

Mechanisms for profiling and referral

CHAPTER 5



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Introduction

Mechanisms to differentiate between various categories of persons soon after they arrive in a host State can facilitate management of mixed movements, especially those involving large-scale arrivals. Such mechanisms can ensure that asylum-seekers and other individuals with specific needs are quickly identified and their needs are addressed. They can also help reduce the number of individuals inappropriately channelled into asylum procedures. In addition, the information gathered through these mechanisms can be used to facilitate individual processing, as well as to inform the development of more strategic responses to mixed movements in specific contexts. (See Chapter 2 for further information.)

The 10-Point Plan uses the term “profiling and referral” to refer to such a mechanism. In other contexts, it has also been called “screening”, “pre-screening” or “identification procedures”.

By “profiling and referral” or similar mechanisms, UNHCR means a non-binding process that precedes any formal status determination procedures and aims to identify the needs of, and differentiate between, categories of persons travelling as part of mixed movements as soon as possible after they arrive in the host State. Its core elements include providing information to new arrivals, gathering information through questionnaires and informal interviews, establishing a preliminary profile for each person, and counselling and referring individuals to the authorities or procedures that can best meet their needs and manage their cases.

Dividing persons into different categories (e.g. asylum-seeker, “woman-at-risk”, trafficked person, unaccompanied/separated child) requires caution. Categories are not mutually exclusive. Individuals may have multiple needs, and the identification of these various needs, especially in the immediate post-arrival phase, can be challenging. For a variety of reasons, individuals may not always be forthcoming with information and/or self-identify with any particular category or group. An environment of trust, confidence and transparency where individuals know what they can expect and where service providers have adequate capacity to assist arrivals is a necessary pre-condition to an effective profiling and referral exercise. Even where such an enabling environment exists, profiling in the immediate post-arrival phase may wrongly categorize individuals or not identify all of their needs. This possibility needs to be accounted for by allowing for persons to be referred to more appropriate procedures at any stage during processing. Further, the process of categorizing different groups of arrivals should not detract from the development of measures to protect the human rights of all persons without differentiation. Profiling and referral is only a tool to enable responses to be better targeted towards needs within existing international and national standards.

Profiling and referral can be more or less complex, depending on the situation and available resources. A simple profiling and referral exercise can be undertaken in any protection-sensitive entry procedure, generally by the “first contact” entry officials. (See Chapter 3.) In some countries, more developed mechanisms for profiling and referral have been established, where entry officials are assisted by experts or expert teams from relevant international organizations and NGOs.

Profiling and referral is often undertaken as part of initial reception arrangements described in Chapter 4. It is also closely linked to the differentiated processes and procedures outlined in Chapter 6. Accordingly, Chapters 4, 5 and 6 of this 10-Point Plan should be consulted together.¹

¹ The practical examples contained in this Chapter include recommendations made at the “10-Point Plan Expert Roundtable No. 2 “Different People – Different Needs”, held in Tunis in July 2009. The recommendations made at the roundtable as well as other related document are available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/4ae6cb069.html>.

Operationalizing mechanisms for profiling and referral: Suggestions for stakeholders and support UNHCR can provide to partners

Suggestions for stakeholders

- Engage with law enforcement, civil society and international agencies to develop appropriate mechanisms to identify the immediate and longer-term needs of new arrivals.
- Encourage the development of teams with members who bring different expertise (i.e. entry officials, NGOs and international agencies) to support the profiling and referral of large numbers of persons arriving as part of mixed movements.
- Develop standardized questionnaires to conduct profiling and referral.
- Provide counselling, inform new arrivals of their rights and obligations, and provide them with the contact details of all organizations that provide support services such as psychosocial and medical assistance.
- Gather information to establish a profile of individuals, including migratory routes, means of transport, family members undertaking the journey, reasons for leaving the country of origin and intended destinations. (For confidentiality and data protection standards, see Chapter 2.)
- Conduct a case analysis to determine possible protection or other special needs of individuals, and coordinate with relevant actors to provide assistance and protection.
- Refer individuals to the appropriate response mechanism (e.g. asylum procedure, child protection system, processes for trafficked persons and women and girls at risk, assisted voluntary return (AVR) programmes, etc.).

Support UNHCR can provide to partners

- Engage in a dialogue with government authorities and other stakeholders, including international agencies and partner NGOs, on the potential benefits of profiling and referral and the specific arrangements that could be necessary and appropriate in the particular context.
- Participate in multi-agency response teams to ensure the identification of persons who may have international protection needs and other persons with specific needs.
- Provide operational guidance regarding protection-sensitive responses to the arrival of larger numbers of persons travelling as part of mixed movements.
- Compile information, including country of origin information, and help develop standard operating procedures and standardized questionnaires.
- Provide expert advice where profiling and referral is carried out by governmental bodies or other stakeholders, and work closely with partners to help identify persons of concern to UNHCR.
- Provide training on asylum and refugee issues for profiling authorities.
- Develop guidelines to identify persons with international protection needs.

Note: Generally, UNHCR should not be the sole agency involved in conducting profiling and referral, given that the process is conducted prior to asylum procedures and is designed to engage and assist all persons in mixed movement situations, whether they need international protection or not.

5.1. Profiling

5.1.1. Providing information

Providing general information to new arrivals helps to establish trust, manage expectations and orient them within their new environment.

Information leaflets are a useful tool to explain the obligations and basic rights of arrivals in the host country, the different processes and procedures available (including the right to seek asylum), and anticipated timeframes for processing, in a manner that is gender- and age-sensitive. Information leaflets are also a simple way to provide clear, practical information about available legal and other support services, such as a list of lawyers offering pro bono services, telephone numbers of consulates, NGOs and/or toll-free hotlines for direct assistance.

Data collected about various groups making up the mixed movement can be used to ensure that relevant information is provided in appropriate languages. Where language barriers and illiteracy are of concern, information leaflets could also include drawings or figures or be supplemented with pre-recorded video or audio presentations, or with live briefings by government authorities or other agencies. It may also be useful to set up information points in reception centres with representatives from the government, international agencies or NGOs on-site to respond to questions and to provide further details on the material distributed.

Examples of Information Leaflets for Asylum-seekers

- The Romania National Council for Refugees issues an information leaflet on asylum applications.

For further details, see: <http://www.cnrr.ro/>.

- UNHCR-Morocco issued a “Guidebook for Asylum-seekers in Morocco”. The Guidebook provides information on the RSD procedure in Morocco and an emergency number to call for assistance. The Guidebook is available in English, French and Arabic.

Annex 1 – UNHCR Morocco, “Guidebook for Asylum Seekers in Morocco”

- In Ukraine, the leaflet “Refugee Status in Ukraine” provides information on the asylum procedure and contains a refugee status application form and a list with contact addresses of government agencies and support services. The leaflet was jointly developed and published by the Ministry of Interior, the State Committee for Nationalities and Migration and the State Border Guard Service. It is printed and available at border points.

Annex 2 – State Committee of Ukraine for Nationalities and Migration, Leaflet on “Refugee Status in Ukraine”

- In Yemen, UNHCR issued a series of information leaflets under the framework of the Yemen Mixed Migration Task Force to inform asylum-seekers and refugees of their rights and obligations and available support services.

The information leaflets are available at:

<http://www.mmyemen.org/resources;jsessionid=9D22C2BC9FB6D51D01486B347D85953B>.

- The UNHCR-Zambia published an information leaflet on “Refugee Status in Zambia”. The leaflet is in a question and answer format and provides information on the current asylum procedure, the rights and obligations of asylum-seekers and refugees and available support services in Zambia.

Annex 3 – UNHCR Zambia, Leaflet on “Refugee Status in Zambia”

5.1.2. Gathering information

Profiling provides an opportunity to collect information from individuals travelling as part of mixed movements at an early stage. While this information can be used to establish individual preliminary case profiles (as outlined below), when collated and analysed it also provides significant data on the overall group that can enhance the efficiency of subsequent responses to mixed movements, including asylum procedures and other processes, as well as broader strategy and policy development.

In order to facilitate the information-gathering process, individuals can be asked to respond to simple, standardized questions about their background and reasons for moving by filling out questionnaires. The accuracy and comprehensiveness of the information provided can be enhanced if trained staff are available to help people complete the questionnaires. In certain contexts, it may be more appropriate or effective to gather this information in a profiling interview, which may include specific questions adapted to the group and the context. Consistency and coherence between interviews can be best ensured if the staff conducting the profiling interviews maintain a careful record of the information they provide to interviewees, and the responses and other statements made by the individuals concerned.

UNHCR/IOM Joint Profiling Questionnaire



The UNHCR/IOM Joint Profiling Questionnaire was developed in the context of the 10-Point Plan Expert Roundtable No. 2 “Different People – Different Needs” held in Tunis in July 2009. It includes questions to establish the individual profile of asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants, migratory routes and experiences, case analysis, and indicators for referral to support services based on the category of identification.

Annex 4 – UNHCR/IOM Joint Profiling Questionnaire

For further details on the Expert Roundtable, see:

<http://www.unhcr.org/4ae6cb069.html>.

Note: An adapted version of the questionnaires is already in use in, for example, the Republic of Belarus and the Ukraine. It is available at:

http://unhcr.org.ua/main.php?article_id=172&view=full.

The questionnaire is also used in Costa Rica (See Example Box, Costa Rica: Pre-screening Panel).

Inter-agency Registration Form for Unaccompanied and Separated Children



An Inter-agency Registration Form for Unaccompanied and Separated Children was included as an Annex to the *UNHCR Guidelines on Formal Determination of the Best Interests of the Child*, May 2006 (Provisional Release).

This form is in the process of being updated.

Annex 5 – “Best Interest Determination Inter-Agency Registration Form for Unaccompanied and Separated Children”

5.1.3. Establishing a preliminary profile

Information provided in profiling questionnaires or during interviews can be used to establish a preliminary profile of each person travelling within mixed movements. These preliminary profiles are intended to identify both immediate needs that may require urgent attention and longer-term processes and procedures that may be available to provide the individual with an appropriate outcome. Profiles are not necessarily mutually exclusive and could include:

- asylum-seekers;
- asylum-seekers and refugees who have moved from their first country of asylum;
- persons who may be victims of human trafficking or torture;
- unaccompanied and separated children;
- women and girls at risk;
- stateless persons;
- persons with physical and mental disabilities and older persons;
- persons with other specific needs;
- persons seeking to join their families (in the host country or in a third country);
- persons whose movement is primarily motivated by economic concerns; or
- persons who voluntarily express a wish to return to their country of origin.

5.2. Referral

5.2.1. Counselling

After a person's profile has been established, this assessment is discussed with the individual and s/he is counselled on all of the options available. This does not create any binding obligations for the individual. Instead, counselling aims to provide advice to individuals so that their expectations remain realistic and they can determine the most appropriate way forward. For instance, individuals could be cautioned that it may not be possible for them to receive a “positive” or “hoped for” outcome, such as the right to remain in the host country, and that the advantages of the asylum procedure are limited for persons without international protection needs. As noted above, it is important that counselling be provided by trained staff and that staff retain a careful record of the information or advice provided to the interviewee, as well as any statements or explanations given by that individual.

Profiling and referral is a non-binding process: it does not replace RSD, nor is it a de facto RSD procedure without or with limited procedural guarantees. While this may mean that some persons without protection needs continue to apply for asylum, discouraging unfounded asylum claims is only one of the goals of profiling and referral. The value of the process also lies in its capacity to provide authorities with overall data on the mixed movement, to provide new arrivals with information, to manage expectations, and to facilitate early identification of protection and other needs.

5.2.2. Referral systems

After counselling, a person can be referred – with his/her agreement – to one of a number of processes and procedures to meet any immediate needs, and/or for further consideration of his/her situation. The different applicable processes and procedures, as well as practical examples are outlined in Chapter 6.

5.2.3. Protecting personal data

Confidentiality and security guidelines apply to all personal information, including questionnaires and other records. Ensuring the confidentiality of information provided during profiling mechanisms, whether through a questionnaire or in informal interviews, also establishes an environment of trust and allows individuals to provide sensitive information without fear of negative repercussions. (See Chapter 2 for data protection standards.)

Where appropriate, the information gathered during profiling and referral may be forwarded to government agencies, NGOs or international organizations for use in subsequent processes and procedures. Any transfer of information is subject to informed consent of the individual concerned. Individuals should also be informed that the information they provide during profiling may be used in subsequent procedures and that they should be as accurate and truthful as possible during the interview process. Further, the sharing of personal data for subsequent procedures, such as registration, should be subject to an agreement ensuring that data protection safeguards are in place.

Model Agreements on the Sharing of Personal Data



Two Model Agreements on the Sharing of Personal Data – in the context of registration and in the context of RSD – were developed in August 2009 by UNHCR to ensure that the sharing of any personal data obtained during registration procedures with governments is subject to data protection standards, including the informed consent of the person concerned. Personal data is only shared upon written request by a government authority and subject to the conditions in the agreements.

Annex 6 – UNHCR Model Agreement on the Sharing of Personal Data with Governments in the Context of Registration, August 2009

Annex 7 – UNCHR Model Agreement on the Sharing of Personal Data with Governments in the Context of Hand-over of the Refugee Status Determination Process, August 2009

5.3. Practical suggestions for implementing profiling and referral mechanisms

Where can profiling and referral be conducted?

Profiling and referral can be conducted at a border or coastal entry point, in group reception facilities or in detention centres. (See Chapter 4 for details on reception facilities.) Expert profiling teams can also be deployed on a temporary basis to various locations according to need in the particular circumstance.

When can profiling and referral be conducted?

The objective is to complete the profiling and referral process as soon as possible after arrival so as to allow for the rapid identification of individual needs. The process can be completed within a short time. The recommended profiling time is between 30 minutes and a few hours per person.

Who can carry out profiling and referral?

Profiling and referral can be carried out by “first contact” entry officials who have been trained in interviewing techniques and identification of needs, and who are familiar with available follow-up processes and procedures. (See Chapter 3 for further information.) The process can also be carried out by a team of experts drawn from government authorities, international agencies and partner NGOs with relevant mandates and expertise.

Joint profiling teams, with male and female staff from different backgrounds, can help ensure that individual needs are accurately identified and enhances the legitimacy of the process.

In general, host government authorities should be part of profiling teams.

Transnational NGO Cooperation in Differentiation, Refugee Identification and Vulnerability Evaluations for Referral (DRIVE)

DRIVE was launched in early 2010 by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC). DRIVE involves collaboration between civil society actors, national authorities and regional and international actors to develop appropriate protection-sensitive responses to address mixed maritime movements. It aims to ensure that persons who may be in need of protection are properly identified and provided with support. It also seeks to strengthen international networking between NGOs and to develop a compilation of good practices, training material and practical differentiated and referral mechanisms for persons arriving as part of mixed movements in Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain.

For further details, see: <http://www.icmc.net/article/need-ensure-reception-identification-and-referral-boat-people-urgent>.

ALBANIA: UNIFIED PRE-SCREENING OF DETAINED MIGRANTS/CARDS PROJECT 2001 – 2006

A. Background and Rationale

In 2001, the Albanian Office for Refugees (AOFR) of the Ministry of Local Government signed a MOU with UNHCR, OSCE, IOM and the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) to establish the “Unified Pre-Screening of Detained Migrants” Programme.

The objective of the project was to rapidly identify asylum-seekers, victims of trafficking and persons who wished to return to their country of origin among improperly documented individuals in Albania. In 2003, the programme was renamed the “Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilization” (CARDS) Project. In 2006, the programme was entirely handed over to the Albanian Border Police.

B. Actors

- Albanian Government Office for Refugees (AOFR) and, since 2006, the Directorate for Nationality and Refugees (DfNR);
- Albanian Border Police;
- EC;
- ICMC;
- IOM;
- OSCE; and
- UNHCR.

C. Actions

- A mobile Pre-Screening Team (PST) was established. The PST consisted of representatives from UNHCR, IOM and DfNR, and, where necessary, an interpreter.
- OSCE assisted through its local and/or regional offices by providing first-aid items, such as food, medicines and blankets to persons in detention centres, and provided preliminary information to the PST.
- The PST was contacted by the law enforcement authorities whenever an unauthorized and/or improperly documented individual was identified.
- The PST interviewed individuals and counselled them on the available options. The interviewers used a standardized pre-screening form which helped them to differentiate persons according to the following categories:
 - a) asylum-seekers (transferred to the Babrru National Reception Centre for Asylum-seekers (BNRC) to have their asylum claims examined, in the presence of UNHCR);
 - b) trafficked persons and persons requesting voluntary repatriation (transferred to the Linza NRC where IOM was present); and
 - c) other migrants (who remained in police custody).
- Information leaflets, translated into 16 languages, were made available both in BNRC offices and in transit reception areas at all border points.
- A video on the pre-screening procedures was developed, and a media kit was distributed to UN agencies and NGOs dealing with migrants.
- UNHCR produced a poster and a “calling card” that was distributed at border check-points.

D. Review

Although only a limited number of persons were processed under this project, it developed an innovative model for profiling and pre-screening which received the support of many regional and international agencies. The MOU allowed all involved parties to have confidence in the sustainability of the project and to be clear about their respective roles. The PSTs were mobile and could be deployed both at border points for new arrivals and in-country for individuals who had been in Albania for an extended period of time.

In 2006, the programme was handed over to the Albanian authorities. While this was seen as a positive development, some concerns were raised over reported cases of *refoulement* of persons likely to have been in need of international protection who were not identified by authorities through the programme.

E. Further Information

Annex 8 – MOU on Unified Pre-Screening of Foreigners between ICMC, IOM, OFR, OSCE and UNHCR, 2001

Annex 9 – Briefing Note: Pre-screening of Asylum-seekers and Migrants in Albania, April 2006

ALGERIA: PROTECTION OF DETAINED REFUGEES AGAINST DEPORTATION AND *REFOULEMENT* 2009 – PRESENT

A. Background and Rationale

UNHCR developed a project in 2009 aiming at enhancing the protection space in Algeria given the lack of recognition by the government of mandate refugees. The project intended to provide timely intervention for refugees in Algeria who are arrested for illegal entry or stay in the country and to prevent their deportation and/or *refoulement* back to their countries of origin.

B. Actors

- Lawyers; and
- UNHCR.

C. Actions

The project has three primary components.

- A hotline was established to enable refugees and asylum-seekers to contact UNHCR and the protection unit, in the event of an arrest, imminent deportation or other protection urgency. The hotline is available 24 hours a day every day of the week. The hotline number is communicated to all persons of concern upon the registration interview and as part of the counselling provided by the Office. Further, brochures including the Office's services, address, contact numbers and hotline number in addition to details of the operating implementing partners and their contacts are widely disseminated.
- Partnership with the LADDH (Ligue Algérienne de Defense des Droits de l'Homme) ensures that experienced and trained lawyers intervene with relevant authorities on behalf of arrested refugees. UNHCR is negotiating expansion of the project in order for the lawyers to cover the whole Algerian territory.
- Channels of direct contact with police officers, police stations and gendarmerie have been ensured through UNHCR's interventions and follow-up. This provides the Office with the opportunity to sensitize governmental officials to asylum issues and even impede arrests of persons of concern. Further, the subject of asylum gains visibility through the lawyers' interventions and audiences with the judges and in courts and, as a result, can lead to greater recognition of UNHCR registration documents.

Capacity-building activities also help improve the knowledge of judges and police officers about international refugee and human rights law, including the principle of *non-refoulement*, and Algeria's international obligations in this regard.

D. Review

Since the implementation of this project, directly through UNHCR and through the lawyers' interventions, there has been a decrease in the numbers of deportations, *refoulement* and arrests. POCs that are arrested on the ground of illegal entry and/or stay in Algeria are being released from detention centres following legal interventions by the lawyers and UNHCR staff members.

No recognized refugees are being deported. Furthermore, a direct channel of communication between police officers and UNHCR has been established. The Office receives calls and letters requesting confirmation and/or authentication of UNHCR registration attestations and their validity in order to release the beneficiaries. Occasionally, judges contact UNHCR directly to confirm the identity and status of the arrested persons. UNHCR's prompt and accurate follow-up to all queries has been a major element in establishing trust.

UNHCR's visibility on the majority, if not all, of the detention/arrests of POCs has improved. The lack of human resources in the UNHCR Office in Algiers and lack of funding to develop a network of lawyers is a key challenge. Conducting field visits to assess and monitor the conditions of migrants, their knowledge of UNHCR presence and accessibility to it, remains a challenge. Access to various parts of the country where there is a wide concentration of asylum-seekers, refugee and migrants is difficult and challenging.

CANADA: CANADIAN RED CROSS "FIRST CONTACT" PROGRAMME 2008 – PRESENT

A. Background and Rationale

The Canadian Red Cross "First Contact" Programme provides refugee claimants with access to emergency assistance, information and referral through a 24/7 multilingual phone line. The programme has been implemented in detention facilities where asylum-seekers are detained in Canada. Red Cross access to provincial facilities and the availability of the First Contact Programme, however, vary from facility to facility.

B. Actors

- Canadian Red Cross;
- Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA); and
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

C. Actions

- Provide accurate, timely information to incoming callers on the process of a refugee claim, how to apply for legal aid or social assistance, as well as how to find affordable housing and secure employment;
- refer to settlement agencies, legal, paralegal, health, government and other services and resources;

- provide emergency services to refugee claimants with emergency shelter, transportation and food for up to 72 hours after making a refugee claim; and
- provide services in over 15 languages, including English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Punjabi, Farsi, Dari, and French.

The Canadian Red Cross has been working closely with the CIC and the CBSA. It also promotes a protective environment for immigration detainees by providing independent monitoring of detention conditions.

D. Review

Thus far, the First Contact Programme has been implemented in Vancouver and Toronto. The CBSA intends to work with the Red Cross on the expansion of the programme. However, in some provinces, it is difficult to negotiate access to detention facilities.

The CBSA and CIC in Vancouver have agreed to provide claimants at all ports of entry, in detention, and at CIC offices with a Red Cross card, which includes contact information of the First Contact Programme. Inland claimants can also access the service through community agencies.

The CBSA is committed to implementing the First Contact Programme in all CBSA facilities. It has, as a matter of policy, posted the 1-800 CBSA number in the common areas of CBSA detention facilities so that detainees have easy access to this information. The CBSA will also pursue access for Red Cross Detention monitoring teams in the context of its negotiations for formal agreements with all Provincial Correctional Services.

E. Further Information

Available at: <http://www.redcross.ca/article.asp?id=32552&tid=001>.

Costa Rica: Pre-screening Panel

A Pre-screening Panel in Costa Rica, comprised of IOM, the Ombudsman's Office and UNHCR under the leadership of the Costa Rican Immigration Authorities is tasked with assessing individual needs of asylum-seekers, extra-regional migrants, trafficked persons and other persons travelling irregularly. UNHCR and IOM helped to develop a pre-screening tool to identify persons in need of protection or special assistance (see Tool Box, UNHCR/IOM Joint Profiling Questionnaire). Positive results obtained from the pre-screening panel have led Costa Rican authorities to systematically seek collaboration with UNHCR and IOM, particularly to address extra-regional mixed movements.



A. Background and Rationale

The Enhanced Registration Project is a joint initiative between the Government of Ecuador and UNHCR, which aims to register previously undocumented refugees living in Northern Ecuador, to identify vulnerabilities among the displaced population, and to expedite access to legal protections through an accelerated asylum process.

B. Actors

- Government of Ecuador; and
- UNHCR.

C. Actions

- A large-scale refugee registration project was launched to shorten the waiting period for a government decision on asylum claims from several months to a few hours.
- Mobile teams comprised of officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNHCR staff traverse difficult terrain in Northern Ecuador to reach refugees, including children, women and elderly persons.
- UNHCR provides technical and logistical support as well as training to mobile teams on refugee determination procedures.
- Recognized refugees are provided with an official government document certifying their status as refugees. In cases requiring further analysis, the person is provided with a provisional document confirming his/her status as an asylum-seeker.
- The provision of documents provides legal protection to persons who were living in remote areas without access to the asylum system. It also allows for free movement and access to social assistance, health care, schools and other services.

D. Review

Registration is a vital step towards formal recognition of refugee status. Many refugees living in the remote border areas in Northern Ecuador were unable to access asylum procedures in urban areas either because of a lack of resources and information or due to their fear of detention or deportation. Taking the registration to the field is an innovative initiative which has resulted in more than 26,000 Colombian refugees receiving identity documents.

Although the Enhanced Registration Project is a tool developed to address a refugee situation, the approach developed could also be used for the identification of asylum-seekers and persons with specific needs among a residual group of improperly documented non-nationals.

E. Further information

A description of the project is available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/4bbb0e0a9.html>.

**FRANCE: STRENGTHENING ACCESS TO ASYLUM PROCEDURES
IN THE CALAIS REGION
2009 – PRESENT**

A. Background and Rationale

For a number of years, refugees and irregular migrants have congregated in the Calais coastal region in France with the hope of crossing over to the UK. The majority comes from Afghanistan, Sudan, Iraq, Iran, and Eritrea and stays in the Calais region in particularly precarious conditions. As most migrants and refugees foresee entry into the UK, few asylum claims are traditionally made in France. The French Government in cooperation with UNHCR and a range of other actors have developed a number of measures to strengthen access to the asylum procedure in the Calais region.

B. Actors

- French Government and local authorities [including the Ministry of the Interior, the Calais sous-préfecture, and the Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration (OFII)];
- local implementing and operational partners (France Terre d'Asile, Secours Catholique and other local NGOs);
- IOM; and
- UNHCR.

C. Actions

- Improve “physical access” to asylum procedures via the opening of a “guichet asile” in Calais;
- establish a full-time UNHCR presence in Calais, together with the NGO France Terre d'Asile;
- gather information to establish individual profiles of persons in Calais, including migratory routes, reasons for leaving the country of origin and intended destinations;
- organize daily information sessions for asylum-seekers and migrants in the Calais region and distribute information leaflets;
- provide individual counselling and inform new arrivals of their rights and obligations in France;
- counsel and refer individuals to appropriate response mechanisms [e.g. RSD, national child protection system, specific procedures for trafficked persons, assisted voluntary return (AVR) programme (IOM/ OFII)];
- assist asylum-seekers in their asylum claims and related legal procedures;
- identify persons with specific needs including unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) who are referred to the French UASC national protection system;
- provide expert advice and training on asylum and refugee issues to governmental and non-governmental partners; and
- foster networking among NGOs.

D. Review

Recent initiatives have improved access to information and counselling and have led to an increase in asylum claims: since the opening of the “*guichet asile*” in Calais in May 2009 to date (30 June 2010), 456 improperly documented persons have claimed asylum in Calais. However, access to migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers remains difficult and, although asylum-seekers are legally entitled to accommodation, many are homeless due to saturation of the French reception system. In addition, about 15-20 per cent of the persons are reportedly UASCs. Their situation is a source of concern, as they are at risk of abuse, exploitation, violence and trafficking. Specific reception measures are therefore needed to address their needs.

E. Further information

UNHCR, “UNHCR Draws Road Map to Help People out of Calais ‘Jungle’”, 17 July 2009, available at:

<http://www.unhcr.org/print/4a6091846.html>.

UNHCR, “Jungle is Empty, but UNHCR Still Helps Migrants in Northern France”, 17 November 2009, available at:

<http://www.unhcr.org/print/4b02d4fc9.html>.

UNHCR, “Out in the Cold: Migrants and Asylum-seekers Find Life Increasingly Hard in Calais”, 2 February 2010, available at:

<http://www.unhcr.org/print/4b6850016.html>.

GREECE: ENHANCING RECEPTION CAPACITY FOR MIGRATION FLOWS AT BORDER AREAS (“AEGEAS PROJECT”) 2008 – 2009

A. Background and Rationale

The Enhanced Reception Capacity for Migration Flows at the Border Areas of Greece (“AEGEAS Project”) aims to enhance the reception facilities and services at several arrival points of the Greek border areas, such as in the Islands of Lesbos, Chios and Samos and the area of Evros, in order to address the influx of maritime and land mixed movements. The border locations were chosen because of the large number of migrants and asylum-seekers arriving without having their immediate needs assessed. All persons arriving by boat were previously detained and their specific needs were not identified.

The AEGEAS Project was initiated in February 2008 and carried out jointly by the Greek Government (several ministries), local authorities from the communities concerned and UNHCR-Greece. The AGEAS Project was completed in September 2009.

B. Actors

- Local Assistance Teams (LATs);
- Ministry of Merchant Marine;
- Ministry of Public Order;
- Prefectures of Samos (project coordinator), Lesbos, Chios and Evros; and
- UNHCR.

C. Actions

- A model response has been developed to respond to mixed movements in Greece, particularly to address the immediate needs of sea arrivals.
- A steering group was created, thereby improving coordination at the local level among different communities and between the local and central levels of government.
- LATs were established at detention facilities tasked with identifying asylum-seekers and other persons with specific needs and referring them to appropriate procedures. The LATs are composed of a lawyer, a doctor or nurse, a social worker, or a care-taker for the centre, as well as interpreters.
- The profiling work conducted by LATs and UNHCR roving experts from 01 May 2008 to 15 September 2009 resulted in the following:
 - 293 asylum applications were submitted by asylum-seekers referred to the asylum procedures;
 - 2,582 unaccompanied children were identified and transferred from detention centres to reception centres;
 - trafficked persons and victims of torture were identified, their immediate medical needs were addressed and they were referred to expert organizations in Athens;
 - pregnant women were given special care and medical interventions were undertaken, when necessary; and
 - follow-up with the Police Directorate continued in an effort to release families from detention centres.
- Assistance has been provided to 24,769 beneficiaries (17,211 men, 3,115 women and 4,443 children).
- Long-term support structures for groups with specific needs, including women, children, trafficked persons and victims of torture, have been improved through appropriate referral mechanisms.
- Capacity building with local authorities, including police, coast guard, prefecture, municipality and hospital staff, on key asylum and migration issues, including human rights issues, has been carried out.
- Sufficient interpretation services have been made available in detention centres for the first time.

D. Review

The establishment of LATs and the profiling and referral structures was an innovative model in Greece. As a result of the AEGEAS Project, detention conditions for asylum-seekers and migrants have improved. With financial and political support, the project could be replicated at other border locations to address the needs of all maritime arrivals.

E. Further Information

Annex 10 – AEGEAS Project Summary, 2009

PANAMA: IDENTIFYING ASYLUM-SEEKERS IN RECEPTION FACILITIES AND DETENTION 2009 – PRESENT

A. Background and Rationale

Panama hosts refugees and asylum-seekers coming from a number of countries, such as El Salvador, Cuba, Nicaragua, and in particular from Colombia. In 2009, the National Migration Service opened new, gender-sensitive detention facilities for improperly documented arrivals in Panama City. These facilities are regularly monitored by UNHCR, its local implementing partners, and other national institutions. The objective is to identify persons in need of international protection, release them from detention and refer them to the competent authority for access to the asylum procedure.

B. Actors

- Centro de Asistencia Legal Popular - Legal Aid Program for Refugees (CEALP);
- National Migration Service of Panama and the Ombudsperson's Office's Specialized Unit for Refugees and Migrants (Ombudsperson's Office);
- Oficina Nacional Para Atención a los Refugiados - National Office for the Attention of Refugees (ONPAR);
- Red Cross Society of Panama;
- Vicariato de Darién (VIDA); and
- UNHCR.

C. Actions

- UNHCR conducts regular monitoring visits at the National Migration Service's reception and detention facilities in Panama City and the border region to identify and follow up on individual cases of persons in need of international protection.
- Material assistance (e.g. hygiene kits) is provided at shelter facilities in Panama City and the border region.
- With the support of UNHCR, ONPAR has designated female RSD/Legal Officers to this project in Panama City and in the border region with Colombia. It has also developed referral mechanisms to direct persons with specific needs requiring specialized attention to public institutions and/or national NGOs.
- Pursuant to a cooperation agreement between UNHCR and the Ombudsperson's Office, joint monitoring missions are conducted in the border region.
- Individual cases are referred to CEALP's Legal Aid Program for Refugees and the Ombudsperson's Office.

D. Review

The project is an example of effective cooperation between the Panamanian Government, NGOs and international organizations to identify and address the needs of persons in need of international protection in Panama.

UNHCR does not have a presence at entry points in the border region. However, monitoring missions, and the support provided to ONPAR in the appointment of personnel to border reception centres, facilitates asylum-seeker access to the territory and to the RSD procedure. Lack of access by UNHCR at the International Airport in Panama City remains a concern to be addressed.

Cooperation agreements with ONPAR and monitoring of the National Migration Service detention centres, with the objective of identifying possible cases of concern to UNHCR, facilitate access to RSD procedures and the release of persons of concern from detention facilities. In general, the National Migration Service respects the legal prohibition on sanctions for illegal entry of asylum-seekers. In the early stages of the admissibility phase of the asylum procedures, ONPAR provides asylum-seekers with certification of their status minimizing the risk of detention and *refoulement*.

TURKEY: PRE-SCREENING, AD HOC PROFILING AND REFERRAL EXERCISES IN DETENTION CENTRES 2004 – 2005

A. Background and Rationale

In July 2005, UNHCR and the Foreigners Department of the General Directorate for Security under the Ministry of Interior (MOI) jointly screened a group of 39 migrants detained in the coastal city of Izmir who claimed to be from African countries (Somalia, Algeria, and Mauritania). At the conclusion of previous profiling exercises, the two parties had agreed on terms of reference “[t]o conduct a joint screening of persons in detention to identify any individuals seeking asylum in line with the applicable international legal standards”. Note: A total of seven joint screening exercises (UNHCR-MOI) were conducted: Hatay (16-19 June 2003), Kusadasi (14-19 July 2004), Edirne (21-22 July 2005), Aydin (19-20 June 2006), Aydin (28-29 September 2006), Izmir (05-06 October 2006).

B. Actors

- Foreigners, Borders and Asylum Department of General Directorate for Security (Ankara and Izmir) (MOI); and
- UNHCR.

C. Actions

- Prior to the interviews, UNHCR staff briefed their national MOI counterparts on the objectives of the interviews and relevant country of origin information.
- Each individual was interviewed by the UNHCR team (eligibility staff and an interpreter) following a standard survey questionnaire drafted specifically for the profiling project. Questions included basic biographical data, mode of transportation, routes followed, motivation for departure, possibility for safe return to countries of origin and wish to apply for asylum. The interviews were conducted in the presence of the MOI staff in order to avoid duplication of interviews for the national asylum procedure.
- The profiling mechanism enabled UNHCR and MOI to distinguish two groups: persons wishing to apply for asylum and persons not seeking international protection. Asylum-seekers were referred to the RSD procedure, run by MOI and UNHCR, while others remained in police custody and were processed by Turkish authorities as “irregular migrants”. Special safeguards for the protection of one separated child in the group were monitored throughout the process.

D. Review

The Izmir profiling project was the fourth in a series of ad hoc profiling and referral exercises conducted by UNHCR and MOI in Kusadasi and Hattay/Antakya in 2004 and in Edirne in 2005. The Izmir joint screening exercise incorporated the lessons learned

from these earlier efforts. It demonstrated that UNHCR and the national authorities can engage in constructive cooperation in screening efforts. In addition to the identification of persons of concern to UNHCR, the joint screening exercise promoted understanding of refugee law principles among the MOI staff involved. National authorities acknowledge the need to improve physical facilities to support the carrying out of screening processes and facilitate access to legal assistance.

Ukraine: Asylum Information Point (“Light Box”) and Posters in Kyiv Airport

An asylum information point (“Light Box”) and posters containing promotional material and information in different languages for refugees were placed in the arrival area at the Borispol International Airport in Kyiv to provide arrivals with information before they passed immigration control cabins. They aim to provide practical information to asylum-seekers who intend to apply for asylum in Ukraine and serve as a reference when approaching border guards for asylum. The posters are placed on the desks where arriving individuals fill in immigration cards.

Annex 11 – Ukraine Asylum Light-Box

Annex 12 – Posters available at immigration desks at airport in Kyiv

Zambia: Migration Support Centre in Churundu

This Migration Support Centre in Churundu, Zambia is managed by IOM. IOM, inter alia: assists migrants with specific needs during interviews; collects and analyses data on travel routes across the highly frequented border towns between Zambia and Zimbabwe; identifies and refers asylum-seekers to UNHCR; provides direct assistance to migrants with specific needs, including trafficked persons and migrants with HIV/AIDS, to address their immediate needs; provides counselling and information on health, safe migration, human trafficking and migrants’ rights; and assists the most vulnerable Zimbabweans who wish to return home. While the current referral procedure of asylum-seekers is based on an informal arrangement between UNHCR and IOM, close collaboration with IOM staff and the use of information brochures (provided in Annex 15 and 16) ensures identification of asylum-seekers. Similar support centres run by IOM can be found in other countries.

For further details, see:

http://iom.org.za/site/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=62&Itemid=67

Annex 13 – UNHCR and Government of Zimbabwe - Border entry point information leaflet for asylum-seekers in Zimbabwe

Annex 14 – UNHCR and Government of Zimbabwe - Induction information leaflet for asylum-seekers and refugees in Zimbabwe

UNHCR 10-Point Plan on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration



The 10-Point Plan Schematic Representation of a Profiling and Referral Mechanism in the context of mixed movements is illustrated in Annex II of the 10-Point Plan.

Annex 15 – Schematic Representation of a Profiling and Referral Mechanism in the Context of Addressing Mixed Migratory Movements attached to the 10-Point Plan of Action, 2007

Summary: Profiling and Referral

Core Elements:

- **Provide information** by distributing information leaflets or other material containing factual information about the situation of arrivals in the host country and available options;
- **gather information** from arrivals by completing basic questionnaires and/or by arranging individual interviews by trained staff;
- **establish a preliminary profile** for each person within different categories and, for some individuals, within more than one category (i.e. asylum-seekers, persons moving for work or family reasons, unaccompanied and/or separated children, trafficked persons, etc); and
- **counsel and refer** to differentiated procedures, such as RSD procedures for asylum-seekers, support services for direct assistance for trafficked persons, child protection systems for unaccompanied and separated children, or legal migration channels for labour migrants and for voluntary return.

Key Characteristics:

- **Non-binding**, two-way, informal;
- **undertaken at or soon after arrival** in the host country, prior to any other processing;
- **age, gender and diversity sensitive**;
- completed within a **short time period**;
- **carried out by** an expert profiling team or by persons who ordinarily have “first contact” with irregular arrivals (e.g. border or immigration officials, NGOs with relevant expertise, or international agencies); and
- **personal data is only shared** with authorities as part of follow-up processes and procedures if the individual provides his/her informed consent.

Key Goals:

- **Ensure that irregular arrivals are provided with accurate information** and informed as early as possible about the options available to them;
- **identify and differentiate between the needs of various categories of persons** travelling within mixed movements;
- **counsel persons who are not in need of international protection** about the limits of applying for asylum, ensure that they have realistic expectations, and refer them to appropriate alternative procedures; and
- **provide authorities with information about the group** as a whole, which can also be used to establish a more strategic response to mixed movements.