

GUIDELINES: ON TWINNING ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN RESETTLEMENT STATES (ESTABLISHED, EMERGING, AND OBSERVER STATES)

This draft prepared by the UK draws together themes from survey results and discussions on Twinning during the ATCR working group meeting held in Geneva in October 2008.

Introduction

Twining can be described as any partnership activity between states, NGOs, service providing organizations, international organizations and or the UNHCR which aims to encourage an emerging or new resettlement state to develop or strengthen its resettlement programme. It is also any partnership activity which allows a state or NGO to improve the effectiveness of their existing resettlement programme. Successful twinning arrangements reinforce UNHCR's global strategic objectives for resettlement as it strengthens global protection activities and resettlement capacity and reflect the reciprocal learning opportunities for both partners.

To date, most activities have been based on selection missions to facilitate the procedural aspect of physically selecting and moving refugees to the resettlement country. In light of the relevance of integration in the discourse on resettlement, this framework is aimed at expanding resettlement capacity both in terms of programme size and in terms of increasing domestic support for resettlement so that settlement (integration) support can also be increased. With this aim in mind, these twinning guidelines embed the role of all resettlement agents: UNHCR for its protection mandate, NGOs for advocacy and public support; Service providing organizations for settlement service delivery; INGOs for program delivery (migration-IOM) and States, which have sovereign authority over State policy (selection and admission).

Twining enhances resettlement by allowing resettlement actors to increase their understanding by sharing best practice of any stage in the resettlement process from case selection through to settlement and integration. Twining can also assist emerging or observing states to develop public awareness about resettlement as a durable solution which in turn can build support for investing in a State's capacity to share the resettlement responsibility with countries hosting refugees. UNHCR can act as a facilitator and active player in some cases, particularly at "front-end" aspects of the resettlement equation including the fostering of public support for resettlement. Within the context of WGR and ATCR such twinning activities are directly beneficial to UNHCR activities and UNHCR has a direct interest in the effective global coordination and cooperation between States and civil society actors on resettlement activities to strengthen the efficiency, integrity and responsiveness of programmes to address global protection / resettlement priorities.

Twinning projects which are backed by funding generally have specific objectives and formal monitoring and reporting arrangements set up at the start of the project. It is helpful to adopt a more formal project style or way of working for twinning activities without specific donor funding as this also demonstrates that both partners are working towards a set of agreed outcomes.

These Guidelines are intended to be a useful best practice framework for states and non-governmental parties who are setting up and logging twinning arrangements. They are not intended to replace any informal arrangement / dialogue that a state or NGO has established or wishes to establish.

Range of Twinning Activities

For the twinning arrangement to be of value there would need to be a substantive / concrete engagement between the two or more parties (e.g. states and NGOs) who are working towards clear and specific objectives to deliver outcomes in terms of resettlement capacity / programme development. An arrangement such as a “familiarisation mission” cannot be considered as a twinning activity in itself. As stated above there should always be an objective to strengthen the resettlement capacity.

Twinning activities will vary depending on the project. They can be one-off meetings, skill share days, secondments for staff over several months or longer term arrangements aimed at mentoring and shadowing all aspects of a resettlement programme. Some activities are listed below:

- visits, staff exchanges,
- shadowing a selection mission,
- training or skill sharing events, seminars,
- assistance in preparing documents for National Government,
- assistance preparing policy documents
- assistance in sourcing funds to strengthen resettlement capacity
- assistance pre and post arrival/cultural orientation
- sharing practice of integration support / housing (e.g. at State, NGO and local authority level).

A cost effective way to set up a twinning arrangement could also be through ‘virtual networking’ in the form of teleconferences or emails. If this twinning relationship develops, the relevant parties could then consider expanding twinning strategies in line with their needs. Virtual twinning could present a more achievable and practical method to ensure that the momentum created by UNHCR in encouraging countries to start/continue resettlement programs is sustained.

Examples of twinning-type activities that have taken place are:

- Czech Republic/ Netherlands: To get as much experience in the field of resettlement as possible to create a Czech Republic policy paper and develop a resettlement process.

- Canadian, shared experiences and challenges in resettlement with officials from the Americas and NGOs as part of their on-going engagement on Solidarity under the Mexico Plan of Action and staff exchanges and visits with Japan to develop a new resettlement programme .
- Norway and five Latin American countries, namely Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay have a competence building cooperation with Norway regarding selection and integration of quota refugees.
- Pan-Europe: ICMC-European experiences of “Practical Cooperation for the European Resettlement Network” and ERF funded programme resulting in the Welcome to Europe” publication.
- Finland, Ireland, Spain, Sweden under MOST¹ the focus of this project was to develop comprehensive models for quicker and better integration of refugees, who come directly from crises situations or refugee camps to the European Union.

Identifying your “learning/skills gap”

Before approaching a potential twinning partner you should first identify what area of resettlement (advocacy, settlement\integration support capacity, technical expertise) you wish to develop and within what timeframe. At this point it is useful to also identify your “ideal” end goal - the outcome you wish to achieve. For example, a goal could be ambitious; i.e. “to set up a resettlement programme in country X within 18 months” or equally important “to improve cultural orientation on arrival of a resettlement group in country X.” UNHCR can assist in identifying suitable twinning opportunities / partners and can advise states and NGOs when a twinning relationship can be advantageously explored.

It is a good idea to draft some initial proposals as these can be used as a basis for discussion with your potential twinning partner/s. You will know your organisation best so ensure that your proposals are **realistic and achievable**. You will also need to identify who in your organisation will lead on negotiations and who should be involved in your project from your organisation and from other relevant stakeholders. This will involve identifying what skills your staff already have, who else needs to be involved and what skills they would need to develop to ensure that the twinning project is a success and the outcomes are achieved. You should also consider how the knowledge gained through the twinning project will be disseminated to all actors with an interest or potential role in resettlement in your country. Annex A: provides basic check list of what you should consider before embarking on twinning project.

Annex B provides a simple example of the range of issues that may need to be considered and the approximate timescales involved when setting up a resettlement programme.

¹ MOST - *Modelling of Orientation, Services and Training related to the Resettlement and Reception of Refugees*

Identifying a twinning partner

Your choice of partner/s will depend on the type of twinning activity to be undertaken and duration of the project. Again UNHCR may be able to offer useful advice on this. It may be that you will need to approach several partners during your preliminary discussions. All partners involved in the partnership will need to refine and negotiate their objectives and outcomes once discussions are underway. Costs will also be an important consideration so should also be factored into discussions at an early stage. You should have a time frame in mind of when you wish to begin and end your twinning project.

Factors that you may wish to take into account in choosing a partner may be:

- Geopolitical and socioeconomic considerations
- Similarity of the resettlements State's asylum system to your asylum system
- Size or structural characteristics of the resettlement programme
- Policy and procedural characteristics of the resettlement programme (e.g. dossier or mission based)
- Interest in specific refugee populations in need of resettlement
- Funding for the twinning activity
- The role and function of NGOs and service providing organizations in your country
- Initial reception orientation arrangements (e.g. refugees go straight to new homes and receive orientation within new community, or refugees spend e.g. month in initial accommodation, receiving orientation package)
- Integration arrangements (e.g. government-sponsored, NGOs, private sponsors)
- Successful co-operation in other areas

Funding

Securing funding for a twinning activity from national resources is not always possible. It is worth exploring other sources of funding such as the European Refugee Fund (ERF) or other international donor organisations.

Some states may wish to note that the European Commission announced a Community Action call for tender on 30 September 2009 for projects that involve two or more EU Member States (excluding Denmark who opted out of the European Refugee Fund). The indicative start date of the project should be before 31 July 2010 and projects should run for no more than 18 months. Minimum funding will be €500,000 (€200,000 if NGO's other than UNHCR are involved) with the maximum funding being €1,500,000. The European Commission will fund up to 90% of the costs for multi-lateral programmes.

This call for tender is aimed at projects which will compliment the proposed activities of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) which, subject to formal agreement by Member States, is due to be set up in 2010. The

European Commission have publicly stated resettlement is one of the primary objectives of EASO and are actively encouraging bids that promote joint working between Member States to further resettlement programmes. The establishment of EASO is one of the main priorities of the Swedish Presidency.

Member States and NGOs operating in one or more EU Member States (excluding Denmark) are eligible to apply for funding under the ERF Community Action call for the tender. Indeed the Commission, in draft documents for the call for tender, have highlighted twinning for resettlement proposes is one of their key strategic objectives when allocating the Community Action funding. Non-EU states may be included on any application for Community Action Funding but this will be on a full cost basis as they are not eligible to receive EC Community Action Funding.

WG participants are invited to suggest other funding possibilities other than EU funding options.

States interested in establishing a resettlement programme and those interested in becoming twinning partners should consider the budget implications for engaging in twinning activities which will likely strengthen the programme development and sustainability.

UNHCR also may be able to assist with advice on twinning activities.

Contact: Sean Henderson at HENDERSO@unhcr.org

Yukiko Iriyama at: IRIYAMA@unhcr.org

Twinning Register

UNHCR may be able direct you towards appropriate partners depending of the type of activity you wish to undertake. Twinning activities should be logged on the Twinning Register to allow Resettlement States and NGOs to easily view what activities have been undertaken. The log will include information on twinning arrangements, best practices, lessons learned and contact information. This may also be a useful source for future activities. (See Annex C – example of Twinning Register) and could help the WG develop an inventory on best practices and expertise.

States are asked to update the twinning register on a quarterly basis. The Register itself will be placed on the UNHCR website (the secure ATCR website) and will be maintained by the UNHCR Resettlement Services. .

Drawing Up a Memorandum of Understanding

Your negotiations should include drawing up a general agreement, or memorandum of understanding which describes the twinning activity. This can include the objectives, the roles of the personnel involved, the timeframe involved, a monitoring plan, outcomes and evaluation. The length and level of detail in the agreement should reflect the partners involved – e.g. and

agreement between two small NGOs in different states will differ from that between two states.

The following is an example of what your memorandum document could include :

1) Title Information - describing the activity.

E.g. "General Agreement for cooperation and exchange between.....etc"

This page should include the names and address of the partners involved in the activity.

2) Introduction – a brief statement providing the contextual background of the activity and the duration of the activity.

3) Aims and Objectives – In some ways this is the most difficult part of the planning process as partners will have to factor in all aspects of the activity taking into account how this impacts on their own organisation or work, so it is useful to allow appropriate time to discuss this during your preliminary negotiations. Once agreed these objectives should be recorded in your agreement.

Your objectives should be reviewed against SMART principles.

- i) Specific – Objectives should specify what they want to achieve.
- ii) Measurable – You should be able to measure whether you are meeting the objectives or not.
- iii) Achievable - Are the objectives you set, achievable and attainable?
- iv) Realistic – Can you realistically achieve the objectives with the resources you have?
- v) Time – When do you want to achieve the set objectives?

4) Roles and Responsibilities of the Partners

This section should clearly state who will be involved in the partnership activity both at an individual and overall level. There may be some partners that were not specified at the beginning of the project but are drawn in as it evolves because of the advantages and expertise they can bring to the activity. If that is the case you could consider including them here if it is practical to do so.

5) Implementation Plan

This section will include the detail, i.e. a list of the specific activities to be undertaken to achieve the objective. This list should state what the activity is, who will be assigned to the activity, and when the activity is to start and end.

As with project based working each specific activity or group of activities should be working towards an outcome or milestone. This will ensure that both partners can easily monitor whether their twinning partnership will meet the agreed outcomes.

7) Funding Arrangements, if any

If funds are available to support the agreed activities, they should be identified in the agreement. Ideally a statement should identify the source, the amount of the funds and the time during which the funds will be available.

8) Review and evaluation

This a key phase for both partners as this identifies whether the twinning project is going according to plan. Therefore it is important to build in a review and evaluation of outcomes both during (at key miles stones) and at the end of the activity. All partners views of what went well and what could be strengthened should be taken into consideration. The person/s (or team) who will be responsible for the reporting and evaluation should be identified.

9) Risks

As with any project it is beneficial to include a simple risk register. That is, identifying each risk and what you can do to minimise it. This will ensure that you are prepared if your twinning activity does not go according to plan. For example, risks could include, unexpected budget cuts, poor communications resulting in misunderstandings, unclear roles and responsibilities.

Annex A

Twinning Checklist

	Before setting up a twinning activity it is useful to consider the following:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Your objectives - What are you hoping to achieve by setting up a twinning activity?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Your outcomes - What you do expect to deliver as a result of setting up a twinning activity?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Reciprocal learning – What do you expect to gain\learn as a result of setting up a twinning activity?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	What is the timeframe – when do you expect to start and end the activity?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Is your organisation committed to the use of resources for this twinning project? If not, what is the source of funding?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Have resources been identified for the duration of the activity?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Who will have overall responsibility for the twinning activity?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Who will be involved in the twinning project? (From your organisation/other stakeholders)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	How will roles and responsibilities be assigned?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	How will the activity be monitored?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	How will risks which could affect the activity be monitored?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	How will you evaluate the activity? What are the lessons learned? How will the findings be disseminated at a national level?