

ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOs

3 – 5 JULY 2012 - International Conference Center Geneva

BACKGROUND PAPER

Refugee Resettlement: Expanding its Reach and Effectiveness through Broader NGO Participation

Tuesday 3 July 2012, 14h30 – 18h30 – Room 2

Brief Description of the Issue: NGOs around the world provide invaluable assistance to refugees in need of resettlement, and the need for more NGOs to become involved with resettlement, both in countries of first asylum and in resettlement countries, is great. The scope of the global resettlement program must expand in order to offer lifesaving protection to the almost 800,000 refugees UNHCR estimates are in need of resettlement. However, the current resettlement program would not be possible without the active partnerships of NGOs, UNHCR, and States. Furthermore, important advocacy to increase resettlement opportunities also requires active NGO participation. Certainly, the gap between resettlement needs and the current 80,000 available annual resettlement slots is daunting. However, it is hoped that this session will help to highlight ways to enhance broader NGO involvement and participation to achieve effective resettlement delivery with particular focus on: the use of resettlement as a key protection tool for those most in need; how resettlement can provide essential protection for the many who will never be resettled; how specific needs of vulnerable refugees are addressed; how to support effective integration of resettled refugees; and, the roles that NGOs of all sizes can play throughout the resettlement spectrum, from identification and processing challenges in the pre-departure phase to the support required in the post-arrival phase.

Format of the Discussions: The session will consist of an initial 45 minute plenary session during which the major themes of the session will be introduced, followed by two break-out session each lasting two hours. The full group will then reconvene for a final, 45 minute plenary session during which the break-out session moderators will summarize their findings and recommendations for moving forward.

One break-out session will be dedicated to issues pertaining to refugees in countries of first asylum. After initial presentations, this break-out session will be further divided with one sub-group focusing on best practices in service provision for vulnerable refugees in need of resettlement and the similarities between service provision in countries of first asylum and service provision for particularly vulnerable refugees post-resettlement. The second sub-group will explore how NGOs can participate in the identification and referral of refugees in need of resettlement, focusing on three methods: deploying staff to UNHCR, referring cases to UNHCR, and referring cases directly to resettlement countries.

The other break-out session will emphasize two primary themes, including the roles that NGOs play in helping to develop welcoming communities for refugees in resettlement countries. This topic will highlight best practices of the work that NGOs do in resettlement countries to help especially vulnerable refugees access the support services that they need as they begin to integrate into their new communities.

Sample Key Questions for Breakout Discussions

- What concerns do NGOs have that currently preclude them from becoming involved with resettlement related work (e.g. provision of psycho-social services to refugees who have been

identified for resettlement; identification of refugees for resettlement; providing legal services to refugees in need of resettlement, etc.) in countries of first asylum? What steps could be taken to help address these concerns?

- What are some best practices for providing services to especially vulnerable refugees in need of resettlement (e.g. LGBTI refugees, elderly refugees, disabled refugees, unaccompanied minors, female-headed households, etc.) in countries of first asylum?
- Half of the world's refugees now live in cities or towns. What challenges does this demographic shift present for the identification of refugees in need of resettlement and in terms of service provision? What are the best practices for responding to these challenges?
- What are some strategies for protecting refugees who face serious security risks in their country of asylum, including as they wait to be resettled?
- What are some best practices for engaging resettled refugees and receiving communities in refugee integration? What steps can be taken to help address anti-refugee sentiment in resettlement countries?
- In the face of an increasing number of processing challenges in the resettlement context, including delays in departures, the lack of access by resettlement country officials to certain refugee populations and difficulties in ensuring reception conditions in resettlement countries are in place on a timely manner, how could NGOs better contribute to mitigating the impact of these challenges in the resettlement continuum?

Expected Outcomes: One goal of the session, including the break-out discussions, is to provide opportunities for participating NGOs to learn about the different ways that refugee protection and resettlement are connected. The other is to share best practices that can help to address questions that NGOs might have about becoming involved with resettlement related work. The overall primary focus is to identify models that can be shared and replicated around the world with different refugee populations in need of resettlement. In addition, it will be important that the session participants identify key recommendations that will be shared with UNHCR and State representatives at the 2012 Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR).

Suggested Reading

UNHCR “UNHCR Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2012 ”<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home/opensslPDFViewer.html?docid=4f0ff0d9&query=resettlement>

UNHCR, UNHCR Resettlement Handbook, July 2011, Chapter 5, Protection Considerations, and the Identification of Resettlement Needs. <http://www.unhcr.org/3d464e176.html>

UNHCR, UNHCR Resettlement Handbook, July 2011, Chapter 8, Partnership, Liaison and Media Relations, <http://www.unhcr.org/3d464f224.html>

UNHCR. UNHCR Resettlement Handbook, July 2011. <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4e786d392.html>

UNHCR. “UNHCR-NGO Toolkit for Practical Cooperation on Resettlement.” <http://www.unhcr.org/4ce54a949.html>

International Catholic Migration Commission. “Paving the Way: A Handbook on the Reception and Integration of Resettled Refugees.” <http://www.icmc.net/pubs/paving-way-a-handbook-reception-and-integration-resettled-refugees>

International Catholic Migration Commission. “Welcome to Sheffield: Reflections on 8 Years Experience of Receiving Resettled Refugees at the Local Level.” <http://www.icmc.net/pubs/welcome-sheffield>

Slaughter, Amy. “Making Resettlement Possible for the World’s Most At-Risk Refugees”.Solutions for a Sustainable and Desirable Future. Volume 3, Issue 2 (March 2012).<http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/node/1064>

Human Rights First. “The Road to Safety: Strengthening Protection for LGBTI Refugees in Uganda and Kenya.”http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/RPP-The_Road_to_Safety.pdf