strengthening reporting. Reporting compliance for 2013 reached 93 percent for the 1,150 GSP impact indicators selected by UNHCR operations globally, which provides an increasingly rich body of data and analysis to support decision making. The cases of missing data and delayed reporting concerned operations confronting major emergencies, which impacted on baselines, targets and their ability to report on results.

We believe that the improvement in reporting this year reflects a greater sense of ownership of the GSPs at the field level, coupled with strong oversight by the Regional Bureaux and consistent support and feedback from the GSP focal points. The same factors are also contributing to better data quality. Data quality remains strongest in the area of public health, but we have made improvements in GSP areas where progress can be more difficult to measure. As an example, field operations are reporting on the extent law and policy are consistent with international standards on the basis of very specific indicator

guidance that sets out detailed, weighted criteria. This helps ensure harmonization and the comparability of results across operations.

Mr. Chairman,

Before turning to our GSP results for 2013, let me set the scene. Last year, forced displacement globally passed the threshold of 50 million people for the first time since the Second World War. The Syria crisis and emergencies in Africa and other regions forced more new refugees across borders than at any time since the Rwandan genocide twenty years ago. Internal displacement also reached the highest level ever recorded. UNHCR mobilized fully to meet these new challenges, while our colleagues in field operations around the globe continued to deliver against their GSP commitments.

Our update to the Committee speaks of encouraging progress across all GSP areas. Progress will never be uniform or even in all operations. For the 2012—2013 biennium, we adopted the global engagements approach, meaning that we report on every single operation that selected a specific GSP impact indicator. Our reporting thus gives you an indication of the trends across the board – whether the situation is improving, staying the same or deteriorating.

We are very pleased that almost all operations reported improvements in support to known survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). This represents a significant increase over 2012 and the impact of UNHCR's global SGBV strategy. During 2013, 22 UNHCR operations developed country-level SGBV prevention and response strategies. Four new

Senior Regional Protection Officers for SGBV also took up their posts in Dakar, Nairobi, Beirut and Panama. Just to give an example of one concrete action, UNHCR sought to improve the safety of learning environments in Ethiopia through the recruitment of women teachers. Strengthening SGBV prevention and response, particularly in emergencies, will continue to be a focus and a priority for UNHCR.

UNHCR also sought improvements in national legislation and administrative regulations that strengthen the protection framework for refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced and stateless people. Progress here depends on many factors, such as the national political environment, that UNHCR cannot strongly influence. Key achievements included Turkey's enactment of a comprehensive law on foreigners and international protection and legislative amendments in Côte d'Ivoire that will reduce the risk of statelessness by allowing long-time residents to acquire nationality. At the same time, during the same year, other countries enacted legislation curtailing the right to seek asylum and creating new situations of statelessness.

We were very encouraged by important steps forward in birth registration for refugee children last year. To give an example, mobile teams working with the Liberian Ministry of Health and Social Affairs are now ensuring that all refugee children are registered immediately after birth. In Kenya, UNHCR is supporting the District registrar's office to organize periodic missions to register births around the Dadaab camps. The 93 percent birth registration coverage in this area is now reportedly the highest in the country. Our efforts have been strengthened by last year's Executive Committee Conclusion on civil registration, but much more work remains to be done.

Mr. Chairman,

Children are among the most vulnerable refugees. For this reason, the mortality rate for children under the age of five provides insight into the overall health of the population. At the end of 2013, UNHCR operations reported that they were meeting the standard of less than 1.5 deaths per month per 1000 in 107 of 112 sites. We are also reporting very good results on the supply of potable water, with 82 percent of all operations meeting the relevant Sphere standards. This reflects the impact of the expanded technical support – we now have 70 WASH experts deployed in UNHCR operations – and the continued rollout of the WASH Monitoring System.

Reporting on the prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) appear less encouraging at first glance. We carried out nutritional surveys in 88 sites using the Standardised Expanded Nutrition Survey (SENS) methodology. The SENS surveys showed that UNHCR is meeting the GAM standard in just over half of these sites. Part of the reason is that UNHCR focused greater attention on undertaking surveys in emergencies and certain protracted situations, where rates were expected to be higher.

We saw continuing challenges in getting out-of-school adolescents into targeted programmes. Where resources are limited, field operations have generally prioritized efforts to ensure access to quality primary education – and we are indeed making progress in this area. We do recognize this gap and, in response, UNHCR has established a Youth Initiative

Fund and the *You can do it!* programme to support protection projects designed and proposed by young people.

UNHCR has taken important steps to strengthen our efforts to achieve durable solutions, including formation of a Solutions Steering Group at Headquarters and other initiatives that the Deputy High Commissioner will discuss in the next session. From the perspective of the GSPs, UNHCR can report that 94 percent of all refugees who expressed the wish to voluntarily repatriate were assisted to go home. The bottom line, however, is that repatriation was very low last year. Only 414,600 refugees returned. More than a quarter of these were spontaneous returnees to Syria. More positively, UNHCR increased the number of submissions to resettlement countries by 26 percent over 2012.

Turning briefly to the Support and Management GSPs, I would like to highlight the exceptional efforts of the Division of Emergency Security and Supply to deploy emergency teams and deliver core relief items (CRIs). Equally important has been the tireless work of the Division of Human Resources Management to meet the staffing needs of UNHCR's rapidly expanding operations. Many of the recent emergencies have had an important internal displacement dimension, and UNHCR has continued to strengthen the capacity and toolkits of the Global Protection, Shelter and Camp Coordination & Camp Management Clusters, in support of the Transformative Agenda. Finally, I want to take note of the Division of Financial & Administrative Management's initiative in providing comprehensive monthly financial reports in dashboard format, which are a key management tool for Representatives.

Mr. Chairman,

Given the scope of the GSPs, I have only been able to highlight a few key trends and results. UNHCR's Global Report provides much more detailed information, including more examples in the GSP areas and specific achievements during 2013. Let me mention a few of the other information resources available to the Committee. These include the *Global Focus* website; *Twine*, UNHCR's health information system; and UNHCR's operational web portals, which cover all major emergencies. More specific reporting, such as the technical paper on refugee food insecurity in Africa prepared for yesterday's joint event with WFP – also provide a wealth of results data, information and analysis.

Together with Ms. Aubin, I would now look forward to hearing the views and advice of the Committee and responding to any questions the Member States may have.