

ANNUAL TRIPARTITE CONSULTATIONS ON RESETTLEMENT
Geneva, 18-19 June 2002

Background Note on:

Resettlement Section's Training Activities and the "Tool Kit" Project

I. Training Activities

Training programmes remain an essential component of the Resettlement Section's activities and a fundamental instrument to achieve quality and transparency in resettlement work.

The Resettlement Section's training programmes are developed on the basis of the following objectives:

- ◆ The strengthening of the capacity and expertise of resettlement staff to identify and process refugee cases in need of resettlement;
- ◆ The enhancement of understanding of the entire processing cycle for individual cases by developing joint RSD-RS training programmes in conjunction with the Protection Capacity Section in DIP;
- ◆ The assistance to field offices for the adoption of Standard Operating Procedures which would improve the efficiency and transparency of resettlement processing and reduce the risk of abuse;
- ◆ The organisation of targeted training programmes for persons on the UNHCR/ICMC Resettlement Deployment Scheme roster, to be delivered prior to their deployment to the field.

A. RSD - RS partnerships in training activities

The joint RSD-RS programme represents a fundamental new element of the Resettlement training strategy to be implemented over the course of this year. This strategic partnership is based on two primary underlying motives. First, it institutionalises the linkage among the various phases of individual case processing and reinforces the *continuum* of protection from the asylum seeker's first contact with UNHCR to the ultimate durable solution of resettlement. The quality of resettlement submission is inevitably linked to the quality of the RSD, to the point that a successful resettlement case is normally predicated upon an accurate and well-presented eligibility determination. Fundamental issues of processing, such as standardisation of procedures, as well as concepts of accountability and monitoring, will be more effectively presented as part of the whole processing system.

Second, the joint effort between RSD and RS tends to maximise resources needed for training events and resource persons, with the anticipated result of increasing the number of sessions organised in a given year.

B. The RSD - RS Learning Programme

The main element of the joint RSD-RS training programmes will be the creation and the implementation of a Specialist RSD/RS Learning Programme in co-operation with the Staff Development Section and the Protection Capacity Section. The programme represents an innovative attempt to unify the two topics systematically into a single learning course and to address issues related to the quality of UNHCR's operating procedures and monitoring mechanisms.

The Learning Programme will be structured on the basis of the same methodology applied for other learning programmes, that is a multi-phased learning itinerary including self-study, a workshop, and a final implementation phase. In addition to traditional components on RSD and RS in accordance with established UNHCR criteria, it will include dedicated units on accountability and monitoring of the respective procedures.

The rationale for the LP rests on a number of observations:

- ◆ refugee status determination and resettlement represent a single functional *continuum* starting with the provision of international protection to refugees and culminating with the identification of a durable solution;
- ◆ the quality of resettlement activities is a direct result of the quality of refugee status determination and of protection assessments of refugees' situations;
- ◆ the renewed attention placed on resettlement both from major resettlement countries and within UNHCR has reinforced the need to re-assess and upgrade the level of knowledge and expertise of UNHCR staff to perform RSD and resettlement activities;
- ◆ there is a need to create systematic and functional synergies in the Field Offices to enhance RSD and resettlement cross-functional cooperation, as well as to share good practices;
- ◆ training has a crucial role in the current efforts to address the existing gaps in RSD/resettlement procedures, internal control systems, and responsibility. It can also greatly contribute to introducing a culture of accountability into UNHCR's systems and operations.

C. The pilot phase of the RSD - RS Learning Programme

The first pilot of the LP will be proposed in a number of selected countries in the Eastern, Central and Southern African region. The tentative timeframe for launching the programme will be November/December 2002. Target beneficiaries will be RSD and resettlement practitioners, including: local staff performing protection and resettlement related activities at a G6/G7 level; national officers with eligibility and resettlement-related functions at the P3 level; protection, eligibility and resettlement officers at P4 and

P3 level, JPOs, UNVs, consultants, project staff, and staff seconded to UNHCR with RSD and/or RS-related functions and with a minimum of a 12 month contract.

D. RSD - RS Regional Training Workshops

In addition to the RSD/RS Learning Programme, traditional workshops will complement the training activities. They will be organised in co-operation with the field and within the limits of the Resettlement Section and Protection Capacity's budgets. Part of the workshop will be dedicated to assisting the Field Offices in adopting Standard Operating Procedures and to the more general topic of the management of protection activities, including monitoring and accountability processes. In this respect, the IOM 25/2002 FOM 24/2002 dated 15 March 2002 from the High Commissioner on the subject: "Management of Protection Activities - Responsibility of UNHCR Staff," is a fundamental policy guideline which facilitates and reinforces the delivery of the concept during the training sessions.

The operational partnership with the RSD section does not preclude the organisation of resettlement-only workshops, addressing specific needs identified in the field. However, given the limited funds at the disposal of the Resettlement Section, these specific training sessions will have to be carefully planned and the needs judiciously selected. Alternatively, when a field office identifies local resources for resettlement training events, the Resettlement Section may support these with the provision of material, resource persons and possible additional funds. Local training sessions, limited to resettlement staff of one field office, may also be organised in conjunction with missions of Resettlement staff from the Headquarters, maximising the mission's accomplishments. In fact, Resettlement staff has participated in training workshops organised locally by the Field Offices in Zambia and Tanzania during the months of March and April 2002.

E. Training activities for the period June 2001 - December 2002

A questionnaire was sent to all Field Offices in September 2001 in order to identify areas of priorities and needs for training on resettlement. From the analysis of the 51 countries that replied, a plan for the delivery of joint RSD-RS workshops was prepared. The needs identified are far outweigh available resources. A careful exercise of prioritisation is necessary in order to address the most urgent among the various needs presented by the Field Offices.

The following RSD - RS Regional Training Workshops were organised and delivered:

- ◆ June 2001, Moscow, for the Eastern European offices (organised by RBE, partially funded by RS Section)
- ◆ March 2002, Amman, for the offices in the Middle Eastern region
- ◆ April 2002, Macao, for the offices in the South and Eastern Asia region

At least another regional workshop, most probably in Africa, is planned for the period September - December 2002.

It is expected that some 120 staff will have received training through the Resettlement Section's programmes, including the Learning Programme, by the end of 2002.

Existing training materials are constantly reviewed and adjusted according to the training situation in which they are employed. New materials are being developed which reinforce the linkage between RSD and RS and cover the procedural and managerial elements related to issues of accountability and monitoring of individual case processes (see Section II below).

F. Training for the UNHCR-ICMC Resettlement Deployment Scheme

The training of deployees prior to their deployment in the field is an activity included in the Framework Agreement between UNHCR and ICMC and is a necessary step for achieving a successful deployment programme.

The first workshop for 21 candidates for deployment (members of the ICMC Roster) was held in Washington on 2-4 May 2002. The workshop was organised in cooperation with the UNHCR RO Washington and included general protection concepts, RSD basic notions, the resettlement process (including case submissions, accountability and monitoring) and the various administrative requirements of the programme. A detailed report on the training workshop held in Washington is included in the "UNHCR-ICMC Resettlement Deployment Scheme - Report on Activities: January 2001 to May 2002" submitted to this session of the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement.

A second workshop is planned for the second half of the year in Canada for the new members of the Roster who are being identified by ICMC under the Scheme.

II. Update on "Tool-kit" Project

1. Further to the conclusions of the Resettlement Oversight Mission to Africa, and further to general requests from the field for more practical resettlement, materials and tools, the Resettlement Section, DIP, is currently engaged in the task of developing procedural guidelines and practical tools to facilitate the identification and processing of refugees in need of resettlement.
2. Further to discussions at the DIP Panel, a consultant was hired for an initial 4 month contract, from 1 March to 30 June 2002, with the following specific responsibilities:
 - Identify deficiencies in the current guidelines contained in the Resettlement Handbook governing the identification and processing of refugees for resettlement and address these deficiencies by revising and expanding the relevant chapters;

- Draft new guidelines for inclusion in the Resettlement Handbook on issues relating to the effective management and oversight of resettlement activities with a view to maintaining integrity in the program.
 - Develop a self-contained resettlement ‘tool-kit’, containing all document templates, guidelines and materials needed to support the establishment or further development of resettlement activities in field locations;
 - Disseminate the draft tool-kit and Handbook revisions to field staff, resettlement countries and NGOs, and solicit feedback and suggestions; and,
 - Make revisions and redrafts to the relevant sections of the Resettlement Handbook and the tool-kit in response to the feedback and suggestions.
3. The consultant undertook the first of three missions to Geneva from 11 March to 5 April. During this mission, the conclusions of the Oversight Mission and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) received from field offices were reviewed and summarized. On the basis of these documents, and further to consultation with colleagues in Headquarters and the field, a comprehensive list of universal minimum standards and best practices was developed, in addition to a number of tools necessary for the implementation of these standards.
 4. The list of universal minimum standards covers both **Management Issues** (anti-fraud measures, file and caseload management, planning for resettlement need, and office management) and **Procedural Issues** (identification, processing, assessment and prioritization of resettlement need, dossier preparation, submission decisions, State decisions, and departure arrangements).
 5. The objective is not to prepare universal SOPs for field offices. Instead, the list of universal minimum standards, coupled with the tool-kit and revised chapters of the Resettlement Handbook, will be used by all field offices to draft resettlement SOPs appropriate to their field context. The importance of drafting SOPs specific to individual field offices was emphasized by the High Commissioner in IOM No. 25/2002 – FOM No. 24/2002.
 6. The list of universal minimum standards and a number of draft tools were presented to senior staff of the Resettlement Section on 4 April 2002. The discussion resulted in a number of useful suggestions, and approved the list of standards.
 7. On the basis of this list of universal minimum standards, the Consultant is currently drafting a resettlement tool-kit and revising the relevant chapters of the Resettlement Handbook.
 8. The draft tool-kit and revised Handbook chapters will be sent to Tripartite resettlement partners on 31 May 2002, along with papers related to the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATC). Resettlement countries and NGOs will be strongly encouraged to comment on the tool-kit and Handbook revisions by 14 June 2002. Key individuals among resettlement countries and NGOs will be particularly solicited for their detailed feedback.

9. An additional day-long meeting has been scheduled for senior staff of the Resettlement Section on 4 June 2002. During this meeting, the Consultant will present the full tool-kit and Handbook revisions for preliminary discussion.
10. A workshop to discuss the tool-kit and Handbook revisions has been scheduled for 20 – 21 June 2002 in Geneva. The timing of the workshop is intended to coincide with the ATC, and thereby take advantage of the presence of resettlement colleagues from the field, in addition to representatives from resettlement countries and NGOs.
11. Comments and suggestions received during the workshop will be incorporated into the product during the week of 24 to 28 June 2002.

The final product, including a report making recommendations on the implementation of the new materials, will be available on 1 July 2002 when a Memorandum from the Director of DIP will be sent out to all field offices attaching the Tool kit.

Resettlement Section
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