



Preliminary Summary Report on Feedback by States on Their Implementation of the Agenda for Protection

I. Introduction

The Agenda for Protection¹ and its Programme of Action, which resulted from the Global Consultations on International Protection,² set out an agreed framework for pursuing protection priorities globally. It was endorsed in 2002 by UNHCR's Executive Committee and welcomed by the General Assembly.³ Upon its adoption, the Executive Committee recognized that implementation of the Agenda would be a multi-year undertaking. While updates on progress achieved have been provided by UNHCR as well as by some States in the past, this has not been part of a concerted effort by all stakeholders.

At the June 2008 session of the Standing Committee, UNHCR announced a plan to elicit a country perspective on progress made in the implementation of the Agenda at the national level.⁴ UNHCR country offices were requested to contact their Government counterparts, and share with them a matrix on the goals, objectives and activities of the Agenda. Using the matrix to review and assess progress made towards specific Agenda objectives and remaining challenges, States were encouraged to reflect on their own performance both nationally and globally in the pursuit of protection objectives. The review would also be used as an occasion for a more comprehensive dialogue on protection at national level. Where feasible, the involvement of a fuller range of stakeholders, including international and regional organizations, civil society representatives and refugees themselves was encouraged.

¹ *Agenda for Protection*, Third edition, October 2003, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4714a1bf2.html>.

² UNHCR launched the Global Consultations on International Protection in late 2000 to engage States and other partners in a broad-ranging dialogue on refugee protection. The aim was to explore how best to revitalize the existing international protection regime while ensuring its flexibility to address new problems. The Agenda for Protection is one of the outcomes of the Global Consultations.

³ United Nations General Assembly, *Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa*, A/RES/57/183, 18 December 2002, preambular para. 10, and para. 6-7, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3f4354364.html>.

⁴ See: UNHCR, *Note on the Agenda for Protection*, EC/59/SC/CRP.12, 2 June 2008, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4868f5f42.html>.

Different approaches have been used to complete the matrix depending on the national context and the possibility to build upon existing comprehensive dialogues on protection, such as those initiated in countries where consultations under the Strengthening Protection Capacity Project (SPCP) have taken place. The approaches have ranged from a one-off interaction between the UNHCR country office and its relevant government counterparts on the matrix itself or its results, to more comprehensive national consultations in the form of a workshop around protection objectives, bringing in a fuller range of stakeholders. In Yemen, for instance, UNHCR facilitated a round-table with all relevant Government agencies, during which protection challenges were discussed for the first time in a comprehensive manner. Comprehensive discussions around the matrix also took place with UNHCR in a number of countries, including, for instance, in Burundi and Sudan. In another instance, it was reported that the exercise was an eye-opener for the responsible authorities, as it demonstrated that refugee protection goes far beyond deciding on refugee applications. From Canada, UNHCR has received separate feedback by, respectively, the Government and a non-governmental organization.

This note provides, firstly, an overview of the reports in response to the matrix, which UNHCR has received thus far.⁵ Secondly, selected objectives are analyzed for each of the six goals of the Agenda for Protection, based on the priorities highlighted in the feedback by States and issues identified as most challenging.

This summary report does not assess in detail the state of implementation of the Agenda for Protection by individual States. It is hoped, however, that more comprehensive discussions on the country matrices can take place between the relevant authorities, UNHCR and other stakeholders at the national level. The report should be read in conjunction with the 2008 Note on International Protection,⁶ which, for some areas, highlights remaining challenges which may not have been reflected in the State responses.

II. Overview of Feedback by States

The initiative was designed as a global exercise to review the implementation of the goals, objectives and activities of the Agenda for Protection. As of 1 October 2008, 42 States out of the 158 States which have participated in the Ministerial Conference in December 2001⁷ submitted a response. UNHCR would like to express particular appreciation to the Government of Bangladesh for its report, as it is the only non-signatory to the 1951

⁵ This summary report includes responses received until 1 October 2008.

⁶ *Note on International Protection*, UN Doc. A/AC.96/1053, 30 June 2008, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/486902122.html>.

⁷ See: Ministerial meeting of State Parties to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (Geneva, 12-13 December 2001), *List of participants*, HCR/MMSP/2001/08, <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/48eb66a92.pdf>. Participants included 125 States Parties to the 1951 Convention; 33 States and the Occupied Palestinian Territory attended the meeting as observers.

*Convention relating to the Status of Refugees*⁸ (“1951 Convention”) to have submitted a response so far.

All reports were received in matrix form. All countries reported on both progress and challenges. Some States provided very comprehensive feedback, whereas others limited themselves to those activities that were deemed to be relevant or considered as a priority for the country concerned. Overall, all the reports reflect a strong commitment to the goals, objectives and activities contained in the Agenda.

The reports contain numerous references to Executive Committee Conclusions on International Protection,⁹ thus confirming their importance as key reference documents in relation to the protection of refugees. Protection approaches adopted by UNHCR since 2002 have become part of the protection vocabulary of States. For instance, frequent references are found in the reports to age, gender, and diversity mainstreaming (“AGDM”), the need for a community-based approach, and participatory assessments.

There are different explanations for those States which have not been able to provide a report. In some cases, the exercise could not be initiated as institutional responsibility for refugee issues is being re-arranged. Limited capacity by the authorities to engage in what is a comprehensive exercise was reported by a number of countries, whereas political instability or emergencies made the exercise not feasible in some other countries. In States which have only recently started to work towards the creation of a national refugee protection system, a comprehensive review of the goals and objectives of the Agenda was deemed premature, as attention is for the moment given to more immediate protection issues. A few States which were not in a position to undertake the exercise expressed broad support, however, for the initiative, including their readiness to undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Agenda at a later stage.

Six years after its endorsement by the General Assembly, the Agenda continues to be seen as relevant for contemporary protection challenges. None of the 42 States which have submitted reports questioned the validity of any of the Agenda’s objectives. While the feedback has thus far been limited, this initiative is seen by some States as a way to support UNHCR in its global protection efforts. For instance, as a new member of the Executive Committee, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is looking forward to playing a more active role in addressing regional and global protection challenges. Canada committed itself vis-à-vis UNHCR to be “a partner in protection in Canada and abroad”.

⁸ *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, 28 July 1951, UNTS vol. 189, p. 137, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3be01b964.html>. For an up-to-date list of States Parties to the Convention, please see the UNHCR website at <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3b73b0d63.pdf>.

⁹ All Conclusions on International Protection as adopted by UNHCR’s Executive Committee are available, in English and French, in Refworld at <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/type/EXCONC.html>.

III. Goal 1: Strengthening Implementation of the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol

[Objective 1.1]¹⁰ Read as a whole, the reports received confirm that the 1951 Convention remains the cornerstone of the international refugee protection regime. Several signatory States, ranging from Afghanistan and the Russian Federation to Yemen, highlighted the importance to encourage accession by other States. Turkey reported that it will consider lifting the geographical limitation as part of the negotiations on accession to the European Union. Several examples of concrete progress were listed. Among them, Rwanda reported having lifted its two reservations in March 2008, whereas Malawi is undertaking a comprehensive assessment with a view of withdrawing some or all of its reservations.

[Objective 1.3 – 1.6]¹¹ Improving individual asylum procedures is challenging for many States, although substantial progress has been reported. Several countries in Africa have instituted domestic asylum procedures and enhanced national refugee legislation. However, some still face difficulties in having State budgets allocated for this purpose. Some States called for external capacity-building support which can effectively help in overcoming practical obstacles. This was, for instance, the case in Senegal, where the creation of a pool of interpreters in cooperation with UNHCR has been appreciated.

The reports focused heavily on efforts made to promote domestic asylum procedures which are sensitive to the specific needs of female asylum-seekers and those of traumatized and child applicants. This is an area in which considerable progress is reported since 2002 by a number of States from various regions. Many countries, including, for example, Australia, Liberia and Venezuela, reported that gender-related persecution can be a ground for refugee status. Switzerland reported the establishment of a permanent specialized team dealing with gender-based persecution claims. Since 2006, in Sweden, the specific reference to gender and sexual orientation in the refugee definition in the national law led to claims based on gender grounds to be considered within the scope of the refugee definition, rather than purely as grounds for complementary protection as previously the case. For claimants who base their well-founded fear on grounds of gender-related persecution, many reports confirmed the possibility to be interviewed by an official of the same sex. Legal representatives for unaccompanied and separated children claiming asylum are reported to be a requirement in a number of countries, while other countries have issued guidelines for dealing with child asylum applicants. Denmark, Ethiopia and Japan supported in their reports the idea of an Executive Committee Conclusion on asylum procedures, and Finland

¹⁰ The numbering refers to the Agenda for Protection objective(s) under discussion. Throughout the rest of this summary report, the wording of the corresponding objective is quoted in the footnote. Objective 1.1 concerns *Universal accession to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol*.

¹¹ 1.2: *Improved individual asylum procedures*; 1.3: *Provision of complementary forms of protection to those who might not fall within the scope of the 1951 Convention, but require international protection*; 1.4: *Exclusion of those undeserving of international refugee protection, including those guilty of terrorist acts*; 1.5: *Closer cooperation in the supervision of implementation of the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol*; 1.6: *More harmonized interpretation of the 1951 Convention in light of developments in refugee law*.

called for further consultations on ways to better manage the increasing challenges of unaccompanied and separated children seeking asylum.

Several countries, such as Belarus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, reported progress in introducing a single procedure to determine international protection needs. Australia reported that it is currently developing a complementary protection model. Exclusion clauses remain a challenge, as some countries reporting that they are still consider it difficult to apply them in practice, while others maintain legislative provisions which depart from the wording of the 1951 Convention. In their feedback, some States have expressed appreciation for the Guidelines on International Protection issued by UNHCR.¹²

[Objective 1.8]¹³ Many countries in various regions have made reference to World Refugee Day¹⁴ as the main global event, around which activities are organized to foster a positive and respectful attitude towards refugees. Anti-discrimination legislation and action plans against racism and xenophobia, such as those drawn up in Slovakia, Switzerland and Venezuela are reported to also benefit asylum-seekers and refugees. Some other reported activities include awareness sessions, such as those organized in Liberia, to foster communication and positive interaction between refugees and host communities, community-based initiatives to promote tolerance at a local level in Uganda, and sports projects for integration in Austria.

[Objective 1.9]¹⁵ A series of preventive and responsive measures to reduce the risk of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence (“SGBV”) in reception facilities were reported. National child protection systems were extended in some countries to include asylum-seekers. By contrast, with the exception of few countries such as Australia, little progress has been reported with regard to alternatives to detention. Read as a whole, the reports received do not mitigate the reality of an increase in the use of detention of asylum-seekers for entry-related offences in different parts of the world. As regards detention of children, there was limited information in the reports illustrating that detention is not resorted to.

[Objective 1.11]¹⁶ Considerable progress is shown in the reports with regard to the issuance of individual identity documents to both male and female asylum-seekers and refugees. Rwanda reported, for instance, that all refugees will receive an ID card by 2009. Yemen

¹² The Guidelines on International Protection complement the UNHCR *Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees* (1979, re-edited, Geneva, January 1992). These Guidelines are intended to provide interpretative legal guidance for governments, legal practitioners, decision-makers and the judiciary, as well as for UNHCR staff carrying out refugee status determination in the field. Currently, Guidelines covering the following seven themes have been issued: gender-related persecution, membership of a particular social group, cessation, exclusion, internal flight alternative, religion-based claims, and victims of trafficking. They are all available, in English and French, in Refworld at <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/rsd.html>.

¹³ *Enhanced respect for refugees.*

¹⁴ See for more information: <http://www.unhcr.org/wrd>.

¹⁵ *Adequate reception arrangements.*

¹⁶ *Better registration and documentation of refugees.*

referred to an agreement between UNHCR and the Ministry of Interior, which was signed in 2005, to open six registration centers for Somali refugees. The *UNHCR Handbook for Registration*¹⁷ has reportedly been used by countries such as Liberia, to set up domestic registration procedures. UNHCR technical and financial support for registration is still deemed essential in a number of developing countries. Biometric features are captured by an increasing number of States, as well as by UNHCR in some operations, to enhance identification and prevent fraud.

Practical obstacles continued to be reported for birth registration of refugees, which are often comparable to those faced by nationals, such as long distance from the registration offices in Malawi. Bangladesh informed that the national birth registration campaign also targets refugees. Regarding access to civil documentation, Rwanda has reported that refugees cannot afford to pay the required standard fees.

[*Objective 1.12*]¹⁸ A number of the reports highlighted the importance of reducing statelessness and expressed commitment in this regard. Austria informed about its recent accession to the 1954 *Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*,¹⁹ and Finland to the 1961 *Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness*,²⁰ whereas the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Korea indicated that they will work on accession to the 1961 Convention. Burundi has also expressed commitment in this regard, as its newly created *Office national pour la protection des réfugiés et des apatrides* (ONPRA) will also be responsible for the protection of stateless persons. Bangladesh has confirmed the nationality of the Urdu-speaking Bihari community by registering them and issuing them with ID cards, whereas Kyrgyzstan is undertaking a survey to better identify stateless persons in the country. A number of States who are not party to either of the Statelessness Conventions, recalled that the main provisions of the two conventions are part of domestic legislation or taken into consideration when reviewing national legislation.

IV. Goal 2: Protecting Refugees Within Broader Migration Movements

[*Objective 2.1*]²¹ Many of the reports quoted existing domestic provisions that enable all persons in need of international protection, including those arriving as part of mixed

¹⁷ *UNHCR Handbook for Registration*, Provisional release, September 2003, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3f967dc14.html>.

¹⁸ *More resolute responses to root causes of refugee movements*.

¹⁹ *Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons*, 28 September 1954, UNTS vol. 360, p. 117, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b3840.html>. For an up-to-date list of States Parties to the Convention, please see the UNHCR website at <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3bbb0abc7.pdf>.

²⁰ *Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness*, 30 August 1961, UNTS vol. 989, p. 175, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b39620.html>. For an up-to-date list of States Parties to the Convention, please see the UNHCR website at <http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/3bbb24d54.pdf>.

²¹ *Better identification of and proper response to the needs of asylum-seekers and refugees, including access to protection within the broader context of migration management*.

migratory flows, to seek asylum. However, limited attention is given in the reports to the challenges in preserving the right to seek asylum when implementing immigration control measures. Only one State highlighted in its report the need to look at the implementation in practice of measures to combat illegal immigration and people smuggling, stressing that this should not be done in a way that undermines the right to seek asylum.

A few States highlighted the need for border and immigration officials to be trained on basic refugee protection, suggesting that further training and awareness raising of international protection obligations is nevertheless a concern. Ethiopia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Yemen made express reference to UNHCR's Ten Point Plan of Action.²² Yemen reported recent initiatives to bring together countries of origin, transit and destination, to discuss the challenges posed by mixed migration movements. Canada and Denmark indicated support for a thematic Executive Committee Conclusion on the protection and solutions challenges emerging in the context of rescue at sea.

Some States have reviewed their national legislation and concluded that several provisions of their immigration laws are in conflict with their refugee/asylum laws. Such comparative review appears to be a valuable one, and could merit replication in other countries.

[*Objective 2.3*]²³ Data collection and research on the issue of refugee protection in mixed migration has been reported to be an issue under discussion in several States. Bilateral and multilateral fora, including those devoted to law enforcement and criminal cooperation, are used for this purpose. Within the European Union, some Member States referred to Regulation 862/2007²⁴ as an important tool, as it also addresses statistics on illegal migration. Some countries reported that information-sharing between immigration and asylum authorities remains limited.

[*Objective 2.7*]²⁵ Return of persons considered to not be in need of international protection is generally seen as an important element of an efficient and effective asylum system. Good practices reported by States in this regard include a focus on information and counseling to encourage voluntary as opposed to forced return as well as the practice of having representatives of humanitarian non-governmental organizations accompany return flights. The reports, however, show that some States are concerned by the increasing tendency of foreigners not to provide identity documents, which puts greater demands on authorities responsible for return.

²² UNHCR, *Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration: A 10-Point Plan of Action*, Rev.1, January 2007, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/45b0c09b2.html>.

²³ *Better data collection and research on the nexus between asylum and migration.*

²⁴ *Regulation (EC) No 862/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 on Community statistics on migration and international protection and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 311/76 on the compilation of statistics on foreign workers*, Official Journal L 199 , 31 July 2007, p. 0023 – 0029, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/48abd548d.html>.

²⁵ *Return of persons found not to be in need of international protection.*

V. Goal 3: Sharing Burdens and Responsibilities More Equitably and Building Capacities to Receive and Protect Refugees

[Objective 3.1]²⁶ The importance of burden- and responsibility-sharing for refugees more equitably is recognized not only in the responses of first countries of asylum, but also by those of countries further afield. A variety of mechanisms, ranging from financial support to resettlement are reported as being used by States to support each other, although in some cases these are not deemed to be sufficient. Generally, there is support for UNHCR's efforts to promote collective responsibility-sharing for refugee protection.

Despite some progress, a number of countries highlighted the fact that trust funds established for refugees' secondary and tertiary education remain under-resourced.

Some Member States of the European Union have highlighted the Dublin II²⁷ and Eurodac²⁸ Regulations as important tools for determining the EU Member State responsible for assessing an asylum claim. Read as a whole, the reports did not contain information about how to mitigate the "burden" that these Regulations create for some EU Member States.

[Objective 3.2 – 3.3]²⁹ Some States have expressed support for UNHCR Strengthening Protection Capacity Project³⁰ as a valuable initiative to develop systematic means to identify and address gaps in state and community protection capacities. In addition to multilateral efforts, a wide range of bilateral cooperation and twinning projects were reported in the areas of training, capacity-building and resettlement. One example of particular relevance for UNHCR is the programme established by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada to provide training to UNHCR staff undertaking refugee status determination under the UNHCR mandate.

[Objective 3.4]³¹ Countries from various regions have highlighted the value of applying a community-based approach building on the skills and capacities of affected communities. The reports indicate that Government representatives have participated in UNHCR-initiated participatory assessment exercises, for instance, in countries such as Ghana, Malawi and

²⁶ *Better responsibility-sharing arrangements to shoulder the burdens of first asylum countries.*

²⁷ *Council Regulation No. 343/2003 Establishing the Criteria and Mechanisms for Determining the Member State Responsible for Examining an Asylum Application Lodged in One of the Member States by a Third-Country National ("Dublin II")*, 16 March 2003, Official Journal of the European Union L 50/1, 25 February 2003, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3e5cf1c24.html>.

²⁸ *Council Regulation (EC) No 2725/2000 of 11 December 2000 Concerning the Establishment of 'Eurodac' for the Comparison of Fingerprints for the Effective Application of the Dublin Convention*, 11 December 2000, Official Journal of the European Communities L 316/1, 15 December 2000, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3f4e40434.html>.

²⁹ 3.2: *More effective cooperation to strengthen protection capacities in refugee-receiving countries*; 3.3: *Strengthened partnerships for protection with civil society, including NGOs.*

³⁰ See for more information: <http://www.unhcr.org/spcp>.

³¹ *Refugee communities empowered to meet their own protection needs.*

Rwanda. In Liberia, community-based groups have been established by the authorities with the support of UNHCR and other partners to identify, document, report and resolve protection cases through field-based monitors. Similar initiatives are described by Afghanistan and Sierra Leone. The “Strengthening Refugee Voices” project in New Zealand is an example of an initiative engaging settled refugees in an industrialized country. However, States in Europe faced with urban refugees have reported challenges in implementing a community-based approach.

VI. Goal 4: Addressing Security-Related Concerns More Effectively

[*Objective 4.1*] ³² The reports show limited examples of practical arrangements for cooperation on security issues. Canada provided two police officers on a pilot basis to work with the Government of Guinea and UNHCR on enhancing security in refugee camps. Security remains a sensitive issue and barriers still need to be overcome.

[*Objective 4.4*] ³³ Read as a whole, the reports received illustrate that prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence remains a major challenge. While some progress has been reported by States, the feedback received indicates that the issue is of such a magnitude that more concerted efforts are required. Impunity is still reported to exist in many parts of the world. Access to health and psycho-social services often remains difficult, and SGBV survivors frequently face secondary protection risks due to rejection by family and community. The exposure to SGBV risks during firewood collection has been highlighted as a particularly serious concern by some countries, including Burundi.

Examples of action taken include, among others, an increase in female security officers and security committees at camp level, the introduction of a zero tolerance policy of sexual exploitation and abuse, and the extension of a government SGBV hotline to include refugees. Preventive activities include the requirement, in a number of countries, for humanitarian partners seeking funding to have signed a code of conduct, and training and awareness-raising sessions. In several countries, the authorities have supported UNHCR’s efforts to establish standard operating procedures on dealing with SGBV.

VII. Goal 5: Redoubling the Search for Durable Solutions

[*Objective 5.1*] ³⁴ The resolution of protracted refugee situations is highlighted as a priority by several countries. The “core group” approach ³⁵ established to address the situation of

³² *The resourcing of States for securing the safety of refugees and for the separation of armed elements from refugee populations.*

³³ *Prevention of age-based and sexual and gender-based violence.*

³⁴ *Realization of comprehensive durable solutions strategies, especially for protracted refugee situations.*

Bhutanese refugees in Nepal is referred to as a good example of strategic collaboration by Denmark. Some countries expressed commitment to a “whole-of-government” approach in pursuing solutions to protracted refugee situations.

[*Objective 5.3*]³⁶ It emerges that increasing attention is being paid to land, housing and property issues. Several countries referred to the establishment of special mechanisms for property restitution, indicating, however, that their capacity is often inadequate to deal with claims. According to the reports, States are working towards overcoming obstacles relating to problematic inheritance law which contained provisions discriminating against women, and widows in particular. Regarding reintegration, through cooperation with national human rights institutions, such as the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, innovative approaches to returnee monitoring are being tested.

[*Objective 5.4*]³⁷ A number of reports confirmed the priority attention given recently to local integration as a durable solution. Canada and Japan referred to Tanzania’s groundbreaking local integration programme for Burundian refugees, and it is suggested to evaluate whether Tanzania’s approach could be applicable in other contexts. In Africa, countries such as, Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Gambia, Guinea and Sierra Leone have reported progress in this regard, which lead to the achievement of durable solutions for a considerable number of refugees. In Asia, the Republic of Korea is exploring measures to facilitate local integration and plans to open a “Refugee Support Center”, whereas Turkmenistan reports that 13,000 persons were granted citizenship in 2005. In Azerbaijan, with revenues from the State Oil Fund and other sources, some 10,000 families were provided with appropriate housing.

[*Objective 5.4 – 5.5*]³⁸ Regarding resettlement, the report for Australia referred to its allocation each year of 10.5 % of its resettlement quota to women at risk. The Czech Republic and Slovakia indicated their readiness to start a resettlement programme, and some other countries reported that they had increased their resettlement quotas, including for emergency resettlement. Norway is supporting emerging resettlement countries in Latin America, and Australia is also prepared to provide such type of support. Some, although not yet sufficient, progress has been made to depart from the need for refugees submitted for resettlement to fulfill integration requirements.

³⁵ See UNHCR, *Progress report on resettlement*, EC/57/SC/CRP.15, 6 June 2006, para. 8, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4651c1f42.html>.

³⁶ *Strengthened cooperation to make repatriation sustainable.*

³⁷ *Local integration having its proper place as part of a comprehensive strategy for durable solutions.*

³⁸ *5.4: Expansion of resettlement opportunities; 5.5: More efficient use of resettlement both as a protection tool and as a durable solution.*

VIII. Goal 6: Meeting the Protection Needs of Refugee Women and Children

Canada, Denmark and the United Kingdom highlighted that AGDM is one of five priorities of the Joint Organization Strategy between them and UNHCR. A number of States have reported substantial progress in achieving a meaningful participation of women in food distribution and management decisions. This is considered to be an effective way to reduce sexual exploitation or the exchange of sex for food. Legislation prohibiting gender-related discrimination has been enacted in a number of countries, also benefiting refugees. Babysitting arrangements are offered in countries such as Norway, to allow women's participation in learning activities, whereas in Uganda women are encouraged to attend literacy classes and vocational training. In Sweden, a study on the integration of a gender perspective into reception and protection work has been initiated in cooperation with Swedish Red Cross.

Several reports stressed that children and adolescents participate equally in decision-making of refugee life, although only few countries gave concrete examples on how this is achieved in practice. Guinea, for instance, specified that child participation has increased following the adoption of an AGDM approach.

IX. Conclusions

Given the time constraints for the implementation of this exercise, the number of country reports received so far is not unremarkable. It is hoped that the exercise will continue and more reports will be forthcoming, thus providing a broader basis for analysis. In this context, more emphasis should be given to the original call by UNHCR that the process of assessing the implementation of the Agenda for Protection should be as consultative and participatory as possible. UNHCR also encourages that more information be provided on the challenges that are not comprehensively covered in the Agenda for Protection, such as those relating to the protection of internally displaced persons, and the reduction of statelessness and protection of stateless persons.

The reports already received provide valuable information on ongoing policies, practices and actions taken in the implementation of the Agenda for Protection. Some reports go beyond this and highlight the challenges of protection delivery on the ground. A few have States even made recommendations on policy, legal, administrative or operational gaps. For the most part, however, the reports have tended to be mainly descriptive rather than analytical.

As for the Agenda for Protection itself, the reports received solidly reinforce its validity and relevance. States which have taken part in the exercise acknowledged that, while considerable progress has been made in some areas, a number of Agenda objectives are still far from being fully achieved. While much of the action required to advance the Agenda for Protection has to take place at the national level, some of the more challenging issues highlighted in this report would require more concerted efforts at the regional or global

level. This may include informal consultations or discussions, including in the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges,³⁹ new thematic Executive Committee Conclusions, or other appropriate initiatives.

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³⁹ See for more information: <http://www.unhcr.org/hc-dialogue>.

Annex
States that have submitted the Agenda for Protection matrix

Status as of 1 October 2008

Afghanistan	Gambia	Norway
Australia	Ghana	Russian Federation
Austria	Guinea	Rwanda
Azerbaijan	Guinea Bissau	Senegal
Bangladesh	Japan	Sierra Leone
Belarus	Korea	Slovakia
Burundi	Kyrgyzstan	Sudan
Canada	Latvia	Sweden
Czech Republic	Liberia	Switzerland
Denmark	Lithuania	Turkey
Djibouti	Macedonia, former	Turkmenistan
Estonia	Yugoslav Republic of	Uganda
Ethiopia	Malawi	Venezuela
Finland	Mali	Yemen
	New Zealand	