

REPORT ON UNHCR'S ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

29 JUNE – 1 JULY 2009

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Abstract

This report provides highlights of the Annual Consultations with NGOs, which this year brought together some 310 representatives from around the world, representing 179 different NGOs, UN and international organizations, of which 73 of these NGOs were national NGOs.

The consultations were opened by the UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner Protection and featured seven Thematic Sessions and five Regional Sessions with the active involvement of some 80 resource persons from NGOs, academia, member states, and international and UN organizations. Participating NGOs also had space to organize ten side-meetings. The related sessions addressed were:

- *Internal Displacement Situations: Getting the numbers and facts right – The Global Needs Assessment: Why it is important and what it means for partners – Disabilities in Displacement – Displacement in Urban Settings – Protracted Refugee Situations – NGOs and Resettlement – Security and Safety of Staff.*

The sessions adopted a round-table format and group discussions to promote greater dialogue and contact among participants. The reports of each session were prepared by the mini-rapporteurs with the aim to capture the main points of discussion and any conclusions reached. UNHCR's High Commissioner closed the NGO consultations.

Included in annex to this report are the Annual Consultations agenda, a list of participants, a list of side-meetings held during the Consultations and a summary of the evaluations from the participants.

The full report may also be accessed at www.unhcr.org and www.icva.ch.

Prepared with the assistance of resource persons from the following organizations:

Academy for Educational Development – Arakan Project – Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network – Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development – Asia Women's Human Rights Council – Asylum Access – Burmese Rohingya Community Australia – Canadian Council for Refugees – CARE International – Caritas Colombia – Caritas Ecuador – Caritas Internationalis – Concern Worldwide – COERR Bangkok Refugee Center – Community and Family Services International – Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa – Danish Refugee Council – European Council on Refugees and Exiles – Flemish Refugee Action – Fundación Ambiente y Sociedad – Group 484 – Handicap International – Heartland Alliance's National Immigrant Justice Centre – Helsinki Citizens Assembly – HIAS Kenya – InterAid Uganda – International Catholic Migration Commission – International Council of Voluntary Agencies – International Detention Coalition – International Disabled Alliance – International Rescue Committee – Jordan River Foundation – KoZon – London Detainee Support Group – National Council of Churches in Australia – Norwegian Refugee Council – Office africain pour le développement et la coopération – Organization for Refuge Asylum and Migration – Permanent Mission of Ecuador – Permanent Mission of Romania – ProAct Network – Refugee Council UK – Security Management Initiative HPCR International – Socio Legal Information Centre – Solar Cookers International – Sphere Project – Suara Rakyat Malaysia – University New South Wales – US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants – Vicaria de Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores – Women's Refugee Commission – World Vision International

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Elizabeth Campbell, RC USA
Raymond Lynch, InterAction

UNHCR'S ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOS

Rapporteur's Report

July 2009

Elizabeth Campbell, on behalf of NGOs
Rapporteur for the Annual Consultations

Opening Plenary Session with the Assistant High Commissioner Protection

This year, like many years in the past, our meeting comes on the cusp of new humanitarian emergencies. Speakers in the opening plenary raised concern over the unfolding disasters in Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Aside from the sheer magnitude of the displacement in Pakistan, of particular concern is the fact that traditional aid delivery methods fall short in responding to a population largely being housed and hosted by communities and families.

In Sri Lanka there are over 300,000 IDPs living in what was described by some as being like detention camps. Sri Lanka stands as an example of the closure of humanitarian space—where the victims themselves are unable to access the protection they deserve and where the organizations who can and should be providing assistance are barred from accessing the community.

In the short-term, concern over the global financial situation continues to preoccupy UNHCR and its NGO partners at all levels.

Now and in the longer term, a policy issue that will increasingly occupy the humanitarian agenda is that of climate change. As environmental degradation and loss of livelihoods increasingly drive forced migration, will such persons be considered refugees under the 1951 Refugee Convention? If not, what kind of legal structure should be in place to protect them? Related to that is the pressure from parts of the international community on UNHCR to extend its role in natural disasters, which is currently under discussion at headquarters.



REGIONAL BUREAUX SESSIONS

Europe Bureau

Access for asylum-seekers in the EU is difficult if not impossible. For instance in Libya there is increasing cooperation with the Italian authorities to contain migration or to engage in the act of “push-backs.” NGOs welcomed the strong stance taken by UNHCR on this issue.

Although the EU continues to work to harmonize its asylum policies, great variations persist in the quality of protection provided from country to country, causing secondary movement and calling into question the fairness of the Dublin Regulation, which requires asylum-seekers to claim asylum in the first country they reach on entering the EU.

It is hoped that resettlement initiatives will continue to expand, including through the development of a common EU resettlement scheme. Given the scale of global need, it will be important to advocate that resettlement should not be compromised by any inter-Europe relocation efforts from places like Malta.

Recommendations

- EU Commission should become more involved in the NGO consultations

- Continue harmonizing policies and practices with an emphasis on improving quality in the Stockholm Program
- Increase focus on IDPs and the issue of statelessness
- Continue UNHCR-NGO advocacy cooperation against violations of international law by European states, including the recent push-backs by Italy

Africa Bureau

The Africa Bureau shares with the Europe Bureau the concern over large numbers of mixed migration flows from Southern to Northern Africa. In addition, scores have lost their lives this year attempting to cross the Gulf of Aden. Large numbers are also moving into the Southern African Region, where there, too, policies increasingly restrict movement and entry.

Many conflicts spill over borders and span multiple countries. UNHCR thus emphasizes situation management rather than a country by country response to help ensure consistency across the region.

Family unity continues to be an issue in the resettlement process. Families are torn apart—some left behind and others resettled to different countries, often because the composition of some African families does not fit the more narrow definition of resettlement countries. Family reunification is perhaps the key factor for successful integration in host countries; thus, the definition needs to be broader.

The repatriation operation into Southern Sudan is largely positive, though the relief to development gap is more like a canyon than a gap. Budgets need to be fully funded in order to support the successful completion of the operations.

NGOs expressed deep concern with the plan of the Tanzanian authorities to forcibly return Burundian refugees from Mtabila camp and urged UNHCR to more strongly and publicly advocate on the refugees' behalf.

Finally, with the advent of communication technologies reaching the most remote corners of the world, refugees are increasingly finding ways to express themselves locally and globally through various media. In some places like Namibia, this has caused a very harsh response by the government authorities.

Recommendations

- Build capacity of local NGOs in Somalia to respond since external actors are unable
- Prioritize and invest in the Best Interest Determinations for unaccompanied minors
- Address protracted refugee situations, ensuring local integration is a component

Asia and the Pacific Bureau

Urban refugees are of particular interest within Asia, because almost 90 percent of the 12.2 million people of concern to HCR live in urban settings.

Session participants generated 15 options for fostering closer collaboration between UNHCR, refugee communities, and NGOs on protection questions within Asia that HCR will consider pursuing in the coming year:

- Conduct mapping exercises of existing agencies and their areas of specialization
- Institutionalize good practices through web-based resources and information-sharing
- Build capacity of local NGOs that are working in places where UNHCR cannot access
- Focus on the provision of livelihoods and the right to work as a protection tool
- Conduct joint training with NGOs and UNHCR on protection issues of local importance
- Expand the range of partners that HCR will seek to involve
- Develop partnerships with agencies beyond immigration authorities
- Support community-based approaches to refugee protection
- Include participation of refugee women
- Advocate for an end to the use of detention for migration purposes at every opportunity
- In the absence of Convention ratification, focusing on the realization of refugee rights
- Develop more sustainable solutions to transient housing for urban refugees

Although NGOs welcomed the opportunity to brainstorm with UNHCR on positive solutions to urban refugee problems within the region, concern was expressed that the session was not able to cover Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Americas Bureau

There are over three million IDPs in Colombia. Indigenous persons especially witnessed increased violence over the last year. The military has been heavily involved in the humanitarian response, blurring the roles of humanitarian and military actors and responsibilities.

There have, however, been two important achievements: Ecuador's adoption of a national policy on refugee protection that will lend to the recognition and registration of 50,000 refugees and the establishment of a UNHCR office in the Dominican Republic.

The Mexico Plan of Action continues to provide the strategic framework in which many issues are addressed. Many of the South American countries continue to be interested in resettlement but call upon international donors to support their efforts. The twinning projects, especially with Canada, were a reported success.

One of the particular challenges in this region is a lack of NGO partners focused on refugees. A recent disappointment stems from the loss of a UNHCR position that focused on AGDM, which will make it difficult to implement the accountability framework.

Recommendation:

- Organize an inter-governmental meeting in the Americas on humanitarian situations

Middle East North Africa Bureau

This region hosts the largest numbers of refugees worldwide (most of which are in urban settings), largely lacks an asylum system, and has no prospects for local integration, all of which continue to make protection challenging. Moreover, there are huge numbers of stateless persons for whom there is no immediate remedy.

A recent and celebrated exception is the resettlement of some stateless Palestinian refugees from Iraq. This experience increased the cooperation between UNHCR and UNRWA and solidified the fact that resettlement does not undermine the right of return. An updated

interpretation of Article 1(d) of the 1951 Refugee Convention to make the interpretation more inclusive and in line with UNRWA is forthcoming.

Notable developments in awareness-raising include the UNHCR commissioned study of the role of Islamic law and thought on asylum; an anticipated study on Islam and citizenship; an attempt to update the Arab Convention on Refugees within the Arab League; and a forthcoming study by the Policy Development and Evaluation Service of UNHCR on best practices in urban settings and lessons learned from the experiences in Damascus and Amman.



THEMATIC SESSIONS

Protracted Refugee Situations (PRS)

There are currently approximately six million refugees living in thirty PRS, the majority of which are located in the global South and many of whom are in urban environments. Apart from the general human rights violations experienced by other refugee populations, refugees in PRS also face problems associated with a lack of certainty (and therefore ability to plan) about their futures; in some cases, extended periods of times in forced encampment; and in other cases, a lack of international attention towards their cases slipping them into “forgotten refugee” populations and placing them in the “too hard” basket when it comes to exploration of potential durable solutions.

Recommendations:

- Viewing all of the durable solutions comprehensively
- Building on positive efforts and experiences of naturalization
- Mapping the cost to host communities of maintaining PRS
- Moving away from the “care and maintenance” discourse and associated funding streams for PRS and instead viewing PRS within the context of broader development
- Recognizing and incorporating protracted IDP situations
- Using a definition of PRS that is qualitative rather than simply quantitative
- Focusing on the right to identity as a priority
- For IDPs, sequence program delivery to prevent PRS
- Ensuring access to secondary education to increase employability

Displacement in Urban Settings

The forthcoming urban refugee policy will be rights based and community based. It will validate the urban setting as a place where protection can happen and where services will be delivered and solutions found. The preliminary findings will be incorporated into the High Commissioner’s dialogue. The findings from the policy rollout must be incorporated into the global needs assessment.

It is expected that community based organizations will play an increasingly significant role in urban settings. There will be a need for a lot of education, especially with donors. The concept “refugee impacted area” will need to be extended to urban neighborhoods as well.

Communication technologies will be key in reaching urban refugees and transmitting important information. Work opportunities will largely be found in the informal economy. Livelihood strategies must be in sync with the local economies and opportunities.

In situations where invisibility is chosen as a form of protection by the refugee over identification, there is a need to develop strategies to reach out to CBOs in order to be able to service these refugees indirectly.

Recommendations:

- In connection with the release of the urban refugee policy, UNHCR and NGOs should collaborate on the development of a best practices handbook or compendium. Examples should be sent to the Evaluation and Policy Unit at UNHCR in view of the upcoming HC Dialogue in December 2009.
- UNHCR and NGOs should collaborate on piloting implementation of the new policy in several locations, perhaps focusing on identification of, and services, to the most vulnerable.
- There is a need for further discussion of issues not covered in the session, including detention, relationship with security agencies, access to health, and urban IDPs.

Disabilities in Displacement

Some of the challenges of disabled persons in refugee situations include: (1) access to basic services, as they remain invisible at the very first stages of an emergency, and are often barred access by their families, communities, and even host populations; (2) low levels of awareness among humanitarian actors and clusters of the issue; (3) disabled persons are not considered in early recovery plans, and they are often overlooked or discriminated against for resettlement; (4) status determination can be hampered in the case of refugees with mental disabilities for lack of “credibility;” and (5) national legal framework are either faulty or nonexistent.

Recommendations:

- Engage in early and complete identification
- Create a critical mass for outreach and lobbying, especially with donors
- Develop a common framework, which could be done through a Conclusion
- Consider having disabilities as the theme for World Refugee Day in 2010
- Engage the treaty body for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Undertake a comprehensive gap analysis for existing national legal frameworks
- Ensure resettlement and repatriation take place to areas where services are available to persons with disabilities

Internally Displaced Persons

In 2008 there were only two countries for which there was up-to-date comprehensive information on IDPs. The guidance on profiling was issued last year, under the auspices of the IASC.

Information supports a focus on livelihoods options as well as on durable solutions. It enables agencies to get information on a group which is being neglected. It can provide a tool from

which to carry out strong advocacy on behalf of IDPs. It can provide baseline information. It helps agencies ensure that they are not overlapping with each other and gives opportunities to IDPs to input their views. The characteristics of host populations can also be integrated. Further, profiling provides clear benefits in terms of advocacy, ownership, transparency, and opportunities for replicability.

Recommendation:

- Inter-agency profiling exercises should be taking place systematically to ensure identification of IDPs, as well as an understanding of their location, numbers and characteristics.

Global Needs Assessment

The goal of the GNA is to map needs more comprehensively; present plans and resources required to address needs; and set targets to achieve results. With all field operations now doing this, it allows for comparison across operations. In the pilot GNA, 30% of needs were unmet. The experiences from one of the pilot countries, Ecuador, reveal the importance of ensuring that NGOs are full partners in the exercise. The GNA in Ecuador has helped to support Ecuador's national policy and provided the means for the national registration process currently underway, both of which significantly improved protection and rights for refugees. The findings of the global GNA will inform the 2010 budget.

Recommendations:

- Include refugees themselves and partners in all phases of the GNA, including prioritizing needs
- Link with other common needs assessments like the process being led by OCHA
- Ensure rollout of new system does not hold up sub-agreements
- Ensure that rights are fully considered and addressed

Security and Safety of Staff

Ongoing concern about transparency of objectives on integrated aid and military UN missions in the field was expressed. There is an inherent conflict and hazard posed for aid workers when the situations have not yet reached a post-conflict stage. Often in these environments there is a transfer of risk from international actors to national ones. A better formula based on needs versus risks should be developed as a basis for humanitarian operations.

There is a need to overcome limited understandings of local politics and dynamics through increased training of staff. It was noted that remote management operations do not allow for flexibility of decision-making in the field, which incorporates dialogues with armed groups or perpetrators of conflict.

Recommendations:

- UNHCR and donors must play a greater role in negotiating with states, especially in a context where NGOs are at risk of expulsion
- UNHCR, and not security staff, needs to explain purpose and implementation of aid programs

NGOs and Resettlement

Greater NGO involvement and cooperation with UNHCR is extremely beneficial for resettlement and should be encouraged. Resettlement is a labor intensive activity. By collaborating UNHCR can augment its human resources. There is a strong value of NGOs being involved in selection missions.

The importance of the continuity of information flow for refugees being resettled and for those working with them, from asylum country to destination country, was stressed.

UNHCR does not support blanket DNA testing, not least because it is quite expensive. Family reunion is an essential—if not the most important—component of resettlement.

Recommendations:

- UNHCR should develop SOPs for NGO resettlement referrals
- States should not use ‘integration potential’ as selection criteria.
- Conduct survey of currently successful NGO involvement in resettlement
- Develop good practice models of NGO/UNHCR cooperation in resettlement
- Enhance information campaigns about resettlement aimed at refugees
- DNA should not be required for all family reunion case

Closing Plenary Session with the High Commissioner

The High Commissioner expressed concerns about the shrinking of humanitarian space. The changing nature of conflicts where there is a multiplicity of actors, makes security unpredictable. In many countries, there is a hardening of attitudes toward foreigners, refugees, and migrants in the name of national sovereignty. Civil-military relations continue to be complex. Increasingly, peace-keeping missions are deployed when there is no peace to keep and so the peace keepers themselves become a party to the conflict. Armed forces increasingly believe it is their role to engage in humanitarian operations, which blurs the lines and leads to insecurity. Integrated missions also make the delivery of aid and protection challenging. There needs to be a separation between the Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator functions.

Moreover, there is a shrinking of asylum space as well. Xenophobia is on the rise across the world, but especially in Europe. Climate change, demographic pressure, and urbanization are all trends that are seen as threatening and often refugees and foreigners are blamed for these changes.

The global media increasingly focuses only on one situation at a time, leaving many dire humanitarian situations out of the spotlight. Without media, there is no money. Without resources, humanitarian crises become forgotten.

Though UNHCR is suffering from the financial crisis, it is not expected that there will be any cuts in programs in 2009.

Annexes

- I. Programme of the Annual Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations**
- II. List of Participants**
- III. Agenda of Side Meetings at the Annual Consultations with NGOs**
- IV. Evaluation of the 2009 Annual Consultations with NGOs**

PROGRAMME OF THE
Annual Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations
 29 June – 1 July 2009
 Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

Monday 29 June 2009

Palais des Nations Geneva

11h00 – 13h00 **Plenary Session** (interpretation Arabic-English-French-Spanish)

Room XIX **Welcome and Opening Address**

Erika Feller, Assistant High Commissioner Protection
 Lloyd Dakin, Director, Division of External Relations, UNHCR
 Catherine Walker, Head, Secretariat and Inter-Agency Service, UNHCR
 Bernard Doyle, Head, Inter-Agency Unit, UNHCR
 Ed Schenkenberg, Coordinator, International Council of Voluntary Agencies

13h00 – 15h00 **Lunch**

15h00 – 16h25 **Regional Sessions**

Room XXII **Asia and the Pacific Bureau** (interpretation English-Russian)

With the number of refugees and asylum-seekers on the increase in many countries across Asia, the Bureau would like to focus this year's discussion with NGO partners on the particular challenges faced by refugees and asylum seekers in urban areas and what needs to be done to increase the services available to them and their livelihood opportunities. Given limited durable solutions opportunities in many cases, the Bureau would like to look broadly at interim solutions.

Moderator: Colin Gonsalves, Socio Legal Information Centre
 Speaker(s): Janet Lim, Director
 Pascale Moreau, Deputy Director
 Terry Morel, Deputy Director

Room XXIII **Americas Bureau** (interpretation English-Spanish)

The Director of the Americas Bureau will give a brief presentation on regional developments since the last NGO Consultations in June, and regional priorities for 2010-2011. The Director will also highlight the situation of urban refugees in the region and present UNHCR's strategy in the Americas to address the specific challenges which are inherent in urban settings.

Moderator: Rodrigo Joaquin Tupper Altamirano, Vicaria de Pastoral Social y de los Trabajadores
 Speaker(s): Merida Morales-O'Donnell, Director
 Eva Demant, Deputy Director

16h35 – 18h00 **Regional Sessions**

Room XXII **Europe Bureau** (interpretation English-Russian)

The session on Europe will review UNHCR's priorities and explore ways of reinforcing partnership with NGOs in this region. With respect to Western and Central Europe, the main concerns continue to relate to access to territory and asylum procedures, the quality of asylum procedures and decision-making, standards of protection, the promotion of resettlement and of integration of refugees. Encouraging positive attitudes towards mixed flows of migrants, including refugees and asylum-seekers, and combating racism and xenophobia remain high on the agenda. UNHCR

supports efforts to develop a Common European Asylum System in the EU and to establish a European Asylum Support Office. Both should help to achieve convergence of practices around higher standards, not around the lowest common denominator. With respect to Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the session will address the need to strengthen protection capacity and continue to make progress in achieving durable solutions for internally displaced persons and refugees, particularly those living in protracted refugee situations.

Moderator: Chris Nash, European Council on Refugees and Exiles
 Speaker(s): Pirkko Kourula, Director
 Udo Janz, Deputy Director
 Angela Li Rosi, Senior Policy Adviser
 Maja Ilic, Executive Assistant

Room XXIII MENA Bureau (interpretation Arabic-English-French)

The vast majority of refugees in the MENA region are in urban areas, where ensuring their protection remains a challenge for UNHCR and its partners. Against this background, the focus of the MENA regional session will be on the protection of refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR in an urban context. The discussion will be geared towards identifying ways and means to maintain and further develop the protection space in the region.

Moderator: Zina Khoury, Jordan River Foundation
 Speaker(s): Radhouane Nouicer, Director
 Karim Abdul Ghoul, Senior Policy Adviser
 Andrew Harper, Head, Iraq Support Unit
 Reem Alsalem, Senior Desk Officer
 Mohamed Osman, Senior Desk Officer
 Annalisa Montecalvo, Executive Assistant

18h30 Reception – UNHCR Cafeteria, UNHCR main building (94, rue de Montbrillant)

Tuesday 30 June 2009

Palais des Nations Geneva

10h00 – 11h25 Regional Session

Room XIX Africa Bureau (interpretation English-French)

The discussion will start with a brief presentation on main developments and challenges in Africa since the last NGOs Annual Consultations. It will be followed by a question and answer session on any issues the NGO community would like to raise with the Africa Bureau.

Moderator: Scholastica Nasinyama, InterAid Uganda
 Speaker(s): Mengesha Kebede, Officer-In-Charge of the Africa Bureau
 Steven Corliss, Deputy Director
 Solange Senaize, Senior Desk Officer
 François Marrillet, Senior Desk Officer

11h35 – 13h00 Thematic Sessions (interpretation English-French)

Room XIX Internal Displacement Situations: Getting the numbers and facts right

Appropriately targeted programmes must be based on commonly-agreed numbers of beneficiaries, their situation and needs. In many situations, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) tend to be 'invisible' by choice or because of their displacement situation. In these cases it is challenging for governments and agencies to reconcile numbers and facts. The aim of the session is to identify the challenges of working together – amongst agencies on the one hand, and with governments on the other - to agree on numbers and on the situation and needs of IDP populations. This common analysis is essential both to mobilize capacities to provide protection and assistance to IDPs, and to ensure that the programmes developed take special vulnerabilities into account.

Moderator: Jean-François Durieux, Deputy Director, Division of Operational Services, UNHCR
 Speaker(s): Marzia Montemurro, IDMC, Norwegian Refugee Council
 Steven Muncy, Community and Family Services International
 Kathrine Starup, Danish Refugee Council
 Kimberly Roberson, Chief, Field Information and Coordination Section, UNHCR

Room XXII *The Global Needs Assessment: Why it is important and what it means for partners*

Responding to the needs of people of concern to UNHCR has always been a challenge for various reasons including a lack of resources and the difficulties in capturing, projecting and presenting needs.

The Global Needs Assessment or GNA, is a new way for UNHCR to comprehensively express the needs of populations of concern worldwide and better present the plans, activities and level of resources required to meet those needs. It also allows UNHCR to clearly show what the very negative human consequences are of needs not being met.

This year, after a pilot GNA in eight countries in 2008, UNHCR rolled-out the GNA worldwide alongside its results-based management software tool *Focus*.

The traditional involvement of governments, implementing and operational partners is more important than ever with the GNA's increased focus on more comprehensive planning.

This session is designed to discuss and exchange views with partners on the GNA and also show the enabling *Focus* software tool.

Moderator: Mamadou Ndiaye, Office africain pour le développement et la coopération
 Speaker(s): Ninette Kelley, Office for Organizational Development and Management, UNHCR
 Martha Nunez, Fundación Ambiente y Sociedad
 Volker Turk, Director, Office for Organizational Development and Management, UNHCR

Room XXIII *Disabilities in Displacement*

To share experience and information, identify gaps and priorities and make recommendations to improve collaboration among all stakeholders in view of addressing the protection risks, needs and issues faced by persons with disabilities in situations of displacement.

According to WHO 7%-10% of the world population consists of persons with disabilities. As of end 2008, there were an estimated 36,5 million persons who had been displaced by armed conflict. A conservative guess therefore would mean that at least 2,5 million of them are disabled, although it is likely that the number is far higher. While initial progress has been made toward increasing staff knowledge and awareness and enhancing response for persons with disabilities, for sustainable and systematic impact, this process requires immediate as well as long-term action. In particular, the need for inclusive humanitarian action and community development as well as attitudes and behaviour changes is called for. Although the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol are not universally ratified, they set out general principles that can guide the development of responses and other measures (e.g. non-discrimination, inclusion, participation and accessibility), as well as other important standards (e.g. "reasonable accommodation" and "universal design") for persons with disabilities when they have been displaced.

Moderator: Philippe Guiton, World Vision International
 Speaker(s): Jean-Pierre Delomier, Handicap International
 George Okoth-Obbo, Director, Division of International Protection Services, UNHCR
 Stefan Trömmel, International Disabled Alliance

13h00 – 15h00 *Lunch*

15h00 – 16h25 *Thematic Sessions (interpretation English-French)*

Room XIX *Displacement in Urban Settings*

With UNHCR nearing completion of a new policy on persons of concern in urban settings and the High Commissioner's Dialogue focussing on this subject at the end of the year, this double-session will focus on elaborating good practice and rights-based recommendations in four subject areas: in session 1, *access to services and outreach and identification of the most vulnerable*; in session 2, *livelihoods and mobility opportunities and strategies*. Given the complexity of issues, limits of time, and the commitment to identify distinct practices and recommendations, the sessions will focus specifically on the situation of refugees and asylum seekers in urban settings. After an introduction to briefly sketch the subject of urban refugees and the trajectory of recent UNHCR policy work,

including NGO engagement, presenters will frame the four subjects for discussion by offering their practical experience, an example of good practice, and two recommendations.

Moderator: Claudine Haenni, Women Refugee's Commission

Speaker(s): George Okoth-Obbo, Director, Division of International Protection Services
James Thomson, National Council of Churches in Australia

Presenter(s): Duncan Breen, Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa
Geraldine Chatelard, Consultant to International Catholic Migration Commission Jordan
Janet Ferreira, Caritas Ecuador
Gaella Roudy-Fraser, Senior Livelihoods Officer, UNHCR
Rufino Seva, COERR Bangkok Refugee Center

Room XXII *Protracted Refugee Situations*

The High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges in December 2008 provided a powerful forum for all stakeholders to discuss Protracted Refugee Situations. The consultations with NGOs offer the possibility to further those discussions, debating key aspects of the protracted refugee situations and in the process sharing experience, identifying policy and operational gaps and recommending concrete steps in addressing the most pressing needs of refugees in protracted situations.

Moderator: Manisha Thomas, International Council of Voluntary Agencies

Speaker(s): Arnauld Akodjenou, Director, Division of Operational Services, UNHCR
Emily Arnold-Fernandez, Asylum Access
Mary Purkey, Canadian Council for Refugees

Group discussions:

Facilitators: Eileen Pittaway, University New South Wales
Miodrag Shreshta, Group 484
Mary Joy Pigozzi, Academy for Educational Development
Karina Sarmiento, Asylum Access

Room XXIII *NGOs and Resettlement*

Effective partnerships in resettlement with all stakeholders, in particular with Governments, NGOs and International Organizations are key to successful protection delivery. This session will discuss opportunities for greater involvement of NGOs in resettlement activities, focusing on the roles of UNHCR's Implementing Partners in the countries of asylum in identifying refugees in need of resettlement and in providing support to vulnerable refugees. Further, the session will explore the mechanism to enhance information sharing on individual cases between NGOs in countries of asylum and Resettlement States and NGOs of receiving end, to ensure coherent and appropriate assistance are provided to refugees throughout the resettlement process.

Moderator: Alistair Griggs, Refugee Council UK

Speaker(s): Jennifer Ashton, Senior Resettlement Coordinator, Resettlement Service
Annette Bombeke, European Council on Refugees and Exiles
Anne Mwangi-Wambugu, HIAS Kenya

16h35 – 18h00 *Thematic Sessions (interpretation English-French)*

Room XIX *Displacement in Urban Settings* (continued)

The session continues.

Room XXII *Protracted Refugee Situations* (continued)

Participants of the meeting will be divided in four working groups to identify key operational and policy gaps, highlight good practices and make recommendations.

Room XXIII *Security and Safety of Staff*

The aim of the session is to highlight some of the current concerns and practices from both the NGO and UN perspectives and to share information and experiences with a view to improving understanding and collaboration on both practical and coordination issues. Issues of particular interest are the importance of perception for the security of humanitarian activities and workers; the particular vulnerabilities of NGOs in the field; and the role of security in ensuring the viability and sustainability of aid programmes.

Moderator: Maarten Merkelbach, Security Management Initiative, HPCR International
Speaker(s): Paul O'Brien, Concern Worldwide
Paul Stromberg, Chief, Field Safety Section, UNHCR

Wednesday 1 July 2009

Palais des Nations Geneva

10h00 – 11h00 **Plenary Session** (interpretation Arabic-English-French-Spanish)

Room XIX *Report back on the NGO Consultations*

Nicoleta Birladianu, Permanent Mission of Romania, Rapporteur for the ExCom Bureau
Elizabeth Campbell, Rapporteur to the Annual Consultations with NGOs
Lloyd Dakin, Director, Division of External Relations, UNHCR
Bernard Doyle, Head, Inter-Agency Unit, UNHCR
Manisha Thomas, Policy Officer, International Council of Voluntary Agencies

11h00 – 13h00 **Plenary Session** (interpretation Arabic-English-French-Spanish)

Room XIX *Closing Address by*

António Guterres, High Commissioner for Refugees

Annex II

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29 June – 1 July 2009
Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland

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ANNEX III

AGENDA OF SIDE MEETINGS
Annual Consultations with Non-Governmental Organizations
29 June – 1 July 2009
Palais des Nations Geneva
Switzerland

Monday 29 June 2009
Palais des Nations, Geneva

13h30 – 14h30 Room XIX

The Search for Regional Solutions: The 10 Point Plan of Action and Rohingyas in Asia

Jean-Marie Garelli, Senior Desk Officer, Asia Bureau, UNHCR
Kamal Hussein, Burmese Rohingya Community Australia
Chris Lewa, The Arakan Project
Alice Nah, Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network
Anna Samson, APRRN

This meeting will use the case study of Rohingya refugees across the Asia-Pacific region to discuss more broadly the issue of developing regional solutions to protracted refugee situations and ensuring protection outcomes in mixed migration flows.

In particular, speakers will:

- (a) provide some background to the situation confronting the Rohingya in states across the region and the context of their migration, including endemic SGBV, arbitrary detention, torture, precarious livelihoods and statelessness;
- (b) discuss UNHCR's *10-Point-Plan of Action on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration Flows* and assess its practical application to the Rohingya case;
- (c) outline the preferred basic elements of "regional solutions" to the Rohingya and other protracted refugee situations - this will include a discussion of the limitations of the 10-point-plan, the Bali Process, and strategic use of resettlement; and
- (d) begin to develop strategies for NGOs to work together and with UNHCR to promote protection-centred regional solutions to refugee crises in the Asia-Pacific.

13h30 – 14h30 Room XXII

Integrated Solutions to Cooking Needs and Safe Water

Sonia Heptonstall, Solar Cookers International
Joyce Jett, Solar Cookers International
Valentine Ndibalema, Senior Technical Officer, UNHCR
Faustine Odaba, Solar Cookers International
Derk Rijks, KoZon

The focus of the meeting is to discuss how food preparation needs and the provision of potable water can be met through an integrated approach of using simple technologies. Approximately one third of the world's population still cooks over open fires utilizing traditional fuels such as wood, charcoal and other forms of biomass. Through the utilization of solar energy and solar cookers combined with fuel efficient stoves, hay baskets or fireless cookers, dependence on traditional fuels can be substantially reduced while decreasing environmental devastation and drastically reduce smoke related illnesses. Furthermore, utilizing solar energy

to pasteurize water by use of the solar cooker can reduce water borne diseases such as those caused by e-coli, Hepatitis A and Rotaviruses.

13h30 – 14h30 Room XXIII

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Refugee Rights: A Protection Gap?

Jesse Bernstein, Researcher
 Neil Grungras, Organization for Refugee, Asylum & Migration
 Rachel Levitan, Helsinki Citizens Assembly
 Anne Mwangi-Wambugu, HIAS Refugee Trust Kenya
 George Okoth-Obbo, Director, Division of International Protection Services, UNHCR

Human rights violations perpetrated against people due to their real or perceived gender identity and sexual orientation constitute an entrenched pattern of serious concern affecting many millions of individuals around the globe. Many of those with differing gender or sexual identities live in constant fear, driving them to search for safe and secure refuge outside of their national borders. This Side Panel will explore the challenges in providing protection and asylum to refugees and asylum-seekers on the grounds of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. In particular, the panel will identify specific protection issues across a range of thematic areas which require further development and analysis in light of the experience of LGBT refugees and asylum seekers. These areas include: refugee status determination, protection of social/economic rights and physical security in the country of first asylum, detention, and resettlement. The Side Panel will also draw attention to global human rights developments in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity, and will consider the ability of UNHCR and the NGO community to provide a basis for improved protection for these sexual and gender minorities. Finally, the panel will highlight UNHCR's 2008 Guidance Note and on practical ways to benefit from and move forward on its recommendations.

Tuesday 30 June 2009

Palais des Nations, Geneva

8h30 – 9h30 Room XIX

The Forgotten Refugees in Latin America

Msgr. Hector Fabio Henao, Caritas Colombia
 Sr. Janette Ferreira, Caritas Ecuador
 Martina Liebsch, Caritas Internationalis
 Merida Morales-O'Donnell, Director, Bureau for the Americas, UNHCR
 Carlos Santos Repetto, Permanent Mission of Ecuador

Rationale: When it comes to refugees and IDPs in Latin America the continent is often forgotten. The issue of refugees and IDPs from Colombia is meanwhile affecting the whole region. Currently Colombia has one of the largest population of IDPs (close to 4 million people). Nearly 70 % of IDPs and refugees live in urban settings: capital cities and large or medium-sized towns. Displaced women and children are particularly hit by the violence. UNHCR reports that up to 70 % of Colombians refugees and IDPs live below the poverty line. The responses are not at all satisfying. The commitments made in the context of the Mexico Plan of Action are not yet implemented.

Expectations: Raise awareness about the Colombian refugees in other Latin American Countries and elaborate recommendations on ways of strengthening cooperation with relevant stakeholders on how to better address the regional implications of this humanitarian crisis.

8h30 – 9h30 Room XXII

Launch of the 2009 World Refugee Survey

Anna Samson, Asia Forum for Human Rights and Development
Lavinia Limon, US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
Temmee Lee, SUARAM

Panelists will introduce *World Refugee Survey 2009* and discuss reporting and evaluation of refugee protection and advocacy around the world. Of special note, will be the *Survey's* transition to an interactive, wiki format to allow more immediate, real-time reporting and action. Copies of WRS09 will be available.

8h30 – 9h30 Room XXIII

Environmental Management and Human Displacement: How are we doing?

Jock Baker, CARE International
David Stone, ProAct Network

Environmental impacts are seen in virtually every refugee, returnee or IDP operation, both as a result of conflicts and natural disasters. Some may be short-term but many cause significant long-term impact – something which climate change is already magnifying.

This session will explore how and why environmental considerations should be addressed in a timely and consistent manner from the start of a refugee or IDP emergency, drawing on recent experiences in supporting IASC clusters and other examples.

Examples of good practice will be highlighted while at the same time describing how “business as usual” approach of international agencies may no longer be appropriate or acceptable in many countries. Lessons learned suggest that more appropriate and sustainable environmental initiatives may be needed. But is there sufficient willingness or understanding within the humanitarian sector to make the necessary changes?

13h30 – 14h30 Room XXII

Sphere Project Handbook Revision 2009-2010

Avishan Chanani and Aninia Nadig, The Sphere Project

The Sphere Project Handbook – *Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response* – is being revised, to acknowledge the significant changes – both technical and regarding humanitarian practice – since the 2004 (current) edition. The aim is to keep the Handbook relevant to humanitarian workers and to the populations affected by conflict and calamity. The new edition is to be published in late 2010.

Rather than change the handbook altogether, the aim is to update the qualitative and quantitative indicators and guidance notes as needed, and to improve the existing content. Latest developments in the sector, in particular issues relating to climate change, disaster risk reduction and protection, as well as the Humanitarian Reform process and the Cluster Approach, will also be taken into consideration.

The revision is a very broad consultative process involving practitioners in all sectors and affected populations. Focal points for each of the five chapters and the cross cutting issues of the current Handbook, each supported by a Working Group, will conduct consultation meetings. The Humanitarian Charter will be reviewed and revised as felt appropriate.

The revision process will be outlined together with ways in which you can engage and participate.

13h30 – 14h30 Room XXIII

Defining UNHCR's SGBV Agenda 2010-2011

Heidi Leihmann, International Rescue Committee
George Okoth-Obbo, Director, Division of International Protection Services, UNHCR

UNHCR seeks to advance its achievements and address the constraints of prevention of, and response to sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), which as one of the most challenging protection concerns for women and girls. UNHCR intends doing this through the elaboration of a clearly defined agenda for the work on prevention and response for UNHCR 2010-2012. The aim of the three-year SGBV agenda is to improve the Organization's ability to work in partnership to provide protection for people of concern. Through this session UNHCR envisages drawing on the inspiration and experience of the NGO community who are at the frontline of addressing SGBV. As the session will take place during the Annual NGO/UNHCR consultations 2009 in Geneva, it avails NGO partners a strategic opportunity to share their views on the direction that UNHCR's work to address SGBV should take.

Wednesday 1 July 2009
Palais des Nations Geneva

8h30 – 9h30 Room XXII

Alternatives to Immigration Detention

Mary Meg McCarthy, Heartland Alliance's National Immigrant Justice Centre
Grant Mitchell, International Detention Coalition
Jerome Phelps, London Detainee Support Group
Jane Rasmussen, Senior Legal Officer, Division of International Protection Services, UNHCR
Pieter Stockmans, Flemish Refugee Action

Background:

Governments around the world are increasingly using detention as a migration management tool, with hundreds of thousands of men, women and children detained in conditions falling below international standards and that deny basic rights. Where a government intends to detain a person for immigration-related reasons, it should first consider and pursue alternatives before detention, in compliance with international and regional human rights standards. However many governments that utilize alternatives to detention, focus on restrictive or intrusive options, or on different forms of detention, such as electronic tagging or family detention centres.

Expectation:

Individuals and groups are invited to share experiences of examples of alternatives to detention, good practice, challenges and lessons learned and to input directly into a handbook being written by the International Detention Coalition for States and civil society on alternatives to detention. The session aims to draw out the key components required to implement community-based alternatives to detention that ensure the rights, dignity and wellbeing of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, while meeting government and community expectations.

8h30 – 9h30 Room XXIII

***Implementing the Conclusion on Women and Girls at Risk
Economic Empowerment: One Way to Prevent and Respond to SGBV***

Eileen Pittaway, University New South Wales

Naoko Obi, Chief, Community Development Gender Equality and Children Section, UNHCR

Joan Timoney, Womens Refugee Commission

Geraldine Doney, Asia Women's Human Rights Council

The Conclusion on the Protection of Women and Girls at Risk was adopted at the 2006 ExCom. An International NGO working group formed to monitor the use of the Conclusion and to ensure that the commitments made in the Conclusion were implemented. They will present a report of the progress to date and the challenges to its full realization. Discussion will focus on strategies to improve the protection of women and girls and will focus on the issue of livelihoods as a protection measure.

Livelihoods interventions in UNHCR allow refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people (IDPs) to protect and build their own resources, and forge their own futures. This is critical to maintain their sense of purpose and normality, and their dignity.

Self-reliance amongst displaced women has also a strong protection aspect. Self reliance give women freedom from dependency, empower them and gain them respect and recognition. Self reliance enhances their capacity to support their families and their preparedness for return, local integration, or resettlement. Women who suffered SGBV can re-gain confidence in becoming self supporting and reintegrating themselves into the community, as active part of it.

ANNEX IV**EVALUATION OF THE
2009 ANNUAL CONSULTATIONS WITH NGOS**

This synopsis is based on the response of 58 participants, which represents 30% of the 179 organizations.

The results are divided into three categories:

- 1) General Evaluation
- 2) Regional Sessions
- 3) Thematic Sessions

1. General Evaluation:

The average rating for the Annual Consultations with NGOs was rated as 3.98 (good) for 2009. 9 out of 10 persons wanted to come back to the event next year and 8 out of 10 persons participated to more than 5 different sessions. The structure of the event was found to be better compared to the previous years.

2. Regional Sessions:

The average rating for the regional sessions varied from good to very good.

- a) **Africa Bureau:** 6 out of 10 persons found the overall session quality good or very good. Majority of the persons commented on the lack of time for discussions and the short duration of the session.
- b) **Americas Bureau:** 8 out of 10 persons found the overall session quality good or very good. Majority of the persons found the session relevant to their area of work.
- c) **Asia and the Pacific Bureau:** 7 out of 10 persons found the overall session quality good or very good. The constraints identified were the large number of participants and short time which did not allow getting engaged in in-depth discussions.
- d) **Europe Bureau:** 9 out of 10 persons found the overall session quality and the presentations good or very good. The majority found the debate opportunities and the duration of the session good or very good.
- e) **MENA Bureau:** 7 out of 10 persons found the presentations and the overall quality of the session good or very good. Many of the participants found the debate opportunities and the duration of the session as very satisfactory.

3. Thematic Sessions:

- a) **IDP Situations:** 6 out of 10 found the presentations good or very good. Some commented that the duration of the session was good, the speakers were knowledgeable, on the other hand presentations were too long and theoretical.
- b) **Global Needs Assessment:** 6 out of 10 persons found the overall quality of the session good or very good. Some commented that the moderator and the panel members spent too much time talking and did not provide enough time for questions and discussions.
- c) **Disabilities in Displacement:** 9 out of 10 persons found the overall quality of the session very good. Most participants commented that the small group sessions were very useful and that the model should be replicated in other meetings.
- d) **Displacement in Urban Settings:** 9 out of 10 persons found the overall quality of the sessions good or very good. Many participants commented that they found the session informative and vibrant, however many also complained about the lack of breaks.
- e) **Protracted Refugee Situations:** 7 out of 10 persons found the duration of the session and the overall quality of the session good or very good. Most participants also found the topics very relevant to their work, on the other hand many also complained about the length of the session and lack of breaks
- f) **NGOs and Resettlement:** 8 out of 10 persons found the overall quality of the session good. Some participants commented that more time was needed for discussions.
- g) **Security and Safety of Staff:** The high quality of the session was particularly remarked on by the participants. Participants commented highly on the relevance of the session for the NGOs and the speakers.