



PEOPLE-ORIENTED PLANNING

A FRAMEWORK FOR PEOPLE-ORIENTED PLANNING IN REFUGEE SITUATIONS TAKING ACCOUNT OF WOMEN, MEN AND CHILDREN



United Nations
High Commissioner
for Refugees

**A FRAMEWORK FOR PEOPLE-ORIENTED
PLANNING IN REFUGEE SITUATIONS
TAKING ACCOUNT OF WOMEN,
MEN AND CHILDREN**

A Practical Planning Tool for Refugee Workers

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People-Oriented Planning in Refugee Situations

Introduction

Background

In 1990, the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's programme approved a Policy on Refugee Women which called for the improvement of participation and access of refugee women in all programmes. This training tool was designed to assist refugee workers in making these improvements by providing them with a framework for analysing the socio-cultural and economic factors in a refugee society which can influence the success of planned activities.

Objectives

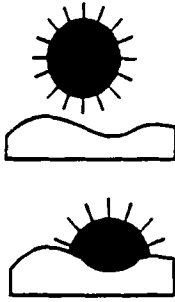
At the end of this training course you will be able to :

- target your programmes more appropriately and, thus, use UNHCR's resources more efficiently;
- ensure that UNHCR programmes do not disadvantage women and girls relative to men and boys and, ensure that disparities between the sexes are reduced by UNHCR programmes;
- ensure that UNHCR programmes address the needs of children;
- increase the opportunities for refugees to assume responsibility for their own management and programmes, again making better use of UNHCR's resources.

After you have read the *map* or analytic framework, which forms the basis of this planning tool, you will be introduced to actual descriptions of UNHCR refugee situations which will illustrate how the framework can be used in a typical refugee situation and what the implications are for good planning.

Change

A major factor in planning for refugees is the concept of change. To plan refugee protection and assistance activities efficiently and effectively, refugee workers must analyse the social and economic roles of women, men and children in the refugee community and understand how these roles will affect and be affected by planned activities. In the refugee context, customary socio-economic roles are disrupted. Roles and responsibilities of



women and men are changing constantly as the stages of the refugee condition evolve from departure through flight, arrival and asylum to durable solutions. While a certain stabilization of roles may occur in a long-term refugee situation, even in these circumstances roles may differ from those of pre-flight roles are regarded as temporary by the refugees themselves, and continue to evolve and adjust to changes that occur during refugee living situations.

Therefore, it is essential in planning activities for refugees that you have an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of change working within the society. These determine, to a great extent, the acceptance and success of any project. Similarly, in planning toward a durable solution, you must consider change. Even where the solution may be a voluntary return to the country of origin, the socio-economic situation in that country may have changed with the passage of time and returnees should be prepared for this.

Participation

Refugee participation is a major factor in determining whether or not a project will be successful. "Failure to involve refugees will ultimately lead to several consequences:

- increasing lethargy on the part of refugees
- cost increases
- decrease in communication¹

It is important to recognize that full participation requires the involvement of refugee women, men and children.

Importance of Analysis

A socio-economic and demographic analysis is one of the critical components of project planning. Whether you are planning programmes for food distribution, water, sanitation, agriculture, accommodation or health, socio-economic conditions and changes in the community are major factors which determine the ability of refugees to participate in and benefit from these programmes. Knowledge of socio-economic arrangements and changes in these

¹ Frederick C. Cuny, *Refugee Participation in Emergency Relief Operations*, Refugee Policy Group.

arrangements is also critical for planning appropriate protection into all of your assistance activities.

The reason that it is essential to ensure that socio-economic factors are included in initial planning is to avoid unintentionally depriving some refugees from the benefits of programmes because their responsibilities do not allow them the time or ability to participate. This is often the case for female refugees who may be neither encouraged nor able to participate in planning activities from which they should benefit (house construction, water and sanitation systems, adult literacy, food distribution, etc.) It may also be the case for unaccompanied children who have no one who can act on their behalf.



A note of caution here: Do not make assumptions based on your own perceptions and *stereotypes* of roles, responsibilities or inherent capabilities. Because the society is in transition, traditional roles may no longer apply. Find out from the refugees, women, men and children, how their roles have changed and are changing.

Analytical Framework

Three-Step Framework

The three-step framework which follows is intended as a tool for planners of refugee programmes. It can be adapted to the level of detail required by any particular situation and is intended as a *map* to provide direction in analysing a specific refugee population and situation. It can indicate or help develop a clear definition of the needs and resources of the various members of this refugee population.

The three components of the **People-Oriented Analytical Framework** are:

- **Refugee Population Profile and Context Analysis**
- **Activities Analysis**
- **Use and Control of Resources Analysis**

Refugee Population Profile and Context Analysis

At the earliest stage of a refugee emergency a preliminary demographic assessment of the population must be taken in order to ensure that assumptions for future planning are basically correct. Fine-tuning can occur at a later stage.

It is important to know whether the overall population profile has been distorted by the refugee situation. Who are the refugees? Are they families or individuals? Are they mostly male or female? Young or old? Are children with family members or are they unaccompanied? Are there many single heads of households? In a refugee situation when men are killed in conflict, adolescent boys flee to avoid conscription; women and children evacuate regions of fighting and population profiles change. When major demographic distortions have occurred, these must be taken into consideration and adaptations made in traditional delivery of programmes.

When you know who is in the refugee population, you can begin to construct your analytical "map" that will guide and shape your programming. The first step of this is to examine the context within which refugees conduct their daily lives. A series of factors within the community and country of origin shaped or determined the roles and responsibilities of women, men and children before they became refugees. Another series of factors in the country of asylum influences and changes these customary roles and responsibilities. The basic resources that the refugees used in their daily lives at home before flight also change during asylum. Because all these factors affect programme outcomes, it is important for you to identify them explicitly and to understand how each can act as a constraint or present an opportunity for assistance programmes.

These broad and interrelated factors that shape the context may include, but certainly are not limited to:

- (a) community norms, social hierarchy, family and community power structures including mechanisms for protection especially for women refugees and for children refugees;
- (b) religious beliefs and practices;
- (c) demographic considerations;

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- (d) institutional structures including the nature of government bureaucracies and arrangements for the generation and dissemination of knowledge, technology, and skills;
 - (e) general economic conditions including poverty levels, inflation rates, income distribution, international trade patterns, infrastructure, etc;
 - (f) political events both internal and external;
 - (g) legal parameters;
 - (h) national attitudes towards refugees in both the country of origin and the receiving country; and
 - (i) attitudes of refugees to development/assistance workers.

Identifying these factors in their particular context is essential for identifying programme priorities and anticipating how these factors can affect the outcome of your plans.

Activities Analysis

The second step of the framework is an Activities Analysis.

The existing patterns of the female/male division of social and economic roles and responsibilities are disrupted when people become refugees. It is therefore essential to find out what people were doing *before* and what they are doing or are *able* to do *now* in the refugee situation for which you are planning (entry, first asylum, durable solutions).



Protection is one crucial activity which must be highlighted here. Protection activities are integral to all UNHCR assistance because refugees are not able or willing to avail themselves of the legal protection of their country of origin. For returning populations, UNHCR monitors the guarantees and assurances which form the basis for the decision to return. In addition, communities provide protection to their members through a *protection hierarchy*. This may involve communities (families, ethnic and social groupings) protecting individuals; men protecting women; adults protecting children; people in the prime of life protecting elderly. In some societies, older women protect younger women; married women protect unmarried women; menopausal women protect fertile women. Similarly, most societies have specific mechanisms for protecting orphaned or abandoned children. Such protection may be legal, physical (through strength or the threat of strength) or social (accomplished through chaperonage). Community protection

mechanisms are often disrupted by the changes which occur when people flee from their homes. Thus, planners of refugee assistance programmes must ensure that their planning includes all necessary measures of protection. For example, identifying specific activities for unaccompanied children, providing appropriate accommodation for single women or orphaned children, or ensuring that supply distribution schemes do not contribute to exploitation of any *unprotected* groups is easier if you have determined the protection *gaps* which occur due to changes in the population profile and in people's roles and responsibilities.

Specifically, you ask the following questions about the pre-refugee setting:

What did People do?

- it includes all the tasks involved in the production of goods and services such as farming, domestic work, teaching, business activities, etc.
- it includes house-building and household production such as meal-preparation, fuel collection, home gardening, food preservation, etc.
- it includes social, political and religious activities which in some cultures take considerable time resources, such as traditional ceremonies, community meetings, etc.
- and it includes protection activities.

Who did what?

For each of the major activities identified, one should ask—

- Is this activity usually carried out by men? by women? by both? by boys? by girls? by elders? It is important to note that tasks within each overall activity must be specified to reflect the responsibilities within the society. For example in agriculture, men may be responsible for land clearance, women and children for seeding and weeding, men for harvesting, women for preservation and sale of products, etc. Knowing this type of information will assist you in targeting the distribution of seeds and tools, or of agricultural extension services.

Where and when did they do it?

- you ask: what was the frequency of the activity? (once a day, every week, etc.) - how long did it take? (all day, all morning, evenings, etc.) where did it take place? (in the home, in the village, on agricultural land, etc.)



Understanding when particular tasks are done and how long they take is one way to determine the time constraints and opportunities for different people in the community. For example, if men in an agricultural society are responsible for land preparation while women carry out the planting and cultivation tasks, you can determine who will be fully occupied during which seasons and who might have unallocated time. Or, if a technology is introduced that shortens the time required to collect water, children who have typically collected water may be more able to attend school in a refugee situation than had been able to do so before becoming refugees.

When some people are responsible for tasks that occur regularly (such as women involved in household production), while others are responsible for tasks that occur seasonally (such as men involved in land preparation and harvesting of crops), the impact of any project intervention on their time may differ greatly.



After addressing the above questions for the pre-refugee setting, you ask the same questions for the situation for which you are planning. If you are planning a repatriation activity for example, you would look at the present activities of the refugees and then at the socio-economic activities in the home country with a view to identifying differences which could have an influence on effective reintegration. We have pointed out earlier that the refugee society is in transition. The society to which refugees will return may have changed considerably or not changed at all. One possible result may be that new roles assumed by returnees may not be compatible with those in their former home.

This **Activities Analysis** will provide you with a good idea of how the traditional activities of women, men and children have been affected by their refugee status. You should also understand who has time to devote to project activities and have some indication as to when and where to plan activities so that your target population can realistically participate. In addition, you will have a good idea of the *gaps* in activities which can be used to identify appropriate interventions and at what time to plan them in the refugee setting.



Table 1 overleaf illustrates the **Activities Analysis**

Table 1 - Activities Analysis

(complete for both the Pre-Refugee experience and the Present Situation)

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Who (Gender/Age)</i>	<i>Where</i>	<i>When/ how long</i>
<p><i>Production of Goods ...</i> e.g. carpentry metal work etc.</p> <p><i>... and Services</i> e.g. teaching domestic labour etc.</p> <p><i>Agricultural Tasks</i> e.g. land clearance planting weeding harvesting care of livestock etc.</p> <p><i>Household Production</i> e.g. childcare home garden water collection etc.</p> <p><i>Protection ...</i> e.g. of unaccompanied children of fighting-age boys of single women of elderly, etc.</p> <p><i>Social/Political/Religious</i> e.g. community meeting ceremonies etc.</p>			

Use and Control of Resources Analysis

In the third step of the framework you should look at **what resources refugees controlled and used** before they became refugees and **what resources they control and use now**. These include material resources such as money, animals, land, housing, tools, etc., and invisible resources such as education, income-generating skills, cultural ties, time, labour, etc. We make the distinction between *use* and *control* because this has a direct bearing on the refugees' ability to take charge of their situation. Refugees may have owned and therefore *controlled* land before flight; afterwards they may use land controlled by others. In a returnee situation, people may have lost their land rights in their

What resources were used?

We ask which resources were used to accomplish the tasks in the pre-refugee setting for two reasons.

- Some resources, such as land, cannot be moved so that when farmers become refugees, they lose their basic productive resource unless the host country is willing to provide it.
- Other resources, such as skills (for example, teaching or trading), are portable and can continue to provide a livelihood even in a refugee setting. If women were farmers and men had more portable skills, the loss of resources for production would be greater for women in the refugee setting than for men.
- Water and fuel, necessary resources for household production, often are time intensive in their collection. Where and how these resources are provided in the refugee setting affects the time resources of those responsible for water and fuel collection.

country of origin. If, in a refugee programme, they had been trained in agricultural skills, they would be unable to use them on return.

In the pre-refugee setting, men may have played the larger role in determining household spending priorities, and may have controlled family income because they were employed outside the home or handled market activities. Women may have had limited experience or opportunities for outside employment and market activities, and lack skills in financial transactions. When men with these skills are temporarily or permanently absent from the household in the refugee setting, the control of the family's financial resources and even its economic opportunities may be assumed by women. If women's prior experience and skills with these activities were limited, women may need assistance to develop new skills for handling this responsibility.



Table II, overleaf, provides a chart for recording and analysing information about control and use of resources. Women, men and children will have lost different resources; they will possess different skills and knowledge. The resources they will be able to use/control as refugees will differ depending on how, where, when and to whom they are provided.



After completing this analysis you will have a clear understanding of the resources which already exist in the refugee community. You will also be able to identify what resources have been lost, what have been acquired, whose activities have been most affected by resource shifts, and who is better or worse off in the refugee setting (men/women, old/young).

This analysis will help you assess which sub-groups of the refugee population have what needs for protection and assistance, the nature of the protection and assistance they require, and what priorities should be assigned to your proposed interventions. With this information you can ensure that your planned activities do not further disadvantage a group which has already suffered disproportionate losses of resources in the refugee situation.

If you are planning a repatriation programme you will look at the resource situation among the refugees in the country of asylum and the likely resources available in the country to which the refugees are returning. The *gaps* will indicate to you where to plan your assistance. At all times your aim should be to build

Table II - Resource Use and Control

<p>Lost</p> <p><i>Resource</i></p> <p>land livestock shelter tools education system health care income</p>	<p><i>Who Used (Gender/Age)</i></p>	<p><i>Who Controlled (Gender/Age)</i></p>
<p>Brought by refugees</p> <p><i>Resource</i></p> <p><i>Skills</i> e.g. political manufacturing carpentry sewing cleaning agricultural animal husbandry etc.</p> <p><i>Knowledge</i> e.g. literacy teaching medicine/health etc.</p>	<p><i>Who has (Gender/Age)</i></p>	<p><i>Who Uses (Gender/Age)</i></p>
<p>Provided to refugees</p> <p><i>Resource</i></p> <p>food shelter clothing education legal services health etc.</p>	<p><i>To whom (Gender/Age)</i></p>	<p><i>How/Where/When (through males? females? adults?)</i></p>

on existing resources in order to encourage self-reliance among the refugees, and to support their dignity as they take charge of their own lives.

Application of the “Framework” to Refugee Emergency Situations

You may wonder how you can apply this tool to an emergency situation. You are probably thinking that it takes too much time to be useful during the first stages of an emergency when thousands of people are crossing a border and require immediate, life-preserving assistance, and it requires too complete an effort for a short-time period.

In such a situation, the tool applies—not as a list of questions to which you must obtain detailed answers through many refugee interviews—but as a *framework* for planning your immediate responses to people’s needs.

In all emergency situations, UNHCR has two priorities—



- to protect refugees
- to establish systems for meeting urgent needs of food, water, shelter, sanitation and health care.

As the tool illustrates, both protection and basic needs are *gendered* issues and children—especially unaccompanied children—have special characteristics that must be considered in effective programming. An efficient emergency response requires the delivery of protection and of essential goods and services to the people who need them in ways which actually meet their needs. The questions outlined above provide the conceptual framework for considering who needs what, and how one can design the best programmatic response to meet those needs. For example, areas where decisions must be made that are improved by considering gender and age factors include—

- (a) food distribution: which foods should be supplied and to whom and how should they be distributed?
- (b) physical planning of the camps: who should live where? What are the salient protection issues in camp layout?

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- (c) medical assistance: what are the most critical medical needs? who has what needs? What were the patterns of health care for the people before they became refugees? What method of health care delivery will best reach the intended target group?

Conclusion

Tools are only instruments which are used by people. It is people who possess the skills, experience, knowledge, plans and vision who put tools to good or poor use. **The People-Oriented Planning Framework** is a tool which facilitates programme and project planning, implementation and evaluation. It alerts refugee workers to variables of which we must be aware and it reminds us that the refugees are active, productive and resourceful people rather than merely passive victims of a disaster.

It reminds us that women, as well as men, are active producers in the economy and society and that one critical variable in programme planning is change in the gender division of roles, responsibilities and resources. And it reminds us that age is the other critical variable for programming. As the roles and responsibilities of women and men are changed through refugee status, the roles and responsibilities of children are also affected. In addition, children's development and potentials for learning are profoundly affected by the circumstances they face, and the assistance they receive as refugees.



The **Framework** also provides a structure for organizing information so that relationships among factors (between men, women, boys and girls; between activities in the economic and social spheres; between activities and resources which are used to perform them; between larger forces and local, social and economic arrangements) are highlighted. The tool does not, itself, give answers about which programmes are best. It does provide insights which, when used appropriately, can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of international assistance provided to refugees.
