

UNHCR & Home Office

QUALITY PROTECTION PARTNERSHIP: ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2021

FINAL (Agreed in Principle) 28 May 2021

PROJECT WORKSTREAMS

WORKSTREAM 1 Evaluation of QI Project Recommendations 2017

<u>Objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation 3: <i>To maximise the potential effectiveness of the project, UNHCR should conduct an assessment of existing QIP recommendations and review the most effective way to draft and share recommendations from the QIP with the HO, including reflection on the level of recommendations produced and intended audience.</i> 	
<u>Method</u>	1. UNHCR and Home Office to finalise the QI Project Recommendations Matrices in order to ensure that all previous recommendations have been reviewed and progressed to either a stage of completion or near completion. Ongoing discussions should include the QPP Action Log and new recommendations arising from current workstreams during the period of the current MOU. Further a communication strategy should be finalized for strengthening interactions with civil society stakeholders and partners.	Quarter 1-2
	2. Home Office to finalise the review all past recommendations and provide a status update to UNHCR. Home Office and UNHCR to continue to populate the QPP action log, taking account of new recommendations.	Quarter 1-2
<u>UNHCR Focal Points</u>	Andrew Leak	

<u>Home Office Focal Points</u>	Jennifer Ridings & Antony Lumgair
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WORKSTREAM 2 Detention

<u>Objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote well-reasoned asylum decision making at first instance; • To ensure that the use of detention, insofar as it affects persons of concern to UNHCR, accords with international standards, and is utilized in line with the relevant policy; and • To support the UK work towards developing and implementing alternatives to detention. 	
<u>Method</u>	Provision of guidance and recommendations on vulnerability and detention review mechanisms including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provision of reports with targeted recommendations following regular Case Progression Panel reviews; and 2. Provide support by way of reviewing policy documents and guiding standards and operational forms to Immigration Enforcement in relation to three ongoing pilots: 1. The Enhanced Screening Tool (with reference to the UNHCR Vulnerability Screening Tool); 2. Reasons for Detention, IS91R; and 3. Monthly Detention Review, IS151F. 3. Work with Immigration Enforcement to implement the detention based recommendations from QPP's Statelessness Determination Audit 	Quarters 1-4.
	Finalization of a comprehensive audit into the Detained Asylum Casework Procedure. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalise an audit report and recommendations. 2. Debrief with the HO and other relevant actors on audit findings. 3. Implement recommendations as agreed/relevant. 	Quarter 1.

	Monitoring and Evaluation of ATD pilot 1 and pilot 2. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain oversight of ATD evaluation consultants. 2. Provide ongoing technical support to Home Office and NGOs on development of pilots. 3. Support HO to set up a roundtable on ATD – to bring together civil society actors who were first engaged in this work in March 2018 in order to report back and further consult on this ongoing work 	Quarters 1-4.
<u>UNHCR Focal Points</u>	Andrew Leak and Max McClellan	
<u>Home Office Focal Points</u>	Dan Smith/Helen Speller and Alison Wray	

WORKSTREAM 3 Statelessness

<u>Objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote well-reasoned stateless decision making at first instance, that are in accordance with both UK legislation and policy and international standards; and • To ensure that the procedural safeguards and guarantees for applicants that are provided for in the policy and legislation are applied in practice and are adequate. 	
<u>Method</u>	The below generally relate to recommendations from the recently finalized stateless determination procedure audit. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HO to consider UNHCR proposals for reconsideration in individual cases from the audit and respond as appropriate. 	Quarter 1

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. UNHCR to propose improvements in the collection and sharing of COI regarding countries with significant statelessness issues. 3. UNHCR to send HO information on asylum ADMT so that the HO can assess if a like resource is worth exploring in the statelessness route. 4. HO to send UNHCR decision templates for review (end of May) 	
	<p>UNHCR and HO to collaborate on the training of decision-makers, through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNHCR to provide a stand-alone workshop to caseworkers on UNHCR’s mandate, position and work on statelessness. 2. UNHCR to be provided with an opportunity to comment on training package once it has been reviewed by SRU lead trainer 	Quarter TBC
	UNHCR to review updated policies being drafted in line with expected simplification of the Immigration Rules. These policies are expected to be ready in draft form in May or June.	Quarter 2
	UNHCR to liaise with colleagues in enforcement to review changes to guidance and SOP to ensure that statelessness is considered by the Detention Gatekeeper as a potential vulnerability when considering immigration detention.	End of April
<u>UNHCR Focal Point</u>	Elizabeth Ruddick	
<u>Home Office Focal Points</u>	Rachel Bickerton, Jacob Graham	
	Louise Richardson, Jane Holloway, Elizabeth Ledsham	

WORKSTREAM 4 Screening, Intake and Triage

<u>Objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure protection sensitive processes for identifying and dealing with persons in need of international protection, and in order to ensure safe, secure and adequate screening and routing procedures within which the Home Office are able to
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	<p>identify and support applicants at specific or heightened risk and/or with arising and developing/changing protection needs as early as possible; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that screening and routing effectively serves to triage into differentiated case processing modalities, enabling efficient and high-quality asylum decision making in line with international standards. 	
<u>Method</u>	<p><u>Stage 1</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. QPP review of screening and intake processes and policies 2. Consideration of current/past UK, and comparative approaches in relevant countries, to screening and triaging of cases onto various case ‘tracks’ 3. QPP in-person observation visits at screening locations 4. Snapshot audit of screening and routing processes from casefiles 5. Focus groups with immigration officials and relevant stakeholders 6. Short findings report 	Quarters 1-3
	<p><u>Stage 2</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide support in the review of procedures and policies on screening – which may include the development of new systems and/or training including training on the identification of victims of modern slavery as carried out by UNHCR UK in Ireland. 2. External publication of findings report 	Quarters 3-4
<u>UNHCR Focal Point</u>	Max McClellan and Elizabeth Ruddick	
<u>Home Office Focal Points</u>	Kate Fleming	
	Lara Roderique, Chris Cannon, Nicola Hey, Janelle Roberts	

WORKSTREAM 5 Policy Review – Review of Home Office Suicide & Self-harm Guidance

<u>Objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify effective safeguarding guidance to staff responding to risks of self-harm or suicide to ensure that the ‘risk-identified to risk-managed’ journey is underpinned by recognised best practice and that action on cases can be prioritised on a most vulnerable basis 	
<u>Method</u>	<p>To review Terms of Reference provided by Home Office BICS Policy relevant to the draft policies on Withdrawal of Asylum Claims and on Suicide and Self Harm.</p> <p>1. Work to be determined based on the Terms of Reference being provided by the Home Office.</p>	Quarters TBC.
<u>UNHCR Focal Points</u>	Andrew Leak	
<u>Home Office Focal Points</u>	Kate Fleming & Paul Pedlow	

WORKSTREAM 6 Policy Review – Withdrawal of asylum claims for those with mental health issues

<u>Objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote well-reasoned asylum decision making at first instance, that are in accordance with both UK legislation, UK policy and international standards. To ensure that the procedural safeguards and guarantees for individuals that are provided for in the policy are adequate and whether there is learning from other jurisdictions which we could use to improve our policy. 	
<u>Method</u>	To review Terms of Reference provided by Home Office BICS Policy relevant to the draft policies on Withdrawal of Asylum Claims.	

	1. Work to be determined based on the Terms of Reference being provided by the Home Office.	Quarters TBC.
<u>UNHCR Focal Points</u>	Max McClellan	
<u>Home Office Focal Points</u>	Rachel Bickerton & Jacob Graham	

WORKSTREAM 7 Asylum Modern Slavery Nexus Decision Making

<u>Objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote well-reasoned asylum decision making at first instance; and To ensure that decision making in cases where an individual is identified as being a potential victim of modern slavery, insofar as it affects persons of concern to UNHCR, accords with international standards, and is utilised in line with the relevant policy. 	
<u>Method</u>	<p>Short review into caseworkers' approach to asylum decision making involving applicants who identify as victims of modern slavery</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review how Home Office asylum decision makers approach asylum claims where an individual has or is in the process of receiving either a positive Reasonable Grounds decision, or positive or negative Conclusive Grounds Decision within the NRM. This will include a mapping of the two processes and the relevant procedures in the operation, supported focus group discussions with Home Office staff and observations of staff training where possible. 	Quarter 1 –2.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Review the communications process between asylum decision makers and Single Competent Authority (NRM) decision makers, regarding material facts and information sharing. Potentially include agreed touchpoints throughout the processes for efficiency. 3. A snapshot audit of up to 15 asylum decisions where the individual has been referred into the NRM. Carry out an inception meeting alongside relevant policy and operational colleagues. Recommend keeping the scope to just adults at present, as the devolving decision making for children pilots may impact these cases in future. 	
<u>UNHCR Focal Points</u>	Andrew Leak and Elizabeth Ruddick	
<u>Home Office Focal Points</u>	Lara Roderique Bhavan Jandu, Russel Bramley	

WORKSTREAM 8 - Training and Decision Making

<u>Objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote well-reasoned asylum decision making at first instance, that are in accordance with both UK legislation, UK policy and international standards 	
<u>Method</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalise the revised Foundational Training Program as a continued workstream from 2020 2. Provide feedback to revised Foundational Training Program (UNHCR to provide HO) 3. Develop a learning package in consultation with HO and UNHCR Global learning centre (GLC). 	<p>Point 1 & 2 - Quarter 1 (by end April) (interview course will follow into Q2)</p> <p>Quarter 2/3 (subject to change)</p>
<u>UNHCR Focal Points</u>	Elizabeth Ruddick	
<u>Home Office Focal Points</u>	Lara Roderique, Melanie Cornish, Tara Byrne and Zahid Hussain	

WORKSTREAM 9 Child Protection

<u>Objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work alongside the Home Office to ensure the ‘best interest’ principle is upheld for all children seeking or in need of international protection, in accordance with UK legislation and policy and international standards. This includes unaccompanied children, those in families and those subject to age dispute procedures; • Provide international best practice support to enable the strengthening of mechanisms and procedures present in processing children’s protection claims, such as age assessment, family tracing, screening, referral and transfer to local authorities; and • Assist the Home Office in its review of legal routes to the UK for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children 	
<u>Method</u>	<p>Proposed changes to the asylum system</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNHCR to review the impact of any proposed changes to the asylum system (including, but not limited to, age assessment) on unaccompanied children who are seeking or in need of international protection. This includes providing advice and guidance on positive international practice and compliance with international standards. 	<p>Quarters 1-4 pending developments.</p>
	<p>Legal routes for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. UNHCR to provide international best practice support to the Home Office in its review of legal routes to the UK for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children drawing on UNHCR’s international expertise in the assessment of children’s best interests and the operation of family reunification, relocation and resettlement pathways. 	<p>Quarters 1-4 pending developments.</p>
<u>UNHCR Focal Point</u>	<p>Max McClellan and Andrew Leak</p>	
<u>Home Office Focal Points</u>	<p>Megan Jensen, Amy Bell and Nick Wale</p>	

WORKSTREAM 10 – Review of Asylum Reason for Refusal Letters

<u>Objectives</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review and examine RFRLs (Reason for Refusal Letters), identifying best practise and essential content. To compare with refusal decision letters from other countries and recommend efficiencies and improvements. 	
<u>Method</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review a sample of (sample size to be discussed) RFRLs, identifying essential content and best practice To present RFRL practice from (sample size to be discussed) other countries with comparable asylum processes; identifying efficiencies and best practice To make recommendations that guide the support of well-reasoned, sustainable decisions; satisfy internal and external stakeholder requirements; and support increased decision productivity. 	Quarter 3
UNHCR Focal Point	Elizabeth Ruddick	
Home Office Focal Points	Lara Roderique and Sharon Gallagher	