

**Executive Committee of the
High Commissioner's Programme**

Distr. : Restricted
11 February 2011*

Original : English and French

Standing Committee
50th meeting

**Global Strategic Priorities (GSP) Framework for
the 2012-2013 biennium**

* Deadline of 8 February 2011 for document availability not met owing to late submission of text to the Committee Secretariat

1. This information note provides the Standing Committee with an update on the ongoing preparation of UNHCR's 2012-2013 Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs). An initial presentation on the draft GSPs will be made to open discussions on this agenda item at the 50th meeting of the Committee in March 2011.
2. The Global Strategic Priorities for the current biennium (2010-2011) were submitted to the 46th meeting of the Standing Committee in September 2009 [EC/60/SC/INF.2]. The GSP matrix annexed to that document outlined a number of priority objectives drawn from the Office's Results Framework, against which baseline data for the end of 2009 was provided and global targets were set. These targets, as explained in the document, were the best estimates of what was likely to be achievable within the budgets approved by the Executive Committee (ExCom) for the 2010-2011 period. UNHCR will report in early 2012 on what was actually achieved in relation to the established GSP targets. A number of donors have included elements of the 2010-2011 GSP matrix in their frameworks of cooperation with UNHCR, reflecting a welcome interest in supporting the Office's priorities.
3. At the 47th meeting of the Standing Committee in March 2010, UNHCR indicated that lessons would be drawn from the application of the GSPs, both as a programming and monitoring tool in field operations, and as an instrument for donors and other stakeholders to monitor UNHCR's global performance in key areas of protection and assistance. The Committee was reminded that the Results Framework, the *Focus* software and the GSPs themselves were new tools, which were being applied worldwide for the first time in 2010: consequently, refinements and corrections based on an assessment of successes and shortcomings would need to be introduced ahead of the 2012-2013 biennium planning.
4. Enhancements to the Results Framework and the *Focus* software are under way. A number of necessary improvements have been identified through the tracking of implementation of the current GSPs, as well as through dialogue with donors who have included specific GSPs in their cooperation frameworks with UNHCR. In the course of 2010, some of the GSP indicators were found to be too narrow to reflect complex objectives; others needed to be improved in terms of measurability and/or specificity. UNHCR wishes to acknowledge the constructive guidance it has received in this regard from several Governments. The UNHCR Field Results Framework to be embedded into the 2012-2013 version of *Focus* is designed to be technically more sound and more practicable than the previous one.
5. Aside from technical issues, it has become clear that the current presentation of GSPs is not conducive to 'ownership' of the strategic priorities by UNHCR managers in the Field. Because the framework includes a mix of global, aggregated country and even site-level targets, it is difficult for an operation to situate itself and plan its programmes accordingly within the collective framework. A study published in November 2010 by UNHCR's Policy Development and Evaluation Service (PDES), entitled *Measure for Measure: A field-based snapshot of the implementation of results based management in UNHCR*,¹ found that, the "GSPs are regarded as a useful checklist of UNHCR's key activities, but they are not generally employed in the field to inform the prioritization and resources allocation process." For the same reason, it has proved difficult for senior management to factor GSPs consistently into the resource allocation, prioritization and re-allocation processes. These observations call for a different approach, whereby GSPs are truly entrenched into the prioritized plans of UNHCR operations, and the latter are reviewed through a GSP lens as an integral part of the 2012 and 2013 resource allocation processes. Planning instructions for 2012-2013, to be issued before the end of March 2011, together with an update on the enhancements made to *Focus*, will reflect this new approach.

¹ This study is available on UNHCR's website.

6. Another difficulty stems from the density of the current GSP framework, which includes a large proportion of all UNHCR Results Framework objectives. The GSPs should describe the areas that will require priority attention by UNHCR in the next two (or more) years. Therefore, their number should be limited, with a view to both enhancing their visibility and facilitating their management across operations.

7. It is crucially important that this reduced, more focused, GSP framework be owned by all those implementing it in such a way that it brings about real improvements in the protection, well-being and achievement of solutions for persons of concern. The operational managers must feel responsible for contributing through their respective programmes to the Office's collective strategic priorities. With this in mind, the GSPs will be on the agenda of the February 2011 global meeting of UNHCR Representatives with the High Commissioner, and the input received from the Representatives will be factored into the draft 2012-2013 GSPs, which will be presented to delegations at the Standing Committee in March.

8. UNHCR looks forward to reviewing the draft GSPs with ExCom members, and counts on the Committee's support in building a shared commitment towards the successful realization of the 2012-2013 framework.
