

UNHCR Comments

Annex I

Rev 2, 23 July 2016

COMPREHENSIVE REFUGEE RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

1. The scale and nature of refugee ~~movements~~displacement today requires us to act in a comprehensive and predictable manner in large-scale refugee movements. Through a comprehensive refugee response, we are better able to protect and assist refugees and to support host States and communities involved.
2. Initiated and coordinated by UNHCR, and involving other relevant UN agencies, comprehensive refugee responses should involve a multi-stakeholder approach, including States, the United Nations, other international organizations, national and local authorities, civil society partners (including faith based organizations and academia), the private sector, media and refugees.
3. While each large movement of refugees will differ in nature, the elements noted below, grounded in international law and practice and adapted to the specific context, provide a framework for a comprehensive refugee response.
4. We envisage a comprehensive refugee response framework which would be applied to a specific large movement of refugees, including in protracted situations, and which would normally contain the following elements:

Reception and Admission

5. At the outset of an influx of refugees, or a mixed flow of refugees and migrants, receiving states, in cooperation as appropriate with UNHCR and other partners and with the support of other ~~non-receiving~~ States as required, would:
 - ensure to the greatest extent possible, that measures are in place to identify those seeking and in need of international protection as refugees, recognizing that others refugees. ~~(Those found not to be in need of protection as refugees~~ may still require protection and support on other grounds);
 - provide for adequate, safe and dignified reception conditions, with a particular emphasis on child protection and prevention of, and response to, sexual and gender-based violence; and support the critical contribution of receiving communities and societies in this regard;
 - meet essential needs of refugees, including providing access to adequate water, sanitation, food, nutrition, shelter, health care and psycho-social support;
 - register and document, on an individual basis and as quickly as possible upon their arrival, those in need of seeking protection as refugees. Assistance to achieve this may be needed, such as biometric technology and other technical support ~~where necessary~~;

- use the registration process to identify refugees with specific assistance and protection needs ~~and protection arrangements, where appropriate~~, including ~~(but not exclusively) for refugees with special protection concerns, for~~ unaccompanied children and children separated from their families, ~~for~~ child-headed and single-parent households, persons as well as for refugees with disabilities and older persons;
- provide other necessary documents relating to civil status (e.g., birth, marriage, divorce, death) at the earliest opportunity;
- put in place measures, with appropriate legal safeguards, and, while upholding refugees' human rights, ensure the security of refugees and also respond to legitimate security concerns on the part of the host country.

Support for immediate and ongoing needs

6. States, multilateral donors and private-sector partners would, in coordination with receiving states:

- mobilise financial resources to cover the humanitarian needs identified within the comprehensive refugee response framework;
- ensure that these resources are provided in a predictable, consistent and flexible manner, including through wider partnerships involving State, civil society, faith-based and private-sector partners;
- ensure adequate funding, including development assistance, for government ministries and local authorities in view of the increased needs and pressures on social services. Programmes should benefit refugees, the host country and affected communities;
- ensure that financiale lending schemes which exist for developing countries are extended to middle-income countries hosting large numbers of refugees, bearing in mind the economic and social costs to those countries;
- consider establishing development funding mechanisms for such countries;
- invest in clean and efficient technology to lessen the potential for adverse environmental impacts;
- increase support for cash-based delivery mechanisms and other innovative means for the efficient provision of humanitarian assistance.

7. Hosting States, in cooperation, as appropriate, with UNHCR and other relevant partners, would:

- provide rapid, safe and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance;

- deliver assistance to the extent possible through appropriate national service providers (e.g., public authorities for health, education, social services);
- encourage refugees, at the outset of an emergency phase, to establish supportive systems and networks involving refugees and host communities, with a particular emphasis on the protection of women and children and other persons with specific needs;
- invest in local and civil society partners so as to enhance their contribution to humanitarian responses;
- ensure close cooperation and joint planning between humanitarian and development actors, aiming, inter alia, to reduce dependency on international humanitarian aid over time in favour of more sustainable solutions and strengthened resilience.

Support for host countries and communities

8. States, UNHCR and relevant partners would:

- implement a joint, impartial and rapid risk and impact assessment after the onset of a large refugee movement in order to identify the assistance required for government ministries, local authorities and communities impacted by a refugee presence;
- seek to incorporate the comprehensive refugee response framework in national development planning in order to strengthen the delivery of essential services and infrastructure to the benefit of host communities and refugees.

Durable Solutions

9. We recognize that millions of refugees around the world at present have no access to timely and durable solutions, the securing of which is one of the principal goals of international protection. The success of the search for solutions depends in large measure on resolute and sustained international cooperation and support.

10. Particular actions that we believe should be taken in pursuit of durable solutions include the following:

(i) Repatriation

11. Reaffirming the primary goal of bringing about conditions that would help refugees return in safety and dignity to their countries, and emphasising the need to achieve necessary political solutions as well as the need to assist in reconstruction efforts,

States of origin/nationality would:

- respect the right of refugees to return to their country and the obligation on states to receive back their nationals in a safe and humane manner and with full respect for their human rights and dignity in accordance with international standards. This may be facilitated through is achievable, for example, through amnesties and effective human rights guarantees;
- consider measures to enable the restitution of property.

To ensure sustainable return and reintegration, States, UN organizations and relevant partners would:

- consistent with the principle of non-refoulement, refrain from conducting any refugee returns that are not voluntary and informed;
- plan for, and support, measures to encourage repatriation, reintegration and reconciliation;
- support countries of origin/nationality, including through funding for rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, and with necessary legal safeguards that enable refugees to access legal, physical and other support mechanisms needed for restoration of national protection and their reintegration;
- support efforts to foster reconciliation and dialogue, particularly with refugee communities, and with the participation of women, and to ensure respect for the rule of law at the national and local levels;
- facilitate the participation of refugees in peace and reconciliation processes, and ensure that resulting agreements duly support their return in safety and dignity;
- ensure that national development planning incorporates the specific needs of returnees and ensures sustainable reintegration.

(ii) **Local solutions**

12. Host States, in cooperation with UNHCR, UNRWA (where appropriate) and relevant partners, where appropriate, would

- provide legal stay in countries of asylum;
- foster self-reliance in countries of asylum by pledging to expand opportunities for refugees to access education, health care and services, livelihood opportunities and labour markets, without discrimination among refugees and in a manner which also supports host communities;

- enable refugees, including in particular women and youth, to make the best use of their skills and capacities, recognising that empowered refugees are better able to contribute to their own and their communities' well-being.
- invest in building human capital and transferable skills as an essential step toward enabling long-term solutions.

(iii) **Resettlement and complementary pathways for admission**

13. States other than host countries would

- make available or expand, including by encouraging private sector engagement and action, resettlement opportunities and complementary pathways for admission of refugees through such means as medical evacuation and humanitarian admission programmes, family reunification, and opportunities for skilled migration, labour mobility and education;
- commit to share best practices, provide refugees with sufficient information to make informed decisions, and safeguard protection standards;
- apply more flexible criteria for resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes in mass displacement and protracted situations coupled with, as appropriate, temporary humanitarian evacuation programmes and other forms of admission.

14. UN Member States who have not yet established resettlement programmes are encouraged to consider doing so at the earliest opportunity. Those who have already done so are encouraged to consider increases in the size of their programmes.

15. Member States will work towards the provision of resettlement places and other legal pathways on a scale which would enable the annual resettlement needs identified by UNHCR to be met.

The Way Forward

16. We commit to implementing this Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework in the case of new large-scale refugee movements as well as existing large-scale protracted refugee situations where possible.

17. We invite UNHCR to convene consultations with Member States and all relevant stakeholders over the coming two years with a view to evaluating the detailed practical application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and assessing the scope for its refinement and further development. Such consultations would benefit from a review of practical experience in implementing the framework in a range of specific situations. The objective would be to ease pressures on the host countries involved, to enhance refugee self-reliance, to expand access to third-country solutions and to support conditions in countries of origin for returns in safety and dignity.

18. We commit to adopt in 2018 a Global Compact on Refugees, based on the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and on the consultations that will have taken place. We invite the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to include in his annual report to the General Assembly in 2018 a proposed Global Compact on Refugees, for consideration by Member States in conjunction with the annual resolution on the High Commissioner's Office.