

**STRATEGIC PRESENTATION SUMMARY ON  
41<sup>st</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE  
(4-6 March 2008)**

**Global Programmes and Partnerships**

**Part A: Introduction**

This summary provides an update on key developments and priority needs relating to UNHCR's Global Programmes and Partnerships since the publication of the 2008-2009 Global Appeal. The reporting will focus on selected situations which the Director of the Division of Operational Services will discuss in his presentation to the 41<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee. In Part B, examples provided will be linked to relevant Global Strategic Objectives and targets for 2007-2008. Amongst the many areas in which the Office is striving to improve performance and delivery of global programmes and strengthen global partnerships, the following are currently being given particular focus:

*Global programmes*

- The organization's capacity and systems for gathering and managing population data and measuring gaps and progress against indicators continues to demand attention as Results-based Management (RBM) principles take root.
- Key public health interventions in the Field related to malaria, malnutrition, reproductive health, HIV, water, sanitation, and avian-human influenza continue to be improved, while receiving global strategic support and benefiting from targeted donor funding. Business continuity planning in case of epidemics or human influenza is ongoing.
- One particular aspect of gender-based security risks, the lack of livelihoods in many displacement situations, is being addressed through an interesting new initiative: "Women Leading for Livelihoods".
- Following the launch of the Education Strategy in 2007, global programme support includes efforts to boost post-secondary and tertiary education opportunities.
- New focus on climate change and its consequences has inspired a global public and private sector initiative.
- Apart from a small advisory team, global operational efforts with regard to protecting and assisting internally displaced persons (IDPs), including lead and non-lead cluster action, are mainstreamed in the Division of International Protection Services (DIPS) and the Division of Operational Services (DOS). Current special funding ends in 2008; remaining capacity building and emerging operational needs will henceforth be covered under regular global programmes and field project budgets.
- Information on related activities, including Emergency Preparedness and Response, will be provided separately in the course of the Standing Committee meeting.

*Global partnerships*

Renewed emphasis is being placed on the forging of partnerships, especially in the management of transition and post-conflict situations. Opportunities for cooperation through the "UN Delivering as One" initiative are being closely pursued and are expected to yield benefits for reintegration, rehabilitation and asylum capacity activities.

## **Part B: Progress on UNHCR's Global Strategic Objectives**

### *Population data and measuring results: progress and key challenges (GSO 7.3, 10.1)*

Gathering quality information on persons of concern remains a key challenge for UNHCR in its pursuit of RBM, notably with regard to population statistics and information on well-being and socio-economic status.

- Within the RBM software FOCUS, linkages have been created to population statistics. Training and roll-out have started in 2008.
- Field support in 2008 will focus on improving the quality of Standards and Indicators (S&I) data gathered and on finalizing, with cluster partners, indicators relevant to situations of internal displacement. Support measures will include the deployment of expertise, the mainstreaming of the operational data management learning programme into UNHCR's regular activities, and the extension of access to relevant data management information and training to partner staff.
- Despite the decentralization of some DOS positions, availability of skilled personnel in charge of data collection and analysis is still limited in many UNHCR operations, partially as a result of the high turnover of staff. The provision of an S&I scorecard analysis to Bureaux and operations early in the planning year is designed to raise awareness about the value of S&I in planning and decision-making. Longer term planning of human resources must be based on needs (and not solely resources), while taking into account sustainability in the short, medium, and long term.
- Similar challenges and needs exist with regard to the availability of skilled personnel and resources for registration. Targeted measures to familiarize staff at management level with UNHCR's standard registration tool, *proGres*, will aim to raise awareness of the importance of registration standards, data protection principles and matching skills in the field team.

### *Age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (GSO 7.1, 7.4)*

The roll-out of age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) was completed by the end of 2007, as a result of which a total of 109 Country Operations have set up multifunctional teams and conducted participatory assessments. UNHCR has initiated a consultative process, with both internal and external stakeholders, to assess progress on AGDM, and developed an AGDM Action Plan for 2007-2009. This Action Plan is now being implemented and monitored. Towards the end of 2008, an evaluation of the AGDM strategy is expected to be launched to review and update the Action Plan. Key measures undertaken include:

- During 2007, UNHCR decentralized functions to support AGDM and the protection of women, children and groups with specific needs. In 2008, to support this decentralization of services, funds are foreseen for operational activities of regional staff (in Asia, the Americas and the Middle East and North Africa regions), but in 2009 this responsibility needs to be assumed by the Bureaux.
- Further to the AGDM Accountability Framework launched in 2007, a more detailed analysis will be available in June on the basis of response from all country representatives, with the exception of countries where UNHCR's focus is on advocacy activities. As the regionalization and decentralization process evolves, one challenge to the sustainability of AGDM includes how to ensure the development of a regional accountability framework, and how to enhance regional ownership of the posts which have been reallocated.

*The protection of women and the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence (GSO 1.2, 4.2)*

The High Commissioner has pursued his commitment to combat sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) by earmarking USD 1.5 million for selected country operations to enhance their response with a variety of interventions, ranging from raising awareness to preventive measures in camp management, infrastructure and essential services. Furthermore, UNHCR is focusing on intensifying its work in the global, regional and national inter-agency context to improve the response to SGBV in situations such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where only a strong inter-agency team working with the Government can address such pervasive and extensive human rights violations.

- Livelihood opportunities and their positive impact on empowerment and protection from dependency-related abuse and survival sex are being addressed by the Women leading for Livelihoods initiative which has prepared a compendium of small-scale business and life skills projects. The projects have begun to receive funding from a growing network of business women being built up through information events and advocacy campaigns. In 2008, the initiative will fund projects in Serbia, Morocco and Georgia.
- Initial findings of the independent evaluation on SGBV demonstrate that while much has been done to raise awareness, providing training does not necessarily result in longer-term permanent behaviour change. Furthermore, reducing assistance in education and livelihoods sectors in the host country as repatriation gets under way affects those who are most at risk and likely to remain behind: unaccompanied and separated girls and boys, people with disabilities and without family support.

*Protection of children and older persons and persons with disabilities (GSO 3, 4.2, 1.2)*

Building on work on the formal determination of the best interests of the child, with increased technical support to offices and the deployment of child protection officers in coordination with Save the Children and other partners, focus in 2008 is being placed on capacity building in the Field.

- Challenges remain with regard to staff capacity and follow-up to ensure that solutions are actually found and implemented, so that the process goes beyond the “assessment” stage.
- UNHCR has reached agreements with the Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, Handicap International and Help Age to undertake research and to develop tools to improve the protection of people with disabilities and older persons, both in the refugee and IDP contexts and to address the identified shortcomings.

*Public Health and HIV (GSO 3.1, 3.2)*

While more comprehensive programmes that include health information systems, monitoring and evaluation will continue to be implemented in stable settings, UNHCR will ensure the establishment of minimum and essential public health and HIV interventions in emergency settings and in returnee areas. Policies and interventions in urban settings, as well as for local integration, are also being developed. In 2008/09, there will be strong HIV and AIDS programmes for vulnerable and risk groups, notably for young people and refugee women. Linkages between HIV and SGBV will be included.

- With support from the High Commissioner’s Special Project, additional funding has been provided in key countries to ensure dedicated support to health, reproductive health and nutrition, and water and sanitation programmes. Significant progress in raising nutrition levels and public health care was recorded in 2007, and additional countries will receive support in 2008.

- However, maintaining these improvements once public health and HIV programmes are mainstreamed in 2009 will be a challenge. The additional resources for priority operations have allowed, for example, the provision of complementary food by UNHCR which could not previously be made available due to lack of resources. Such budgetary gaps may reappear; however, with an improved health information system, unmet requirements and population trends can be monitored better and the Standing Committee will be kept informed of overall needs and prioritization dilemmas.
- Similarly, the support provided under the special projects and increased collaboration with partners have had a positive impact on the Nutrition and Water and Sanitation sector with a subsequent reduction in related diseases. Planning is ongoing to overcome funding constraints and to maintain the required level of support and partnership.
- The risk of creating tension due to differences in living standards between local host communities and long-term refugee camps, as well as in return areas, is a concern. Development partners will progressively be engaged to address the general standard of services in the country.

*Promotion of self-reliance of displaced populations, local integration of refugees and reintegration of returnees (GSO 3.5).*

In 2007, UNHCR placed increasing emphasis on the value of livelihood and returnee support activities, related policy development, capacity building and support to country offices. In this sector, partnerships with development actors are key.

- UNHCR has contributed to the drafting of the United Nations system-wide policy on Employment Creation, Income Generation and Reintegration in Post-Conflict Settings, to be launched shortly with UNDP and ILO. A Joint Operational Guidance Note will provide a strategy for practical implementation, including for refugee and IDP programmes.
- The Office will continue to participate in the Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery (CWGER), including in the sub-group on livelihood.
- UNHCR will further strengthen its partnership with development agencies such as ILO, FAO, UNDP BCPR, UNDP ART Gold Initiative, UN-Habitat, JICA and Danish Refugee Council (DRC) on local integration, reintegration, livelihood and land tenure.
- In Early Recovery, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Kenya are targeted for the final development of livelihood and land assessment tools.
- UNDP, together with UNHCR, OCHA, and the Representative of the Secretary-General on the Human rights of IDPs' will also organize a conference on durable solutions for IDPs in June 2008, and hope to build on lessons learned for future programming.
- UNHCR is participating in the debate on funding for early recovery, as this is a potential opportunity to build sustainable solutions for returnees and IDPs.

Outstanding challenges include the limited involvement of development actors in conflict-affected areas, and in asylum countries. Current constraints and opportunities include:

- While there is growing awareness of the need for more coordinated responses in post-conflict situations, the pace of project planning and implementation and funding by development agencies is still slow. This limits the prospects for a smooth disengagement by UNHCR.

- Although refugees are now included in many of the Common Country Assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes, the translation of this principle into joint programmes for local economic development of hosting areas, is still limited.
- Opportunities lie in the “UN Delivering as One” initiative, for example in the United Republic of Tanzania where the Government and the Country Team are planning to support the rehabilitation of refugee hosting areas, as well as the sustainable integration of residual Burundi refugees (though funding still needs to be identified).
- The local integration initiative for Liberian and Sierra Leonean refugees in West Africa is also mobilizing the Governments and Country Teams of different countries.
- In Serbia, UNDP and UNHCR are planning joint programmes for the “Improved Living Conditions and Livelihood Opportunities for IDPs”. UNHCR is also discussing partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency in Afghanistan, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as in Southern Sudan.

A related challenge is the misperception of UNHCR’s reintegration activities which are often mistakenly taken for full-scale development activities rather than quick impact measures, aimed at allowing the resumption of essential services in returnee areas. It is important to foster understanding that the sustainability of large-scale returns in these areas is often not given priority by regular development actors, and that geographical areas which are priorities for development actors may not coincide with areas of high return.

The need for technical expertise and support in the area of self-reliance and livelihood (as a tool for protection) is growing, but internal expertise is limited. Measures being pursued include:

- A Senior Livelihood Officer has been appointed at Headquarters and another technical officer will be appointed in South America.
- To satisfy the enormous need in the field, UNHCR is further developing partnerships with UN agencies and NGOs involved in this sector.
- The Office is developing a roster of experts while discussing other options with ILO, FAO, and NGOs. Other actors will also be consulted in 2008.
- Opportunities for further partnership with prominent business women in support of the “Women Leading for Livelihoods” initiative.

#### *Education (GSO 3.4)*

UNHCR’s strategy for 2007–2009 includes seven objectives to address gaps in the following areas: access and retention; safety and quality; post-primary education with a particular focus on the expansion of tertiary education and scholarships; capacity building; partnerships; resources; and monitoring and evaluation.

- UNHCR will promote safe learning environments in all its operations and guidelines for planning and implementation have been developed and disseminated. An inter-agency initiative is focusing attention on this issue.
- Increased resources and support will be sought through partnerships and special fundraising initiatives to address the major gaps in providing holistic and comprehensive education programmes for girls and boys of concern to UNHCR, including through the INEE partnership (Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies) and the fundraising campaign “Ninemillion.org”.

- Key challenges relate to the human and financial resources available to UNHCR for safeguarding the right to education. UNHCR does not meet its standards on education, as the resources to meet the minimum standards have yet to be made available in many operations.

#### *Environment issues*

UNHCR's focus on environmental issues and climate change continues to evolve in response to the changing needs of operations in different countries and regions.

- Attention is being given more to designing, implementing and supporting a broad range of projects and activities that respond to identified needs, and which promote sustainable environmental management and reduce carbon emissions in refugee, IDP and returnee hosting areas.
- Priority issues to be addressed in 2008 include: the development and implementation of five thematic areas of renewable energy and energy conservation; support for multi-faceted rehabilitation of refugee impacted areas following repatriation; reduction of carbon emissions; capacity building in Africa and Asia; and fostering partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, the United Nations system and governments in order to address environmental and climate change and take mitigation/adaptation measures.
- Challenges include the lack of awareness about carbon-neutral practices, the need to programme environmental interventions such as rehabilitation of refugee sites at early stages of the operation, and to identify local partners for action.

#### *The "UN Delivering as One" initiative (GSOs 5.2, 5.5, 6)*

In 2007, UNHCR joined the UNDG-led pilot initiative "UN Delivering as One", being implemented in eight countries.<sup>1</sup> The Office has started to participate in all planning phases, and is moving to the implementation of joint programmes, while carefully monitoring risks and increasing transaction costs. UNHCR appreciates the potential for greater synergies with development partners, yet remains conscious of the importance of retaining flexibility in the exercise of its mandate for international protection and solutions and upholding the principally humanitarian character of its mission. In most pilot countries, UNHCR is seizing opportunities for coherent planning, especially in contingency and disaster reduction planning and management, refugee and returnee (re-) integration and transition management, and new approaches to solutions for protracted displacement situations, as well as, in some cases, capacity and institution building for asylum.

*UNHCR*

*28 February 2008*

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<sup>1</sup> Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam and Uruguay