

The Identification of Refugees in Need of Resettlement



UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

Overview



1. The **importance of identification** in the resettlement process – only 1% of refugees globally can benefit
2. Stages of the identification **process**
3. Methods and **tools** to assess resettlement needs
4. The importance of **referrals systems** and cooperation with partners

This presentation:

- Reviews the **identification process**.
- Introduces **tools and methods** to assess protection needs and vulnerabilities, and to **identify appropriate durable solutions**, including resettlement
- Outlines the **importance of referrals systems and cooperation with key partners** in the identification of refugees in need of resettlement

For more details see the presentations:

“Who Can be Resettled? Resettlement under the Auspices of UNHCR”

“UNHCR Resettlement Submission Categories”

1. The importance of identification

Proper identification is **most crucial and challenging aspect** of the resettlement process. It requires:

- **Consistent application** of resettlement criteria
- **Equal / fair of access** to resettlement consideration
- **Systematic and proactive** management
- **Fraud and risk mitigation**



Identification of Refugees in Need of Resettlement

Properly identifying refugees in need of resettlement consideration is one of the **most crucial, yet challenging, aspects of resettlement.**

While resettlement is not a right, the refugees who are most in need of resettlement should have access to the process in a timely manner.

2. The identification process

2 stages of identification:

1. Identification of resettlement needs as part of **strategic planning**
2. Identification of **individual cases** for resettlement submission through internal and partner referrals



The Identification Process

The Resettlement Handbook highlights the overall process for identifying resettlement need- from the initial identification of overall resettlement needs, to the identification of cases for submission.

1) Initial Identification

- a) **Strategic planning**, UNHCR country offices worldwide use a standard approach to determine the role and scope for resettlement as part of the annual planning exercise. Tools such as *proGres* and Focus, give an indication of overall needs and allows proactive durable solutions planning to provide a holistic picture of an operation's resettlement needs for current and subsequent years.
- b) **Individual identification**, through the use of *proGres*, participatory assessments, the Heightened Risk Identification Tool, and referrals from partners or from other UNHCR units. Protection or Community Services, for example, can help augment registration data and identify the most vulnerable individuals for resettlement consideration.

UNHCR country offices undertake a yearly exercise of proactive planning for resettlement as an integral part of the overall planning process. UNHCR country offices forecast overall refugee resettlement needs for specific populations, as well as refugee resettlement needs for the next calendar year and UNHCR's capacity to address them.

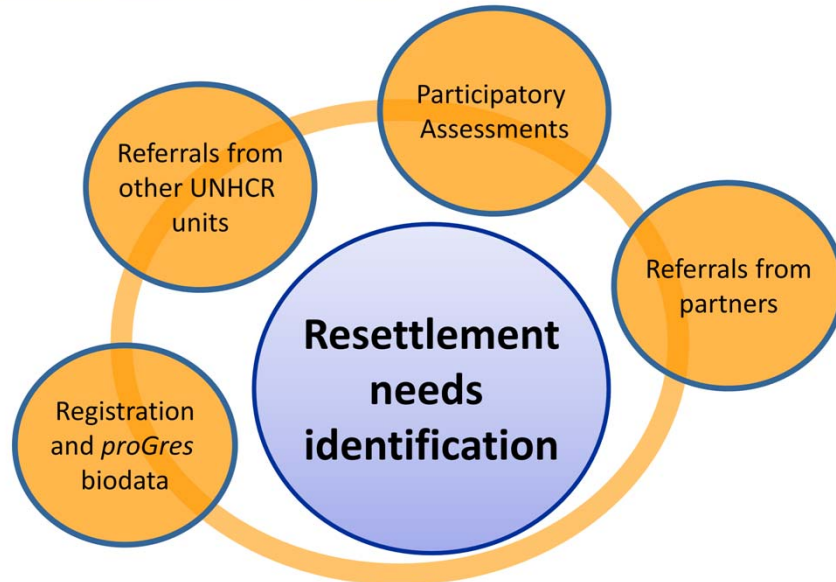
Resettlement was identified as the most appropriate durable solution for approximately 800,000 refugees for each of the last 3 years (2011-2013 Projected Global Resettlement Needs). The actual figure of overall identified needs for 2013 is 859,305.

- 2) The actual submission of cases to resettlement countries is determined by their **submission priority, the submission categories** and the processing capacities and resettlement plan of the UNHCR office. This plan is influenced by the availability of **resettlement quotas and**

resources.

States have committed only 80,000 resettlement places, far lower than the needs identified, which have been approximately 180,000 for each year 2011-2013.

3. Methods and tools for identification



Tools and Methodologies for Data Collection and Needs Assessments

UNHCR has developed tools and methodologies to assess the most appropriate *type of protection intervention- not only the identification of resettlement needs*. Resettlement may be identified as the most appropriate response.

‘**Assessment**’ is best understood as gathering and analyzing data from various sources.

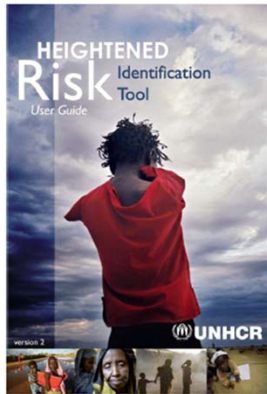
Data sources include:

- Registration and *proGres* data, including identification of specific needs;
- Participatory assessments;
- Internal and partner reports and dialogue;
- Participatory assessments;
- Data from the *Heightened Risk Identification Tool (HRIT)*; and
- Internal and external referrals.

Heightened Risk Identification Tool (HRIT)



The HRIT is a tool for early identification of individuals at risk who require protection intervention .



The HRIT is flexible, simple, yet comprehensive. It can be used:

- in conjunction with **participatory assessments**
- as part of **individual assessments**
- as an **interviewing tool** for caseworkers
- as a **checklist** for roving officers to use in camps or urban settings

Heightened Risk Identification Tool (HRIT)

This methodology, involving a multidisciplinary team approach to identification, was developed to enhance UNHCR's effectiveness in identifying refugees at risk by linking community-based and participatory assessments with individual assessment methods.

The HRIT can be effectively used during all stages of displacement, in urban as well as rural and camp situations.

For example, it can be used:

- as follow-up to registration or refugee status determination;
- in conjunction with a participatory assessment exercise;
- as a stand-alone methodology involving community-based consultations and individual assessments; or
- during protection monitoring.

The Heightened Risk Assessment Tool also provides an interview format and checklist for UNHCR staff or partners to measure risk levels.

UNHCR staff and NGO partners should use the HRIT as a means to enhance early identification of persons at heightened risk.

4. Referral systems with partners



Successful referral systems are built upon:

- **collaboration** of all UNHCR staff and partners (NGOs, legal aid institutions, religious or charitable organization, local foundations, government agencies)
- **systems for sharing information** and feedback on cases between units, agencies, and partners
- **expertise and knowledge** of the refugee population and refugees' specific needs and vulnerabilities



Referral Systems

- Referral Systems are a structured means of sharing information on particular refugees or populations between units, agencies, or partners
- These systems identify refugees in need of required interventions (including resettlement).
- Effective and well-managed referral systems bridge gaps in protection needs identification and resettlement delivery.

Benefits of referral systems:

- Better access to protection interventions (including resettlement) for people who really need it
- Wider range of cases means more of the population is being considered
- Variety of cases may discourage fabrication or even self harm to fit apparent profile
- The more partners involved, the less likely that one organization or one person made a target by the perception of being *the* 'Resettlement Channel'
- Better access to protection interventions (including resettlement) for people who really need it
- Less frustration among refugees

What does a referral system entail?



- Designated **focal points** to make and receive referrals
- Established **standard operating procedures** for referrals and information-sharing
- Incorporated **safeguards against fraud**

What does a referral system entail?

UNHCR offices must have effective mechanisms for considering internal and external referrals.

Essential aspects of a referral system are:

- Partners with expertise and knowledge of the refugee population and of refugees in need
- Effective coordination, training and communication
- A designated focal point to receive referrals
- Established standard operating procedures for documenting, forwarding and assessing the needs to ensure accountability and oversight
- Finally, the system must incorporate safeguards against fraud and to manage expectations

Standard and transparent procedures for assessing referrals mitigate risk of fraud and pressure on all partners involved in referrals.

Benefits of referrals from NGO partners



NGO partners may be in a position to:

- **expand access** to resettlement by bringing information about vulnerable cases and groups to UNHCR's attention
- **complement activities** of UNHCR by assisting with the verification and assessment process



External referrals from partners:

External partners may be in a position bring vulnerable cases to UNHCR's attention, inform on the vulnerabilities of specific groups, or assist with the verification process. Refugee populations may be identified that would otherwise remain hard-to-find.

Referral partnerships may therefore be established with implementing partner NGOs, or other organizations such as legal aid institutions, religious or charitable organizations, local foundations or government agencies. Information from organizations not necessarily targeting refugees, especially those working with women, children, medical and social services may also be very useful.

- Establishing external partnerships is an important means of expanding access to resettlement and increasing identification capacity.
- Types of partnerships can range from formal agreements to case-by-case referrals
- External partners should complement, not negate, UNHCR's own identification activities.

NOTE: The UNHCR-NGO Toolkit for Practical Cooperation on Resettlement

provides examples of UNHCR-NGO collaboration in many areas, including identification and referral.

Key tools and resources



- **The Heightened Risk Identification Tool, UNHCR, June 2010, Second Edition**

available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/46f7c0cd2.html>

- **UNHCR-NGO Toolkit for Practical Cooperation on Resettlement**

available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/4ce54a949.html>