

**DESIGNING PROTECTION STRATEGIES AND
MEASURING PROGRESS:**

CHECKLIST FOR UNHCR STAFF

Department of International Protection

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UNHCR UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

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INTRODUCTION

What is international protection? How can we ensure effective protection? What kinds of protection strategies are needed in specific settings? What are the key practical actions to be taken? How can we measure the progress made in the area of protection? UNHCR staff members in the field are frequently faced with these questions.

Protection encompasses all activities aimed at ensuring the enjoyment, on equal terms, of the rights of women, men, girls, and boys of concern to UNHCR in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law.¹ Ensuring protection involves multifaceted activities² and requires an integrated and collaborative approach within UNHCR offices.

UNHCR staff members in the field, confronted with many challenges on a daily basis, have often indicated that they need practical tools to guide them to strategize, plan their protection activities and measure progress, in an increasingly complex and critical protection environment.

Against this background, the Department of International Protection (DIP) has developed the document “Designing Protection Strategies and Measuring Progress: Checklist for UNHCR Staff”. This document has four overarching “Goals” accompanied by a set of “Desired End Results”. It offers examples of “Activities” necessary to be pursued to reach these end results. The “Signs of Progress/Indicators” are meant to help measure the effectiveness of the “Suggested Activities” and the extent to which the end result is met. As success depends on a collaborative effort, this document is important for all substantive officers in the field and at Headquarters.

The Checklist has been compiled from a variety of sources, including information from field offices, documents such as Annual Protection Reports, Country Operations Plans, and various protection guidelines. It has been refined and improved through extensive consultations within UNHCR. At the same time, the document is intended to be a useful reference in gathering information of particular relevance for inclusion in Country Operations Plans, Annual Protection Reports and Country Reports.

The document should be viewed as a first effort to develop a practical protection-planning and measurement tool for UNHCR staff in the field and needs to be further improved. The suggested list of “Goals”, “Desired End Results”, “Suggested Activities” and “Signs of Progress/Indicators” is by no means exhaustive. For example, our activities for strengthening protection capacities in refugee-receiving countries are not elaborated in an exhaustive manner. To that end, the forthcoming *UNHCR Handbook on Strengthening Capacities in Host Countries* should be a useful document to consult.

Similarly, this document does not incorporate our protection activities for internally displaced persons (IDPs) as such. However, should UNHCR assume responsibility for protection and assistance of IDPs, the activities undertaken for the protection of refugees would, to a large extent, be similarly relevant. The *Operational Guidelines for UNHCR’s Involvement with Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)*³ would be an essential reference in this respect.

If you have any questions about the relevance of particular “Desired End Results” to a specific operational issue, you are invited to contact the Department of International Protection for assistance. Your comments and practical suggestions are appreciated and should be sent to HQPR08@UNHCR.ORG.

¹ This definition is an adaptation of the definition of protection developed by human rights and humanitarian organizations, including UNHCR, during a series of workshops on protection sponsored by the ICRC.

² See paragraph 4 of the *Note on International Protection* for the forty-ninth session of the Executive Committee: “International protection is not an abstract concept. It is a dynamic and action-oriented function. It encompasses a range of concrete activities, covering both policy and operational concerns, and is carried out, in cooperation with States and other partners, with the goal of enhancing respect for the rights of refugees and resolving their problems.” (Doc No. A/AC.96/930, 7 July 2000).

³ See UNHCR IOM/77/2001-FOM/75/2001 (24 Sept 2001).

GOAL I:

**PRIORITIZING THE WELL-BEING OF
REFUGEES IN EMERGENCIES AND CAMPS**

Desired End Result 1.	<i>Refugee women, men and children in mass influx and camp situations are physically protected and receive services on equal terms⁴</i>
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1.1.	The response to mass influx situations is effective with security-related concerns addressed at an early stage⁵
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Lobby the Government to secure protection of refugees in mass influx situations in relation to, *inter alia*, admission to the country, prevention of *refoulement*, and reception and treatment according to basic human rights standards.
- ⇒ Promote the adoption of a legal or policy framework providing for admission of refugees on a group basis, coupled with a status granting them, from the beginning, at least the basic standards of treatment outlined in ExCom Conclusion No.22 including UNHCR's unhindered access to refugees.
- ⇒ Support the Government to respond effectively to mass population displacement. Encourage the Government to prepare a contingency plan, including an important protection component that also deals with registration and documentation, and provide training where necessary.
- ⇒ Deploy a sufficient number of suitable and qualified staff to the field, including sufficient numbers of female staff, including female interpreters and community workers, to monitor the situation of refugees and identify protection problems.
- ⇒ Provide technical and logistical assistance to the Government at relevant entry points to ensure admission of refugees, and registration as soon as possible thereafter. Offer joint registration activities in case the authorities are unable to carry these out independently.
- ⇒ Make authorities aware that they retain primary responsibility for the security, safety and well being of refugees. The most important measures to be taken by the authorities are in the following areas:
 - Safe location of the camps not too close to the border;
 - Separation of armed elements from refugee populations to preserve the civilian character of asylum in mass influx situations;
 - Prevention of military recruitment of refugees, including particularly refugee boys and girls;
 - Prevention of channeling humanitarian assistance to those engaged in combat;
 - Strengthening security as well as law and order arrangements in the areas where refugees are accommodated; and
 - Prevention of age-based, sexual and gender-based violence.
- ⇒ Coordinate with UNHCR Field Safety staff on the issue of refugee safety, including training needs on gender-sensitive policing.
- ⇒ Review the possibility of security patrols, preferably by trusted male and female members of the refugee community, ensuring the protection of refugee women and children as a priority.

⁴ As a comprehensive reference for this Desired End Result, see *Handbook for Emergencies*, June 2000.

⁵ For registration and documentation, see also End Result 3.2. on ensuring adequate reception arrangements where individual status determination is required. As essential reference, see *Protection of Refugees in Mass Influx Situations: Overall Protection Framework*, EC/GC/01/4 (19 Feb 2001); *UNHCR Regional Symposium on Maintaining the Civilian and Humanitarian Character of Asylum: Refugee Status, Camps and Other Locations – Key Conclusions/Recommendations*, EC/GC/01/9 (30 May 2001); *Protection Aspects of Physical Security in Refugee Camps*, 29 May 2000 (C.3.9. in UNHCR Protection Manual); *Protection Guidelines relating to refugee security* (<http://intranet.hcrnet.ch/ops/region/kosovo/kospro3.html>); *The Security, Civilian and Humanitarian Character of Refugee Camps and Settlements: Operationalizing the "Ladder of Options"*, EC/50/SC/INF.4 (27 June 2000); *The Civilian Character of Asylum: Separating Armed Elements from Refugees*, EC/GC/01/5 (19 Feb 2001); *Practical Aspects of Physical and Legal Protection with Regard to Registration*, EC/GC/01/6 (19 Feb 2001).

- ⇒ Initiate tracing family members/relatives of unaccompanied and separated children at a very early stage of the operation. Place such children in an appropriate care arrangement and monitor their situation.
- ⇒ Ensure that unaccompanied and separated children are not adopted during the first stage of an emergency. Thereafter, ensure that all adoptions are in accordance with the 1993 Hague Convention on the Protection of Children in Respect of Intercountry Adoption.
- ⇒ Advise the Government on possible procedures, including practical modalities, for the exclusion of those who do not deserve international protection in the context of group acceptance on a *prima facie* basis.
- ⇒ Consult members of the refugee community that adequately represent the refugee population, including refugee women, from the very beginning of the operation, on decisions affecting their situation. In this context, promote equal participation of refugee men and women in all refugee management and leadership structures. Avoid and oppose, however, leadership structures involving persons set to control and manipulate the refugee population for political or other objectives.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ Refugees are no longer rejected at borders, and therefore, they no longer have to resort to unofficial and more dangerous border crossings. There are fewer incidents of exploitation by smugglers and of physical safety problems, particularly for women and children.
- ◆ UNHCR has increased access to refugees and can better monitor the situation at all stages.
- ◆ Increasing numbers of refugees are registered individually and provided with documentation which secures their protection and access to services. The authorities have agreed that such documentation be issued to women in their own names.
- ◆ Increasingly, the security situation is the focus of attention of the authorities. In particular:
 - The authorities promptly put in place appropriate security measures in response to UNHCR interventions and requests. The authorities are willing to share relevant security information with UNHCR;
 - There is a clear procedure agreed upon between UNHCR and the Government on the hand over of armed elements to the authorities;
 - The Government takes concrete measures to prevent infiltration of armed elements into refugee camps and settlements and, should the Government identify them, place them in an arrangement separate from civilian refugees. The authorities, however, do agree that there may be *bona fide* asylum-seekers among them, if after a certain period it becomes clear that such persons have relinquished their combatant status for good;
 - The Government takes concrete measures to reduce the risk of, and, to the extent possible, prevent the forcible recruitment of refugees, in particular refugee boys and girls, including by ensuring assistance to education and vocational training;
 - Refugees with special security needs are identified and provided with separate and safe accommodation upon arrival;
 - Effective security patrols are in place in and around the area where refugees are accommodated, targeting protection of refugee women and children as one of the priorities. Refugees can easily alert the security authorities should there be security concerns in the area.
- ◆ Women have safe access to water and fuel without being exposed to security risks. These and other services are available at a closer distance than before.
- ◆ Protection needs of groups with special needs are identified and addressed in a protection and assistance framework from the initial stage of an emergency. In particular:

- There is improved consultation with all members of the refugee community, and refugee women are starting to become involved in the distribution of assistance to ensure equal access to such assistance;
- Regular monitoring and inspection systems are in place. Spot checks show that humanitarian assistance is not channeled to those engaged in armed combat and that all refugees have access to and enjoyment of humanitarian assistance without discrimination;
- Safe accommodation is provided to refugees with special security needs;
- A lead agency for tracing family members/relatives of separated or unaccompanied children is promptly identified and establishes a network with local partners and authorities at a very early stage of the operation. Until family reunification, appropriate care arrangements are implemented and monitored regularly by UNHCR and its partners. No irregular adoptions take place;
- Appropriate care and monitoring arrangements for unaccompanied and separated children are given priority;
- Victims of sexual violence including sexual exploitation and abuse receive necessary treatment and support from the early stage of the operation.

1.2.	Protection and assistance are provided on equal terms to all refugees in camp operations^{6 7}
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Incorporate a gender and age-sensitive perspective in designing the camp layout, e.g. latrines, washing area, water collection point, school, clinic, and other facilities frequented by refugee women and children.
- ⇒ Support States, UNICEF, and other actors to set up special programmes to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate child soldiers, both male and female.
- ⇒ In close coordination with colleagues and partners working in other sectors (security, health, programme, community services), design a protection and assistance framework with special focus on refugee women and children. Activities may include:
 - Establishing an information-sharing network and a referral system of individual protection cases with partners;
 - Developing programmes to respond to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and sexual exploitation in consultation with refugees, States and other humanitarian actors. Design a coordinated response engaging all relevant sectors (legal, health, security, community services, and programme) to SGBV and sexual exploitation;
 - Establishing confidential age-sensitive complaint mechanisms for SGBV and sexual exploitation to protect and assist the survivors to report perpetrators;
 - Establishing programmes for education, recreation and vocational training for refugee children and adolescents, as under-age recruitment is aggravated by lack of productive activities. Set up particular programmes for girl soldiers who were forced into sex slavery;
 - Employing a sufficient number of female staff in the various sectors, particularly health, protection, and counseling services;
 - Taking measures to increase refugees' access to legal remedies, for example by providing legal advice and interpretation, and by promoting the deployment of mobile courts.

⁶ This Desired End Result should be read closely together with 1.1., in particular in relation to physical security in camp operations. Furthermore, many of the suggested activities and signs of progress/indicators listed under 1.2. apply to camp operations where refugees are protected and assisted until a durable solution is identified for them. It should be strongly kept in mind that protection and assistance activities should be planned long-term, going beyond the emergency operation. It is also essential to encourage refugee participation at all stages right from the start.

⁷ See also *Refugee Women*, EC/GC/02/8 (25 April 2002); *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women* (July 1991); *Sexual Violence against Refugees – Guidelines on Prevention and Response* (1995; currently under review); *Step by Step Guide for Protection Officers in responding to SGBV* (March 2001); *Refugee Children – Guidelines on Protection and Care* (1994); *Refugee Children*, EC/GC/02/9 (25 April 2002).

- ⇒ Ensure the participation of refugees and strengthen community support structures allowing refugees to raise their concerns. In particular:
 - Encourage refugees to participate in decision-making by forming refugee committees. Ensure such committees are gender balanced;
 - Ensure equitable representation and active participation of women refugees in distribution of humanitarian assistance;
 - Establish women's councils/women's centers and organize activities targeting women. Enhance an environment where women can discretely approach and address their concerns in confidence;
 - Establish youth groups/youth centers and organize activities targeting children. Enhance an environment where children and adolescents can easily address their concerns in a relaxed manner appropriate to their age and sex, including problems related to sexual exploitation, abuse and violence.
- ⇒ Undertake capacity-building training and sensitization activities for the authorities, NGOs, and male and female refugee leaders on the rights of women and children to promote gender equality and their responsibilities to eliminate SGBV and sexual exploitation.
- ⇒ Monitor the treatment of refugees, in particular of groups with special needs, and inspect distribution of assistance regularly.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ Adequate responses are being developed to address sexual exploitation, abuse and violence:
 - More refugee women and children share their concerns with UNHCR staff, including on SGBV and sexual exploitation;
 - Community support structures for SGBV victims, such as drop-in centers where victims gain the confidence to discuss problems and to seek help, are strengthened;
 - More refugee victims file formal complaints against perpetrators.
- ◆ More women participate in camp committees and in decision making.
- ◆ Refugee women and children confirm that their access to humanitarian assistance and services has improved.
- ◆ More protection cases are referred to UNHCR by refugees themselves.
- ◆ Increasing access to education and vocational training:
 - Refugee women have better access to skills training, vocational programmes, income generation activities, and paid employment.
 - Refugee girls have equal access to education and scholarships. The attendance rate of girls at school increases, and the dropout rate of girls decreases.
 - More demobilized children attend school or vocational training.
- ◆ Male humanitarian workers and officials as well as male refugees are more responsive to achieving the gender equality and empowerment of refugee women. Male groups promoting the value of gender equality and empowerment of refugee women are being established.

Desired End Result 2.	<i>Refugees are empowered to better meet their protection and assistance needs⁸</i>
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2.1.	Increasing numbers of refugees are becoming self-reliant
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Encourage the authorities to establish a solutions-oriented self-reliance policy and solicit involvement of refugees in the formulation of these policies. Foster, where necessary, the support of opinion makers using humanitarian, human rights and cost-related arguments, as well as the potential benefits for the local population. Distinguish, as appropriate, self-reliance from local integration.
- ⇒ Develop legal and institutional frameworks that foster productive activities and protect relevant civil, social and economic rights (related, for example, to land, employment, education, freedom of movement, identity documents, and access to the judiciary).
- ⇒ Where self-reliance activities are possible beyond camp settings, promote a careful geographic selection for such activities, taking into account the economic situation in the area, the availability of affordable housing or possibility to build housing, access to land and markets, the availability of basic services, the attitude of the host community, etc.
- ⇒ In cooperation with colleagues and partners working in other sectors:
 - Use existing or establish new profiles of the refugees (gender, age, educational/professional background, needs and resources) and their host community, including urban refugees;
 - Develop community-development activities promoting community organizations and leadership structures, if possible, linked to local structures, with representation of the various community groups;
 - Design targeted assistance packages to enhance the economic self-reliance of refugees, benefiting men and women equally⁹;
 - Design projects to strengthen the absorption capacity of local communities by investing in the infrastructure, community services and local economy, as well as preserving or rehabilitating the natural environment;
 - Ensure that refugees and their communities are fully involved in the design, development and monitoring of programmes;
 - Establish benchmarks for self-reliance in a given refugee situation to allow objective verification of when it has been achieved; refugees should be closely consulted in order to arrive at criteria which are relevant, realistic, specific and achievable by the refugees within a given period.
- ⇒ Encourage the authorities as well as NGOs to undertake income-generation projects targeting refugees.
- ⇒ Incorporate protection and assistance programmes into national development plans and poverty alleviation initiatives to make structures sustainable, which can be realized through pro-active and constructive participation in the co-ordination framework of the UN Country Team.

⁸ Achieving self-reliance is a pre-cursor to any of the three durable solutions and is to be understood to mean that refugees are able to provide for themselves and their community members in terms of food and other means of basic subsistence, including housing; can cope with unexpected events; and are no longer dependent on outside assistance. See also *Local Integration*, EC/GC/02/6 (25 April 2002) which concerns self-reliance.

⁹ Programmes could include the provision of agricultural land and related support, income generation and micro finance activities, direct job placement programmes, job-oriented skills development for refugee adults and adolescents, grants for education or scholarships, as well as support for the accreditation of educational degrees and professional designations; besides access to education, promote training in the language and the culture of the host country.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ More refugees, from camps as well as urban settings, have access to assistance to enhance their economic self-reliance through provision of agricultural land, income generation and micro finance activities, job-oriented skills-development programmes, and grants for education or scholarships.
- ◆ More refugees are allowed to choose to reside in an economically viable environment.
- ◆ More women participate in education, vocational training, and agricultural and other income-generating programmes, and are able to enhance their potential.
- ◆ Development-oriented agencies and NGOs start developing and implementing programmes to promote self-reliance of refugees.
- ◆ More refugees, particularly refugee women and adolescents, and host communities themselves, participate in the design and development of self-reliance programmes.
- ◆ The number of refugees depending on humanitarian assistance decreases due to the enhanced self-reliance. Feelings of frustration and despair, which often breed protection problems among refugees and with the local community, are diminishing and are transformed into an increasing sense of self-confidence.

GOAL II:

**ENSURING PROPER TREATMENT
IN INDIVIDUAL ASYLUM SYSTEMS**

Desired End Result 3.	<i>Refugees and asylum-seekers are admitted to safety, and reception arrangements and treatment are in conformity with international standards¹⁰</i>
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3.1. Refugees and asylum-seekers are admitted at borders

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Monitor the government practice of admission at entry points in cooperation with relevant partners, especially local or international NGOs.
- ⇒ Encourage the authorities to implement policies ensuring the admission of refugees and asylum-seekers at the border in conformity with international standards and UNHCR guidelines, such as on the safe third country concept, with due consideration given to gender, age, family unity, privacy, and confidentiality.
- ⇒ Offer UNHCR assistance, where necessary, in examining asylum claims when asylum-seekers are confined at entry points (land, sea or airport).
- ⇒ Provide training to government officials, including border guards, immigration officers, the police, military personnel, customs officials, the judiciary, officials in the Ministry dealing with refugee issues and NGOs on refugee issues, with a particular focus on the significance of the principle of *non-refoulement*.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ UNHCR has better access to asylum-seekers at entry points.
- ◆ Officials, in particular border officials, seek and react positively to advice and guidance of UNHCR on how to deal with persons seeking asylum, including asylum-seekers arriving without documentation and asylum-seekers kept confined at entry points, such as airports.
- ◆ The Government more frequently consults with UNHCR on admission and standards of treatment of refugees and asylum-seekers, and welcomes and acts upon UNHCR's advice.
- ◆ The number of asylum-seekers and refugees being rejected at the border measurably decreases.
- ◆ The Government issues instructions to border officials on how to receive asylum-seekers in a gender and age-sensitive manner, and border officials closely follow the instructions.
- ◆ In the monitoring visits to the entry points, fewer asylum-seekers complain about how they were treated upon arrival.

3.2. Adequate reception arrangements are established¹¹
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Promote conditions of stay for asylum-seekers consistent with relevant international legal standards, taking into account the socio-economic situation prevailing in the host country. Reception measures should address, *inter alia*: (1) assistance to asylum-seekers, including accommodation and means of subsistence, preferably including the right to engage in gainful activities; (2) their freedom of

¹⁰ Although the standards underpinning this Goal are universal, their application should understandably also take into account the socio-economic conditions especially in developing countries. This section aims in particular at the situation in countries with developed asylum systems.

¹¹ See *Reception of Asylum-Seekers, Including Standards of Treatment in the Context of Individual Asylum Systems*, EC/GC/01/17 (4 Sep 2001).

movement; (3) registration and necessary documentation¹²; and (4) the requirements of groups with special needs, including access to medical care and, in the case of children, education.

- ⇒ Ensure that gender and age-sensitivity guides the crafting of reception arrangements. In this respect, undertake training of officials and staff involved in the reception of asylum-seekers to enhance their gender and age-sensitivity.
- ⇒ Ensure that special attention is paid to the prevention of and response to SGBV, including sexual exploitation and abuse of asylum-seekers. In cooperation with colleagues/partners working in other sectors (security, programme, health) and refugees themselves, put in place a response mechanism to provide assistance to victims of sexual exploitation, violence and abuse, and bring perpetrators to justice.
- ⇒ Address the protection needs of children in reception facilities, focusing on educational, medical, psychological, and recreational aspects. Draw special attention to the care arrangements and security for unaccompanied and separated children.
- ⇒ Identify vulnerable asylum-seekers in need of special assistance, such as legal advice, interpretation services, and social counseling. Coordinate with the authorities and partners so that their needs are met.
- ⇒ Ensure the authorities take appropriate measures, including tracing activities, within the country of asylum to maintain family unity, and process asylum requests expeditiously for the sake of family reunification.
- ⇒ In cooperation with other agencies (e.g. UNICEF, ICRC), ensure that tracing activities for unaccompanied and separated children are undertaken at a very early stage. Prioritize family reunification in the search for long-term solutions for unaccompanied and separated children, in accordance with the best interest of the child principle.
- ⇒ Monitor reception arrangements, and make interventions, as appropriate.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ Reception facilities at borders, including airports, increasingly include necessary assistance, and provide for basic necessities of life, including food, shelter and basic sanitary and health care. Even for a short stay, family unity and privacy are respected.
- ◆ Conditions in reception centers or in other types of open, collective accommodation for asylum-seekers fulfil minimum standards, including the existence of basic facilities, as well as access to health care and education.
- ◆ Single men and women are accommodated separately, and families progressively have the possibility to live together in the same premises.
- ◆ Reception arrangements take into account the nature of asylum procedures (regular and accelerated), and more asylum-seekers are granted a range of social and economic rights and benefits commensurate with the anticipated length of the procedure, i.e. which will increase over time.
- ◆ More asylum-seekers are registered and receive temporary documentation which is valid until the final decision is taken on the asylum application. More female adult asylum-seekers are also registered and obtain their own documentation. More children are registered at birth, and parents are provided with birth certificates.

¹² See ExCom Conclusion No.91 on registration of refugees and asylum-seekers.

- ◆ More asylum-seekers have access to legal advice, interpretation services, social counseling and other assistance where needed. Such services are provided in a gender-sensitive manner. A support network to provide such services is formed.
- ◆ Special needs of vulnerable groups, such as single women with special security needs, unaccompanied and separated children, the elderly, and survivors of torture and sexual violence, are increasingly given due consideration in reception arrangements, including for accommodation, medical and psychological care, and education.
- ◆ More asylum-seekers in need of urgent treatment, including torture victims and those suffering trauma, receive special assistance. Medical care also includes counseling on reproductive health matters. Pregnant women are able to receive maternal services.
- ◆ More child asylum-seekers attend primary schools for free, and secondary education is also made available to asylum seekers where resources permit. Refugee girls attend in higher proportions and remain in school, completing their education.
- ◆ Adequate personnel and financial resources are allocated in the annual budget for adequate reception arrangements.

3.3. Asylum-seekers are not detained, except in a limited number of circumstances
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Lobby for alternatives to detention.
- ⇒ Disseminate *UNHCR Revised Guidelines on the Detention of Asylum-Seekers* (UNHCR/IOM/22/99/Rev.1, UNHCR/FOM/22/99/Rev.1, 26 February 1999) and *Detention of Asylum-Seekers and Refugees: The Framework, the Problem and Recommended Practice* (U.N. Doc. EC/49/SC/CRP.13, 4 June 1999), and raise awareness that, in principle, refugees and asylum-seekers should not be detained.
- ⇒ Where refugees and asylum-seekers are detained, promote respect for minimum standards which are to be met, including the availability of procedural safeguards¹³.
- ⇒ Visit refugees and asylum-seekers in detention and ensure that they are advised on their rights and have access to social/legal aid networks and UNHCR, as well as to asylum procedures. Encourage civil society/local NGOs also to monitor detention of refugees and asylum-seekers.
- ⇒ Where women asylum-seekers are detained, ensure they are accommodated separately from male asylum-seekers, unless these are close family relatives. Ensure that women in the late stages of pregnancy and nursing mothers are not detained.
- ⇒ Ensure that asylum-seeking children are not detained. In the exceptional situations where they are detained, ensure that the conditions of such detention conform to the minimum standards stipulated in Article 37 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ Authorities are willing to discuss and implement alternatives to detention.

¹³ Procedural safeguards include prompt and full notification of the detention decision and the reasons for it, in a language and in terms which the affected persons understand; advisement of the right to counsel and provision of free legal assistance, wherever possible; automatic review of the detention decision by a judicial or administrative authority, and periodic reviews thereafter of the continuing necessity, if any, of the detention; an opportunity to challenge the necessity for detention; and the right to contact and to communicate with UNHCR, local refugee support network or an advocate.

- ◆ Fewer refugees and asylum-seekers are detained. Reports confirm that detention is resorted to in individual cases only for reasons listed in *UNHCR Revised Guidelines on the Detention of Asylum-Seekers* and *Detention of Asylum-Seekers and Refugees: The Framework, the Problem and Recommended Practice*, after full consideration has been given to all possible alternatives.¹⁴
- ◆ The authorities allow UNHCR visits to prisons or detention centers where access was previously out of the question.
- ◆ Through visits to the detention centers, it is observed that the conditions of detention are improving, with respect shown for the inherent dignity of the person, and that asylum-seekers are not detained with convicted criminals.
- ◆ Refugee women and female asylum-seekers are not held in detention with unrelated men.
- ◆ Children are neither separated from parents nor detained in ordinary facilities.
- ◆ All appropriate alternatives to detention are considered in the case of children.¹⁵ If none of the alternatives can be applied and States do detain children, this is taken as a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible period of time.
- ◆ More asylum-seekers are informed of the reasons for their detention and of their rights in a language and in terms that they understand. They have access to UNHCR as well as social and legal assistance, delivered in a gender and age-sensitive manner.
- ◆ Increasingly, the authorities provide UNHCR with accurate information on detained refugees and asylum-seekers within a reasonable time.

Desired

End Result 4. Asylum-seekers have access to fair asylum procedures

4.1. Fair and efficient asylum procedures are established^{16 17}

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Argue, in lobbying and PI activities, if necessary with the help of opinion leaders, that asylum processing is in principle a State responsibility especially in countries that have acceded to the 1951 Convention and that UNHCR and other international support could be mobilized. Argue also that asylum procedures are an unavoidable tool to distinguish between refugees and economic migrants and thereby to comply with international standards.
- ⇒ Provide legal, technical, material and financial support to the Government for the establishment of fair and efficient asylum procedures, with the accompanying legal, institutional and administrative structures, including a review mechanism and development of a related training curriculum.¹⁸

¹⁴ ExCom Conclusion No.44 on detention of refugees and asylum-seekers provides an exhaustive list of the exceptional situations in which detention may be resorted to, namely: “to verify identity; to determine the elements on which the claim to refugee status or asylum is based; to deal with cases where refugees or asylum-seekers have destroyed their travel and/or identity documents or have used fraudulent documents ... or to protect national security or public order”.

¹⁵ Refugee children should either be released into the care of family members who already have residency within the asylum country or, where this is not possible, the competent authorities make alternative arrangements such as foster-care placement and supervised group homes.

¹⁶ See also End Result 8.1. on the adoption/amendment of national asylum legislation which is in conformity with international refugee law and standards.

¹⁷ For registration and documentation, see End Result 3.2. on ensuring adequate reception arrangements where individual status determination is required.

¹⁸ For standards of fair and efficient asylum procedures, see para 50 of *Asylum Process (Fair and Efficient Asylum Procedures)*, EC/GC/01/12 (31 May 2001).

Mobilize this support also on a bilateral basis involving countries with developed asylum systems, where appropriate.

- ⇒ Organize targeted and specialized training and other sensitization activities for government officials, including border guards, immigration officers, police, military, customs, judiciary and officials involved in refugee status determination, on issues such as:
 - How to deal with asylum-seekers arriving without documentation or with false documents;
 - Cross-cultural interviewing techniques of asylum-seekers, particularly of refugee women and children as well as victims of torture or sexual violence;
 - How to use of interpreters effectively;
 - Need to counsel asylum-seekers about the process, their rights and obligations;
 - Effective decision writing.
- ⇒ Encourage the Government to issue administrative instructions and operational guidelines to officials at the working level, including police and immigration officers, on how to deal with asylum claims within the framework of the legislation, with a particular focus on the claims of refugee women and children.
- ⇒ Promote gender and age-sensitive structures, in particular lobbying for the employment of female eligibility officers and interpreters, as well as psychosocial support for traumatized refugees.
- ⇒ Promote creation/identification of specific focal points on refugee-related issues in relevant ministries.
- ⇒ Support strengthening the key administrative departments overseeing asylum procedures, and encourage development of coordination mechanisms between relevant ministerial departments that may complement one another in addressing protection issues. Enhance operational partnerships between relevant local authorities and central authorities.
- ⇒ Ensure that asylum seekers have the opportunity to present evidence concerning their personal circumstances and conditions in the country of origin.
- ⇒ Maintain contacts at all levels of the national eligibility body, and make interventions where necessary.
- ⇒ Enlist the support of NGOs, intellectuals, opinion leaders, and academics to lobby parliamentarians and policy-makers in favor of government asylum policy in compliance with international standards.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ The Government indicates that it will assume responsibility for refugee status determination and makes concrete steps towards establishing a fair and efficient asylum system.
- ◆ Experts are called upon to advise on the development of asylum procedures and structures. At a minimum they envisage that asylum-seekers will have a personal interview before the competent body, will have access to UNHCR and vice versa, will receive a written and reasoned decision and have a right to second instance review by an independent body.
- ◆ Ideally, especially in countries with a well-resourced legal infrastructure, due weight is also given to the following safeguards:
 - At all stages of the procedure, including at the admissibility stage, asylum-seekers receive guidance and advice on the procedure and have access to legal counsel. Where free legal aid is available, asylum-seekers have access to it in case of need. They also have access to UNHCR, and UNHCR also has prompt and unhindered access to asylum-seekers;

- Special considerations are made in order to process claims lodged by asylum-seekers with special needs, such as single women with security needs, unaccompanied and separated children, survivors of trauma or sexual violence, and these cases are treated as priority. Provisions are made for traumatized asylum-seekers to have access to psycho-social support throughout the asylum procedure including during the interview;
 - A legal representative is designated to handle the social and legal rights of unaccompanied and separated children throughout the asylum procedure and ensures that the child's best interests are represented throughout the child's stay in the country. Suitably qualified guardians or advisors are identified and appointed to assist separated children at all stages. Interviews are carried out by specially trained personnel;
 - Sufficient female interpreters and interviewers are available. Female asylum-seekers are given the opportunity to be interviewed by skilled female interviewers and interpreters and are interviewed in a gender-sensitive environment;
 - The Government adopts guidelines for dealing with asylum claims of women and children, and more officials are following the guidelines;
 - Family members who have not submitted an individual application for asylum are informed of their right to file their own claim and are given an opportunity to explain the reasons why they fear return to their country in confidence;
- ◆ The Government decides that financial resources will be allocated in the yearly budget for implementation of fair and effective asylum procedures, if necessary with donor support advocated by UNHCR.
 - ◆ More asylum-seekers, in whatever manner they arrive within the jurisdiction of a State, have access to procedures to adjudicate their claim, which are fair, non-discriminatory, and appropriate to the nature of the claim.
 - ◆ To reduce the period of uncertainty for asylum-seekers as well as the costs involved in reception arrangements for States, individual asylum requests are processed more expeditiously.
 - ◆ The Government prepares leaflets in relevant languages available for asylum-seekers informing them of the procedures as well as their rights and obligations during such procedures and upon the granting of a protected status. Procedures are being put in place to ensure that illiterate asylum-seekers also have access to the necessary information about the asylum procedure.

4.2. A full and inclusive interpretation of the refugee definition is used

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Develop with authorities cooperative arrangements, including access to files and records, as well as an adequate forum for regular discussions.
- ⇒ Provide advice and support to officials involved in refugee status determination on interpretation of the refugee definition, including on key inclusion criteria such as, *inter alia*, gender-related persecution, prudent application of the internal flight alternative and the safe third country concept, and acknowledgement of non-state agents of persecution as well as on the exclusion of those undeserving of international protection.
- ⇒ Hold regular training activities on the above-mentioned issues for officials in the administration and judiciary.
- ⇒ Provide the authorities with updated country of origin information, jurisprudence on refugee issues, regional/international expert studies, periodicals or other initiatives in the refugee area, as well as copies of relevant international and regional legal instruments.
- ⇒ On a regular basis, conduct spot-check of interviews and quality of decisions, and hold regular meetings with decision-makers to identify aspects found not to be in compliance with refugee and human rights law.

- ⇒ Supervise the government practices in a given region, to encourage a harmonized and consistent approach to refugee status determination, including by organizing regional workshops for government officials.
- ⇒ Give guidance on the content and compatibility with the 1951 Convention of complementary forms of protection to protect those who do not fall within the scope of the Convention but still require international protection.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ UNHCR is officially given an advisory or observer role in the status determination mechanism and has access to all relevant files and records.
- ◆ The authorities solicit UNHCR's views more frequently. They welcome and act upon UNHCR's advice.
- ◆ UNHCR's advice on interpretation of the refugee definition is more frequently reflected in the decision of the authorities.
- ◆ Where the claimant might fall under Article 1 F of the 1951 Convention, exclusion is examined more carefully, in line with UNHCR guidelines.
- ◆ More officials conducting refugee status determination have accurate, impartial and up-to-date information on country of origin, and decisions are taken with due consideration to the actual situation in the country of origin.
- ◆ There is evidence that States in the same region are harmonizing their interpretation of the refugee definition and other aspects of refugee law.
- ◆ Those who do not fall within the scope of the Convention but still require international protection are increasingly given a complementary form of protection. This includes persons fleeing from indiscriminate serious threats resulting from armed conflict and generalized violence as well as persons risking torture and other cruel or inhuman treatment, but only in cases without a link to a 1951 Convention ground.

GOAL III:

**BROADENING AND
IMPLEMENTING DURABLE SOLUTIONS**

<i>Desired End Result 5.</i>	<i>Voluntary repatriation is organized effectively and refugees are returning in safety and dignity¹⁹</i>
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5.1.	Conditions in the country of origin are properly assessed
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Make a thorough assessment of the causes that led to the refugee situation and subsequent developments (such as policy changes, domestic stability, and signals from the government to accept refugees back).
- ⇒ Collect baseline data on potential areas of return and identify/analyze possible constraints and obstacles to determine whether refugees can return in physical, legal and material safety and with dignity, including an analysis of the situation of women and children.²⁰
- ⇒ Develop a questionnaire for the collection of data, as well as a reporting format to ensure the compatibility of information. Seek assistance to create a database to store and easily retrieve information on conditions in country of origin.
- ⇒ Develop partnerships for the collection, analysis and sharing of data to ensure a sound basis for decision-making and operations planning. Ensure coordination and communication between UNHCR offices in countries of asylum and origin. Conduct joint assessments between the two offices where possible.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ There are more frequent consultations among UNHCR offices in countries of asylum and origin as well as with different partner agencies, focusing on conditions for voluntary repatriation.
- ◆ More information is available on issues of relevance for the determination of the possibilities of return in physical, legal, and material safety, including for women and children.
- ◆ Information is collected in a standardized manner. The database on conditions in the country of origin is regularly updated and more frequently consulted. Data can now be shared on a regular basis with UNHCR offices in countries of asylum.

5.2.	Profiles of the refugee population are updated for repatriation purposes
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ In consultation with all segments of the refugee community, undertake or update repatriation-related surveys, in particular on:
 - Demographic and socio-economic profiles of the refugee population (including gender and age);
 - Areas of origin and preferred destinations upon eventual return;
 - Vocational background; and
 - Identification of groups with special needs.
- ⇒ Share the above-mentioned information on the profiles with UNHCR office/authorities in country of origin, Headquarters, and relevant partners.

¹⁹ See *Handbook on Voluntary Repatriation: International Protection* (1996); *Voluntary Repatriation*, EC/GC/02/5 (25 April 2002).

²⁰ In particular, examine security conditions; access to suitable land; mines; availability of health/water/education facilities; services available for groups with special needs (e.g. female-headed households, disabled, widows); presence of NGOs and other UN agencies; seasonal, administrative or logistical issues; national legislation on issues of importance for the return of refugees (e.g. access/restitution of land, property and housing).

- ⇒ Determine whether different repatriation approaches would have to apply to different ethnic or other groups within the refugee population, or between refugees in (UNHCR-assisted) camps and those who have settled spontaneously.
- ⇒ In cooperation with the country of origin, start working on an operations plan covering all protection and assistance aspects. Identify possible implementing partners for tasks under the repatriation programme that you do not foresee UNHCR implementing directly.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ Refugees gradually participate in the survey exercise and provide the requested data, including information on their special needs and intentions. The refugee population profile is being updated.
- ◆ Discussions are under way with potential implementing partners regarding planning and implementation of repatriation programmes.
- ◆ Taking into due account the profile of the refugee community, there are close consultations with the UNHCR offices and authorities in the country of origin on the drafting of an operations plan.

5.3. Conditions conducive to return are actively promoted, and a framework to implement voluntary repatriation is established in time

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Facilitate the participation of refugees, including women, in peace and reconciliation processes.
- ⇒ Promote references in peace agreements to the right to return, to the principle of non-discrimination, and to other standards relating to voluntary repatriation (e.g. amnesty provisions, housing and property rights, freedom of movement and free choice of settlement upon return).
- ⇒ Encourage authorities in the country of origin to promote conditions conducive to the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of refugees, including recognition of and respect for refugees' right to return to their country in conditions of physical, legal and material safety and with dignity; seek, as appropriate and necessary, proclamation of amnesties and other legal guarantees for returnees, including property restitution, all of which should be appropriately communicated to refugees.
- ⇒ Obtain agreement on the establishment of tripartite commissions (host country/country of origin/UNHCR) and on fundamental issues such as reception facilities, security en route to final destinations, protection without recrimination, access to documentation, and UNHCR's returnee monitoring. To that end, work towards tripartite agreements on voluntary repatriation, which translate the standards of voluntary repatriation into operational modalities. Such formal agreements are preferable, however not indispensable in all situations.
- ⇒ Try to avoid individual clearance procedures by the Government of the country of origin for the return of each refugee, unless this is clearly in his or her protection interests.
- ⇒ Develop partnerships and close cooperation with other multilateral and bilateral actors, ranging from the local authorities in countries of asylum and origin to NGOs, diplomatic missions and multilateral development actors (World Bank, UNDP). Stimulate especially the latter to target returnee areas, including host populations, in their plans and projects, so as to link repatriation, reintegration, reconstruction and development at the earliest possible stage, implying a financial basis that goes beyond humanitarian programmes.
- ⇒ Develop also a close cooperation with international peacekeeping forces, if present in the country of origin (and asylum), involve them in repatriation planning, and encourage them to assume a proactive role in addressing security-related problems.
- ⇒ Identify and work with national institutions and NGOs in the human rights field in the country of origin, if appropriate, with a view to maximizing support for the creation of conditions conducive to

safe return and reintegration of refugees. Rally also political and material support among diplomatic missions for this purpose.

- ⇒ Involve the local authorities and NGOs, and enhance their capacity to manage the voluntary repatriation operation. To that end, undertake training activities in the management and implementation of reception and post-repatriation programmes.
- ⇒ Following discussions with refugee men and women, determine the assistance package and security/protection procedures for voluntary repatriation.
- ⇒ Based on an assessment of refugees' post-repatriation needs, reorient assistance programmes towards repatriation preparedness in such areas as education, vocational training, income-generating activities, and health and community development.
- ⇒ In cooperation with colleagues and partners working in other sectors, initiate/complete repairs or rehabilitation of access roads and basic water supply systems, as well as health services; ensure the prepositioning of food and other items (e.g. seeds, tools, shelter material) which are required for returnee assistance programmes.
- ⇒ Contact and hold discussions in the country of origin with government departments and humanitarian organizations providing social welfare to groups with special needs (e.g. elderly, disabled returnees).
- ⇒ Agree with the country of origin on the format of the voluntary repatriation form (VRF), registration guidelines and, as appropriate, a system for the computerization of VRF data.
- ⇒ Ensure free access of UNHCR to refugees and returnees and vice versa during all stages of the voluntary repatriation process.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ More refugees feel associated with the peace process, and peace agreements reflect more demands of refugees relating to their voluntary repatriation.
- ◆ The Government responds to the request of UNHCR to establish a tripartite commission and has more contacts with UNHCR. Formal tripartite agreements incorporating basic terms and conditions of voluntary repatriation are being prepared for adoption based on the proposal made by UNHCR.
- ◆ The authorities in the country of origin undertake necessary steps to promulgate amnesties and other legal guarantees.
- ◆ International peacekeeping forces (if present) commit themselves to proactively contribute to the repatriation operation, notably in areas where security problems are not completely ruled out.
- ◆ Protection staff and programme staff now meet regularly to discuss possible programmes for assistance and for the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure. The existing gaps in country-of-origin resources to meet the needs of returnees are discussed with programme colleagues with a view to preparing or mobilizing possible assistance programmes.
- ◆ Development actors in the country of origin, especially the World Bank and UNDP, show interest, in an early stage, to assist in filling these gaps and to incorporate community-based reintegration in their programmes and to secure timely funding.
- ◆ Discussions are underway with authorities on the format of the VRF, registration guidelines, as well as computerization of VRF data. The system benefits the country of origin's registration needs as well as UNHCR's monitoring purposes.
- ◆ There are consultations with male and female refugee representatives before determining assistance package and security/protection procedures. More refugee men and women participate in assistance programmes geared towards repatriation preparedness.

- ◆ Officials, NGOs representatives and international peacekeepers (where applicable) actively participate in workshops on voluntary repatriation.
- ◆ An operational repatriation plan is being developed. There is close synergy between UNHCR offices in the countries of origin and asylum, and between UNHCR repatriation, protection, programme, community services and field safety colleagues. Relevant external stakeholders such as the countries concerned, WFP, peacekeeping forces (if present) and NGOs are actively involved.

5.4. Repatriation is based on a free and informed choice

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Design and start conducting a UNHCR-supervised and coordinated information campaign regarding repatriation to reach out not only to the refugees (men, women and children), but also to governments, NGOs, the local population and the media.
- ⇒ Support the establishment of gender and age-sensitive counseling/information networks in host countries in cooperation with governments, NGOs and refugees. In addition, ensure the dissemination of country of origin information.
- ⇒ Support and organize go-and-see assessment visits for refugee men and women to study the situation in the country of origin. If necessary and appropriate, facilitate visits to the refugees by community leaders or government authorities from the country of origin (come-and-see visits).
- ⇒ Enable the participation of different age and gender groups in the decision-making process on the return of their families and/or communities by appropriate dissemination of information.
- ⇒ Ensure that the system allows adult refugee women to sign the VRF separately to ensure their voluntariness.
- ⇒ Recruit women leaders and female staff to monitor the voluntary repatriation registration process, in particular in relation to access to registration points, and to act as focal points for related concerns of refugee women about return.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ More refugees, including women, adolescents, children, and elderly, attend information sessions on the situation in the country of origin. More refugees utilize the counseling system.
- ◆ More refugees approach UNHCR to inquire about their voluntary repatriation. UNHCR staff undertake visits to interview refugees to ascertain their future plans.
- ◆ Male and female refugees representing all members of the community conduct go-and-see assessment visits to the country of origin, and disseminate obtained information to refugees upon return to the country of asylum.
- ◆ Refugee women can take decisions on their voluntary repatriation independently, based on their own choice. More women refugees accept to sign the VRF separately.

5.5. Return travel proceeds safely²¹

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Incorporate in the operational repatriation plan, in consultation with countries of asylum and origin, fair, expeditious, simple, transparent, and non-discriminatory arrangements for the actual return movement. Where necessary, call for a meeting of Tripartite Commission for discussion.
- ⇒ Provide support to the authorities concerned in order to ensure safe return travel, in particular with special needs of vulnerable groups taken into consideration. Ensure medical screening is conducted prior to travel and that medical care is available during the travel, including at reception centers.
- ⇒ Determine desired assembly centers, border-crossing points, departure and entry formalities, reception centers, and a system for onward movement to final destinations in the country of origin. Where necessary, make transit arrangements.
- ⇒ Where mines are a concern en route, prior to travel, ensure mine clearance including by international peacekeepers where present.
- ⇒ Where it is necessary, assist returning refugees with exit and transit formalities.
- ⇒ Make a final assessment of routes of return. Agree with all concerned and implement logistics and security arrangements for the movement and establish a system to monitor movement.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ Pursuant to the operational repatriation plan, capacities of the authorities have been developed in order to handle the repatriation operation smoothly and expeditiously, with the support of UNHCR and other partners.
- ◆ More refugees who are not fit to travel are identified through medical screening. Refugees have access to medical treatment should they fall sick during travel.
- ◆ Administrative requirements for return are simplified, including the border formalities. More returning refugees can continue their travel without being kept waiting unduly for formalities.
- ◆ Cases of detention, security or mine incidents during the repatriation travel have become exceptional and are followed up.

5.6. The best interest of unaccompanied and separated children is taken into account^{22 23}

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ In the country of origin, contact and hold discussions with government departments and humanitarian organizations providing social welfare services to unaccompanied and separated children. Encourage authorities in the country of origin to take special measures for the reception of unaccompanied and separated children.²⁴
- ⇒ Establish special procedures, involving child-welfare experts, to ensure that the rights of unaccompanied and separated children are respected in the process of making a decision as to whether or not a child should repatriate. In cases where the child does not wish to repatriate, inform

²¹ For transit and reception arrangements, see End Result 3.2. on the establishment of adequate reception arrangements.

²² See *Voluntary Repatriation*, Action for the Rights of Children – ARC (UNHCR and Save the Children Alliance), 1999.

²³ See also the preceding End Result in Goal 5 on the effective organization of voluntary repatriation and ability of refugees to return in safety and with dignity.

²⁴ See also End Result 3.2. on the establishment of adequate reception arrangements.

local authorities and discuss with them medium and long-term options such as foster care and guardianship.

- ⇒ Take special measures related to the child's health, personal effects, documentation, education, security and transport to ensure safety and dignity of unaccompanied and separated children in the repatriation process. When unaccompanied and separated children are newly identified in the repatriation process, ensure documentation and immediate family tracing.
- ⇒ Ensure that monitoring of repatriation movement is conducted with a particular focus on unaccompanied and separated children, since they are particularly vulnerable to abuse (including sexual violence) and exploitation.
- ⇒ Take appropriate action to ensure that unaccompanied and separated children are either reunited with family members upon return or placed in appropriate care arrangements until family members can be traced. Ensure close monitoring of unaccompanied and separated children upon return.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ Standard operating procedures on how to deal with unaccompanied and separated children in voluntary repatriation, including special counseling and registration, are being developed and well-understood by UNHCR staff as well as by authorities and partners.
- ◆ More unaccompanied and separated children participate in the decision-making process.
- ◆ Relevant partners on both sides of the border increasingly coordinate their efforts, including sharing advance information and providing feedback upon their return.
- ◆ Unaccompanied and separated children return with all relevant documentation (VRF, tracing documentation, school and health certificates, any records kept by NGOs related to the care of the child), and these documents are handed over to the competent persons/ institutions receiving the child. Proper protection and care are well coordinated.
- ◆ Authorities and partners dealing with registration and tracing activities in the country of origin meet each convoy and obtain relevant information on all arriving unaccompanied and separated children. They are placed in safe and adequate accommodation in the reception arrangement. Trained staff conducts tracing and family reunification activities in an expedited manner, before and after return.

5.7. Returnees are reintegrated smoothly, and return is made sustainable through strengthened cooperation with development and other partners at an early stage²⁵

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Provide the authorities of the country of origin with technical and advisory services to elaborate legal safeguards agreed to by the Government at an earlier stage,²⁶ and promote their effective implementation. Ensure that special needs of women and children are reflected. Mobilize the support and involvement of other actors, including diplomatic missions.
- ⇒ Encourage the government of the country of origin and development partners to adopt a community-based focus regarding investment in reintegration, which benefits returnees as well as the local population, and which accords sufficient priority to housing and essential services, to increase absorption capacity and contribute to reconciliation.

²⁵ See also End Result 5.3. on the conditions conducive to return and the timely establishment of a framework to implement voluntary repatriation.

²⁶ These should ideally cover, *inter alia*, registration, effective provision of nationality, reduction of statelessness, documentation (access, issuance and recognition of documents issued in host countries), re-establishment of residence, restitution of land, housing and property, employment, access to basic social services including medical care, education (including recognition of equivalency of educational qualifications), and social welfare.

- ⇒ Keep the adequacy of UNHCR's field presence under regular review.
- ⇒ With the authorities, plan measures to sensitize and prepare the population, particularly in the communities to which refugees will eventually be returning. In particular, in cooperation with other relevant partners, facilitate a dialogue between returnees, the receiving community and the authorities. Promote continuous initiatives to foster confidence building (first phase), co-existence (second phase) and reconciliation (third phase), such as inter-community bus lines, women's initiatives and community-based co-existence projects.
- ⇒ Undertake returnee monitoring, involving other agencies as appropriate, to:
 - generate relevant country of origin information for potential returnees, host countries and other actors;
 - identify problems of returnees with a view to designing appropriate protection and assistance interventions;
 - determine whether refugees/displaced persons are able to return in safety and with dignity. In the monitoring exercise, pay special attention to returnees at risk and groups with special needs.
- ⇒ Where obstacles for reintegration are identified, intervene with competent authorities to redress the situation both for individual cases, as well as at institutional level. Help to prevent the occurrence of security incidents directed against refugees, including well-documented follow-up with the authorities and international peacekeepers where present.
- ⇒ Build partnership with local institutions and national and international agencies. Address the concerns of returnees in an inter-agency framework to find solutions.
- ⇒ Establish a workable mechanism for linking spontaneous returnees to existing or anticipated UNHCR operations, for both protection and assistance considerations.
- ⇒ Support the authorities in establishing a registration system covering organized as well as spontaneous returnees.
- ⇒ Support an effective human rights regime, including institutions which sustain the rule of law, justice and accountability. Facilitate capacity building of local authorities and civil society to ensure the creation of self-sustaining structures.
- ⇒ Support existing structures or the establishment of gender and age-sensitive Legal Aid/Information Centers to ensure that returnees have access to effective legal remedies.
- ⇒ Provide immediate material or financial support, including through QIPs, to needy returnees at the initial stages of reintegration.
- ⇒ Encourage the authorities and partners to initiate projects focusing on reintegration and self-reliance of returnees, including means to improve access by returnee children to education, vocational training and income generation projects with a focus on single-headed female households.
- ⇒ In consultation with reconstruction and development agencies, develop phase-out strategies for UNHCR, keeping in mind that a quick exit will not always be possible and that flexibility is required on the question of timing.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ The Government has adopted a concrete framework for safe and sustainable reintegration. It includes a variety of legal measures, has a community-based focus, and is based on the active involvement of development partners. Returnees and areas of return are included in national recovery and reconstruction plans through the CCA/UNDAF²⁷ process and other mechanisms. The necessary

²⁷ Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

financial means have been allocated in the annual budget for implementation of the reintegration plan. Legislative measures have been prepared and reintegration projects are being implemented.

- ◆ UNHCR is producing return statistics, comprising organized and spontaneous returnees.
- ◆ Effective returnee monitoring structures are being put in place ensuring that:
 - More protection concerns of returnees and obstacles for return are identified in a timely manner and directed to the authorities, as well as partners in the inter-agency framework, and effective solutions are found for more cases;
 - Information collected is shared with refugees still in the country of asylum in order to facilitate their taking an informed decision on return.
- ◆ More returnees are able to exercise their rights:
 - More returnees are registered and are provided with identity documents. The problem of potential statelessness is addressed and appropriate solutions are found;
 - Reports show more returnees have access to basic social services, including medical care, education, and social welfare;
 - Temporary accommodation arrangements are made for returnees without shelter. More returnees manage to have access to shelter and to regain their property. Regulations are passed which ensure that women have equal rights in access to housing and property restitution. A system is being put in place to assist occupants of refugee homes who are equally displaced, to find alternative accommodation.
- ◆ Increasingly, needy returnees are assisted:
 - Evaluations show reintegration assistance projects have a direct impact on the smooth reintegration of returnees and are appreciated by them;
 - Vocational training and income-generation programs targeting returnees are implemented, and more returnees, including women, participate in the programs.
- ◆ Co-existence/reconciliation, as well as security is gradually increasing:
 - Members of different communities have increased contacts;
 - A sense of tolerance takes root between returnees, the receiving community and the authorities;
 - There are fewer reports on returnees being mistreated, harassed, or discriminated against in the communities to which they return.
- ◆ Fewer returnees are compelled to leave the country or their area of origin for a second time.

5.8. Protection and assistance remain available for those refugees with continued protection needs

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Negotiate continued protection and assistance for those unwilling and/or unable to return voluntarily for valid protection-related reasons. Where necessary, agree upon and establish procedures for this residual group.
- ⇒ Ensure that access to international protection remains available to those in need of it, be they returnees forced to flee their country of origin again or first-time asylum-seekers.
- ⇒ In the event of fundamental, stable and durable changes in the country of origin, develop a framework in which all refugees affected by a group or class decision to apply the “ceased circumstances” cessation clause have the possibility, upon request, to have such application in their cases reconsidered on grounds relevant to their individual case.

- ⇒ Develop a plan for the transfer of refugee camp facilities to the authorities concerned; make a plan for the future use/redeployment of all non-expendable property. Where relevant, promote the integration of services previously provided to refugees into existing national structures, thus building local capacity.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ Authorities are willing to extend stay permits for residual caseload and have discussions with UNHCR about the opportunities for their local integration.
- ◆ Returnees who flee again or first-time asylum-seekers are not automatically rejected at borders and are progressively admitted to asylum procedures or other protective structures.
- ◆ Refugee camp facilities are being converted for use by local population. Arrangements are underway that the facilities/services previously provided to refugees can in future be used by the local community.
- ◆ In the event of cessation, the Government agrees to examine a continued status for persons who have compelling reasons arising out of previous persecution for refusing to re-avail themselves of the protection of their country as well as for persons who cannot reasonably be expected to leave the country of asylum, due to a long stay in that country resulting in strong family, social and economic links there. A fair procedure for assessing such cases is established, preferably by the Government with UNHCR advice and support as necessary.
- ◆ The implementation of UNHCR mobilized programmes to address the negative environmental impact in former refugee areas are being set in motion.

<i>Desired End Result 6.</i>	<i>Resettlement functions as an improved tool of protection and solutions²⁸</i>
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6.1.	Resettlement activities are a prominent part of a comprehensive protection and solutions' strategy
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Integrate resettlement activities into UNHCR's regular protection activities and into Country Operations Plans.
- ⇒ Proactively and systematically identify refugees in need of resettlement, in cooperation with colleagues working in other sectors and local implementing partners. In this respect, give increased attention to gender-related protection needs, in addition to the women-at-risk category.
- ⇒ Assess cases in accordance with UNHCR's established resettlement criteria and apply the criteria in a transparent and consistent manner.
- ⇒ Prepare well-documented and well-structured Resettlement Registration Forms and submit them according to established procedures and with the appropriate categorization of priority. Argue logically and convincingly the reasons for both refugee and resettlement eligibility. Where special needs are identified or in emergency situations, give due priority to the submission in a manner which reflects the urgency of the situation.
- ⇒ Appropriately counsel and provide information to the refugees throughout the resettlement process, in a gender and age-sensitive manner.

²⁸ See *Handbook on Resettlement* (June 2002 revision); *Strengthening and Expanding Resettlement Today: Dilemmas, Challenges and Opportunities*, EC/GC/02/7 (25 April 2002).

- ⇒ Establish credible systems that preserve the integrity of the resettlement process including by defining areas of accountability and responsibility in supervision and delivery of resettlement services and by organizing timely oversight missions.
- ⇒ Ensure that mechanisms are in place to detect and address any malfeasance, including corruption and fraud.
- ⇒ Establish tripartite resettlement partnerships (countries, NGOs, UNHCR) and mechanisms to strengthen and consolidate resettlement objectives and to harmonize resettlement criteria. In particular, promote greater flexibility in establishing criteria, especially for refugees who have particularly pressing protection needs in the host country.
- ⇒ Conduct targeted training programmes for UNHCR staff and others involved in resettlement activities on the concrete application of resettlement criteria and the overall management of resettlement activities.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ More refugees have access to UNHCR and are counseled on the resettlement process.
- ◆ Field-level resettlement management is being improved with standardized case processing, beginning with registration, through refugee status determination to the creation of standard operating procedures for all resettlement-processing stages.
- ◆ The quality of the resettlement submission is being improved, and resettlement countries demonstrate increased responsiveness to UNHCR's resettlement activities. In particular, they agree on flexible resettlement criteria, including refugees who have been in limbo for years or those with prima facie status.
- ◆ Urgent and emergency submissions are processed expeditiously and within a standardized time frame. The period between case submission and departure is progressively shorter.
- ◆ The integrity of the resettlement process is maintained as per feedback from Governments and NGO partners. Where any malfeasance is detected, appropriate action is taken, including providing information to the Office of the Inspector General, at an early stage.

6.2. Efficient pre-departure and departure arrangements are in place for refugees accepted for resettlement

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Assist refugees to obtain necessary travel documents and visas.
- ⇒ Counsel refugees on pre-departure arrangements and provide appropriate cultural orientation and language training, where feasible.
- ⇒ Follow up medical screening and/or medical preparation relating to refugees awaiting departure, as appropriate, and pursue waiver applications for refugees rejected on medical grounds.
- ⇒ Coordinate with host governments to ensure the delivery of exit permits for refugees prior to departure.
- ⇒ Liaise with resettlement countries, UNHCR Headquarters, IOM and other partners to facilitate transportation for refugees, according to established procedures.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ Refugees are granted necessary travel documents without delay and exit fees are waived. More refugees depart under the waiver procedures.

- ◆ Countries of first asylum facilitate the expeditious departure of refugees determined by UNHCR to be in need of resettlement.
- ◆ Travel and arrival of refugees in the countries of resettlement is effectively coordinated among the various actors.
- ◆ Special needs of refugees are attended to during travel and upon reception in the resettlement country.

6.3. Resettlement countries are more responsive and flexible, and new countries offer resettlement opportunities²⁹
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Promote a better understanding of UNHCR’s resettlement activities and UNHCR’s overall goals with local officials of resettlement countries as well as with refugees.
- ⇒ Work in close and collaborative fashion with resettlement country representatives in the field to achieve flexibility in the decision-making process.
- ⇒ Encourage, in consultation with the Resettlement Section at Headquarters, diplomatic missions of non-resettlement countries to examine participation in resettlement programmes.
- ⇒ In case of new resettlement countries, in cooperation with NGOs and other States, develop capacity-building programmes, including training, as well as “twinning”³⁰ and related support.
- ⇒ Ensure the regular, timely and accurate flow of information to the Resettlement Section at the Headquarters with regard to current and projected resettlement needs of refugee populations in the respective country/region.
- ⇒ Encourage increased internal dialogue between the Resettlement Section and the Bureaux on issues impacting resettlement activities.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ Resettlement countries respond not only with more generous quotas but also with greater flexibility and responsiveness to refugees in need of resettlement.
- ◆ States show enhanced response to special needs identified and to emergency situations, in a manner which reflects the urgency of the situation and the increasing diversity of resettlement needs. “Integration potential” does not play a determining role in the consideration of protection resettlement cases.
- ◆ New countries offer resettlement to refugees in need.
- ◆ Partnerships are identified to assist new resettlement countries and their civil society in developing their capacity to receive and integrate resettled refugees.
- ◆ Resettlement countries take measures to enhance the integration of resettled refugees aimed at enabling refugees to have durable residence status to enjoy equality of rights and opportunities in the social, economic, and cultural life of the country, especially as regards: education, including language training and skills development; the labor market; family reunification; and citizenship.
- ◆ Resettlement countries, in cooperation with civil society, involve resettled refugees in decision-making processes in order to assist them to better cope during the transition phase.

²⁹ Concerning integration upon resettlement, see also Desired End Result 7 on local integration.

³⁰ “Twinning” is support to capacity building whereby civil servants from national administrations, NGOs, or individuals make themselves available to assist other States with less developed protection structures to build up expertise in the different areas.

Desired End Result 7.	Local integration is permitted and refugees become fully participating members of society^{31 32}
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7.1.	More refugees are allowed to integrate locally
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Promote understanding by the Government of the situation of those refugees who are unable to return to their country of origin, or for whom local integration is otherwise the preferable durable solution. Lobby with local authorities in the area concerned, parliamentarians and opinion makers. Convince the latter to use the media to argue in favor of opening up for local integration.
- ⇒ Encourage the Government to fully agree to and actively support efforts to integrate refugee populations, taking into account that integration is a mutual, dynamic, multi-faceted and on-going process. Encourage the Government to actively involve refugees in this process.
- ⇒ Build and/or strengthen multi-faceted partnerships among governments, donors, development agencies, refugees, local community, NGOs and volunteers, who can assist in the integration process, also to bring about tangible dividends of local integration to the local community as appropriate.
- ⇒ Support projects that strengthen the receptiveness and absorption capacity of the local community. In particular, ensure that UNHCR's assistance as well as bilateral programmes in the area of integration are incorporated into national development plans, UN Development Assistance Framework (where applicable) and poverty alleviation initiatives.
- ⇒ Facilitate a dialogue between refugees and local community to enhance tolerance and prevent local resentment. Undertake awareness building activities on the positive contribution made/to be made by refugees, targeting local community where refugees are to integrate.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ A political climate is created in which local integration opportunities are discussed in a favorable light. The Government examines the issue involved.
- ◆ More local NGOs and civil society groups support refugees to integrate in the host community.
- ◆ NGOs and developmental partners increasingly implement community-based integration projects and assist the authorities to reinforce the socio-economic infrastructure where large numbers of refugees are being integrated.
- ◆ Absorption capacity where refugees are integrated is enhanced thanks to the government-sponsored integration programme. Receiving communities more readily accept and assist the refugees.
- ◆ More refugees feel that they are welcome in the community and that they are members of their host society.

³¹ For self-reliance of refugees in integration process, see Desired End Result 2 on the empowerment of refugees to better meet their protection and assistance needs. See also *Local Integration*, EC/GC/02/6 (25 April 2002).

³² Suggested Activities, Signs of Progress/Indicators listed for this Desired End Result also apply to the integration of refugees upon resettlement.

7.2. Refugees are granted a progressively wider range of rights on the way towards full integration
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Assist the Government in creating a framework for long-term local integration of refugees and other persons of concern, including family reunification and citizenship legislation. Make sure that administrative instructions for enforcement of these rights are issued. Provide legal and technical advice to the authorities, where needed.
- ⇒ In cooperation with other sections, support the Government in designing a comprehensive integration programme, suitable for the urban and rural environment. Such a programme may comprise: orientation courses, housing and employment programmes³³, counseling, as well as an evaluation process to ensure identification of best practices and appropriate revision of the programme.
- ⇒ Monitor the integration process of refugees in relation to the most pertinent rights and entitlements stipulated in 1951 Convention and other human rights instruments.³⁴
- ⇒ Make sure that refugees are aware of their rights as well as their obligations. Disseminate pamphlets on the rights of refugees in the languages they understand. Provide legal advice to the refugees in cooperation with NGOs and local lawyers.
- ⇒ Encourage the Parliament to form committees to examine the human rights situation of refugees. Empower other national institutions, such as human rights commissions and ombudspersons' offices to help guarantee rights of refugees. Initiate training and promotional activities on these rights for the authorities and parliamentarians concerned.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ A framework supporting local integration of refugees is being established. More refugees are granted permanent residence permits, gradually exercise a wider scope of the rights stipulated in the 1951 Convention and engage in income-generating activities, such as farming, trading, or paid labor.
- ◆ The authorities pay due regard to the difficult circumstances of integrating refugees, and special administrative procedures in favor of refugees are being put in place.
- ◆ The human rights situation of refugees is monitored and discussed by official institutions. Competent bodies issue reports on their situation.
- ◆ The Government accords long term residence status. At that stage or progressively later, refugees are treated in the same manner as nationals, and ultimately are naturalized.

³³ The programme should incorporate activities as outlined under End Result 2 on empowering refugees to meet their protection and assistance needs.

³⁴ These include, non-discrimination, personal status, delivery of documents and certifications, identity papers and travel documents, freedom of movement, public elementary education, access to public relief and assistance, social security and labor laws, gainful employment, housing, access to courts, freedom of association and religion, and family life.

GOAL IV:
**BUILDING A LEGAL FRAMEWORK
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CIVIL SOCIETY**

<i>Desired End Result 8.</i>	<i>A national legislative framework is adopted/amended to strengthen the implementation of international instruments falling under UNHCR's direct responsibility</i>
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8.1.	A national asylum legislation in conformity with international refugee law and standards is adopted/amended
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Advocate for the adoption/amendment of national asylum legislation which is in conformity with international refugee law and standards.
- ⇒ Contact parliamentarians to disseminate the *UNHCR/IPU Handbook* on refugee law and the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol.
- ⇒ Offer and provide UNHCR expert guidance/assistance to the authorities drafting or amending the legislation.
- ⇒ Conduct promotional activities, including through the media, on the importance of establishing asylum legislation in compliance with international standards.
- ⇒ Lobby with parliamentary groups/individual parliamentarians and provide information, advice and guidelines to ensure that they fully understand international standards and the extent to which proposed legislation does (or does not) conform to them.
- ⇒ Where opposition to the adoption of the law is expected, make arrangements for UNHCR to provide its opinion on the law during the parliamentary debate on the draft legislation.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ The Government establishes a task force to draft national asylum legislation.
- ◆ The Government accepts invitations from UNHCR to attend meetings where adoption of national asylum legislation is discussed.
- ◆ UNHCR is regularly consulted in the drafting process, and UNHCR proposals are reflected in the draft legislation.

8.2.	An effective legal framework to avoid/reduce statelessness is adopted/amended to implement the Statelessness Conventions
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Provide the Government with technical and advisory services to develop an effective legal framework to avoid and reduce statelessness in conformity with international principles pertaining to statelessness, including in relation to women and children, notably by reviewing national legislation and practice and by organizing training.
- ⇒ Underline the importance, especially for women and children, of identity documentation, proper registration of births and marriages, and encourage the Government to take all necessary measures in this regard to minimize potential statelessness.
- ⇒ Identify cases of statelessness, promote appropriate solutions, and ensure appropriate follow-up in cooperation with relevant States. Promote the resolution of detention cases where detention is due to disputed/unknown nationality status or statelessness.

- ⇒ Develop partnerships with regional and other international organizations for the promotion of the international legal instruments, technical and advisory services, training and capacity-building activities.
- ⇒ Mainstream activities on statelessness within overall office activities with assistance of HQ.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ The Government establishes a task force to draft or enhance national legislation on the status of stateless persons and mechanisms for the avoidance of statelessness as well as to review the compatibility of the existing national legal framework with the Statelessness Conventions.
- ◆ Concrete plans are made to amend citizenship laws. Any issues of statelessness, including those faced by women and in relation to their children, are addressed in the relevant draft legislation.
- ◆ The Government enhances cooperation with other States to promote a harmonized approach and to jointly identify solutions.

<i>Desired End Result 9.</i>	<i>The number of States Parties to international instruments falling under UNHCR’s direct responsibility continues to increase</i>
9.1.	States accede to the 1951 Convention, the 1967 Protocol on refugees, as well as to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions and/or withdraw reservations made at the time of accession

Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Provide information to government officials, members of parliament, opinion leaders, academia, and relevant civil society organizations on 1) international refugee law and the importance of accession to the refugee instruments³⁵; and 2) international norms concerning the avoidance of statelessness and the importance of accession to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions³⁶. If possible, arrange translation of relevant documents into the local language.
- ⇒ Where States made reservations at the time of accession, sensitize government authorities on the need of lifting these reservations.
- ⇒ Conduct targeted training on refugee law and on statelessness for the persons and groups mentioned above with special focus on the importance and value of accession to the refugee and statelessness instruments.
- ⇒ Provide technical advice and support to the Government towards accession to these instruments.
- ⇒ Undertake promotional activities, possibly including a media campaign for the general public, on the importance of accession, and encourage partners at national and regional levels to cooperate in efforts towards accession as relevant.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ The Government accepts invitations by UNHCR to attend meetings where accession or lifting reservations is discussed.

³⁵ This information is contained in the brochures *Signing on Could Make all the Difference* and *Procedures for Becoming a Party to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* (both issued in August 2001).

³⁶ This information is contained in the brochures *What would life be like if you had no nationality* and the *Information and Accession Package on the Statelessness Conventions* (revised January 1999).

- ◆ The Government requests advice from UNHCR on the implications of accession or lifting reservations.
- ◆ The Government establishes a task force or appoints a focal point to discuss accession to the refugee instruments or lifting reservations to the refugee and/or statelessness instruments.
- ◆ Public and official awareness of the importance of accession to refugee and statelessness instruments is increased through articles and reports in the media and through better understanding by policy makers and opinion leaders.
- ◆ Parliamentary approval for accession is sought. Where necessary, additional measures are taken to implement the instruments at the national level.

<i>Desired End Result 10.</i>	<i>Civil society plays an active role in providing protection and assistance to refugees</i>
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10.1.	Protection networks are established in civil society and within refugee communities
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Build the capacity of civil society players involved in refugee protection, including by developing the skills of their staff through formal education, training, coaching, and other forms of learning.
- ⇒ Encourage the establishment of NGOs' and/or lawyers' networks working for the protection of refugees and asylum seekers, including through financial and/or technical support, if necessary. In this effort, closely involve international NGOs that can play a role in working in collaboration with national NGOs to enhance their capacity to respond to protection needs.
- ⇒ Encourage the establishment of refugee associations by refugee women and men themselves, with equal participation.
- ⇒ Where necessary, encourage the Government to accord NGOs legal status through the creation of a legal framework for their operations.
- ⇒ Help civil society, including NGOs, to diversify their funding and elicit broad-based community support.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ More civil society actors are working for the protection of refugees, in cooperation with UNHCR.
- ◆ More refugee women and men feel empowered to identify their protection problems and make suggestions to address them.
- ◆ NGOs enjoy a clear legal status for their refugee assistance and protection activities, they act independently and are capable of rendering assistance to the State by resolving problems related to asylum-seekers, particularly concerning legal assistance and monitoring of developments.
- ◆ More NGOs address the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers and incorporate them into their activities and programs.
- ◆ Civil society, including NGOs, actively seek new possibilities to obtain funds for their programmes, including from sources other than UNHCR.

10.2. Partnerships with various civil society actors are strengthened and foster a positive attitude towards refugees
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Suggested Activities

- ⇒ Reach out to civil society with offers to disseminate public awareness materials. Organize or participate in public awareness campaigns.

- ⇒ Encourage NGOs to use their field presence and activities to enhance protection of refugees through initiatives of the sort identified in the *UNHCR/NGO Field Guide on Protection*. These include:
 - Monitoring human rights issues, in particular, the treatment of asylum-seekers and refugees, as well as the application of national legislation and procedures, where applicable;
 - Reporting protection concerns to authorities, UNHCR, other international organizations or NGOs;
 - Alerting the public and the media to the concerns of refugees and asylum-seekers;
 - Promoting the observance of international standards among government and local officials;
 - Offering legal and social assistance, education and training programmes to refugees;
 - Encouraging the participation of female and male refugees and asylum-seekers in designing projects, and incorporating them into their projects as beneficiaries.

Signs of Progress/Indicators

- ◆ The number of articles and reports in the media promoting understanding, respect and compassion for refugees increases. More civil society actors appear in the media to raise awareness on the plight of refugees and the need for refugee protection.

- ◆ UNHCR, NGOs and other civil society actors, including refugees, meet more regularly and consult more actively on protection issues/problems. More reports on the situation of refugees are shared with UNHCR by civil society actors.

- ◆ NGOs and other civil society actors have easier access to the authorities and are regarded as credible interlocutors.