MIRA	Multi cluster/sector Initial Rapid Needs Assessment
MSRP	UNHCR's web-based Resource Planning system known as Managing for Systems, Resources and People
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OL	Operating level
OP	Operations Plan
OPS	Operations budget
PICSC	Partner Integrity Capacity and Support Cost
PA	Partnership Agreement
PPG	Population Planning Group
PQP	Pre-qualification for Procurement
PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
RBM	Results Based Management
RCM	Refugee Coordination Model
ROU	Receipt and Right of Use of UNHCR Assets
RRP	Refugee Response Plan
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SGBV	Sexual Gender Based Violence
SSA	Small Scale Agreement
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
WASH	Water Sanitation Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

Glossary

http://reporting.unhcr.org/glossary

Guidance for Partnering with UNHCR

7th Draft v2

Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ABOD	Administration budget
AGD	Age Gender Diversity
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARA	Accountabilities, Responsibility and Authorities
CBI	Cash-based intervention
CCCM	Camp Coordination Camp Management
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
CAN	Comprehensive Needs Assessment
DFAM	Division of Financial and Administrative Management
ExCom	UNHCR's Executive Committee
FIP	Framework for Implementing with Partners
FOCUS	UNHCR's results-based management software
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HPC	Humanitarian Programme Cycle
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IPMC	Implementing Partnership Management Committee
IPMS	Implementing Partnership Management Service
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Persons
LOMI	Letter of Mutual Intent
MFT	Multi-Functional Team
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

RESOURCES
▪ UN Security Policy Manual, 2017 https://www.un.orgsecurity_policy_manual
▪ Security Risk Management: A basic guide for smaller NGOs, EISF, 2017 https://www.eisf.eu/Security-Risk-Management-a-basic-guide
▪ UNHCR Manual on Security of Persons of Concern, 2011 http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4f6313032.pdf
▪ UNHCR Guidelines on International Protection: The application of Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees to victims of trafficking and persons at risk of being trafficked. http://www.unhcr.org/443b626b2.pdf
▪ Stay and Deliver – Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments, OCHA, 2011 https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/GP guide complex security
▪ European Interagency Security Forum (EISF) resources and advice: https://www.eisf.eu/resources-library/

Foreword

This edition of UNHCR's handbook, *Guidance for Partnering with UNHCR* replaces the previous edition (2003) *Partnership: A Programme Management Handbook for UNHCR's Partners.* It has been updated and further developed in collaboration with a Partner Reference Group made up of representatives from UNHCR partners and staff and through the UNHCR Annual and Regional Consultations with NGOs.

Partnership is not an end in itself, but rather its value should be measured in terms of impact on the well-being of refugees and other Persons of Concern. As such, and in the spirit of partnership, UNHCR looks to those who work with the Office to share its vision and objectives in addressing the needs of refugees and other Persons of Concern for international protection, assistance and solutions. Furthermore, all UNHCR partners are expected to espouse the Guiding Principles underlining the UNHCR Code of Conduct and more specifically the commitment to prevent, oppose and combat all exploitation of refugees and other Persons of Concern.

Purpose and intended users

The Handbook is intended to provide guidance for Partners on engaging and working with UNHCR. It provides information on the policies, principles and collaborative arrangements for partnering with UNHCR to protect, assist and seek solutions for refugees and other Persons of Concern. In response to feedback from partners and UNHCR staff, effort has been made to present the guidance in a practical, easy to follow format with supporting tips, tables and checklists.

The intended users of the Handbook are managers and staff of Partner organizations who implement activities and projects in partnership with UNHCR. It also provides useful guidance for UNHCR staff who are directly involved in working with Partners. The content is applicable to all UNHCR Partners, with a focus on partnering with international and national NGOs.

Feedback and suggestions

The Handbook will be updated on a regular basis to incorporate new or amended policies and procedures and address user feedback concerning areas that need clarification or the development of additional guidance. Please send your feedback, suggestions or queries on the content on the handbook to the Implementing Partnership Management Service (IPMS/DFAM, e-mail epartner@unhcr.org).

Contents

▪ Detention	▪ Deployment of Security Personnel or Police in Camps, Centers and Settlements
▪ Refoulment and Arbitrary Expulsion	
▪ Improvised Explosive Devices, Crossfire, Landmines and Unexploded Ordnance	▪ Internal Relocation and Safe Houses

7.11.2 Security of UNHCR and Partner Personnel

Attacks on humanitarian workers and constraints on humanitarian access impact on the capacity of UNHCR and its Partners to provide protection and assistance to Persons of Concern. In response, there has been a shift from risk aversion to risk management. This enabling approach to security focuses on "how to stay" as opposed to "when to leave" and has been adopted in the UN and many other humanitarian organizations.

UNHCR 'duty of care' does not extend to Partner organizations and it is not responsible for Partner security management. However, UNHCR Offices and its Partners must work together to increase the joint understanding of security risks and effective ways to mitigate them (refer to **Sections 3.1.2** and **3.1.3**). This need for shared commitment and collaboration in dealing with security is particularly important as security conditions deteriorate and Partners take on greater roles and risks in project implementation.

UNHCR Offices should, where appropriate consider[87]:

▪ Including Partners in analyzing and assessing threats and security risks in the areas where it will be operating;

▪ Providing local Partners with basic security awareness training;

▪ Budgeting for appropriate logistical and security communication; and

▪ Establishing clear procedures for reporting security incidents to UNHCR.

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[87] Risk based Performance Monitoring and Control Toolkit, UNHCR, 2017

7.11 Security

7.11.1 Security of Persons of Concern

The security of Persons of Concern is regularly compromised, and they may face physical insecurity, gender violence, exploitation, threats to their health (for example from HIV-AIDS), refoulement (in the case of refugees), and restriction of other basic rights. The **UNHCR Manual on Security of Persons of Concern** describes the threats facing Persons of Concern and sets out a range of responses that can be used in addressing them. A summary of this guidance is given in **Figure 63** below.

Figure 63: Security Threats and Responses for Persons of Concern

Security Threats	Security Responses
- Persons of Concern involved in or affected by protests, demonstrations, group disturbances or gang violence - Tension and conflict between groups of Persons of Concern or Persons of Concern and host communities - Banditry, Kidnapping, Abduction, Disappearances and Hostage Taking - Physical Attacks on Camps and Settlements or Persons of Concern - Presence of Combatants and Armed Elements among Persons of Concern - Abuse of Power by Humanitarian or Peacekeeping Actors or Persons of Concern - Physical harassment, exploitation or corruption - Verbal Harassment or Rumors - Intimate Partner Violence - Human Trafficking and Smuggling - Self-harm - Sexual Violence - Unlawful Killings	- Access to Essential Services - Site Selection and Planning - Access to Counselling or MHPSS programs - Enhance the Capacity of National Institutions, Traditional Leaders and NGOs - Access to Justice and Referral Mechanisms - Adherence to International Norms, Standards and Codes in Law and Practice - Security Sector Reform and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programs - Training on Human Rights, Refugee and International Humanitarian Law - Effective Screening, Reception, Status Determination, Registration and Documentation - Resettlement, Local Integration and Livelihoods - Community Awareness and Coexistence Measures

Table of figures

Figure 62: UNHCR Strategy for Nutrition at a Glance

Strategic Objectives

1. **Effective prevention of undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies -** through enabling access to food, cash and/or vouchers and special nutritional products for vulnerable groups, as well as supporting infant and young child feeding and care practices.
2. **Effective treatment of acute malnutrition** – through quality treatment projects and sufficient coverage.
3. **Effective provision of up-to-date food security and nutrition information and analysis** - thereby enabling appropriate and needs-based programming).
4. **Effective food security and nutrition response in emergencies.**

RESOURCES

- Global Strategy for Public Health 2014-2018 – Public Health – HIV and Reproductive Health – Food Security and Nutrition – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
  http://www.unhcr.org//530f12d26.html
- Global Nutrition Cluster, Moderate Acute Malnutrition: A Decision Tool for Emergencies, 2014
  https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/GNC-MAM_decision+tool
- Operational guidance on the use of special nutritional products related to reduce micronutrient deficiencies and malnutrition in refugee situations, UNHCR 2011
  http://www.unhcr.org/4f1fc3de9.html
- UNHCR's policy related to the acceptance, distribution and use of milk products in refugee settings. UNHCR 2006
  http://www.unhcr.org/4507f7842.html
- Emergency Nutrition Network (ENN)
  https://www.ennonline.net/
- Global Nutrition Cluster, training and resources:
  http://nutritioncluster.net/harmonized-training-package

7.10 Food Security and Nutrition

Displacement is a major shock for people and is often associated with a complete loss of livelihoods and entitlements leading to undernutrition and food insecurity. Encampment policies restrict freedom of movement, including access to markets. Livelihoods can be further restricted by several factors such as, limited access to land, natural resources, attrition of knowledge and skills, limited transport facilities and generalized poverty, thereby negatively affecting food security and nutrition.

To mitigate this, UNHCR, WFP and its Partners need to improve the food security and reduce the prevalence of undernutrition among Persons of Concern, especially women, young children and other vulnerable groups, including the elderly and people with special needs. The food security and nutrition sectors also work in close collaboration with livelihoods, to provide longer term solutions and to promote self-reliance among Persons of Concern.

7.10.1 Malnutrition

Acute malnutrition among children under five, together with mortality, is the main indicator for the overall health and nutrition of a population. The principal causes of acute malnutrition are inadequate food intake and utilization, sub-optimal infant and young childcare and feeding practices, and morbidity often linked to environmental, hygiene and shelter conditions. In addition, micronutrient deficiencies, notably anemia, are common across Persons of Concern, including in post-emergency contexts, largely because of inadequate food intake and communicable diseases, such as malaria.

7.10.2 Programming for Food Security and Nutrition

In camp settings, acute malnutrition is one of the major causes of mortality because malnutrition increases vulnerability to disease. A nutrition assessment and implementation of needs-based feeding programs are important initial activities in a camp to ensure that vulnerable groups and those with specific needs receive special attention, as appropriate.

UNHCR's food security and nutrition interventions aim to improve the immediate food security and nutritional well-being of refugees and other Persons of Concern, mainly by tackling the immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition. In line with its **Global Strategy for Public Health 2014-2018**, UNHCR has four objectives guiding its programming activities in food security and nutrition, as set out in **Figure 62** overleaf.

Chapter 1: **Working with Refugees and other Persons of Concern**

Chapter 1 sets out UNHCR's mandate in providing protection, assistance and seeking solutions for Persons of Concern. This underpins all aspects of its operations, structure and the way that it works. All new and prospective Partners are encouraged to develop a good understanding of the history and mandate of UNHCR in order to work together effectively.

This chapter also describes the principles and values that govern UNHCR's interests, obligations and requirements in partnering with others which can be used as a guide in assessing the synergy of a potential partnership arrangement.

1.1 **Understanding UNHCR's mandate**

1.1.1 **History of UNHCR**

The conviction that the international community – rather than individual States or charities - has a duty to provide refugees with protection and find solutions to their problems, dates from the time of the League of Nations, established in 1920. World War I and its turbulent aftermath left a legacy of 1.5 million refugees and displaced people across many countries. In the autumn of 1921, to provide a focal point for the coordination of relief efforts for these people, the League of Nations appointed Fridtjof Nansen, a renowned Norwegian Arctic explorer as the first High Commissioner for Refugees.

When the United Nations replaced the League of Nations in 1945, it recognized that the community of States should assume collective responsibility for those fleeing persecution and established the International Refugee Organization with a mandate to protect those refugee groups that had been recognized by the League of Nations, along with the 21 million or so refugees stranded throughout Europe following World War II. Initially, the International Refugee Organization's main objective was repatriation, but this shifted toward resettlement of those who had "valid objections" to returning home, such as persecution or fear of persecution.

The Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was adopted by the General Assembly on 14 December 1950 as Annex to Resolution 428 (V).

 "The United Nations Commissioner for Refugees, acting under the authority of the General Assembly, shall assume the function of providing international protection, under the auspices of the United Nations, to refugees who fall within the scope of the present Statute and of seeking permanent solutions for the problem of refugees by assisting governments and, subject to the approval of the governments concerned, private organizations to facilitate the

RESOURCES

- All UNHCR CBI publications on:
  http://www.unhcr.org/cash-based-interventions.html
- UNHCR Policy on cash-based interventions, 2016
  https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/Policy_on_CBIs
- Cash Feasibility and Response Analysis Toolkit, UNHCR, 2017
  http://www.unhcr.org/5a8429317.pdf
- Minimum Standards for Market Analysis, CaLP; 2016
  http://www.cashlearning.org/min stds Market Analysis
- Multi-sector Market Assessment: Companion Guide and Toolkit, UNHCR, 2017
  http://www.unhcr.org/593e856e7
- Cash Delivery Mechanism Assessment Tool, UNHCR, 2016
  http://www.unhcr.org/598c69db7
- CBI Post distribution monitoring tool (forthcoming)
- Cash Learning Partnership – community of practice and resources, CaLP:
  http://www.cashlearning.org

Key question: What is the host country Government position on CBIs to people of concern on national and local levels? What are other CBI actors, including the Government, doing? What is the regulatory environment?

Main tools: Best practice summarized in the toolkit

5.   Transfer Mechanisms and Delivery Options

Key question: Who are the financial service providers and what is their coverage and reliable level of service provision? How long might it take to contract and establish the required services? What is the regulatory environment?

Main tool: Cash Delivery Mechanism Assessment Tool (CDMAT)

6.   Cost-Efficiency

Key question: What is the cost of delivering CBIs, as compared to using alternative response options? How do the costs vary between different delivery mechanisms?

Main tools: Best practice summarized in the toolkit

7.   Skills and Capacity

Key question: What is the level of skills and commitment within the operation, across different functions including IT systems and budgetary and accounting requirements? What additional internal capacity is needed?

Main tool: Overview of steps to establish a cash-based intervention

Based on the above, where assuming CBI, or a combination of CBI and in-kind provision of assistance and services, is identified as the most appropriate transfer modality, the CBI should be designed and implemented in accordance with UNHCR guidance and best practice, including the Operational Guidance for Cash-Based Interventions in Displacement Settings. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), clarifying the processes and controls for CBI,). Completion of the SOP template is required for all CBIs implemented by UNHCR and its Partners.

Monitor the process, performance and impact of the CBI in line with UNHCR's Results Framework and UNHCR CBI monitoring framework and tools, which includes specific tools for Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM).

voluntary repatriation of such refugees, or their assimilation within new national communities.“

In 1951, the International Refugee Organization was replaced by the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees; UNHCR.

1.1.2   UNHCR Mandate and Responsibilities

UNHCR 's founding Statute entrusts UNHCR with two main and closely related functions:

- to provide international protection and
- to seek permanent solutions to the problems of refugees.

The UNHCR's core mandate[1] covers refugees, that is, all persons outside their country of origin for reasons of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order and who, as a result, require international protection.

Asylum-seekers also fall within the UNHCR's competence as persons who seek international protection and whose refugee status has not been determined yet.

In recent years, the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and, to some extent, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) have developed the UNHCR's mandate further, to take account of the changing nature of forced displacement and refugee flows. The High Commissioner has therefore been mandated to provide protection and solutions for returnees as former refugees, as well as to identify, prevent and reduce statelessness, and protect stateless persons.

UNHCR has also engaged in situation of internal displacement and its operational role of providing humanitarian assistance and protection to internally displaced persons (IDPs) is now mainly defined by the inter-agency coordination approach.

Given the changing global humanitarian context, UNHCR's responsibilities and assistance programs have grown substantially and there is greater focus on working in partnership, and in making refugees and other groups of persons of concern more self-reliant and resilient.

Further details of UNHCR's role in relation to protection, humanitarian assistance and seeking durable solutions for refugees and other persons of concern are outlined in Section 1.2.

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[1] UNHCR, *Note on the Mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees and his Office*, October 2013, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/5268c9474.html

1.1.3 Persons of Concern

UNHCR works directly and through its Partners with a diverse range of women, men, girls and boys, including refugees and other persons of concern, as outlined in **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1: Groups of Persons of Concern

Refugee	- a person outside his or her country of origin or residence who needs international protection
Asylum seeker	- a person who has applied for international refugee protection but has not yet received a final decision
Stateless person	- a person who is not considered a national by any State under the operation of its law
Returnee	- a former refugee who has voluntarily returned to her/his country of origin
Internally Displaced Person (IDP)	- a person forced to leave his or her home but has not crossed an internationally recognized State border

Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

A refugee is any person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his or her former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

This is the refugee definition enshrined in Art. 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (the 1951 Refugee Convention), which has been built upon by regional instruments expanding its scope, thus including, in particular, persons compelled to flee their country due to generalized violence or other circumstances seriously disturbing public order.

Refugees are therefore broadly understood to include all persons outside their countries of origin who are in need of international protection because of a serious threat to their life, physical integrity or freedom in their country of origin as a result of persecution, armed conflict, violence or serious public disorder[2].

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[2] UNHCR, *Persons in need of international protection*, June 2017, available at: https://www.refworld.org/docid/596787734.html

| Complaints Mechanism | Establish complaints and response mechanisms acceptable to Persons of Concern and communicate procedures to them | Report on common complaints and actions taken |
| Coordination | Actively participate in the relevant sectoral coordination on basic needs and CBI to maximize synergies. Ensure needs as defined are agreed to and the response is coordinated. Fill gaps and reduce duplication. Ensure transfer value and delivery mechanism are established in coordination with other key stakeholders, including the government, and in line with recommended rates and methods, considering efficiencies gained through common delivery mechanisms. | |

7.9.2 Programmatic Considerations for Cash Based Interventions [86]

To assess the appropriateness and feasibility of using CBIs to meet humanitarian objectives, consult the UNHCR Cash Feasibility and Response Analysis Toolkit (see below) which provides tools and guidance on the following seven steps which should be considered:

1. Market Access and Capacity
Key question: Are existing markets (local, regional, and national) accessible and able to provide the required goods or services at an appropriate price to address the needs? Can these markets respond to increased demand if CBIs are applied?

Main tool: UNHCR Multi-sector Market Assessment: Companion Guide and Toolkit

2. Protection Risks and Benefits
Key question: What are the protection risks and benefits of using CBIs compared with alternatives? What are the protection implications at the individual, household and community level? How can these risks be mitigated and managed?

Main tools: UNHCR Guide for Protection in Cash-Based Interventions and Protection Risk and Benefit Analysis Tool

3. Financial Risks and Benefits
Key question: What are the potential risks and benefits of using CBIs? How can risks be mitigated and managed?

Main tools: CBI SOP template (see table 7.7 implementation)

4. Political Context

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[86] Guidance Note on Standard Format Bipartite Project Partnership Agreements, Annex V3 Short Operational Guidance for Individual Specialized Activities

	tender for financial services, and contract in line with UNHCR financial and data protection requirements	provider, timely and efficient reconciliation of transfers
Assessment, Targeting and Verification	Support the assessment and analysis of target groups and agree on targeting criteria and methods	Verify that the correct beneficiary on the payment lists and is receiving the correct transfer (type and amount)
Risk Analysis and Mitigation	Undertake beneficiary, program and financial risk assessment and design risk mitigation plan	Monitor and report on protection risks and benefits
Implementation	Where partners delivery CBI, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) should be established outlining: the key steps of the implementation process, the generation of distribution lists, assigned authorized signatories, release of payments, a monitoring system to ensure compliance with the end-to-end use of the CBI transfer; and standardized methods for tracking, recording and reporting transactions, fees for Financial Service Providers and evidence of the release to and receipt by Persons of Concern.	Implement according to the agreed upon SOPs.
Monitoring and Reporting	Adapt and contextualize UNHCR's CBI monitoring and reporting framework and ensure mechanisms are in place for each indicator. Provide information on distribution statistics, including summary statements with the periodic project performance report.	Monitor and report according to the agreed upon process, performance and results indicators as well as process, output and outcome indicators in the CBI monitoring framework.

An asylum-seeker is a person who seeks international refugee protection but whose refugee status has not been determined yet, as the asylum procedure is still on-going or there is a situation of large-scale influxes where individual refugee status determination is impractical.

Protecting refugees is primarily the responsibility of the host State. The rights of refugees are set out in the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol[3]. In situations where a State has the capacity to provide protection and deliver assistance, UNHCR primarily plays an advisory role and provides support. In other situations, UNHCR and its Partners assume a more substantive role, including the delivery of protection and assistance. As an integral part of its core mandate, UNHCR retains a supervisory responsibility in relation to States' compliance with their international protection obligations (Art. 35 of the 1951 Refugee Convention).

Through the mandate granted by the United Nations General Assembly, UNHCR complements the role of the host State in **providing international protection and seeking permanent solutions for refugees**, including:

- Ensuring that refugees are granted asylum and are not forcibly returned to the countries from which they have fled (non-refoulement)
- Promoting the establishment of appropriate procedures to determine whether a person is a refugee according to the 1951 Refugee Convention definition and/or other definitions in regional conventions
- Advocating for refugees' access to rights and adequate standards of living
- Seeking durable solutions for refugees, including voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement.

UNHCR is also responsible for **supervising the implementation of the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol by State parties**, including:

- Promoting accession to, and implementation of, refugee conventions and laws
- Ensuring that refugees are treated in accordance with internationally recognized legal standards
- Providing guidance to States in their interpretation and application of international refugee law instruments

UNHCR is further expected to support the implementation of the **Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)** - see section 1.2.1 for further details.

Stateless Persons

A stateless person is an individual who is not considered a national by any State under the operation of its law. UNHCR is mandated to lead efforts to prevent and reduce statelessness and to protect and identify stateless people. These efforts

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[3] 147 countries ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention but several countries maintain a geographical limitation which limits the countries from which they recognize claims for refugee status

included the launch in 2014, of the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness in 10 years, which is supported by a Global Action Plan to End Statelessness: 2014 - 2024.[4] UNHCR's role with respect to stateless persons includes:

- Promoting accession to the Statelessness Conventions[5];
- Conducting or advising on studies or surveys to clarify situations of statelessness;
- Supporting practical measures (e.g., birth registration, the issuance of citizenship certificates and related documents and direct support to stateless populations);
- Advocating for governments to address statelessness, including through reform of nationality laws;
- Providing technical advice and support to States with respect to nationality law reform efforts;
- Providing technical advice on procedures for determining statelessness status and promoting respect for basic rights of stateless persons;
- Promoting solutions, including through the acquisition of nationality.

Returnees

A returnee is a former refugee who has voluntarily returned to her/his country of origin spontaneously or in an organized fashion, including those returning as part of the operationalization of the cessation clauses but is yet to be fully reintegrated. UNHCR's role in supporting repatriation complements that of the State, both the asylum country(ies) and the country of origin. In particular, UNHCR enters into tripartite agreements on return and reintegration with the country of origin and the country(ies) of asylum, oversees the conditions of return with a view to ensuring voluntariness, safety and dignity, and assist returnees through:

- Monitoring the legal and physical safety of returnees;
- Providing returnees with reintegration assistance, including in cooperation with development actors, to help ensure that the return is sustainable and durable;
- Promoting reconciliation in areas of return.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

An IDP is an individual who has been forced or obliged to flee or to leave his or her home or place of habitual residence – but has not crossed an internationally recognized State border – because of or in order to avoid armed conflict,

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[4] http://www.unhcr.org/54621bf49.html
[5] 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. These are complemented by international human rights treaties and provisions relevant to the right to a nationality.

7.9 Cash Based Interventions (CBIs)

UNHCR's mandate for protection and its comprehensive, multi-sector assistance programs make cash-based interventions (CBIs) a particularly appropriate tool for addressing the needs of Persons of Concern. Cash-based interventions can:

- bring protection benefits through empowering people to determine their own needs and the best way of meeting them;
- reduce the operational costs associated with delivery of in-kind assistance;
- improve access to assistance and services through money transfer services and new technologies.

CBIs can be used in a variety of settings, as long as there is a stable market and a safe way to provide refugees with cash or vouchers. The flexibility that CBIs offer makes them a more dignified form of assistance, giving refugees the ability to immediately prioritize and choose what they need. Cash-based interventions make the displaced less likely to resort to harmful coping strategies, such as survival sex, child labor, family separation and forced marriage. They also directly benefit the local economy and can contribute to peaceful coexistence with host communities. Risks may be mitigated through careful program design.

7.9.1 Partner Roles

The role of partners in CBI programs is important, even where UNHCR is delivering CBI's directly, partners continue to play a crucial role in the design, analysis and monitoring of CBI programming.

Figure 61 below sets out the roles that UNHCR Partners play in the design, implementation and monitoring of CBIs. See the **Resources box** at the end of this section for further guidance). The Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) and Markets in Crisis d-groups also offer active communities of practice for sharing ideas, experience and learning on CBIs.

Figure 61: Partner Roles in Design, Implementation, and Monitoring of CBIs

Role	Planning / Design	Implementation
Market Performance	Demonstrate market capacity through analysis: supply of goods/services, capacity of goods/service providers	Monitor supply, price fluctuations, beneficiary perception of market and service provider performance
Delivery Mechanism	Understand service provision, beneficiary experience and preferences. If implementing, competitive	Monitor beneficiary experience and satisfaction, and effectiveness of service

- Strengthen UNHCR and Partner capacity to better respond to housing, land and property issues
- Invest in research and development for innovative shelter options
- Enhance settlement and shelter needs assessment methods and tools
- Finalize and roll-out sectoral monitoring and evaluation systems
- Compile and catalogue settlement and shelter good practices

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RESOURCES

- UNHCR Global Strategy for Settlement and Shelter 2014-18
  http://www.unhcr.org/530f13aa9.pdf
- Global Shelter cluster website and references
  https://www.sheltercluster.org/
- Shelter Design Catalogue UNHCR, 2016
  http://sheltercentre.org/Shelter_Design
- UNHCR Emergency Shelter Standards
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/emergency-shelter-standards
- UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps, 2014
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/5423ded84.html
- UNHCR Core Non-Food Items Catalogue (2012 Edition)
  http://www.unhcr.org/4d1b34b79.html
- Transitional Settlement and Reconstruction after natural disaster (UNOCHA, 2008, field edition),
  http://sheltercentre.org/TransitionalSettlement

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generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters.

The **primary responsibility for providing protection and assistance, and finding long term solutions for IDPs, rests with the State**. However, UNHCR and its Partners are often called on to support national capacity in doing this. In 1998, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were created to re-state the international human rights and aspects of humanitarian law that are applicable to IDPs. The principles also attempt to clarify grey areas and gaps in the various legal instruments about situations of interest to IDPs.[6]

UNHCR's involvement with IDPs is guided by its role and responsibilities under the cluster approach, and similar inter-agency sector coordination mechanisms (see Section 2.2.1 for detailed information). As the problems of forced displacement become more wide scale, UNHCR's role is continually evolving with recognition of its unique protection expertise and the need to mobilize a coordinated effort to the prevention, response and solutions for both refugee and IDP displacement[7].

Host Communities

Host communities are not in themselves Persons of Concern for UNHCR, however any work being implemented by UNHCR or its Partners, must factor them in. This can be done through building links between the host community and refugees or other Persons of Concern, strengthening the resilience capacity of both host communities and displaced persons, and regular communication and engagement with host communities in planning, implementing and monitoring of the assistance being provided. This is reflected in the GCR multi-stakeholders and partnership approach, involving both humanitarian and development actors, based on the active participation and consultation of refugees and host community members.

Migrants

Though their treatment is governed by separate legal frameworks, refugees and migrants have the same universal human rights and fundamental freedoms. They also face many common challenges and have similar vulnerabilities, including in the context of large movements. Migrants are not among the Persons of Concern for UNHCR. However, migrants and refugees increasingly make use of the same routes and means of transport when moving from one country to another. If people in these **mixed flows** are unable to enter a state legally, they may employ the services of human smugglers and embark on dangerous sea or land journeys. This raises protection concerns for all those whose lives are at risk, whether refugees or

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[6] Resolutions of the Human Rights Council and UN General Assembly on IDPs:
http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/IDPersons/Pages/Resolutions.aspx
[7] Operational Review of UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement, Sep 2017:
http://www.unhcr.org/op-review-unhcr--internal-displacement

migrants. The growing need to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration is acknowledged in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (see Section 3.2.2), and specifically in **Annex II of the Declaration: Towards a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration**.

7.8 Shelter and Settlement

Shelter is a critical factor in survival during the initial stages of a disaster and is one of UNHCR's global strategic priorities. Beyond survival, shelter is necessary to provide safety particularly for children, women, and other people with specific needs, security, protection from the climate and resistance to ill health and disease. It is also important for human dignity, to sustain family life and to enable those affected to recover from the impact of disaster. Shelter cannot be looked at in isolation; any response must also consider the context, culture and environment in which households are being sheltered, including access to basic services, markets and livelihood opportunities.

Together with the IFRC, UNHCR co-leads the Global Shelter Cluster and, working with Partners, plays an important role in ensuring implementation of the IASC Transformative Agenda. The IFRC leads the Shelter Cluster in disaster situations while UNHCR leads it for conflict-generated internal displacement.

UNHCR's **Global Strategy for Settlement and Shelter** provides a framework to guide UNHCR and its Partners in addressing the sheltering needs for Persons of Concern, in line with the following mutually-reinforcing objectives:

1. To enable Persons of Concern to access and live in dignity in secure settlements that improve their social, economic and environmental quality of life as a community.

2. To enable Persons of Concern to access shelter solutions that provide privacy, security and protection from the elements, emotional support, and a space to live and store belongings in a dignified manner.

The ever-evolving nature of shelter technology and materials requires a constant investment in research and development to identify a variety of shelter solutions adapted to different climates, cultures and situations. Expanding its pool of technical specialists and building technical capacity for settlement and shelter within UNHCR and its Partners is a cornerstone of the 2014-18 Global Strategy.

Key activities in addressing sheltering needs:

- Integrate settlement strategies and potential layouts in contingency planning
- Develop standard formats and operating procedures for designing and implementing settlement and shelter strategies
- Ensure that other sector strategies support proposed shelter and settlement programs
- Put sufficient senior level expertise in place to guide implementation
- Promote holistic, comprehensive design of settlements (i.e. Master Plans)
- Design, roll out and/or support urban settlement guidelines
- Develop a range of shelter models for all operational phases in urban and rural settlements

Figure 60: UNHCR Strategy for Safe Access to Fuel and Energy

Strategic Objectives

1. Integrate energy into emergency preparedness and response
2. Develop and implement country level energy strategies
3. Improve access to household fuel and lighting using appropriate technologies and renewable energy
4. Increase access to energy for schools, health centers and other institutions.
5. **Establish and manage woodlots for fuel provision and environmental protection.**

Guiding Principles	**Programming Approaches**
▪ Protection	▪ Partnerships and Coordination
▪ Age, Gender and Diversity	▪ Capacity-Building
▪ Equity	▪ Communication and Advocacy
▪ Access	▪ Integrated approaches
▪ Sustainability	▪ Measurement
▪ Community empowerment	▪ Innovation
▪ Appropriateness and reliability	

RESOURCES

- UNHCR 2014-18 Global Strategy for Safe Access to Fuel and Energy, March 2014
  http://www.unhcr.org/energystrategy

- UNHCR Environmental Guidelines and Key Principles, 2005
  http://www.unhcr.org/3b03b2a04.html

- Framework for Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluating the environment in refugee-related operations (FRAME) Toolkit, 2009 (covering Environmental Assessment, Rapid Environmental Assessment, Community Environmental Action Planning, Environmental Indicator Framework, Evaluation)
  http://www.unhcr.org/4a97d1039.html

- Camp Management Toolkit, Chapter 6 Environment, NRC
  http://cmtoolkit.org/chapters/view/environment

- ProAct – environmental partnerships for community resilience
  http://www.proactnetwork.org/proactwebsite_3/index.php/resources

RESOURCES

About UNHCR

- History of UNHCR
  http://www.unhcr.org/uk/history-of-unhcr.html

- UNHCR, *Note on the Mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees and his Office*, October 2013, available at:
  https://www.refworld.org/docid/5268c9474.html

Persons of Concern

- Global Plan to End Statelessness 2014-2024
  http://www.unhcr.org/54621bf49.html

- UNHCR's Operational guidelines on Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement 2014. OUTDATED; 2016 OG on UNHCR's engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement (which may also be revised shortly; to be confirmed by DIP_
  http://www.unhcr.org/Ops_Guide_Internal_Displacement

- Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, 1998
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/3d4f95e11.html

- UNHCR Handbook for Repatriation and Reintegration Activities, 2004
  http://www.unhcr.org/411786694.pdf

- New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants
  http://www.un.org/NY Declaration 2016

- Global Compact on Refugees, 2018
  https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf

- UNHCR, A guide to international refugee protection and building state asylum systems, 2017, Handbook for Parliamentarians N° 27
  https://www.refworld.org/docid/5a9d57554.html

- Refworld – broad range of international and regional instruments, policy guidance and general information on Persons of Concern:
  http://www.refworld.org

- UNHCR Operational portal – Refugee situations
  https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations

- UNHCR 10-Point Plan of Action on Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration
  http://www.unhcr.org/uk/the-10-point-plan-in-action.html

1.2 Protection, Assistance and Solutions for Persons of Concern

UNHCR's prime responsibility is to **protect, assist and seek solutions for refugees and other Persons of Concern.** This fundamental commitment underpins what UNHCR does, and the way that it works, directly and through its Partners.

1.2.1 Protection of Persons of Concern

The protection of refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons and returnees is enshrined in UNHCR's core mandate and forms the basis of all its operations (see Section 1.1.2). UNHCR's role and authority to protect other Persons of Concern, notably IDPs, is shaped by specific circumstances, including inter-agency agreements and host government policies.

There is an unprecedented level of movement both within countries and across international borders. These large-scale movements may involve mixed flows of people, whether refugees or migrants, who move for different reasons but often use similar routes and face similar challenges. Protracted refugee crises are also more commonplace, with long-term repercussions for refugees and for their host countries and communities.

Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action

In 2015, a **Whole of System Review** was generated by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals' to examine how protection issues were being addressed in the context of humanitarian action and makes practical suggestions to help humanitarian actors be more strategic, and better capable of meeting core life-saving humanitarian responsibilities in relation to protection. In response to the findings, the IASC Principals' issued a statement on the **Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action** in December 2015 and the subsequent **IASC Protection Policy** followed-on from the Principals' statement.

While recognizing that the primary responsibility to protect people in humanitarian crises lies with states, the Statement affirms the responsibility of humanitarian actors to protect people and respect and promote their human rights. It also sets out the need for a dedicated protection strategy, extending from preparedness, throughout the humanitarian response and into early recovery, with input and support from the Protection Cluster and other humanitarian, peacekeeping, diplomatic and development actors. This is the relevant framework for UNHCR's engagement in situation of internal displacement.

7.7 Energy and Environment

7.7.1 Programming for Environment

Protecting the environment that Persons of Concern depend on is a critical cross-cutting issue to UNHCR. This involves ensuring that natural resources such as vegetation, water and wood are continuously available for the protection and well-being of Persons of Concern and host communities. Use of these resources by Persons of Concern can result in tensions with the host community, jeopardizing opportunities for integration and asylum. As such, it is important to consider natural resources around camps and settlements from the onset of an emergency.

Initiatives taken to protect the environment by UNHCR, and its Partners should utilize a community-based approach to understand the needs and habits of both Persons of Concern and host communities and assess the carrying capacity of environment to identify appropriate and sustainable solutions. Key activities include:

- ✓ Undertaking rapid or comprehensive environmental assessments. These should be undertaken following the **Framework for Assessing, Monitoring and Evaluating the Environment in Refugee-related Operations (FRAME) toolkit.**
- ✓ Developing Community Environmental Action Plans and appropriate awareness raising or advocacy activities. These involve extensive consultation with Persons of Concern, host communities, government representatives and other stakeholders over the life cycle of a project.

7.7.2 Programming for Energy

Meeting the energy needs of Persons of Concern is another critical cross-cutting issue. UNHCR strives to ensure that Persons of Concern are able to satisfy their energy needs for cooking and lighting in a safe and sustainable manner, without fear or risk to their health, well-being and personal security. Without safe access to energy, women and children may spend hours searching for firewood, risking their personal safety and taking time away from educational or livelihood activities. Without light or electricity, students cannot study, and medical and educational institutions cannot refrigerate medication, perform critical operations or power computers.

Programs to help address energy requirements should adopt a community-based approach and fully assess environmental considerations including enabling or disabling factors such as government prohibitions, affecting the use of certain energy types. **Figure 60** below provides a snapshot of **UNHCR's Global Strategy for Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE).**

✓ Foster safe enabling environments that support learning

✓ Enable learners to use their education toward sustainable futures

The UNHCR Education strategy can be found here offering partnership guidance for Governments, Intergovernmental Organizations, Donors, INGOs, Private Sector and Foundations, Individual Philanthropists and National CSOs and Academic Networks. Education interventions examples are;

✓ Amplifying and extending existing evidence-based development education programmes to refugee hosting schools and districts

✓ Focusing on programmes that contribute to successful inclusion in national systems during emergency phases, such as intensive language and literacy programming, or amplified accelerated education programming

✓ Contributing to non-recurrent cost projects such as school expansion where refugees and locals can all benefit, and harmonize with other INGOs and NGOs on collaborative projects where single funding sources are insufficient

✓ Supporting governments to extend national grade placement processes in crisis-affected regions to correctly identify learning needs and programmes for displaced children and youth as well as host community children and youth, and reduce over-population of lower primary school classrooms

✓ Championing refugee voices in national policy/practice

✓ Developing good practices on data sharing, regular disaggregated reporting on girls and boy's enrollment and retention

Other key reference documents are: Her Turn: It's time to make refugee girls' education a priority and Turn the Tide: Refugee education in crisis.

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (New York Declaration)

The need for international cooperation in addressing large-scale movements and the protection of refugees and migrants was further endorsed in the **New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants**. It was adopted by the United Nations in General Assembly Resolution 71/1, on 16th September 2016 and is a milestone for global solidarity and refugee protection at a time of unprecedented displacement.

The set of commitments agreed by Member States reflect that the protection of those who are forced to flee, and the support for the countries that shelter them, are a shared international responsibility – a responsibility that must be borne more equitably and predictably.

In adopting the New York Declaration, Member States:

▪ expressed profound solidarity with those who are forced to flee;

▪ reaffirmed their obligations to fully respect the human rights of refugees and migrants;

▪ agreed that protecting refugees and supporting the countries that shelter them are shared international responsibilities and must be borne more equitably and predictably;

▪ pledged robust support to those countries affected by large movements of refugees and migrants;

▪ agreed upon the core elements of a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (refer to Section 1.2.2 for further details); and

▪ agreed to work towards the adoption of a **Global Compact on Refugees** and a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

The Global Compact on Refugees

The resolution on the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees which affirms the Global Compact on Refugees (as contained in A/73/12 (Part II)) was adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2018 (A/RES/73/151).

The resolution underscores the importance of the Global Compact on Refugees as a representation of political will and the ambition to operationalize the principle of burden- and responsibility-sharing, to mobilize the international community as a whole, and to galvanize action for an improved response to refugee situations. It calls upon the international community as a whole, including States and other relevant stakeholders, to implement the Global Compact on Refugees, through concrete actions, pledges and contributions, including at the first Global Refugee Forum. It further calls upon States and other stakeholders that have not yet contributed to burden- and responsibility-sharing to do so, with a view to broadening the support base in a spirit of international solidarity and cooperation.

The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework set out in Annex I of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted by the General Assembly on 19 September 2016 (A/RES/71/1), forms an integral part of the Global Compact on Refugees.

The affirmation of the Global Compact on Refugees by the General Assembly represents the culmination of a two-year period of engagement and consultation with States and all relevant stakeholders, following the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in 2016, informed by practical experience with application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework in a range of specific situations with the objective to ease pressures on the host countries involved, to enhance refugee self-reliance, to expand access to third-country solutions and to support conditions in country of origin for return in safety and dignity.

Comprehensive international, regional and country level guidance in relation to refugee law, status and protection can be found in the UNHCR Protection Manual (see the **Resources box** at the end of this section). In addition, the annual **High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges** provides a regular forum to discuss protection challenges related to the work of UNHCR and its partners and identify ways of strengthening the protection of people of concern (refer to Section 2.3.2 for further details)

Protection Principles and Good Practice

Through incorporating protection principles into aid delivery, humanitarian actors can ensure that their activities target the most vulnerable, enhance safety, dignity, and promote and protect the human rights of Persons of Concern without contributing to or perpetuating discrimination, abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation. **Figure 2** below provides guidance on the key protection principles.

UNHCR and its Partners may be required to provide protection for Persons of Concern in a variety of operational settings, including **camps and non-camp settings**, which may be urban or rural in nature. In highly dynamic or insecure emergency contexts, significant flexibility in the design and approach to programming is also likely to be needed.

Figure 2: Key Protection Principles

Avoid causing harm	- minimize unintended negative effects of an intervention which may increase people's vulnerability to both physical and psychosocial risks

7.6 Education

Education is a strategic protection priority for UNHCR, with the aim of ensuring access to inclusive, equitable quality education that will enable refugees, displaced and stateless children and youth to become resilient and contribute to their societies. The 2018 Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and the Sustainable Development Goal 4 to 2030 underpin UNHCR's Education Strategy. The GCR recognizes the importance of an improved multi-stakeholder and partnership approach in global responses to large-scale refugee situations. The range of actors involved in refugee responses is growing, particularly within the Education Sector since the roll-out of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework.

UNHCR's approach to Education is guided by the fundamental principle of national system inclusion. UNHCR is committed to inclusive and equitable quality education for all, throughout all phases of displacement, through traditional and innovative delivery models, and across the full continuum of formal and non-formal education programme opportunities: early childhood development, primary, secondary, tertiary, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and non-formal education that leads to academic or professional certification.

Protracted situations require a hybrid response. Two-thirds of all 25 million refugees protected under UNHCR's mandate are in protracted refugee situations. Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, representing roughly 17 per cent of the total protracted refugee population, have been displaced for 38 years or more. At the end of 2017, 6.9 million people had been displaced between five and nine years, of whom 5.4 million were Syrian refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. The remaining 3.5 million people were in protracted refugee situations of between 10 and 37 years. Humanitarian response and approaches alone, including for education, are no longer sufficient to support governments to fulfill their responsibilities to protect refugees and other persons of concern. In such a reality, hybrid approaches that anticipate protraction and harmonize with the long-term vision and financing of development planning can result in amplified, sustainable, systemic support to host countries that will benefit displaced and stateless learners and the often-underserved host communities that welcome them.

The majority of refugees are now displaced for a length of time that represents at least one, if not all cycles of education. Creating parallel education systems for the displaced is never desirable. Inclusion can create conditions conducive to social cohesion, conflict mitigation and prevention, fundamental to the "inclusive societies" committed to under Sustainable Development Goal 16 and to achieving the CRRF goal of countering "racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance against refugees and migrants."

Strategic Objectives for Education Programming are:

✓ Promote equitable and sustainable inclusion in national education systems for refugees, asylum seekers, returnees, stateless and internally displaced persons

▪ Equity ▪ Access ▪ Sustainability ▪ Community empowerment ▪ Appropriateness and reliability ▪ Market orientation	▪ Multi-year Planning and Sequencing ▪ Generating and Using Evidence ▪ Advocacy to Establish an Enabling Environment ▪ Access to Services for Employment and Entrepreneurship

7.5.2 Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Programming

Livelihoods and economic inclusion interventions carried out by UNHCR and its Partners may include:

✓ Advocating for the legal right to work of Persons of Concern and other opportunities for access to markets and resources

✓ Facilitating inclusion of Persons of Concern into existing livelihoods and development initiatives appropriate to market opportunities, such as trainings for employment and entrepreneurship

✓ Creating synergies with other sectors and stakeholders from the onset of an emergency and building a common ethos and coordinated practice on market-based livelihoods and economic inclusion

✓ Targeting livelihoods initiatives according to the socio-economic profiling of Persons of Concern

✓ Enabling access to financial services

✓ Avoid the provision or creation of parallel services

RESOURCES

▪ **Refugee Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion: 2019-2023 Global Strategy Concept Note**

▪ ILO-UNHCR **Guide to Market-Based Livelihoods Interventions for Refugees**

▪ **Minimum Economic Recovery Standards (MERS)**

▪ OECD-UNHCR 10-point action plan to guide multi-stakeholders in **Engaging with Employers in the Hiring of Refugees**

▪ UNCTAD-UNHCR- IOM **Policy Guide on entrepreneurship for Migrants and Refugees**

Equality	- facilitate meaningful access to impartial assistance in proportion to need and without any barriers (i.e. discrimination). Take account of vulnerable individuals and groups and those who have difficulty accessing assistance.
Accountability to Affected Populations	- provide appropriate mechanisms for gathering and addressing feedback on the adequacy of humanitarian assistance and concerns and complaints from the affected population.
Participation and Empowerment	- facilitate the development of self-protection capacities within the affected population and assist people to claim their rights, including rights to shelter, food, water and sanitation, health, and education.

1.2.2 Assisting Persons of Concern

UNHCR's mandate for assistance to refugees and other Persons of Concern derives from its **Statute**. Subsequent General Assembly resolutions reaffirm this mandate and highlight the mutually reinforcing relationship between assistance and protection and that inadequate material assistance and food shortages undermine protection[8].

The nature of assistance needed by refugees and other Persons of Concern varies from one situation or group to another. However, a participatory and rights-based approach is important in all cases to achieve fair and equitable access to food and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

The type of assistance that UNHCR and its Partners provide includes:

▪ The **reception and registration** of new arrivals.

▪ Determining **refugee status** and assisting Persons of Concern to exercise their right to seek asylum.

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[8] UNHCR's mandate in relation to assistance to refugees and other Persons of Concern http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/557050fa4.pdf

- Providing support for **immediate and on-going needs** in terms of shelter, food, water, sanitation and medical care through direct provision of goods and services or cash-based interventions.
- Facilitating **education** for the children of refugees and other Persons of Concern.
- Promoting and facilitating **opportunities for work and livelihoods** for refugees and other Persons of Concern.
- Providing support in accessing **legal assistance** in the event of unlawful detention or other breaches of human or refugee rights e.g. through legal advice or hotlines.
- Assisting **institutions and communities** that receive refugees.
- Securing **documentation** for refugees and other Persons of Concern including birth registrations and identity documents.
- Undertaking **advocacy** and promoting the rights and needs of Persons of Concern e.g. for admission to a third country on humanitarian grounds, family reunification, labor migration and regional mobility.
- Developing humanitarian **response capacities** among local government and non-government actors, host communities and Persons of Concern.

Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)

In the **New York Declaration**[9], the General Assembly set out the key elements of a **Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework** (CRRF) that is designed to:

1. ease pressures on countries hosting large numbers of refugees,
2. enhance refugee self-reliance,
3. expand access to third-country solutions, and
4. support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.

The New York Declaration calls upon UNHCR to develop and initiate the application of the CRRF in various situations, in close coordination with relevant States, other UN agencies and stakeholders.

The key elements of a comprehensive response include:

- rapid and well-supported reception and admissions;
- support for immediate and on-going needs (such as protection, health and education);
- assistance for local and national institutions and communities receiving refugees; and
- expanded opportunities for solutions.

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[9] Refer to Section 3.2.2 for further details

7.5 Livelihoods

7.5.1 UNHCR's Strategy for Livelihoods

Improving livelihoods through economic inclusion is a key component of achieving protection and solutions outcomes for refugees. Economic inclusion entails access to labor markets, finance, entrepreneurship and economic opportunities for all, including non-citizens in addition to vulnerable and underserved groups. Economic inclusion contributes to the self-reliance and resilience of refugees, empowering them to meet their needs in a safe, sustainable and dignified manner; avoid aid-dependency and negative coping mechanisms; contribute to their host economies; and prepare refugees for their future whether they return home, integrate in their country of asylum or resettle in a third country.

Improving livelihoods and achieving economic inclusion of refugees cannot be done by UNHCR alone and requires the engagement of a broad range of stakeholders, leveraging the added value and strategic positioning of different actors. In contexts where other actors are already engaged in livelihoods interventions, UNHCR should not create parallel systems through implementation. Rather, to the extent possible, it is recommended that UNHCR operations play a facilitation and advocacy role, enabling and convening relevant stakeholders to include refugees in services/programmes of governments, development actors and the private sector to the extent possible. The arrangements of actors at both international and national levels to implement the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) will form a great opportunity for the inclusion of refugees in economic systems and development agendas. **Figure 59** below provides a snapshot of the **Refugee Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Concept Note**, which provides an overview of the comprehensive, forthcoming global strategy for 2019-2023.

Figure 59: UNHCR Strategy for Livelihoods at A Glance

Strategic Objectives
1. Refugees and their host communities have the resources to become resilient and self-reliant through the ability to absorb and recover from shocks
2. Markets and economies enjoy inclusive growth through the full participation of refugees
3. An enabling environment ensures sustained resilience for refugees and their host communities

Guiding Principles	Programming Approaches
▪ Protection	▪ Facilitation and Coordination
▪ Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD)	▪ Partnerships and Collaboration
▪ Inclusion	

RESOURCES
▪ Global Strategy for Public Health 2014-2018 – Public Health – HIV and Reproductive Health – Food Security and Nutrition – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) http://www.unhcr.org//530f12d26.html
▪ Sphere Handbook, Health Action, 2018 (draft) http://www.sphereproject.org/revision-health-action
▪ Global Health Cluster – health guidelines in emergency response http://www.who.int/list_of_guidelines for emergency response
▪ Operational guidance on mental health & psychosocial support programming for refugee operations, UNHCR, 2013 http://www.unhcr.org/525f94479.html
▪ UNHCR Essential Medicine and Medical Supplies - Policy and Guidelines, 2013 http://www.unhcr.org/527baab09.html
▪ Interagency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings, IAWG, 2010 http://www.unhcr.org/4c187e5b6.html
▪ UNHCR Public Health Information System (Twine) http://twine.unhcr.org/app/
▪ Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) for Reproductive Health in Crisis Situations, 2011 http://www.unhcr.org/4e8d6b3b14.html
▪ Clinical Management of Rape Survivors: Developing protocols for use with refugees and IDPs, WHO 2004 http://www.unhcr.org/403a0b7f4.html
▪ All resources for public health programs can be found at: http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cdd.html

1.2.3 Seeking Solutions for Persons of Concern

The ultimate goal of any refugee intervention is to find ways that will enable refugees to live in safety and rebuild their lives. UNHCR attempts to secure such solutions through four mechanisms as illustrated in **Figure 3** below.

Figure 3: UNHCR Mechanisms for Providing Solutions
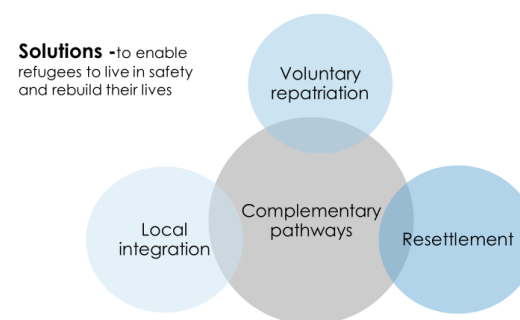
Voluntary repatriation - this refers to the voluntary return of refugees to their country of origin. Within voluntary repatriation programs it is important to take appropriate measures to ensure that:

- ▪ any choice regarding movements or return made by refugees is voluntary, free from coercion, and based on objective information,
- ▪ refugees return to conditions of physical, legal and material safety, with full restoration of national protection and
- ▪ return takes place in safety and with dignity and that it is sustainable.

Involvement of all stakeholders, including returnees, host and origin countries, UNHCR, other international organizations, and Partner NGOs, is an important element in successful repatriation. This type of collaboration will help to provide an appropriate framework for managing voluntary returns in the host country, through the provision of information, documentation and financial support, and in the country of origin through legal guarantees for amnesties, property restitution and reintegration projects.

Local integration – this refers to integration of refugees in the country of asylum. The 1951 Convention provides a legal framework for the integration of refugees in States party to the Convention.

The scope and pace of the integration will depend on the number of refugees and social and economic conditions in the host society. Priority may be given to:

- ▪ refugees born on the territory of the host country who may otherwise be stateless,
- ▪ refugees who do not have the possibility to repatriate in the foreseeable future,

▪ refugees who have established close links to the host country.

Host countries sometimes adopt an incremental approach to local integration by granting permits to stay that gradually lead to a wider range of rights and entitlements over time. In certain situations, host countries may be willing to integrate refugee populations but may lack sufficient resources and require assistance and support from the international community to do so.

Resettlement – this refers to the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another State that has agreed to admit them as refugees with permanent residence status. Resettlement is not a right, and the number of refugees that can access resettlement is limited by the number of resettlement places offered by resettlement States each year. Therefore, resettlement should only be considered for refugees with limited or no prospects for local integration or voluntary repatriation and with specific needs who cannot find adequate protection in the country of origin or the country of asylum. As the number of refugees estimated to be in need of resettlement each year by UNHCR greatly exceeds the number of resettlement places made available by States, proper identification of refugees for resettlement is one of the most crucial and challenging aspects of the resettlement process. Partners, including NGOs and international organizations can play an important role in assisting UNHCR identifying refugees in need of resettlement.

Complementary pathways or other forms of admission for refugees to third countries - with the three traditional solutions (outlined above) remaining elusive for many refugees, UNHCR is also intensifying its efforts to advocate for and assist in the establishment and expansion of other pathways of admission for refugees to third countries with a wide range of Partners.

The global call from the international community to expand third-country solutions for refugees as reaffirmed in the Global Compact on Refugees, recognizes that when durable solutions are not achievable for all members of a refugee population, other pathways can facilitate access to protection and solutions, and alleviate pressures on host countries. These pathways may include family reunification, scholarships and education programs, labor mobility, regional labor schemes and special visa and humanitarian programs.

While resettlement remains one of the most important tools at States' disposal, opportunities such as learning new skills, contributing in the labor market, acquiring an education, or reuniting with family members in third countries can equip refugees to achieve long-lasting solutions while providing safety and a lawful stay where their international protection needs are met.

Complementary pathways are not meant to substitute the protection afforded to refugees under the international protection regime, rather they serve as an important expression of solidarity and burden- and responsibility- sharing. Although refugees sometimes find complementary pathways on their own, the provision of administrative measures and protection safeguards can help to facilitate these processes.

7.4.3 Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

UNHCR and its Partners need to ensure that appropriate Community Based Organizations and Persons of Concern, including groups with specific needs, are involved in all stages of design and implementation of the MHPSS activities. All MHPSS interventions should prioritize the interests of Persons of Concern, show respect for their decisions, and be guided by the principles of confidentiality, safety, security, respect, dignity and non-discrimination.

UNHCR's **Operational Guidance for MHPSS Programming** is based on the following guiding principles to be followed by its staff and Partners:

1. Use Rights-based, Community-based and Participatory Approaches
2. Ensure equity of care and access
3. Assess needs and resources
4. Use a systems approach
5. Strive for integrated service provision
6. Adapt services to the stages of the refugee (displacement) situation
7. Build capacity
8. Use appropriate and systematic monitoring and evaluation
9. Ensure compliance with UNHCR policies and strategies and national and international standards and guidelines
10. Do No Harm

MHPSS is recognized as a crosscutting issue within the humanitarian response and not the sole responsibility of specialist agencies or individuals. Many interventions by humanitarian actors will impact on the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of Persons of Concern. UNHCR's operational guidance makes a distinction between a 'MHPSS approach' and 'MHPSS interventions'.

A MHPSS approach means providing a humanitarian response in ways that are beneficial to the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of Persons of Concern. This is relevant for all actors, including UNHCR Partners involved in providing protection and assistance to Persons of Concern.	MHPSS interventions consist of one or several activities with the primary goal of improving the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of Persons of Concern. MHPSS interventions are usually implemented by specialists in the sectors for health, protection and education.

Ten Key Points on HIV and the Protection of Persons of Concern

1. **Non-Discrimination**: Persons living with HIV and AIDS are entitled to live their life in dignity, free from discrimination and stigmatization.

2. **Access to HIV and AIDS Health Care**: Persons of Concern have the rights, as any other individual to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health care, including prevention, treatment, care and support and HIV and AIDS

3. **Access to Asylum Procedures and Protection from Expulsion and Refoulment**: The HIV status of an asylum-seeker does not constitute a bar to accessing asylum procedures.

4. **Protection from Arbitrary Detention and Unlawful Restrictions on Freedom of Movement**: There is no public health justification for restrictions of these rights due to a person's HIV status alone.

5. **Respect for Confidentiality and Privacy**: Personal data is confidential and should not be shared without the consent of the individual concerned; this includes data on the health and HIV status of the person.

6. **Provision of Voluntary Counselling and Testing**: Persons of Concern should have equal access to Voluntary Counselling and Testing services to help in preventing transmission of HIV. However, care is needed in maintaining confidentiality to prevent protection problems.

7. **Freedom from Mandatory Testing**: UNHCR opposes mandatory HIV testing as it contravenes various human rights standards. Public health interests are best served by promoting Voluntary Counselling and Testing where confidentiality and privacy can be assured.

8. **Access to Solutions**: The attainment of a long-term solution should not be jeopardized by the HIV status of a refugee or a family member.

9. **HIV-related protection needs of women, girls and boys**: Women and girls should be protected against sexual violence and exploitation as they are disproportionately affected by HIV and AIDS. Special attention must be paid to children affected by HIV, including those orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV.

10. **Access to HIV information and education**: The right to health also includes access to HIV and AIDS and sexual and reproductive health related information. It improves UNHCR's and Partners' ability to reach out to groups that are otherwise not able to access UNHCR services, including marginalized groups and groups in remote locations

Despite ongoing progress, refugees continue to face barriers and challenges in accessing complementary pathways. These include, inability to obtain required exit permits, entry visa or travel documents, lack of adequate protection safeguards, strict eligibility criteria that do not take refugees' specific situations into account, inability to remain in the third country if refugees are unable to return to first country of asylum or country of origin, or limited resources to cover refugee needs on arrival.

1.2.4 Focus on Persons of Concern

UNHCR puts Persons of Concern at the center of its work through facilitating their participation in all phases of its **Operations Management Cycle** (refer **to** Section 4.1.1) and integrating protection principles and good practices across all aspects of its operations. This commitment extends to the way UNHCR works with Partners.

To keep the needs and interests of Persons of Concern front and center in all aspects of partnership negotiations and arrangements between UNHCR and its Partners, agreement needs to be reached on:

- The commitments of both organizations to the people they aim to protect and assist, and how these commitments will be met (including allocation of resources and/or funding).

- The knowledge, skills, behaviors and attitudes that staff need to demonstrate, and how these will be reflected and managed in both organizations.

- How, when and with whom, the organizations will share information.

- How to engage those that the project aims to protect and assist, in all stages of the program cycle.

- How to implement an age, gender and diversity approach throughout the program cycle

- How both organizations will raise and handle complaints against each other in a safe and accessible way, the ways in which they will enable the people they aim to protect and assist to raise complaints, and how these will be managed.

- How they will jointly monitor and assess programs, the quality of the partnership, and each other's agreed performance, including how to involve the Persons of Concern in this process.

RESOURCES

Protection

- UNHCR Protection Manual,
  http://www.refworld.org/protectionmanual.html
- New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (UN Resolution 71/1)
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/57ceb74a4.html
- IASC Protection Policy, 2017
  https://iasc.org/protection/documents/iasc-policy
- IASC Principals, The Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action Statement, Dec 2015
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/54913c1715.html
- Global Protection Cluster Annotated Reference list on Protection Mainstreaming
  https://drc.ngo/gpc-reference-list
- Global Protection Cluster Protection Mainstreaming Training Package, 2014
  http://www.GPC/protection_mainstreaming training
- Global Protection Cluster Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons, 2010
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/4790cbc02.html
- Advocating together for the Protection of Persons of Concern, HC's Structured Dialogue on NGOs – UNHCR Partnership, 2012
  http://www.unhcr.org/advocating-together

Assistance

- UNHCR Basic Needs Approach in Refugee Response, 2016
  https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/Basic_needs_approach
- Towards a global compact on refugees
  http://www.unhcr.org/towards-a-global-compact-on-refugees.html
- CRRF Global Portal
  http://www.globalcrrf.org/

Solutions

- UNHCR Solutions for refugees: The 10 point plan http://www.unhcr.org/10-point-plan
- Durable Solutions – Preliminary Operational Guide, 2016 (concerning refugee returnees and IDPs)
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/57441d774.html
- IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons, 2010
  http://www.unhcr.org/50f94cd49.pdf

Partners that submit Public Health proposals should involve UNHCR in developing the Project Description and take account of the following:

- Use of the UNHCR Public Health Information System (**TWINE**) for all refugee camp settings;
- Use of UNHCR's out-of-camp and urban HIS reporting tools;
- Adherence to UNHCR policies, Standard Operating Procedures and tools for public health programming, namely:
  - referral management,
  - management of medicines and medical supplies, and
  - laboratory quantity control.

7.4.2 Reproductive Health and HIV AIDS

In order to prevent morbidity and mortality due to HIV and reproductive health issues among Persons of Concern, UNHCR is committed to promoting and facilitating universal access to HIV protection, prevention, care and treatment services and comprehensive, integrated reproductive, maternal and newborn health services. The **strategic objectives for UNHCR's Reproductive Health and HIV and AIDS programs** and the work of its Partners in these areas are to:

- Reduce transmission of HIV using a protection and rights-based approach
- Facilitate universal access to antiretroviral therapy
- Facilitate the elimination of vertical (mother to child) transmission of HIV
- Improve access to reproductive, maternal and newborn health services
- Progress the use of innovative and appropriate technologies in women's health

UNHCR and its Partners should provide a minimum package of HIV services, even during the acute phase of an emergency. Persons of Concern should be included in national HIV and reproductive health strategies and plans, and benefit from the prevention and treatment protocols that are available to other nationals.

Services to prevent and mitigate the risk of mother-to-child transmission should also be provided, including access to confidential voluntary counselling and testing services and Anti-Retro Viral treatment for pregnant women and exposed babies. The box below sets out ten key considerations[85] in protecting and assisting those affected by HIV and AIDS in emergencies.

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[85] http://www.unhcr.org/uk/publications/operations/444e20f32/ten-key-points-hivaids-protection-refugees-idps-other-persons-concern.html

7.4 Health, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

UNHCR is committed to ensuring that Persons of Concern enjoy the right to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, including access to quality health services at a level similar to that of nationals of the country. The focus of UNHCR and its Partners' public health programs is to minimize avoidable morbidity and mortality and should contribute to the following **strategic objectives**:

- Improve access to quality primary health care programs
- Decrease morbidity from communicable diseases and epidemics
- Improve childhood survival
- Facilitate access to integrated prevention and control of Non-Communicable Diseases, including mental health services
- Ensure rational access to specialist referral care
- Ensure integration into national services and explore financing options

7.4.1 Primary Health Care

Primary health care incorporates medical diagnosis and treatment, psychological assessment and management, personal support, communication of information about illness, prevention, and health maintenance. A community-based approach is critical, taking into account the disease profile of affected groups.

Depending on the setting, primary health care may be provided by a nurse, family physician or other type of health worker. Services are generally free of charge. However, where Persons of Concern are locally integrated (durable solution), or the surrounding population pays for health care, different financing options for Persons of Concern may need to be explored. Key interventions include:

- Emergency medical, surgical and trauma care;
- Services for infants and young children, including immunization;
- Reproductive health and prevention of HIV;
- Communicable disease control;
- Non-communicable disease control including mental health;
- Psychosocial support;
- Response to disease outbreaks;
- Nutrition;
- Health education and health promotion;
- Rational use of essential medicines in accordance with UNHCR's medicine policy (under direct implementation);
- WASH in health facilities.

1.3 Shared Principles and Values

1.3.1 Humanitarian Principles

The work and conduct of UNHCR, its Partners and other humanitarian organizations is guided by several core principles. The principles of **humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence** are derived from international humanitarian law and underline all humanitarian assistance.

They were taken up by the United Nations in General Assembly Resolutions 46/182 and 58/114, and further endorsed in 1994 within the **Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement** and Non-Governmental Organizations in Disaster Relief, and subsequently in 1997 in the **Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response**.

These core principles also underpin the **Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability** which sets out in nine Commitments that all humanitarian organizations and individuals can use to improve the quality and effectiveness of the assistance they provide.

CHS Commitments

- ✓ Humanitarian response is appropriate and relevant.
- ✓ Humanitarian response is effective and timely
- ✓ Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects
- ✓ Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback.
- ✓ Complaints are welcomed and addressed.
- ✓ Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary.
- ✓ Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve
- ✓ Staff are supported to do their job effectively and are treated fairly and equitably.
- ✓ Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose.

DEFINITIONS

Humanity - is the quality of being humane or compassionate and is the principal driver for a response to any crisis.

Impartiality – is the principle of providing humanitarian assistance based on need, with priority given to the most urgent cases irrespective of race, nationality, gender, religious belief, political opinion or class.

Neutrality – is the principle of refraining from taking sides in hostilities or engaging in actions that are motivated or influenced by political, racial, religious or ideological interests.

Independence – is the principle of retaining autonomy and not being subject to control or diversion by political, economic, military or other non-humanitarian objectives.

Principled humanitarianism is a commitment to providing for the assistance and protection of affected populations in a way that is distinct and separate from political and other motivations[10].

These, along with other principles such as '**Do No Harm**', are internationally recognized and contribute to 'principled humanitarianism'. Consistent adherence to these principles assists all humanitarian actors to:

- gain and maintain access to affected populations, including Persons of Concern;
- mitigate risks to affected populations, staff, Partners and assets;
- promote the full rights and dignity of affected populations; and
- establish a principled engagement with authorities and, where appropriate, non-State parties to a conflict.

UNHCR is also committed to a **rights-based** and **community-based approach**, which includes efforts to engage and empower all Persons of Concern (age, gender, diversity approach) in decisions that affect their lives.

1.3.2 Standards of Conduct

Upholding the principles outlined in Section 1.3.1, depends on the ability of all humanitarian organizations and their staff to promote and practice the highest standards of ethical, personal and professional conduct, both within their respective organizations and externally.

- Providing an adequate and accessible amount of safe water for drinking, cooking and personal and domestic hygiene;
- Providing adequate and accessible sanitation services (including showers);
- Proper disposal of all waste;
- Control of vectors, including mosquitoes, rats, mice and flies;
- Awareness-raising of water-related diseases and meeting minimum standards for WASH Core Relief Items (e.g. Jerry can, soap, etc.).

Partners that submit WASH proposals should involve UNHCR in developing the Project Description and take account of the following:

- The use of the UNHCR WASH monitoring system;
- The use of UNHCR's out-of-camp and urban WASH reporting tools;
- Adherence to UNHCR policies, Standard Operating Procedures and tools for WASH programming (refer to the **UNHCR WASH website** in the Resources box below).

RESOURCES

WASH Programming Guidance
- UNHCR WASH website and Manual for Refugee Settings:
  http://wash.unhcr.org/WASH website
- UNHCR Global Strategy for Public Health 2014-2018
  http://www.unhcr.org//530f12d26.html
- Sphere Handbook, WASH, 2018 (draft)
  http://www.sphereproject.org/handbook/revision-wash
- Excreta Disposal in Emergencies: A Field Manual IFRC, OXFAM, UNHCR, UNICEF, WEDC, 2007
  https://www.alnap.org/help-library/excreta-disposal-in-emergencies-a-field-manual
- UNHCR Emergency Hygiene standards and guidance
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/33096/emergency-hygiene-standard
- Camp Management Toolkit, Chapter 14 WASH, NRC
  http://cmtoolkit.org/chapters/view/water-sanitation-and-hygiene

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[10] As defined in the UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies, 2016

7.3 Water Sanitation Hygiene (WASH)

UNHCR aims to ensure that Persons of Concern have safe access to water of sufficient quality and quantity, improved sanitation and hygiene and improved WASH services in institutions, including schools and health facilities[84]. UNHCR is also committed to WASH solutions which are efficient in reducing long-term operational costs. **Figure 58** below illustrates UNHCR's Hygiene Improvement Framework.

The overall objective of UNHCR's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programs with its Partners is to reduce avoidable mortality and morbidity among displaced people as well as reduce the impact on the local environment. In doing this, it also works closely with appropriate local ministries (e.g. Ministry of Water and Natural Resources, Environment, Water Supply, and/or Health). UNHCR and its Partners use a hygiene improvement framework to build effective WASH programs.

Figure 58: UNHCR Hygiene Improvement Framework

Access to Hardware	Water supply systems Improved sanitation facilities Households technologies and materials ▪ Soap ▪ Safe Water containers ▪ Effective water treatment	Hygiene promotion	Communication Social mobilization Community participation Social marketing Advocacy

Hygiene Improvement
Diarrheal Disease Prevention

Enabling Environment	Policy improvement Institutional strengthening Community organization Financing and cost-recovery Cross-sector & PP partnerships

Key programmatic activities to reduce health risks and prevent epidemics, include:

Examples of **misconduct[11]** include:

- Embezzlement and procurement fraud
- Financial negligence resulting in substantial losses
- Sexual exploitation and abuse (of Persons of Concern and aid workers)
- Sexual harassment (in the workplace or in connection with work)
- Harassment (including mobbing)
- Assault, threats or retaliation
- Unlawful acts (e.g. theft or fraud)
- Misrepresentation or false certification relating to a claim or benefit
- Misuse of the equipment or assets or abuse of authority
- Non-compliance with local laws or legal obligations.

The Clauses on Investigation and Ethical Considerations in the Partnership Agreement (Appendix 2) emphasize the obligation of UNHCR's Partners and their staff to carry out their activities to the highest ethical, personal and professional standards. Refer to Section 5.1.5 for further guidance on Ethical and Professional Conduct.

Failure by Partners to take measures to prevent misconduct or investigate allegations of misconduct and take the appropriate disciplinary and corrective actions, constitute grounds for termination of a Partnership Agreement. This includes allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse committed against Persons of Concern or staff, consultants or contractors of the Partner organization itself. Refer to Section 1.3.3 for further guidance on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

Codes of Conduct

Codes of Conduct and/or associated policy documents are an important way of providing guidance to personnel, Persons of Concern, donors and others within and external to the organization on the required standards of behavior and conduct, along with the consequences of failing to respect and practice these standards.

Partner organizations and their personnel are not required to sign up to the UNHCR Code of Conduct[12]. However, they are expected to make the principles contained in the Code known to their personnel (consultants and contractors, interns) in an appropriate manner. Refer to **Figure 4** overleaf for details.

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[84] UNHCR Global Public Health Strategy 2014-18

[11] Misconduct is defined by the United Nations as "any failure by a staff member to comply with his or her obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules or other administrative issuances, or to observe the standards of conduct expected of an international civil servant."
[12] https://www.unhcr.org/admin/policies/422dbc89a/unhcr-code-conduct-explanatory-notes.html

Compatible standards should be reflected in a **Partner organization's own Code of Conduct** which staff sign up to as a condition of their employment. Furthermore, Partners are required to refrain from any conduct that could adversely reflect on, or is incompatible with, the aims and objectives of the United Nations.

Figure 4: UNHCR Code of Conduct: Nine Principles Guiding Personal and Professional Conduct

1	Treat all Persons of Concern fairly, and with respect and dignity
2	Uphold the integrity of UNHCR, by ensuring that my personal and professional conduct is, and is seen to be, of the highest standard
3	Perform my official duties and conduct my private affairs in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, thereby preserving and enhancing public confidence in UNHCR
4	Contribute to building a harmonious workplace based on team spirit, mutual respect and understanding
5	Promote the safety, health and welfare of all UNHCR staff as a necessary condition for effective and consistent performance
6	Safeguard and make responsible use of the information and resources to which I have access by reason of my employment with UNHCR
7	Prevent, oppose and combat all exploitation and abuse of Persons of Concern
8	Refrain from any involvement in criminal or unethical activities, activities that contravene human rights, or activities that compromise the image and interests of UNHCR
9	Refrain from any form of harassment, discrimination, physical or verbal abuse, intimidation or favoritism in the workplace

https://www.unhcr.org/dach/wp-content/uploads/sites/27/2017/04/CH-UNHCR_Handbook-on-Protection-of-Stateless-Persons.pdf

- Guidelines on Statelessness No. 4: Ensuring Every Child's Right to Acquire a Nationality through Articles 1-4 of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, 21 December 2012, HCR/GS/12/04
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/50d460c72.html
- Background Note on Gender Equality, Nationality Laws and Statelessness 2019, 8 March 2019
  https://www.refworld.org/docid/5c8120847.html
- The Sustainable Development Goals and Addressing Statelessness, March 2017
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/58b6e3364.html

Child Protection and Youth

- Global Protection Cluster (GPC), Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2012
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/5211dc124.html
- UNHCR Child Protection resources and guidance
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/120177
- Child Protection Coordination Handbook, CPAoR, 2016
  http://www.cpaor.net/Child-Protection-Coordination
- Child Protection Issue Briefs, UNHCR
  http://www.refworld.org/childprotectionissuebriefs.html
- Child Protection and Education in Emergencies, GPC 2016
  http://cpaor.net/Child-Protection-and-Education-in-Emergencies
- A Framework for the Protection of Children, UNHCR, 2012
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/4fe875682.html
- Field Handbook for Implementation of UNHCR's Guidelines for Determining the Best Interests of the Child, UNHCR, 2011
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/4e4a57d02.html
- Beyond Detention: A Global Strategy to support governments to end the detention of asylum-seekers and refugees, 2014-2019, UNHCR, 2014
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/536b564d4.html
- Options Paper 1: Options for governments on care arrangements and alternatives to detention for children and families, UNHCR, 2015
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/5523e8d94.html
- UNHCR Guidelines on Determining the Best Interests of the Child, UNHCR, 2008 (updated version being reviewed)
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/48480c342.html
- Core Actions for Refugee Youth, UNHCR, 2016
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/59dc80184.html

SGBV Resources

- Guidelines for Integrating GBV Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing Risks, Promoting Resilience, and Aiding Recovery, IASC, 2015
  https://gbvguidelines.org/IASC-GBV-Guidelines
- UNHCR, Action against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: An Updated Strategy, 2011
  https://www.refworld.org/docid/4e01ffeb2.html
- UNHCR, SGBV against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displace Persons. Guidelines for Prevention and Response, 2003
  http://www.unhcr.org/protection/women/3f696bcc4/sexual-gender-based-violence-against-refugees-returnees-internally-displaced.html
- GBVIMS Tools and Resources
  http://www.gbvims.com/
- GBV Responders network (resources and lessons learned)
  https://gbvresponders.org/
- Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies
  https://www.calltoactiongbv.com/
- GBV AoR Tools and Resources
  http://gbvaor.net/resource-topics/core-toolbox/
- GBV AoR Media Guidelines for Reporting on Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Contexts
  http://gbvaor.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GBV-Media-Guidelines-Final-Provisional-25July2013.pdf
- Working with Men and Boy Survivors of SGBV in Forced Displacement, UNHCR, July 2012
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/5006aa262.html
- Safe from the Start: Reducing Risks - Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies
  http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/575a83dd5.html
- SGBV Prevention and Response – Training package, Oct 2016
  http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/583577ed4

Statelessness

- Global Action Plan to End Statelessness, 4 November 2014
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/545b47d64.html
- Good Practices Papers on Actions 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 9 of the Global Action Plan
  http://www.refworld.org/statelessness.html
- Handbook on Protection of Stateless Persons under the 1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless **Persons**, 2014

1.3.3   Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

> **DEFINITIONS**
>
> **Sexual Exploitation** means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.
>
> **Sexual Abuse** means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Managing Conduct in Relation to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Since the power balance between humanitarian workers and Persons of Concern is inherently unequal, humanitarian workers must avoid any action (suggested, implied or perceived) that would suggest that a sexual act might be required or invited by themselves or others, for protection, material assistance or services. Acts of sexual exploitation and abuse have been committed by humanitarian workers, officials in positions of authority such as border guards, and other Persons of Concern with the power to provide or withhold food, shelter, education or medical care. Women, girls and boys are particularly vulnerable, and all humanitarian organizations must ensure that mechanisms are in place to prevent and sanction sexual exploitation and abuse during an emergency.

This includes having in place, highlighting and upholding policies on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, along with relevant sections of an organization's Code of Conduct. All personnel of humanitarian organizations must refrain from engaging in or encouraging in any way sexual exploitation or abuse, report sexual exploitation or abuse and refer victims/survivors to the relevant services. Humanitarian organizations also need to ensure that Persons of Concern are aware of their rights and entitlements. They should know that they are entitled to assistance without providing any form of sexual favor and that demands for such favors are strictly prohibited.

Core Principles Governing Humanitarian Workers' Conduct in Relation to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse [13]

The following principles should be observed and reflected in relevant policies and/or Codes of Conduct to ensure that Persons of Concern are treated with dignity and respect, and that minimum standards of behavior are observed:

1. Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are grounds for termination of employment.

2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defense.

3. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favors or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behavior is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that Persons of Concern are entitled to.

4. Sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and Persons of Concern are strongly discouraged as they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.

5. Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns about sexual exploitation and abuse by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, s/he must report this via established agency reporting mechanisms.

6. Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse. Managers have additional responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.

Persons of Concern should also know how to safely report sexual exploitation and abuse when it occurs. It is crucial to put in place an effective and anonymous complaints mechanism, which enables individuals to report instances of sexual exploitation and abuse easily and safely. All such complaints should be reported to and overseen by appropriate senior management in a Partner organization (or the Inspector General's Office in UNHCR) either directly or by the person to whom the incident is reported. Further guidance on the process for reporting and investigating misconduct including incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse is set out in Section 1.3.6 below.

UNHCR adopts a **zero-tolerance approach to incidents of Sexual Abuse or Exploitation by its own personnel, volunteers or contractors, and those of its Partner organizations**. It will not partner with organizations that fail to address Sexual Exploitation and Abuse through appropriate preventative, investigation and

1. UNHCR staff and Partners are more likely to be alerted to protection problems in a timely fashion if a relationship of trust is nurtured.

2. It ensures that activities are appropriate and of direct relevance to the communities and will meet their various protection needs.

3. It reduces opportunities for exploitation and abuse.

4. It generates an attitudinal change whereby Persons of Concern are at the center of decisions, responses and solutions, and their skills and contributions are recognized.

5. It improves UNHCR and its Partners' accountability to Persons of Concern through participatory monitoring and evaluation.

6. It improves UNHCR's and Partners' ability to reach out to groups that are otherwise not able to access UNHCR services, including marginalized groups and groups in remote locations

It provides the basis for sustainable responses and durable solutions

- It improves understanding of the local context and links protection interventions with development initiatives and government structures.

- It focuses on solutions in partnership with the community from the start, thus reducing the potential for protracted displacement situations.

- By involving all members of the community, it leads to greater effectiveness and long-term sustainability of programming.

RESOURCES

Protection Resources

- Protection Mainstreaming Toolkit, GPC, 2017
  http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/protection_mainstreaming
- UNHCR Protection Manual
  http://www.refworld.org/protectionmanual.html
- Global Protection Cluster: Tools and guidance
  http://www.gpc/guidance-and-tools
- Community based protection
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/47da54722.html
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/5209f0b64.html
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/91605
- Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons, UNHCR, December 2007
  http://www.unhcr.org/4c2355229.html

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[13] Based on an extract from the Plan of Action of The Report of the IASC Task Force on PSEA

✓ Community work requires expertise and training

✓ Supportive supervision is essential

✓ Focus on protection

✓ Promote sustainability from the start

✓ Support and work with existing community and national structures

✓ Develop an advocacy strategy for sustainable change

✓ Give attention to evaluation and reporting

Benefits of a Community-Based Approach [83]

It strengthens the capacity and autonomy of individuals and communities

▪ Community members take responsibility for identifying and analyzing protection risks and jointly developing protection strategies, assistance responses and solutions.

▪ It recognizes and supports the ways Persons of Concern protect themselves through social networks and community resources while ensuring individual rights.

It promotes respect for rights and the accountability of leadership structures

▪ Community members see that their systems are recognized, reinforced and respected and community ownership is supported.

▪ Persons of Concern learn about their rights and support change through identifying and addressing practices that violate human rights, particularly in relation to women and children.

▪ It clarifies roles and responsibilities in relation to rights-holders and duty-bearers, including humanitarian agencies and governments.

It underpins age, gender and diversity mainstreaming

▪ It improves understanding of the relations between women and men, boys and girls, and the diverse groups within the community.

▪ It requires participation of all groups in decision-making processes and representative structures that respect the rights of individuals.

▪ It provides for age, gender and diversity analyses of the situation and proposed responses, and for targeted action to address discrimination.

▪ It recognizes all groups in the community as contributors to their own protection and seeks the full participation of marginalized groups in the community including persons with disabilities, minority groups and older persons

It improves the quality and effectiveness of UNHCR and Partner operations

corrective action. Such failures also constitute grounds for termination of any Agreement it has with them.

Inter-agency Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

The UN Secretary-General's Bulletin, **Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)**, entered into force in the UN on 15 October 2003 and was formally adopted by UNHCR in November 2003. The need for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) policies became evident after reports confirmed that humanitarian workers had been responsible for acts of sexual exploitation and abuse.

As part of prevention, training and information campaigns are recommended for all humanitarian workers and Persons of Concern to raise awareness and ensure there is clear understanding of the gravity of sexual exploitation and abuse and the measures that will be taken to prevent it, or deal with any incidents should they occur. The **IASC Task Team on Accountability to Affected Populations/ Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse** has produced a range of training and information materials on PSEA (see the Resources box at the end of this section).

The UN Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse involving Implementing Partners was adopted on 27 April 2018. UNHCR country offices are requested to assess the PSEA capacity of partners based on the standards which are detailed in the "Checklist for assessment of the PASE capacity of partners (see the Resources box at the end of the section). Partners are expected to jointly identify risks and challenges of the PSEA and find mitigating measures.

1.3.4 Protecting Against Fraud and Corruption

The obligation to combat **fraud** and **corruption** applies to all humanitarian organizations and workers, within their respective organizations and externally. Fraud and corruption can arise in all aspects of humanitarian operations. **Figure 5** overleaf illustrates common fraud and corruption practices that can arise.

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[83] A Community Based Approach in UNHCR Operations, UNHCR, 2012

Figure 5: Potential Fraud and Corruption Practices [14]

Program support	**Supply chain Management**	• Procurement, Transport, Asset management • Contract execution, renewal or modification
	Human Resources	• Recruitment based on biased, falsified or fabricated information • Unfair practices or bias in personnel management • Conflict of interest • Bribery, extortion, and coercion of staff • Staff entitlement fraud
	Finance	• Accounting fraud • Improper asset valuation and asset misappropriation • False invoices or receipts • Payroll and employee expense fraud • Physical cash, money laundering
	Communication and IT	• Unauthorized access and use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) systems and data
Program cycle	**Needs assessment and resource allocation**	• Corruption and fraud risks in project location and resource allocation decisions • Overstated reporting of needs and diversion of funds
	Partners and local intermediaries	• Biased and government or donor influence on Partner selection • Resource stewardship by Partners • Partners and procurement • Insufficient or ineffective Partner monitoring
	Targeting Persons of Concern	• Beneficiary selection criteria • Misrepresentation and resource diversion • External schemes
	Distribution fraud	• Unauthorized changes of entitlement and diversion of resources • Misappropriation and diversion of funds in Cash-Based Interventions programs
	M&E	• Fictitious, false, or incomplete reports • Fraudulent information from Persons of Concern

Human trafficking

Trafficking in human beings is a serious crime and a gross violation of human rights. Women and children are particularly vulnerable to trafficking and the forcible or deceptive recruitment of women and children for the purposes of prostitution, sexual exploitation, slave labor or adoption is a form of gender-related violence. Trafficked women and children can be susceptible to serious reprisals by traffickers after their escape or upon return, as well as to a real possibility of being re-trafficked or subjected to severe family or community ostracism and discrimination. In certain settings, unaccompanied or separated children, are especially vulnerable to trafficking.

UNHCR's Guidelines on International Protection set out its involvement with the issue of trafficking[81]: UNHCR and its Partners have a responsibility to ensure that Persons of Concern do not fall victim to trafficking and that individuals who have been trafficked or are at risk of persecution are provided with appropriate protection.

Further guidance on mitigating the risks and responding to victims of human trafficking can be found in the **UNHCR Manual on Security of Persons of Concern**.

7.2.4 Community Based Protection

Community-based protection empowers communities to obtain their rights safely and with dignity. Using community-based protection, displaced communities and humanitarian actors can jointly identify a community's protection risks, explore their causes and effects, and decide how to prioritize the prevention and response to those risks, while taking the skills and capacities of Persons of Concern into account. UNCHR and its Partners should adopt a community-based approach which recognizes Persons of Concern as partners and enables communities to meaningfully and substantively engage in all aspects of programs that affect them.

Some of the key lessons learnt from UNHCR's experience with community-based approaches[82] to protection include:

- ✓ Community-based protection is a process, not a project
- ✓ Select community counterparts with care
- ✓ Communities are well placed to identify their protection challenges, but external partners also have an important role to play
- ✓ Effective protection interventions require accurate diagnosis
- ✓ Communities already employ protection measures

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[14] Based on content from the Handbook on Fraud and Corruption Prevention, Detection and Reporting in UNHCR, 2017

[81] Guidelines on International Protection: The application of Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees to victims of trafficking and persons at risk of being trafficked
[82] Understanding Community Based Protection, UNHCR, 2013
http://www.refworld.org/docid/5209f0b64.html

relations. In consultation with the community, strategies to address inequalities must be put in place.

- **Mitigating SGBV** refers to taking proactive measures to reduce risk of exposure to SGBV across all areas of programming. All actors are required to apply a Do No Harm approach.

- **Responding to SGBV** refers to the provision of multi-sectoral response services and assistance to all survivors of SGBV in order to save lives, improve health including mental health and psycho social support, ensure safety, provide access to legal assistance and justice and meet immediate basic needs. A survivor-centered approach should be adopted to ensure dignity and respect, safety, confidentiality, informed consent and non-discrimination. This helps to promote a survivor's recovery and reinforces his/her capacity to make decisions about possible interventions.

- **In particular, mainstreaming SGBV** prevention and mitigation strategies are essential to mitigate risk of harm and exposure to SGBV through humanitarian programming.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and SGBV: Assistance and support for victims/survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse is provided through SGBV services, programmes, networks and community mechanisms that are appropriate to the given context and in a manner that does not isolate or stigmatize victims/survivors of sexual exploitation and abuse. SGBV standard operating procedures and referral pathways must include appropriate considerations for preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse. SGBV standard operating procedures and referral pathways must include appropriate considerations for preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Protection objectives in relation to SGBV:

- To uphold the human rights of all Persons of Concern.

- To ensure the implementation of prevention programming that is transformative and reduces gender inequality and norms that perpetuate SGBV.

- To take proactive measures to mitigate known and anticipated risks that contribute to SGBV and to ensure all actors apply a Do No Harm approach and monitor for unintended negative consequences of their programming.

- To ensure that all SGBV survivors can confidentially report incidents e.g. through hotlines, and access timely and non-discriminatory services and support, including medical, psychosocial, legal and safety.

- To address the specific protection needs of persons at heightened risk of SGBV.

- To encourage and enable Persons of Concern to actively engage in community-based protection networks and initiatives to address SGBV.

There are several factors that may cause individuals to commit a fraudulent act. In general, if the following three components (often referred to as the "fraud triangle") are combined, there is a higher likelihood they will lead to a fraudulent behavior:

- **Incentives and pressures** (e.g., the need for money or prestige, or to demonstrate results);
- **Perceived opportunity** (e.g., weak control might lead the perpetrator to believe that she/he will not be detected); and
- **Rationalization**, for instance the perpetrator considers her/himself to be undervalued in the organization and consequently rationalizes the fraudulent behavior (e.g., "I'm underpaid and everyone else does it").

Measures to Prevent and Detect Fraud and Corruption

Effective fraud prevention, detection and response mechanisms help to reduce the risk of fraud and corruption and guard against substantial monetary losses and reputational damage. **Prevention** encompasses policies, procedures, training, and communication that prevent fraud from occurring, whereas **detection** focuses on activities and techniques that promptly recognize whether fraud has occurred or is occurring. Different interventions can help reduce the risk. For example, strong internal controls will reduce the perception that fraud can be committed without detection.

Under a Partnership Agreement, UNHCR's Partners are required to respect relevant local laws and not engage in any form of corrupt practices, including extortion, fraud, or bribery (refer to Section 5.1.5 for guidance on the Partnership Agreement obligations in relation to Ethics and Professional Conduct). They must have adequate procedures in place to prevent, detect and address any incidents of fraud and corruption that arise.

Furthermore, the Partnership Agreement includes provisions for requesting Partners to strengthen measures for preventing, reporting and investigating allegations of fraud and corruption if they are deemed to be inadequate. Training materials are also available to support Partners in enhancing their capacity to prevent fraud and corruption (see the Partner Portal and links in the **Resources box** at the end of this section).

Tips for Preventing and Detecting Fraud and Corruption

✓ Emphasize a zero-tolerance principle at all levels;

✓ Make all staff aware and provide regular training, communication and policy guidance about what constitutes fraud and corruption;

✓ Encourage free and open communication regarding ethical behavior and ensure a supportive whistleblowing policy and associated complaints mechanism is in place;

✓ Put clear levels of delegated authority in place and adhere to them;

✓ Adopt appropriate procedures, risk assessment and controls for the selection and recruitment of partners, vendors, contractors and staff;

✓ Ensure that there is a sufficient level of segregation of duties so that no one individual can own and/or execute a process end-to-end;

✓ Implement controls and assign appropriate staff (in number and seniority) to monitor them effectively;

✓ Identify and assess fraud and corruption risks at the program planning stage and develop appropriate prevention and mitigation measures;

✓ Closely monitor procurement practice to ensure all applicable policies (internal, donor) are adhered to and exceptions are identified and addressed;

✓ Consider periodic staff rotations for staff who perform the same function to prevent opportunities for collusion.

The UNHCR **Strategic Framework for the Prevention of Fraud and Corruption** provides a template for use in assessing and identifying measures for mitigating the risk of fraud and corruption amongst staff. The **ICVA and InterAction member standards** also provide a useful benchmark for Partners in assessing financial system strength.

UNHCR's 2017 **Policy on Addressing Fraud Committed by Persons of Concern** outline measures towards preventing, detecting and responding to fraud by Persons of Concern. The Policy applies to fraud by all Persons of Concern across protection processes, including registration, status determination, and assistance until solutions are achieved. Each UNHCR office is expected to designate an Anti-Fraud Focal Point who is responsible for ensuring that measures to prevent, detect and respond to fraud by Persons of Concern are in place. Partners should know who the Anti-Fraud Focal Point in UNHCR is and liaise accordingly for purposes of capacity building as needed and to refer cases of suspected fraud for appropriate intervention.

The Policy promotes strengthened internal processes and capacities so as to prevent fraud from occurring in the first place. Sanctions in response to fraud committed by Persons of Concern can only be applied following the approval of UNHCR's Headquarters through the Division of International Protection. It is important to note that, in addition to other conditions, any sanctions in response to fraud committed by Persons of Concern cannot affect life-saving assistance such as food and health care.

This can lead to harmful coping strategies, such as transactional sex, child marriage, forced recruitment in criminal and armed groups, and exploitation in the labor market.

Following UNHCR's Global Refugee Youth Consultations in 2015-2016, participating youth crafted a framework for action, the **Core Actions for Refugee Youth**, which provide a protection and development framework for young people, which is in line with and complements the child protection "systems" approach.

7.2.3 Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is a widespread public health and human rights issue that can affect women, men, girls and boys. Addressing SGBV is a core component of UNHCR's protection mandate and is considered a life-saving priority in all humanitarian settings. It must be assumed that SGBV is happening, therefore the need for prevention and mitigating measures, and it is not necessary to have evidence before establishing programming.

SGBV can take place at any stage in the displacement cycle and during humanitarian crises many factors can exacerbate SGBV-related risks. Persons with specific needs (see Section 4.3) can be at heightened risk of experiencing SGBV in any type of displacement. UNHCR promotes inclusive service provision for all Persons of Concern and ensures a rights-based and community-based approach in programming.

DEFINITIONS

SGBV refers to any act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. SGBV is an abuse of power that inflicts harm on the survivor, encompassing threats of violence and coercion. It may be physical, emotional, psychological, and/or sexual in nature. It can involve the denial of resources or restriction of access to services. It includes a range of new and emerging forms of violence, such as threats, harassment, stalking, sexual bullying, and abuse that occur on-line or through electronic media and communication technologies. It comprises of violence committed by family and friends, by members of the community, unknown assailants, or that is perpetrated or condoned by the state, non-state actors, or institutions.

Tackling SGBV requires that the following be addressed through a comprehensive multi-sectoral strategy:

- **Preventing SGBV** generally refers to preventing SGBV from first occurring by addressing the root causes of gender inequality and unequal power

UNHCR's Handbook on Protection of Stateless Persons, provides guidance on how to interpret the definition of a stateless person, how to establish statelessness determination procedures and the status to be afforded to persons determined to be stateless.

Given the significant impact that statelessness has on development of communities and individuals, partnerships with development actors are becoming increasingly important for UNHCR. Addressing statelessness as a development issue may, for example, help to mitigate risks of forced displacement or security risks that can arise from leaving a section of society in a protracted situation of exclusion.

7.2.2 Child Protection and Youth

Situations of forced displacement and emergency have devastating effects on children's lives, and boys and girls are uniquely vulnerable due to their age and social status. They are at a greater risk of abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, trafficking or forced recruitment into armed forces or armed groups. They may also have witnessed or experienced violent acts and/or been separated from their families

UNHCR is committed to strengthening national State and community-based child protection systems and to advocating that refugee, asylum-seeking, returnee, internally displaced and stateless children have access to and are included in the child protection system. UNHCR's approach to child protection is described in **A Framework for the Protection of Children**, and has 6 goals:

1. Girls and boys are safe where they live, learn and play
2. Children's participation and capacity are integral to their protection
3. Girls and boys have access to child-friendly procedures
4. Girls and boys obtain legal documentation
5. Girls and boys with specific needs receive targeted support
6. Girls and boys achieve durable solutions in their best interests

UNHCR seeks to strengthen systems and mechanisms that contribute to the overall protection of children, avoiding the tendency to react and respond to individual needs or focus on 'categories' of children. Working holistically with the whole 'system' also highlights the actions for duty bearers at all levels - family, community, national and international actors – in mitigating and responding to the risks faced by children, as well as ensuring girls and boys are fully involved in matters that affect them.

Conflict and forced displacement frequently force adolescents and youth to take on new roles and responsibilities beyond their years to try to meet their own and their families' basic needs. For those living in conflict-affected areas, displacement can lead to an increased sense of marginalization, where a perceived lack of prospects for the future and inability to influence their own lives can heighten protection risks.

1.3.5 Accountability

Accountability – is the process of using power responsibly, taking account of, and being held accountable by, different stakeholders, and primarily those who are affected by the exercise of such power.[15]

Being accountable goes beyond identifying and formally committing to codes, principles and standards. Truly accountable organizations are based on a 'culture of accountability' which values, encourages and builds on the views and capacities of its stakeholders, especially those with little or no formal power. In this way, it listens to, learns from and explains its intentions and performance in an open and transparent manner, to all those significantly affected by its actions.

Humanitarian organizations including UNHCR and its Partners are accountable to:

- the **affected populations** that they seek to assist for the standards of performance and conduct;
- their **donors and other supporters** for the funding and resources that are entrusted to them; and
- their **staff, partners and other stakeholders** for the way in which they engage and work with them.

What is Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)?

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) - can be understood as 'an active commitment by humanitarian actors and organizations to use power responsibly by taking account of, giving account to, and being held to account by, the people they seek to assist'.[16]

It requires that humanitarian actors:

- involve Persons of Concern in key decisions and processes that affect them;
- facilitate the meaningful participation of Persons of Concern in all phases of the program cycle;
- maintain transparency through continuous communication, consultation and sharing of information; and

- maintain mechanisms through which Persons of Concern can complain if they feel that the help they receive is not adequate or has unwelcome consequences.

AAP is a central element in UNHCR's **Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) policy** and its approach to protecting, assisting and finding solutions for Persons of Concern.

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[15] As defined by the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability, 2014
[16] As defined in the UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies, 2016

IASC Task Team on Accountability to Affected Populations and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (AAP/PSEA)

The Task Force on Accountability to Affected Populations was created in 2012. Its remit was extended in 2014 to cover Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. The objectives of the Team are to:

- Foster a culture of accountability and PSEA at all levels of the humanitarian system.
- Encourage institutionalization of AAP and PSEA within humanitarian organizations, including local and national NGOs, INGOs, Red Cross Red Crescent movement and UN Agencies.
- Support operationalization of AAP and PSEA at collective level as well as individual agency level.

In Nov 2017, the IASC Principals endorsed four Commitments on Accountability to Affected Populations and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, set out in **Figure 6** below[17].

Figure 6: Commitments on Accountability to Affected Populations and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (AAP/PSEA)

LEADERSHIP	Demonstrate commitment to AAP and PSEA by enforcing, institutionalizing and integrating AAP approaches in the Humanitarian Program Cycle and strategic planning processes, and appropriate management systems to solicit, hear and act upon the voices and priorities of affected people.
PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIP	Adopt agency mechanisms that support coordinated people-centered approaches enabling the affected population to participate in decisions that will impact their lives, well-being, dignity and protection. Adopt equitable partnerships with local actors to build upon their relationships with communities.
INFORMATION, FEEDBACK AND ACTION	Adopt participatory agency mechanisms that inform and listen to communities, address feedback and lead to corrective action. Establish and support appropriate mechanisms for reporting and handling of SEA-related complaints.

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[17] https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/2017 Commitments AAP and PSEA

7.2 Protection

Further information on UNHCR's protection mandate is given in Section 1.2.1 in this Handbook and guidance on protecting and assisting individuals with specific needs or protection vulnerabilities is covered in Section 4.2.

7.2.1. Statelessness

Millions of stateless people around the world continue to suffer the hardship and indignity of being denied a nationality. Stateless people are often denied enjoyment of a range of rights and services, including employment, education and health services. Statelessness can also contribute to political and social tensions.

Statelessness occurs for a variety of reasons, including discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or religious belief; the emergence of new States and transfers of territory between States; and lack of safeguards in and conflicts between nationality laws. The exclusion and denial of rights to large populations because they are stateless can impair the economic and social development of States.

Under the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness, UNHCR encourages a wide range of actors, including international agencies, regional organizations, civil society and stateless persons themselves to play an active role in supporting governments to implement the 10 Actions of the Global Action Plan, which are:

1. Resolve existing major situations of statelessness
2. Ensure that no child is born stateless
3. Remove gender discrimination from nationality laws
4. Prevent denial. Loss or deprivation of nationality on discriminatory grounds
5. Prevent statelessness in cases of State succession
6. Grant protection status to stateless migrants and facilitate their naturalization
7. Ensure birth registration for the prevention of statelessness
8. Issue nationality documentation to those with an entitlement to it
9. Accede to the UN Statelessness Conventions
10. Improve quantitative and qualitative data on stateless populations

Preventing statelessness from being passed down from generation to generation is critical to the goal of ending statelessness. UNHCR has published guidance on **Articles 1 – 4 of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness**, which principally concern acquisition of nationality by children who would otherwise be left stateless. These guidelines are intended to serve as an aid to correctly interpreting and implementing these provisions. In 2016, UNHCR and UNICEF also jointly launched a Coalition on Every Child's Right to a Nationality.

- Achieving synergies with national development planning
- Planning on the basis of data, information and analysis r
- Updating protection and programme management
- Strengthening community-based protection
- Adapting service delivery
- Developing settlement and shelter responses
- Enabling refugees to build sustainable livelihoods
- Maximizing mobility
- Engaging with national authorities
- Creating adapted partnership models

RESOURCES

Camps and Settlements

- UNHCR Policy on alternatives to camps, 2014
  http://www.unhcr.org/5422b8f09.html
- Camp Management Toolkit, NRC
  http://cmtoolkit.org/chapters/view/about-camp-management

Urban Settings

- UNHCR Policy on refugee protection and solutions in urban areas, 2009
  http://www.unhcr.org/protection-urban-areas
- Home Sweet Home: Housing Practices and Tools that Support Durable Solutions for Urban IDPs, 2015
  www.internal-displacement.org
- The Implementation of UNHCR's Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas Global Survey – 2012
  http://www.unhcr.org/516d658c9.pdf
- Good Practices for Urban Refugees
  http://www.urbangoodpractices.org/

RESULTS	Measure AAP and PSEA related results at the agency and collective level, including through standards such as the Core Humanitarian Standard, the Minimum Operating Standards on PSEA and others.

1.3.6 Reporting and Investigating Misconduct

Reporting Misconduct

If a Partner staff member has concerns or suspicions about the conduct of an individual(s), whether a member of their own staff, or a contractor, supplier or staff of another organization (except UNHCR), they are expected to follow their own organizational procedures for reporting allegations of misconduct or abuse.

If the allegations are serious (including but not limited sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud and criminal behavior), this must be reported immediately and confidentially to the **Inspector General's Office Investigation Service**[18]. The Partner will still be expected to deal with the case according to its own rules and procedures, provided it has the necessary capacity. However, the Inspector General's Office and the Partner need to consult on the most appropriate course of action to take.

If staff from a Partner organization has concerns or suspicions about possible misconduct by a member of UNHCR personnel and Affiliated Workforce, regardless of their position, such concerns should be reported directly to the UNHCR's Inspector General's Office.

There will be mixed situations where staff of a Partner or UNHCR and refugees are suspected to be involved or collude in the commission of fraud or corruption. While the Partner is expected to deal with the former situation according to their internal procedures, where the mixed situation involves a UNHCR staff member, such concerns or suspicions should be reported directly to the UNHCR's Inspector General's Office regardless of the level of information surrounding the suspicions.

Process for Investigations

It is important that any form of investigation is conducted by competent and experienced investigators in an independent, impartial and confidential manner that protects the safety of all concerned. The focus of an investigation is to:

- Find out if a staff member has breached one of the organization's policies

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[18] The Inspector General's Office provides independent oversight of UNHCR's activities and operations, including activities undertaken by Partners. It conducts ad-hoc inspections and investigations into misconduct.

- Recommend appropriate and proportionate disciplinary action

- Protect individuals from being abused, exploited or harmed

- Identify aspects of program delivery or performance that increase risks of abuse or exploitation by staff.

Figure 7 below **s**ets out the IASC guiding principles for investigations into Sexual Exploitation and Abuse[19] which are also broadly applicable to any form of investigation.

Figure 7: Guiding Principles for Investigations into Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

THOROUGHNESS	- investigations must be conducted in a diligent, complete and focused manner.
CONFIDENTIALITY	- complainants, witnesses and the subject of allegations have a right to confidentiality other than in certain exceptional circumstances.
SAFETY PARAMOUNT	- the safety and welfare need of the victim/survivor and/or complainant/witness are paramount.
COMPETENT, RESPONSIBLE, INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATORS	- people conducting investigations and preparing reports should be responsible, independent and have received training.
IMPARTIALITY	- investigations must be conducted in a fair and equitable way. Investigators must be free of any influence that could impair their judgement.
OBJECTIVITY	- evidence to support and refute the allegation must be gathered and reported in an unbiased and independent manner.
TIMELINES	- investigations must be conducted and reported in a timely way.
ACCURACY AND DOCUMENTATION	- investigation reports and their conclusions must be supported by adequate documentation.

In 2012, UNHCR's Inspector General's Office developed an **Investigation Resource Manual for NGO Partners** to:

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[19] From IASC Task Force on PSEA - Model Complaints and Investigation Procedures and Guidance Related to Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation, 2004

- A camp's life cycle has 3 phases: set-up, care and maintenance and closure.

- The Camp Coordination and Camp Management cluster does not promote camps. It seeks to end encampment through more durable solutions.

- Government authorities, humanitarian agencies, community volunteers, private sector and civil society stakeholders will be involved in the running of a camp, together with the camp population and host community.

7.1.2 Out of camp settings

Millions of Persons of Concern have settled peacefully outside camps in both rural and urban areas, living on land or in housing that they rent, own or occupy informally or in hosting arrangements with communities or families. Unlike in a camp, this presents opportunities to integrate, generate income and build a better future. But it also presents similar risks to those people living in camps, as Persons of Concern often live in the poorest areas and may not have legal documents that are recognized. They may also be vulnerable to exploitation, arrest and detention and have difficulties in finding safe livelihoods.

Alternatives to camps are achieved when UNHCR and its Partners are able to ensure that refugees are protected and assisted effectively and are able to achieve solutions without resorting to the establishment of camps and when existing camps are phased out or transformed into sustainable settlements. They should ultimately be more sustainable and cost-effective, because they harness the potential of refugees, rationalize service delivery and allow for more targeted assistance to those most in need. However, achieving these objectives may require increased early investments and greater protection outreach and monitoring.

UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps

UNHCR's Policy on Alternatives to Camps[80] incorporates its earlier urban refugee policy commitments to refugee rights, state responsibility, partnership, needs assessment, equity, community orientation, interaction with refugees and, importantly, self-reliance. As with the urban refugee policy, UNHCR can only achieve the objectives of the policy on alternatives to camps with the engagement and support of all partners and stakeholders, and involves working along several lines of action:

- Consulting with refugees and host communities

- Promoting an enabling protection environment

- Developing advocacy strategies

- Reinforcing contingency planning and emergency preparedness

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[80] See http://www.unhcr.org/5422b8f09.html

Chapter 7: **Further Technical Guidance**

Chapter 7 covers some of the key technical and thematic aspects of UNHCR operations that are of specific relevance to its Partners.

The main purpose of this chapter is to outline the principles and priorities that guide UNHCR's work in these areas and to provide pointers and links to more comprehensive policy guidance, strategy documents, detailed procedures and good practice.

7.1 Operational Settings

7.1.1 Camp-based Settings

The location in which refugees and other Persons of Concern reside is often determined by the host government and, in some cases, the preference of Persons of Concern themselves. UNHCR and its Partners are responsible for advocating for sheltering provisions that meet the needs of Persons of Concern and are in their best interests.

Wherever possible, opportunities for settlement other than camps must be pursued. In the **New York Declaration**, Member States recognized that refugee camps "should be the exception," and a temporary measure in cases of emergency. Instead, refugees should be allowed to live among host communities. Helping refugees to thrive, not just survive, reduces the risk of protracted stays and lessens refugees' dependence on humanitarian aid.

UNHCR's **Policy on Alternatives to Camps**[79] is to avoid the establishment of refugee camps, wherever possible, while pursuing alternatives to camps that ensure refugees are protected and assisted effectively and enabled to achieve solutions.

When camps must be established or already exist, UNHCR and its Partners in camp management should seek opportunities to phase them out or transform them into sustainable settlements at the earliest possible stage. Key considerations for supporting Persons of Concern in camp-based settings include:

- Camps are an option of last resort. They offer temporary protection and assistance in situations of displacement.
- Achieving a long-term solution is key to ending displacement and must be considered from the beginning of a camp-based response to displacement.

- strengthen partnership and cooperation on investigations; and
- assist NGO Partners to develop, adapt or improve their own policies and guidelines in the areas of accountability, complaints and investigation.

There are several approaches that can be taken to managing and undertaking investigations:

1. **Partner-led:** Partners are expected to conduct their own investigations into allegations of abuse or misconduct by their staff or contractors, where they have the organizational capacity to do so. The box below provides an overview of the minimum investigation standards and procedures that they are expected to have in place. Or at the very least, a plan to develop and/or improve them, in order to take effective preventive and investigative action.

2. **UNHCR-led:** Investigations of allegations against UNHCR staff members are carried out by the UNHCR Investigation Service within the UNHCR's Inspector General's Office.

3. **Joint investigations:** A joint investigation may be conducted by UNHCR and a Partner NGO when staff of both organizations have been implicated in an allegation of abuse or misconduct, or if the Partner does not have sufficient capacity to undertake an investigation into the conduct of one of its own staff or contractors. A joint investigation team will be assembled which may include staff from UNHCR and/or the Partner, or independent external investigators.

Minimum Standards and Procedures Expected of UNHCR Partners in Managing and Conducting Investigations [20]

✓ Organizational Code of Conduct (refer to Section 1.3.2)

✓ Complaints and feedback mechanism and investigation guidelines

✓ Procedures for conducting a joint investigation when warranted

✓ Policies on confidentiality, data protection and disclosure (refer to Section 2.2.5)

✓ Policies on Protection against Retaliation from Partners Personnel (Whistleblowing Policy)

✓ Disciplinary system, including disciplinary proceedings and applicable disciplinary and administrative measures, such as recovery of assets

✓ Investigative capacity, including trained investigators or access to support from other agencies, UNHCR, or an investigation roster or pool.

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[20] From the Project Partnership Agreement (UNHCR with Non-governmental and other not-for-profit Partners) Appendix 3: Standards of Managing Misconduct

A Partner organization should maintain close cooperation with UNHCR regarding the planning and implementation of any investigation and the administrative actions being taken. UNHCR should be provided with a complete copy of the investigation report, or a summary if appropriate to safeguard confidentiality.

RESOURCES

Humanitarian Principles and Standards

- Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief
https://www.icrc.org/CoC

- OCHA Guidance on Humanitarian Principles v1, 2010:
http://www.unocha.org/HumPrinciple

- The Sphere Project:
http://www.sphereproject.org/resources/sphere-essentials/

Accountability and Codes of Conduct

- IASC Task Force on Accountability to Affected People and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (AAP/PSEA)
https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/AAP-PSEA

- Tools to support implementation of the Commitments on AAPs
https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/Implement_AAP

- CHS Alliance FAQs on AAP https://www.chsalliance.org/files/files/FAQs-AAP.pdf

- UNHCR Age Gender Diversity policy:
http://www.unhcr.org/5aa13c0c7.pdf

- UNHCR Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes, 2010:
http://www.unhcr.org/code-conduct-notes

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

- UNHCR Emergency Handbook PSEA guidance
https://emergency.unhcr.org/psea

- PSEA Task Force
http://pseataskforce.org/

- InterAction PSEA Training resources
https://www.interaction.org/PSEA_training

- CHS Alliance PSEA guidance
https://www.chsalliance.org/what-we-do/psea

- PSEA guidance on Planning for 2020

RESOURCES

- Agreement on the Transfer of Ownership of Goods and Property
https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

- Agreement for the Receipt and Right of Use of UNHCR Assets
https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

- IPMS Guidance Note on Joint Monitoring and Partner Feedback, 4th June 2013
http://www.unhcr.org/IMPS-GN-Joint-Monitoring

- UNHCR Evaluation policy, 2016
http://www.unhcr.org/uk/research/eval/3d99a0f74/unhcrs-evaluation-policy.html

- ALNAP – general humanitarian evaluation and learning guidance and good practice resources
https://www.alnap.org/

Upon return of an asset, a joint physical verification of the condition of the asset must be conducted by UNHCR and the Partner to verify that the asset is returned in a similar condition (excluding normal tear and wear) as when it was released to the partner. Refer to Section 5.4.2 for further guidance on the management of assets.

6.4.3 Evaluation and Lessons Learned

In the context of UNHCR partnerships, an **evaluation** is an assessment of an activity, project, program, approach, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

An evaluation should provide relevant, evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes for UNHCR, the Partner and other relevant stakeholders. The overall purpose of evaluation in UNHCR is to contribute to learning and accountability and clarity on whether UNHCR is doing the right thing and in a way that will make a difference.

Any evaluation of projects undertaken through a Partnership Agreement are **decentralized** and commissioned directly by the respective UNHCR Office. They may also be linked to specific donor funding requirements. Evaluations are decided on a case by case basis and tend to review the cumulative impact of several years of policy or programming e.g. around a specific context, approach or problem.

Evaluations are carried out by independent third parties so that their design, implementation, findings and recommendations are free from influences or bias. UNHCR also commissions **centralized** evaluations managed by the Evaluation Service. These tend to focus on issues of strategic concern and include Evaluations of major UNHCR-led response to refugee emergencies.

Annual Partnership Review

As part of the joint monitoring and review of project implementation, review of the partnership arrangement between UNHCR and its Partners is done on an annual basis through the NGO-UNHCR and UNHCR-NGO Annual reviews. This is also a pre-condition for project closure, so the annual feedback and review process should be completed in line with the final project reporting timeline (see Section 6.4.1) Once feedback forms are received, UNHCR and the Partner should conduct a session to review feedback and draw out lessons learned that could be applied to improving the project or partnership.

https://intranet.unhcr.org/en/policy-guidance/administrative-instructions/unhcr-ai-2019-1.html

Misconduct and Investigations

- UNHCR Global Learn and Connect – various e-learning modules including Basics on Fraud and Corruption https://unhcr.unelearn.org/catalogue/index.php/login
- UNHCR Investigation Resource Manual http://www.unhcr.org/uk/investigation-resource-manual.html
- UNHCR Inspector General's Office http://www.unhcr.org/inspector-generals-office.html
- UNHCR How to Report Misconduct leaflet http://www.unhcr.org/report-misconduct
- Strategic Framework for the Prevention of Fraud and Corruption, July 2013 http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5433a4e54.pdf
- Various resources from MANGO on managing fraud and corruption https://www.mango.org.uk/guide/internalcontrol

Chapter 2: **Engaging with UNHCR**

Chapter 2 provides an overview of UNHCR's structure and organization with emphasis on divisions and functions of relevance to its Partners.

It sets out the organization's global priorities and ways of working, including Results Based Management and explains the mechanism for planning, budgeting and reporting across the organization.

This chapter also details UNHCR and its Partners' roles in coordination, consultation and capacity strengthening.

2.1 Structure and Organization of UNHCR

2.1.1 UNHCR Structure and Decision Making

UNHCR is governed by the United Nations General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. In November 1957 [GA Res.1166 (XII)], the Economic and Social Council established the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (ExCom) as an advisory body to UNHCR.

Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (ExCom)

The ExCom is formally independent of UNHCR and operates as a distinct body of the United Nations. ExCom membership is on the widest possible geographical basis from those States (members of the United Nations) with a demonstrated interest in, and devotion to, the solution of refugee problems. By the end of 2017, there were 101 ExCom members[21]

The ExCom's main tasks are to oversee the finances and administration of UNHCR, approve the High Commissioner's programs, and advise the High Commissioner in the exercise of his functions (mainly on protection issues). An annual session of the Excom is held every October, in Geneva.

http://www.unhcr.org/uk/executive-committee.html

In October 1995, the ExCom established a Standing Committee (A/AC.96/860) to replace former sub-committees on international protection, and administrative and financial matters. The ExCom Standing Committee meets three times a year to:

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[21] Global Appeal 2018-19 http://reporting.unhcr.org/Global_Appeal_2018

Project Liquidation

The project liquidation period is the period within which all financial commitments entered into during the project implementation period must be settled or paid by the Partner e.g. payment of suppliers, termination of contracts etc. It runs for one month from the end of the original Partnership Agreement completion date, and up to no later than 31st January of the following year (refer to Figure 47 in Section 5.5.1 for a detailed timeline for the Partnership Agreement process).

The liquidation period is not intended as a period for completion of project activities. New commitments during the project liquidation period are not permitted; if any such commitments are made, they will **not be considered as eligible expenditure**.

Extension of project implementation beyond 31 December, or of project liquidation beyond 31 January will only be authorized by the UNHCR Controller in exceptional situations. **If such an extension is needed, a No Cost Extension should be requested by the Partner in the last quarter of the project implementation period**. The agreed extension period must also be recorded in a Partnership Agreement Amendment before the end of the original Partnership Agreement implementation period, and no later than 31 December. Full details of the process for requesting a No Cost Extension can be found in Section 5.5.2**.**

6.4.2 Retention or Transfer of Goods and Property

In accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards, UNHCR is required to report accurately on all property, plant and equipment in its annual financial statements. This necessitates clarity about the numbers, condition and status of all property and assets that:

- are already owned by UNHCR;
- have been acquired by the Partner with UNHCR funds (and are therefore new assets owned by UNHCR);
- have had ownership transferred from UNHCR to its Partners; or
- have been loaned by UNHCR to its Partners under an **Agreement for the Receipt and Right of Use of UNHCR Assets**.

At the end of a project, all Goods and Property acquired or received by the Partner must be returned to UNHCR. If an asset is damaged (beyond normal tear and wear), lost or stolen, the Partner must immediately notify UNHCR in writing providing an explanation of the circumstances.

If ownership of UNHCR Goods and Property is to be transferred to the Partner on project completion, then an **Agreement on the Transfer of Ownership of Goods and Property** must be completed and approved prior to the transfer. If there are goods or property to be disposed of, including broken or damaged items, these proposals must be approved by UNHCR prior to disposal.

6.4 Project Closure

6.4.1 Project Closure with Partners

To ensure smooth closure that is neither disruptive nor impacts negatively on Persons of Concern, UNHCR and Partners need to engage in a timely process that includes final performance and financial reporting, payment reconciliation and recoveries, audit and finally, a review and evaluation of what has happened during the year.

For a typical project running from January to December, project closure takes place the following year. An indication of the pre-conditions and timescale applicable to Partners is given in **Figure 57** below**.**

Figure 57: Pre-conditions and Indicative Timeline for Project Closure

Final project reports	**Feb**	The final project reports covering finance, performance, goods and property and personnel must be submitted to UNHCR no later than 15th February of the year following project implementation. See Section 6.2.1 for full details of project reporting requirements.
Payment reconciliation and recoveries	**Feb**	Under the Partnership Agreement; Partners are required to reimburse all unspent balances at the time of submitting their final Project Financial Report. For project closure it is necessary to have a zero balance of unspent funds remaining.
Return or transfer of goods and property	**Mar**	All Goods and Property acquired or received by the Partner must be returned to UNHCR, unless an Agreements in made and signed for transfer of ownership to the Partner.
Audit reports	**April**	For project closure, audit reports should have been submitted and observations and recommendations followed up.
Annual Partnership review and feedback	**Feb-Mar**	Standard feedback forms are to be completed by UNHCR and the Partner at the end of a project
Review and lessons learned	**Feb-Mar**	Once feedback forms are received, UNHCR and the Partner should conduct a session to review feedback and draw out lessons learned that could be applied to improving the project or partnership.

- review UNHCR's activities and programs globally and regionally;
- examine thematic issues and adopt appropriate decisions and conclusions on issues proposed by the plenary, in its program of work; and
- discuss other issues that it deems of concern.

http://www.unhcr.org/uk/standing-committee-meetings.html

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHCR's Statute specifies that the High Commissioner be elected by the General Assembly, on the nomination of the Secretary-General. The High Commissioner is responsible to the General Assembly for the discharge of UNHCR's Mandate; and to the Secretary-General for the administration of UNHCR.

http://www.unhcr.org/uk/the-high-commissioner.html

Organizational Structure

UNHCR's organizational structure is based on a Global Management Accountability Framework, which sets out substantive, geographical and functional Accountabilities, Responsibilities and Authorities, which are mapped at three levels:

- Global level for Headquarters entities, including Regional Bureaus and services posted out to Budapest and Copenhagen among others;
- Regional level for Regional Offices;
- Country Offices and Sub-Offices[22].

UNHCR Headquarters

UNHCR's Headquarters is in Geneva and it has an Office at the UN Headquarters in New York. The Headquarters provides overall direction for international protection, management of field activities, and the necessary financial, technical and administrative support.

The Headquarters is organized around the Executive Office, eight Divisions, and five regional Bureaux under the direction of the **Assistant High Commissioner for Operations**.

Regional Offices

UNHCR's Regional offices coordinate and provide support to Country Offices in terms of operations, strategy, resource allocation and accountability. They may be based at headquarters or in the field.

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[22] See Global Focus for details: http://reporting.unhcr.org/operations

Field Operations

UNHCR has its main representation in the field at country level. Within each country, the official in charge is generally called the Representative (i.e. Representative of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees). The UNHCR Representative acts on behalf of the High Commissioner in all aspects of UNHCR's activities in the country(ies) to which s/he is accredited, including:

- promoting UNHCR objectives
- maintaining relations with the government, diplomatic missions, UN agencies, other inter-governmental organizations, NGOs and the media
- ensuring the protection of Persons of Concern through the government's observance of the universally recognized principles of asylum;
- promoting compliance with international refugee instruments.

There are a variety of office arrangements in the field depending on the size of operation and nature of emergency. Similarly, the structure of one UNHCR office can vary significantly to another so there is no standard 'organigram' for a country office. However, the following functions are generally present and represent the UNHCR staff that relate most directly to Partners:

- **UNHCR Representative** – accountable for UNHCR operations including activities undertaken in collaboration with Partners. Responsible for signing Partnership Agreements, approval of allocation of funding (instalments), assets or other resources.

- **Program function** – facilitates the formulation, negotiation, planning, design and monitoring of Agreements with Partners.

- **Project control function** – has oversight for projects and resources allocated to Partners.

- **Technical section** – provides guidance on technical aspects of operations such as health or education.

- **Protection function** – develops, monitors and oversees UNHCR's strategies towards refugees and other Persons of Concern.

- **Other staff** such as finance and admin staff that support these functions.

2.1.2 Results Based Management (RBM)

UNHCR uses **Results Based Management** to help ensure that all organizational processes support the achievement of the right results in terms of protection, assistance and solutions for Persons of Concern.

Feedback from the UNHCR Office and respective Partners on the performance and the quality of the audit field work and services provided by the assigned auditor will also be sought by UNHCR Headquarters.

Follow Ups

Once the Audit Certificate has been agreed, the UNHCR Office, together with the respective Partner(s) must agree the appropriate actions needed to address any audit observations and recommendations. UNHCR retains the right to request a refund of any ineligible expenditure from the Partner that might be identified by the auditor. The amount to be recovered will be established by UNHCR based on review of information in the Audit Certificate.

RESOURCES

- IPMS Guidance Note 5: Risk based Audit of UNHCR-funded Projects, May 2015
  http://www.unhcr.org/Guidance-Note-5
- UNHCR Strategic Framework for the Prevention of Fraud and Corruption.
  http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5433a4e54.pdf
- Financial rules for voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees (A/AC.96/503/Rev.10):
  http://www.unhcr.org/4b693d089.pdf
- MANGO guidance on audits for NGOs
  https://www.mango.org.uk/guide/audit

Figure 56: Indicative Timing and Milestones in the Audit Process

Nov	**Assignment of an auditor by IPMS**	Upon assignment of an auditor, the UNHCR Office must notify the respective Partner(s) in writing and invite the Partner(s) to the entry meeting with the auditor.
	Entry meeting	The auditor provides a briefing to the UNHCR Office and respective Partner(s)
March	**Start of audit work**	On starting the audit, the auditor issues a formal letter to the UNHCR Office and respective Partner(s) outlining the audit schedule, required documentation, a copy of the Internal Control Questionnaire, etc. After this, communication with the Partner(s) is conducted directly.
	Draft audit certificate	The draft Audit Certificate is presented to the Partner(s) for comments, factual corrections and resolutions before completion of the field work.
	Comments	The Partner(s) may submit comments directly to the auditor within a limited time set by the auditor, before the final Audit Certificate is issued. The auditor may disagree with the Partner's comments but is obliged to include these responses and explain any difference of opinion in the Management Letter of the Audit Certificate.
	Exit meeting	The auditor provides briefings to the UNHCR office and respective Partner(s) at an exit meeting. It informs of the main audit findings, conclusions and recommendations.
April	**Final Audit Certificate**	The final Audit Certificate is issued to the UNHCR Office and copied to the respective Partner(s) within 15 days of completing the field audit work.
	Follow ups	The UNHCR Office reviews the Audit Certificates and identified reasons for qualifications (if any). The UNHCR Office and its Partners are obliged to take timely and appropriate actions to address the observations and recommendations from the audit.

Audit findings provide useful information on the strengths and weaknesses of the internal control mechanisms for a project that can be used as the basis for further enhancement of project management and Partner capacity.

Results Framework

UNHCR developed a standardized, rights-based Results Framework described in **Figure 8** below, that facilitates a systematic approach to planning, budgeting and reporting at HQ and country level. It also provides the structure for the planning, budgeting and reporting on Partner projects (refer to Section 5.2.1). UNHCR's budget structure is strictly aligned to the results framework to ensure a linkage between resource allocation and expected results.

Figure 8: Description of Elements in UNHCR's Results Framework

Elements	Definition and Pre-Defined Options		
Goal	**The desired overall result for a Population Planning Group (PPG)**, not necessarily within a one-year period. Each PPG must have at least one of **11 pre-defined goals** listed:	▪ Emergency response ▪ Protection pending solutions ▪ Protection and mixed solutions ▪ Voluntary return ▪ Reintegration ▪ Integration	▪ Resettlement ▪ Capacity building ▪ Advocacy for protection and solutions ▪ Resource mobilization ▪ UNHCR global management
Rights groups	**The main thematic rights results for UNHCR.** Within a results chain, each objective corresponds **to only one** of the 9 pre-defined rights group**s** listed:	▪ Favorable protection environment ▪ Fair protection processes and documentation ▪ Security from violence and exploitation ▪ Basic needs and essential services	▪ Community empowerment and self-reliance Durable solutions ▪ Leadership, coordination and partnerships ▪ Logistics and operations support ▪ Headquarters and regional support
Objectives	**A statement of desired results and impact on a population's rights/well-being that contributes to the achievement of the overall goal**. For example, the objective "Population has optimal access to education" contributes to protection, local integration and/or voluntary return. The objective may not be attainable within one year and may be outside the direct control of UNHCR.		

UNHCR has **more than 60 pre-defined objectives**.

Impact indicators	**A variable that facilitates the measurement of change at the objective level.** Each objective should be linked to at least one of the **180 pre-defined impact indicators** in the Results framework, e.g. 'Extent to which Persons of Concern have access to national education systems' is an appropriate impact indicator for the objective suggested above.
Outputs	**A specific deliverable within the control of UNHCR and/or its Partners(s).** There are **over 370 pre-defined outputs** in the Results framework, each of which links to a specific objective. For instance, the output 'Educational infrastructure constructed, improved or maintained' contributes to access to education (the example objective given above). UNHCR and/or its Partner are accountable for meeting the **prioritized target** established for an output, within the time period specified.
Performance indicator	**A variable that facilitates the measurement of the outputs delivered.** Each output should be linked to at least one of 657 pre-defined performance indicators in the Results framework, e.g. Number of households receiving conditional cash grants or vouchers for education. Each performance indicator has a comprehensive target (based on the Operations Plan) and a prioritized target (Operating Level).

DEFINITIONS

Population Planning Group (PPG)

A Population Planning Group (PPG) is a population of concern considered to be homogenous for planning and budgeting purposes. For example, two PPGs in an operation could be:

    a. refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas, and

    b. refugees and asylum-seekers of various nationalities in camps.

Within a Population Planning Group there can be several populations residing in the same location (e.g., refugees from two countries living in an urban area or in various camps) but, as the programmatic response is similar, they are grouped together in one PPG.

Internal Control Questionnaire	The Internal Control Questionnaire is used to assess internal controls and financial management. The auditor reviews the Partner's practices with respect to the following areas and reports whether they are Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory: ▪ Cash management ▪ Procurement ▪ Management of activities contracted to third parties ▪ Personnel engagement and payments ▪ Managing misconduct ▪ Other areas of compliance with the Partnership Agreement

UNHCR requires that the conduct of the audit and the format of the Audit Report are in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing[78].

6.3.4 Audit Process

A Project is subject to audit upon the completion of the project period and the submission of final Project Financial and Performance reports by the Partner (refer to Section 6.2.1). However, in some exceptional cases, audit and subsequent reviews may take place during the project implementation period or up to six years following the completion of the project.

Sequence of Audit Activities

The audit process follows a series of milestones which depend on UNHCR, the assigned auditor and the Partner meeting their communication, coordination and information sharing obligations as set out in **Figure 56** overleaf.

The Audit Certificate and associated documents are confidential and internal to UNHCR. All parties (UNHCR, Partners and auditors) are obliged to maintain them confidentially and not share them with an external entity.

Significant audit observations such as fraud, misconduct, misappropriation and other risks observed through the audit exercise must immediately be referred appropriate authority based on UNHCR's **Strategic Framework for the Prevention of Fraud and Corruption** (see Section 1.3.4 for further guidance in investigating cases of fraud and corruption). Similarly, any significant audit observations and non-compliance may be reported at any time during the audit exercise, as deemed necessary by the auditor.

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[78] International Standards on Quality Control for the Firms that Perform Audits and Reviews of Financial Statements and other Assurance and Related Service Engagements.

- maintain relevant project document up to six years, following the closure of the project;

- provide unfettered and timely access to all information, documents, books, records, transactions, sites, persons for audit purposes to UNHCR authorized staff or agents, including auditors;

- undertake timely and appropriate measures to address and resolve audit observations and recommendations including refund of ineligible costs.

Projects implemented by NGOs, Governmental partners, Red Cross and Red Crescent Society partners, and national fundraising partners are all subject to audit under their Partnership Agreements. For projects implemented by other UN agencies, a separate audit is not required as they are covered by the Single Audit Principle[76].

UNHCR and its assigned Auditors also have obligations to Partners when preparing for, undertaking and completing an audit. These are set out in IPMS Guidance Note No. 5. Audit costs are borne by UNHCR, not the Partner.

Purpose and Outputs of a Project Audit

Project audits are undertaken by a limited number of global/regional audit firms that are contracted centrally by UNHCR Headquarters. On completion, the auditor will provide an Audit Certificate setting out their findings and recommendations, as outlined in **Figure 55** below[77].

Figure 55: Composition of an Audit Certificate

Audit Certificate	
Audit Report	The report sets out the auditor's opinion on whether the Project Financial Report for a project is presented fairly and the eligible expenditure incurred to implement activities conforms with the terms of the Partnership Agreement
Management Letter	The Management letter contains the major findings, points related to compliance with critical terms of the Partnership Agreement, assessment of the Partner and UNHCR's internal control mechanisms and identified weaknesses and recommendations of how to address them.

All Partner interventions must relate to at least one **PPG** and, for each PPG selected, develop a results chain and a budget. Every PPG and its corresponding results chain correspond to a **pillar** within UNHCR's budget structure.

Each element of the results chain is illustrated in **Figure 9** below.

Figure 9: Example of a Results Chain with One Goal and One PPG [23]

Population Planning Group X
Goal 1

Objective A
Impact Indicator A1

Output A1
Performance Indicator A-1
Performance Indicator A-2

Objective B
Impact Indicator B1

Output B1
Performance Indicator B-1

Output B2
Performance Indicator B-2a
Performance Indicator B-2b

Global Focus website - provides external access to key information on UNHCR operations, populations of concern, thematic areas and financials.
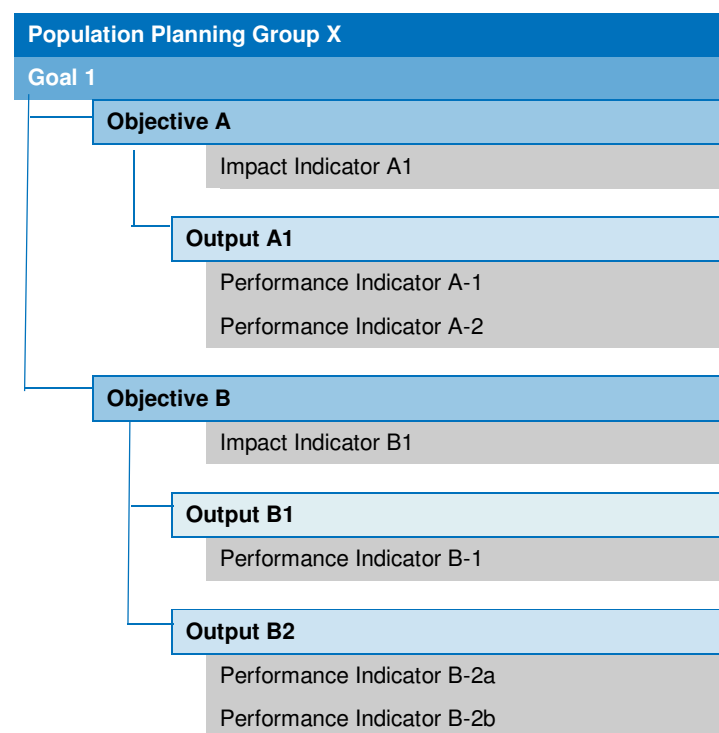
http://reporting.unhcr.org/

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[76] Relates to a system where the control and audit methods are common to both institutions enabling auditors from one institution to rely on the work of auditors from the other
[77] Based on the FIP Learning Module 4: Project Partnership Closure and Smooth Disengagement

[23] From UNHCR Programme Manual (Chapter 4)

2.1.3 Global Strategic Priorities and Planning Mechanism

UNHCR's global planning is informed by its **Global Strategic Priorities** and driven by the needs and priorities identified at field level through a **Comprehensive Needs Assessment** process, which is conducted annually in each of its operations around the world (refer to Section 4.3 for details of the planning process with Partners at country level).

Global Strategic Priorities

UNHCR's Global Strategic Priorities are revised every two years and informed by the longer-term Strategic Directions set by the High Commissioner which elaborate the focus of UNHCR's efforts over a 5-year period. The 2017- 2021 **Strategic Directions** are:

- protection;
- responding in emergencies and beyond;
- promoting inclusion and self-reliance, including through the engagement of development actors;
- empowerment of the people UNHCR serves; and
- the pursuit of solutions

A range of other thematic commitments and strategies also inform UNHCR's strategic priorities, including the **New York Declaration and Global Compact on Refugees** (refer to Section 1.2.1).

Planning and Budgeting Process

The main planning exercise in UNHCR takes place in field operations and Headquarters Divisions annually between January and April, for the subsequent year. **Operations Plans** are submitted in April and reviewed in April – May as part of an **Annual Programme Review p**rocess.

Budget allocations are communicated at the end of the Annual Programme Review process by the High Commissioner. These are based on an authorized **Operating Level** and are used by divisional, regional and country teams as the basis for prioritizing results and activities within their Operations Plans.

Once the budget allocations are approved by the **ExCom** in October, detailed planning and budgeting takes place at operational level in collaboration with Partners and other stakeholders over the period October - December. All contracts signed with Partners, service providers, etc., must fall within the agreed Operating Level for an Operation. The Operating Level may change throughout the year as UNHCR gains a better understanding of funding commitments from its donors. Details of the country level planning process are set out in Section 4.3.

6.3.2 Risk-based Audit Approach

In 2015, UNHCR adopted a risk-based approach to auditing. This involved a shift from setting the thresholds for auditing based on the financial value of a project to a more holistic approach based on the risks associated with a project.

Under the risk-based approach, UNHCR selects the projects for auditing based on a set of risk criteria including the following (also refer to Section 3.1.3):

- Operational risks;
- Project profile and partner performance risk;
- Specific UNHCR management needs and donor requirements.

Within these criteria, a wide range of factors are considered such as performance record, internal controls, financial management capacity, project profile and value, type of operation, length of partnership, previous audit results, and nature of outstanding recommendations.

This approach was introduced to enhance the management, stewardship and accountability of funds spent through partnerships as well as better aligning project verifications and audit measures with principles of risk management and audit compliance.

All audits are mandated and regulated by the Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds administered by the High Commissioner. This includes all funds, including those spent through partnerships. The United Nations Board of Auditors is mandated to audit the overall UNHCR funds and its annual financial statements.

6.3.3 Project Audit Requirements

Audit Requirements under a Partnership Agreement

UNHCR provides funds to Partners under a Partnership Agreement but remains accountable to its stakeholders for the way in which these funds are spent. UNHCR and its Partners when entering into a Partnership Agreement are required to establish appropriate controls to mitigate risks, ensure appropriate and proper utilization of funds, and submit periodic and end-of-Project reports, including the Project Financial Report, demonstrating accurate expenditures against the project budget and performance delivery under the Partnership Agreement.

Guidance for Partners setting out their audit obligations as a condition of partnering with UNHCR are explained in the **IPMS Guidance Note No. 5 Risk based Audit of UNHCR-funded Projects** which is based on UNHCR's risk-based approach. This guidance applies to all types of partnership agreement.

The provisions and terms for a Project Audit are stipulated in the Partnership Agreement. These include the Partner's obligation to:
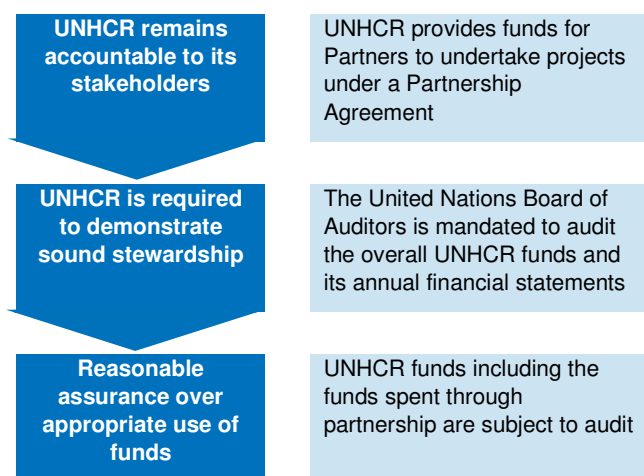
6.3 Project Audit

6.3.1 Assurance and Accountability

The main purpose of an audit is to ensure the accountability of UNHCR and its Partners for the use of donor funds, but it is also a useful management tool which facilitates efficient and effective programming.

Audits provide assurance to donors, Persons of Concern, staff and other stakeholders and supporters of sound stewardship and appropriate use of entrusted funds within UNHCR's projects as illustrated in **Figure 54** below [75].

Figure 54: Process for Assuring Appropriate Use of Resources

UNHCR remains accountable to its stakeholders	UNHCR provides funds for Partners to undertake projects under a Partnership Agreement
UNHCR is required to demonstrate sound stewardship	The United Nations Board of Auditors is mandated to audit the overall UNHCR funds and its annual financial statements
Reasonable assurance over appropriate use of funds	UNHCR funds including the funds spent through partnership are subject to audit

UNHCR operations facilitate accountability and assurance over the appropriate use of funds through a range of complementary due diligence measures including:

- vetting and selection of Partners
- monitoring project progress
- verification of progress and financial reports
- physical and spot checks of performance
- implementation of internal controls
- project audits

[75] From the FIP Learning Module 4: Project Partnership Closure and Smooth Disengagement

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2.1.4 UNHCR's Funding and Four Pillar Budget Structure

Funding and the Global Appeal

UNHCR is funded mainly through voluntary contributions. Most funding comes from its top ten donors. UNHCR produces a **Global Appeal** in December, and reports on the previous year's fundraising performance through an annual Global Report, produced in June. The Global Appeal is an annual process used by UNHCR to raise the funding required in meeting the humanitarian needs of Persons of Concern. This information is publicly accessible via UNHCR's **Global Focus** website.

Through the Global Appeal, UNHCR invites donors to pledge their contributions for the following calendar year. However, many donors are unable to make firm commitments at that time. Therefore, UNHCR essentially starts each year with an unfunded budget and considerable uncertainty about how much funding it will receive, and when. This unpredictable annual funding cycle is further compounded by the need to balance single and multi-year funding in the budget and meet specific donor requirements for earmarked (or restricted) funding.

UNHCR's global budget is made up of all the Country Operations Plans and Headquarters costs. In October, a biennial budget is submitted to its ExCom, covering the subsequent two years (e.g. submitted in 2017 for the 2018-2019 biennium). The budget for the second year is indicative, with a basic narrative, due to the degree of uncertainty involved.

Budget Structure

In 2010, UNHCR adopted a **four-pillar budget structure** that helps to:

- align financial requirements and contributions with the way UNHCR plans and manages its operations; and
- ensure greater clarity in how it addresses the needs of different populations of concern, thereby providing a solid basis for results-based management.

Pillar 1	Pillar 2	Pillar 3	Pillar 4
Refugees	**Statelessness**	**Reintegration**	**IDPs**

Pillar 1: Global Refugee Program is focused on UNHCR's core mandate covering protection, assistance, and solutions for refugees in countries of asylum, together with capacity building, advocacy and resource mobilization. It also covers support for voluntary repatriation of refugees and UNHCR's Headquarters costs.

Pillar 2: Global Statelessness Program covers all UNHCR interventions addressing the needs of stateless persons, including those with undetermined nationality.

Pillar 3: Global Reintegration Program covers long-term activities to reintegrate refugees in their country of origin or their countries of asylum

Pillar 4: Global IDP Projects cover all operations related to IDPs.

The budget under each pillar is then subdivided into three elements:

- **The administrative budget -** covering all non-staff related costs and costs for temporary staff (for periods of less than 6 months).

- **The operations budget** – covering all goods and services provided to Persons of Concern directly by UNHCR or its Partners.

- **The staffing budget** - covering salaries and entitlements for regular or temporary positions with a duration of six months or more.

2.1.5 Global Reporting Mechanism

Reporting has two main purposes in UNHCR:

1) It fosters confidence and support through reporting on the achievements and impact of its activities to the ExCom, donors, Partners and Persons of Concern.

2) It helps identify where adjustments to programming are needed, including the allocation of resources, and to capture lessons learned which are used to improve the design of future programming.

The primary internal reporting mechanisms for both field operations and Headquarters are the **Mid-Year Report** and the **Year-End Report**. These are complemented by other targeted reports that form part of the annual reporting cycle, such as the Resettlement Statistics Report.

The UNHCR Global Report is prepared annually to inform donors of the results achieved for Persons of Concern, through their funding. It includes content from the Year-End Reports of individual operations and can be accessed through the **Global Focus website**.

Section 6.2.1 provides detailed guidance on the reporting requirements for UNHCR and its Partners at country level.

RESOURCES

Partner Reporting Forms

- Partnership Agreement Annex D: Project Performance Report (Periodic Progress Report), June 2018

- Partnership Agreement Annex D: Goods and Property Report, 2013

- Partnership Agreement Annex E: Partner Personnel Report

  All found in the Project Partnership Agreement
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

New expenditure	– this needs to be populated by the Partner with details of all new expenditure incurred for the current reporting period
Unused instalment	– indicates any remaining balance from the previous instalments paid, per output. It is used to determine whether a new instalment is needed (refer to Section 5.4.4 for guidance on instalments)

Once the Partner completes and submits its Project Finance Report, UNHCR must verify the accuracy of the content. This should be done against all relevant monitoring data and the narrative project performance report. Once verified, UNHCR must certify acceptance of the report and clearance of the expenditures account, before payment of the next instalment of funds to the Partner can be authorized. Four different people are required to sign off on a Project Finance Report before it can be accepted, and further instalments released:

- Partner representative accountable for the Partnership Agreement
- UNHCR representative accountable for the Partnership Agreement
- UNHCR Programme Officer
- UNHCR Project Control Officer or delegated Officer

6.2.4 Goods and Property and Personnel Reports

The remaining two reports that Partners are required to complete in accordance with the Partnership Agreement are:

Goods and Property Report (Partnership Agreement Annex D)

- A standard report which is used to report on the status of any Goods and Property provided or funded by UNHCR.
- Provides an inventory and key data on all Goods and Property.

Partner Personnel Report (Partnership Agreement Annex E)

- A standard report that includes the actual details of Partner Personnel engaged in the project against those planned in the Partnership Agreement.
- Provides details for the UNHCR and Partner contribution towards the cost of Partner personnel under the Partnership Agreement.

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RESOURCES

UNHCR Structure and Organization

- About UNHCR
  http://www.unhcr.org/uk/governance.html
- UNHCR Organisational Structure (revised since establishment of the new Division on Resilience and Solutions)
  http://reporting.unhcr.org/resources
- UNHCR Strategic Directions 2017-2021
  http://www.unhcr.org/strategic-directions-2017-2021

UNHCR Funding and Budgets

- UNHCR Global Focus – Financials
  http://reporting.unhcr.org/financial
  http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html
- UNHCR Global Focus – Global Appeals (current and historical)
  http://reporting.unhcr.org/publications
  http://www.unhcr.org/global-appeal

UNHCR Planning and Reporting

- Emergency standards and indicators
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/emergency-standards-and-indicators
- UNHCR Global Report
  http://www.unhcr.org/uk/the-global-report.html

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2.2 Coordination

Coordination is about ensuring that all those who have a contribution to make, whether through knowledge, expertise, capacity, resources or influence are enabled to do so and that gaps are covered, and duplication is avoided. Coordination platforms such as the Inter Agency Standing Committee enable these contributions to be made in an efficient and effective manner.

In this way, the expertise and efforts of different actors can be brought together to best contribute towards achieving effective protection, assistance and solutions for Persons of Concern, with the optimal use of available resources

Global Humanitarian Coordination Structure

The **Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC)** is the primary mechanism for coordination, policy development and decision-making. UNHCR is a member of the IASC, along with other UN operational agencies, the global NGO consortia; International Council of Voluntary Organizations (ICVA), InterAction, the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR)[24], and several standing invitees.

In 2011 the IASC initiated a review of humanitarian coordination under the **Transformative Agenda**. This focused on the need to strengthen humanitarian leadership, coordination, and accountability in major natural disasters and complex emergencies, which go beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency. In situations involving refugees, a Refugee Coordination Model is used for coordination.

2.2.1 Coordination in Refugee and Mixed Settings

Coordination in refugee settings is guided by the **Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework** (CRRF), which is government led. This aims to:

- build on and support existing refugee response models and consultative networks at all levels, and;
- better support refugees and the communities hosting them through a multi-stakeholder, "whole-of-society" approach.

The CRRF is not a new coordination mechanism, but rather builds on existing mechanisms such as Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), Refugee Response Plans (RRPs), the Refugee Coordination Model, as well as development processes pursued by Member States, the UN (such as the UN Development Assistance Framework), regional organizations and international financial institutions.

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[24] SCHR is a voluntary alliance of nine of the world's leading humanitarian organizations, which come together to support quality, accountability and learning in humanitarian action.

Provide recommendations for amending the project design to address these changes, including any alterations to implementation plan/approach, specific activities, indicators, budgets, etc.

6.2.3 Project Finance Reports

The Project Finance Report is prepared by Partners to report on all financial aspects under the Partnership Agreement:

- It demonstrates financial resources received and expended including any variance in expenditure against budget/disbursed funds;
- Gives advance alert of any unplanned or unacceptable variations that have occurred or are likely to occur;
- Provides a useful indication of the rate of expenditure.

The template for the Project Finance Report for each period is generated for the Partner by UNHCR. The template is automatically populated with all previous financial reporting information that has been submitted and approved. **Figure 53** below provides an outline of the content required.

Figure 53: Key Sections of the Project Finance Report

Section	Objectives
Reporting period	– indicates the period covered by the report
Currency	– indicates the currency for the budget and expenditures recorded
Description	– describes expenditures by cost center, situation, PPG, goal, objective and output and should follow the same format as the approved budget
Instalment released	– indicates the amount released to date per output
Accumulated expenditure	– records all previous approved expenditure recorded by account line
Expenses as % of budget	– indicates what proportion of each budget line has already been spent by account line

Partner Declaration

When a Partner signs and submits a report, it is important to note that they are declaring that:

i. The reported expenditures and performance delivery are genuine and accurate;

ii. The expenditures and performance are conducted in accordance with the Agreement, and any misrepresentation of reports might be considered fraud;

iii. UNHCR Goods and Property in the custody of the Partner are being properly used and safeguarded; and

iv. The Partner is aware that unauthorized/ineligible expenditures and unsubstantiated reports may be rejected by UNHCR and funds recovered.

6.2.2 Project Performance Reports

The **Project Performance report** is the main narrative report that Partners are required to complete. The information recorded should focus on progress, changes and any challenges from the planned activities and results detailed in the Project Description (Annex A of the Partnership Agreement) at the time of reporting. The report[74] consists of two main sections outlined in **Figure 52** below. These should be monitored by the Partner and UNHCR concurrently with the Project Financial Report.

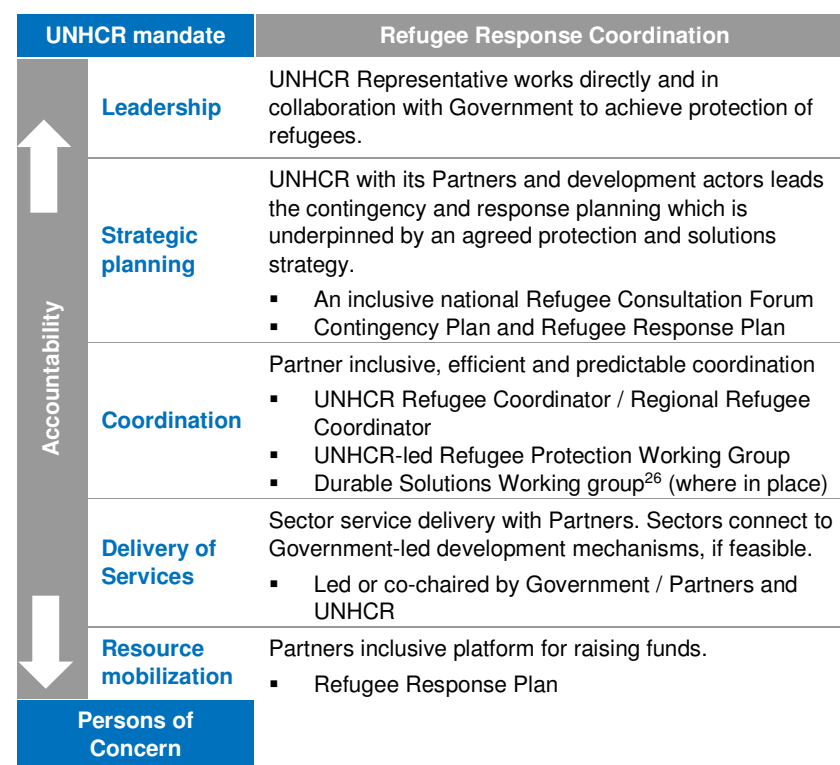*Figure 52: Key Sections of the Project Performance Report*

Section	Purpose
1. Progress Towards Planned Results	Describe the progress in achieving the outputs, associated targets as set out in Project Description, according to the benchmarks/baselines, milestones, or indicators that were established.
2. Changes and Amendments	Provide a concise summary of any changes, deviations or amendments from the original plan (whether in terms of implementation plan, activities, indicators, budgets), and the circumstances or factors that prompted them. This might include changes resulting from the needs of the beneficiaries, or operational challenges or other constraints/opportunities

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[74] Based on Project Performance report, June 2018 format

Coordination in Refugee Settings

Coordination in refugee settings is led by UNHCR, through the High Commissioner as part of its refugee mandate. In December 2013, UNHCR established the **Refugee Coordination Model (RCM)** to provide a platform for leadership and inclusive coordination for the effective and accountable delivery of protection, assistance and solutions for Persons of Concern. This is illustrated in **Figure 10** below.

Figure 10: Overview of the Refugee Coordination Model [25]

UNHCR mandate	Refugee Response Coordination
Leadership	UNHCR Representative works directly and in collaboration with Government to achieve protection of refugees.
Strategic planning	UNHCR with its Partners and development actors leads the contingency and response planning which is underpinned by an agreed protection and solutions strategy. ▪ An inclusive national Refugee Consultation Forum ▪ Contingency Plan and Refugee Response Plan
Coordination	Partner inclusive, efficient and predictable coordination ▪ UNHCR Refugee Coordinator / Regional Refugee Coordinator ▪ UNHCR-led Refugee Protection Working Group ▪ Durable Solutions Working group[26] (where in place)
Delivery of Services	Sector service delivery with Partners. Sectors connect to Government-led development mechanisms, if feasible. ▪ Led or co-chaired by Government / Partners and UNHCR
Resource mobilization	Partners inclusive platform for raising funds. ▪ Refugee Response Plan

Accountability (vertical label)

Persons of Concern

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[25] https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/60930/refugee-coordination-model-rcm
[26] Sample ToR for the Durable Solutions Working group in Sudan, 2017:
http://www.earlyrecovery.global/DSWG ToR Sudan 2017

The Refugee Coordination Model enables inclusiveness, predictability and transparency, as well as clear lines of accountability. It is a simple and agile model, based on accountability to and for Persons of Concern. UNHCR's coordination for refugee response:

✓ Is guided by the capacity and approach of the host government.

✓ Is responsive and agile with structures that expand, and contract as required.

✓ Provides streamlined, efficient coordination that fills gaps and avoids duplication.

✓ Places greatest focus and investment on coordination at the point of delivery in order to provide the best protection-centred and accountable response.

✓ Brings together and builds on the expertise and capacities of government, international and national Partners.

Duration: As it is linked to the Mandate of the High Commissioner, the Refugee Coordination Model is not activated or deactivated- it remains in place throughout the refugee response cycle. As coordination is needs driven, some features of the Refugee Coordination Model may be contracted in non-emergency settings and expanded in emergency situations.

Other coordination modalities in refugee settings include:

- **Refugee Protection Group** (led by UNHCR and/or government) - brings together key protection actors to collaboratively establish the refugee protection priorities and objectives that form the basis for a Refugee Response Plan. It also guides, coordinates and oversees protection issues and promotes the systematic application of rights and community-based protection approaches, ensuring accountability to populations of concern.

- **Multi-Sectoral Group** (led by UNHCR and/or government) - provides a cross sectoral platform which brings life-saving needs and protection priorities together under a collective vision to ensure a timely, effective and accountable response. In addition to sectors, this group also includes working groups on cash, information management, logistics and operational support as required.

- **Refugee Response Sectors** (led by UN, NGOs, Government) – agencies taking up coordination responsibilities must be:
  - operational in the response with close proximity to refugees and communities;
  - have proven technical and coordination capacity;
  - guarantee adequate field presence and delivery and monitoring capacity;

Figure 51: Partner Reporting Schedule

Note: International Partners are allowed up to 10 more days (than the dates specified) for the consolidation and submission of these reports.

Report Type	Reporting Period (as of)	Due Date	Mandatory	Optional
Project Performance	31 March	10 April		✓
	30 June	**15 July**	✓	
	30 September	10 October		✓
	31 December	**15 February**	✓	
Project Financial	31 March	10 April		✓
	30 June	**15 July**	✓	
	30 September	10 October		✓
	30 November	**10 December**	✓	
	31 December	**15 February**	✓	
Goods and Property	31 March	10 April		✓
	30 June	**15 July**	✓	
	30 September	10 October		✓
	31 December	**15 February**	✓	
Project Personnel	31 March	10 April		✓
	30 June	**15 July**	✓	
	30 September	10 October		✓
	31 December	**15 February**	✓	
Others Reports as required	As specified in the Partnership Agreement			

6.2 Reporting

Reporting is the process of documenting what has been achieved, based primarily on data gathered from monitoring and verification. Reporting documents whether the expected performance and impact targets have been met and explains the challenges faced during implementation. Moreover, reporting informs stakeholders (e.g. staff, donors, Partners, Persons of Concern) about what has been achieved and any associated learning.

6.2.1 Reporting on UNHCR Projects

Figure 51 below outlines the standard reporting requirements under a Partnership Agreement. However, these will vary from one project to another depending on the type of project, operating context, nature of partnership etc., and should be agreed between UNHCR and the Partner when developing the Partnership Agreement.

Once agreed, it is important that the reporting requirements and associated arrangements for monitoring and review are clearly documented in the Agreement to allow the Partner sufficient time and resources for preparation and submission of the reports and overcome any risk of misunderstanding at a later stage. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the capacity strengthening needs of less experienced Partners to help facilitate effective completion of monitoring, verification and reporting activities (refer to Section 2.3.3 for further guidance on capacity strengthening). Templates and guidelines for completing the required reports can be found in the **Resources box** at the end of this section.

Partners may also be required to submit other reports, such as specialized technical reports or reports for earmarked project funding. In such cases, the Partners must be informed in advance to allow sufficient time for preparation and submission. Furthermore, UNHCR, other UN agencies and several donors have, as part of the **Grand Bargain** committed to harmonizing their reporting templates. This is likely to affect the UNHCR template and content for Partner reports in the future.

TIPS: Reporting requirements

The type and frequency of reporting required under a Partnership Agreement depends on the needs and risks associated with any specific project. This forms an important part of the negotiation between Partners and UNHCR at the stage of developing the Partnership Agreement.

Partners are only required to fulfil the reporting requirements stipulated in their Partnership Agreement with UNHCR.

- meet established standards, policies and guidelines for the overall refugee response and for the sector. These include a commitment to integrate a solutions perspective from the outset, to remain involved for an adequate period (for example, a minimum of one year for an emergency) and to execute a sound transition and exit strategy.

Coordination in Mixed Situations

Coordination in mixed situations where IDP and refugee responses are underway, involves close collaboration between UNHCR and **OCHA**.

The principle underpinning UNHCR's approach in mixed situations is that refugee operations should form an integral part of any overall humanitarian response, while at the same time, UNHCR maintains the oversight and coordination needed to fulfil its ultimate accountability for ensuring the international protection and delivery of services to refugees.

To simplify and streamline leadership and coordination arrangements, UNHCR and OCHA signed a **Joint Note on Mixed Situations: Coordination in Practice** in April 2014. The Note spells out mutual roles and responsibilities and respective leadership and coordination functions for mixed situations. Furthermore, it builds on, and further elaborates the principles of the Refugee Coordination Model.

There are several primary points of interface between the Refugee Coordination Model and the **cluster approach**:

- In all situations, at the leadership level the UNHCR Representative maintains responsibility for advocacy with the host government in relation to refugee protection and assistance and engages closely with the Humanitarian Coordinator/Resident Coordinator. This includes keeping the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) informed about the refugee operation on a regular basis.

- The Representative will lead the refugee-specific strategic planning exercise with Partners, drawing on the HCT, including OCHA, to ensure coherence with the broader humanitarian response.

- The Refugee Coordinator and multi-sector operations team will ensure effective coordination through information exchange with inter-cluster coordination forums, support for the implementation of the Humanitarian Program Cycle and protection mainstreaming across clusters/sectors.

- The Refugee Protection Group will continue to be convened and will harmonize approaches with the protection cluster where applicable.

The aim is to ensure better harmonization between the IDP and refugee responses and minimize meetings and processes.

2.2.2 Humanitarian coordination in Non-Refugee Settings

Country Level Coordination

Overall accountability for coordination in non-refugee settings where the scale of humanitarian need is greater than the host government's ability to respond, rests with the Humanitarian Coordinator, the UN Country Team and the UN Resident Coordinator.

A **Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)**, led by a Humanitarian Coordinator (or Resident Coordinator, if a Humanitarian Coordinator has not been appointed) is the primary mechanism for providing operational oversight, coordination and decision making at country level. The HCT is part of the IASC and as such its composition mirrors the IASC globally; including UN humanitarian agencies, NGOs, and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

The Cluster Approach

Coordination of the humanitarian response is organized through a **cluster approach**. The HCT determines which clusters to activate, and which organizations should lead them at national and sub-national level. Agencies that are designated Cluster Leads should represent the Clusters as well as their respective organizations. **Figure 11** overleaf illustrates the main clusters and designated cluster lead agencies at global level.

IASC's **Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level** is the principal reference document for clusters at country level. It describes their activation, de-activation, core functions, and other features.

The activation criteria are met when:

- Response and coordination gaps exist due to a sharp deterioration or significant change in the humanitarian situation.

- Existing national response or coordination capacity is unable to meet needs in a manner that respects humanitarian principles.

Within the cluster mechanism, UNHCR is the global lead agency for the Protection Cluster, and co-lead for the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) and Shelter clusters. UNHCR's Partners are likely to be members of these clusters and some may act in the capacity as co-lead at national or sub-national level.

or weaknesses in the project that have been identified. The use and follow up of findings are valuable in improving project implementation and enabling the achievement of project outputs and objectives. They can be used in several ways:

- To mentor, train and support UNHCR and Partner staff to enhance capacities and avoid recurrent weaknesses;

- To highlight lessons learned for institutional knowledge;

- To adjust the project budget, allocated resources, plans, targets and results, and implementation arrangements, as applicable;

- To identify monitoring measures and follow-up actions by UNHCR and/or the Partner, and progress to be reported in subsequent project reports; and

- To inform project auditors of weaknesses in management of the project and/or use of financial and other resources that have been identified.

RESOURCES

Joint Monitoring

- IPMS Guidance Note on Joint Monitoring and Partner Feedback, 4th June 2013
  http://www.unhcr.org/IMPS-GN-Joint-Monitoring

- Humanitarian Response Monitoring Guidance
  https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/response-monitoring

Project Monitoring and Review

- PHAP accreditation in Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)
  https://phap.org/credentialing-program-meal

- INTRAC Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning resources
  https://www.intrac.org/monitoring-evaluation-learning/

- Using Sphere for Monitoring and Evaluation
  http://www.sphereproject.orgmonitoring-and-evaluation/

where all parties must sign off on each project milestone. Risk of local actors lacking the technical skills required and/or a full understanding of the project. Generates local ownership, accountability and a good source of local information but can present risks to the monitors and local population.

Step 3: Reviewing and discussing findings

Once data has been verified, it should be reviewed on a regular basis by UNHCR and the Partner organization to assess progress and results, identify gaps and recommend adjustments to programming in response to changing needs. The review should consider all pertinent issues identified during the development of the Project Performance Monitoring Plan.

Under the terms of the Partnership Agreement, as a minimum, a formal joint monitoring and review meeting must be conducted at the end of the project. This meeting along with any interim monitoring and review meetings should consider:

- progress of the project;
- working relationship between UNHCR and the Partner;
- compliance with the Partnership Agreement;
- success and challenges for the Partner in meeting the agreed objectives.

Step 4: Identifying Gaps and Agreeing Solutions

Once a summary of the findings and recommendations from the monitoring and review process has been shared, UNHCR and the Partner, together with other parties (where applicable) work jointly to:

- Identify solutions and remedial measures for identified gaps and risks;
- Acknowledge accomplished objectives and progress made;
- Identify challenges and constraints;
- Recommend solutions, changes and adjustments to current and future programming; and
- Agree an action plan and develop commitment and ownership for the implementation of required changes.

Examples could include moving resources from another project to address critical gaps; more regular follow-up or a change in implementation modalities to speed up or mobilize new or alternative resources.

Step 5: Communicating and Learning from Monitoring and Review Process

Findings from the project monitoring and review process are also used to support institutional learning and inform internal and external stakeholders about strengths

Figure 11: Designated Clusters and Lead Agencies
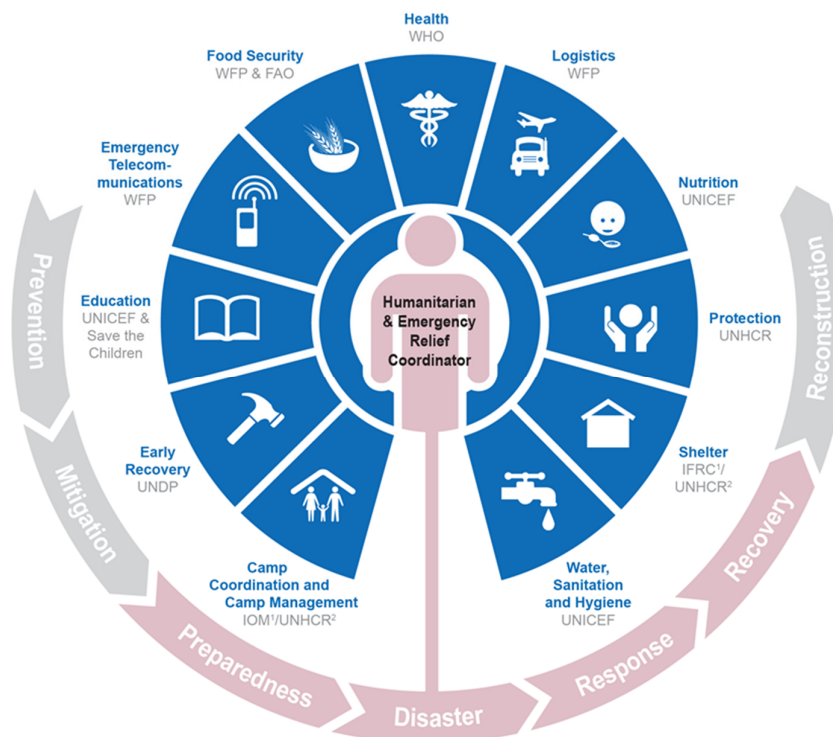
The sequence of actions needed in planning, managing, delivering and monitoring the collective humanitarian response to non-refugee-related crises is set out in the **Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC)** reference module. The HPC is driven by collectively owned, evidence-based plans[27], direction by the HCT, and accountability for results.

Under the HPC, all humanitarian agencies including UNHCR and its Partners should:

- Support national authorities, who have primary responsibility to assist and protect populations affected by disaster or conflict;
- Promote the participation of affected populations;
- Actively contribute to joint assessment, analysis, setting strategy and the achievement of collective results;

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[27] Preliminary Response Plans and Humanitarian Response Plans

- Accept the direction of the HCT (or UN Country Team if an HCT has not been created) and operate under the leadership of the Humanitarian (or Resident) Coordinator.
- Support inter-cluster or sector coordination and cooperate with clusters or sectors (when they are created).
- Include a broad range of actors, including at sub-national level.
- Be familiar with, and follow, HPC procedures and guidance

Coordination in the Protection Cluster

UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster at country level in circumstances of internal displacement and at times in natural disaster situations . Areas of responsibility within protection are coordinated by the following agency focal points which are UNHCR Partners):

- Child Protection by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- Gender-Based Violence by UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF
- Housing, Land and Property by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
- Mine Action by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

Participation in the Protection Cluster at country and sub-national levels is open to all UNHCR Partners and protection actors that are ready to engage in information collection and sharing, strategy development, prioritization, and preparation of work plans. Minimum commitments for participation include:

- ✓ Commitment to humanitarian principles and the Principles of Partnership, including the Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (see Section 1.3.3).
- ✓ Readiness to participate in actions that improve Accountability to Affected Populations, in line with the IASC's commitments (see Section 1.3.2).
- ✓ Demonstrated understanding of responsibilities associated with cluster participation, including in relation to agreed terms of reference at country level.
- ✓ Active participation in the cluster and consistent engagement in the cluster's collective work.
- ✓ Capacity and willingness to contribute to the cluster's strategic response plan and activities, including inter-cluster coordination.
- ✓ Commitment to work cooperatively with other cluster partners to ensure the best and most strategic use of available resources.
- ✓ Willingness to take on responsibilities, taking account of capacity and mandates.

- ✓ Reviewing the management of goods and property provided by or financed by UNHCR to verify their location, use and condition.
- ✓ Reviewing human resource management procedures and records and checking compliance with legal requirements and terms of the Partnership Agreement.
- ✓ Checking compliance with ethics, standards of conduct, laws, regulations and rules applicable to the Partnership Agreement.

UNHCR uses three main methods to verify data[73]:

- **Document review:** includes analysis of project progress reports (financial and narrative), monthly reports by UNHCR offices, official records (e.g., schools, hospitals) and reports prepared by other actors that contain secondary data relevant to UNHCR's objectives.
- **On-site monitoring:** involves generating primary data to verify the goods or services provided to Persons of Concern through key informant interviews, focus group discussions, surveys and field visits. This is the most robust method of data collection for project monitoring and verification and may be conducted directly by UNHCR or jointly with Partners.
- **Remote monitoring:** used in cases where it is impossible to make field visits due to unacceptable security risks or denial of access (see box below for alternative methods). This can include indirect monitoring through multiple Partners or stakeholders with access to Persons of Concern, feedback from Persons of Concern, and the use of various tracking and information technologies (e.g. GPS, satellite monitoring)

Remote Monitoring Methods

Web-based Remote Project Monitoring – used in high security threat environments. Involves Partners uploading photographs with GPS information as evidence of project implementation

Quality Assurance Team for Remote Management Accountability – involves UNHCR team with background in relevant technical fields and access to operational areas.

Third Party Monitoring – provides an independent account of progress and quality of project implementation. Typically takes place after project completion limiting the scope for corrective actions

Triangulated Local Monitoring - (Persons of Concern / local community group monitoring / local government officials) - uses a combination of local actors

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[73] From the FIP Learning Module 3: Effective Project Partnership Undertaking

✓   Community/beneficiary structures are actively engaged in the process.

✓   Consideration is given to essential cross cutting issues including gender mainstreaming, protection mainstreaming, and child protection (refer to Chapter 7 for further guidance).

✓   A well-structured and agreed checklist is used which covers multidisciplinary as well as thematic /sector-specific issues.

✓   Joint activities include review and analysis of relevant data and reports as well as on-site visits.

✓   Scheduling of activities allows time for gathering the appropriate staff and documentation, is convenient to all participating agencies, and in line with any requirement for programmatic adjustments.

✓   Precautions are put in place to avoid raising unnecessary expectations which may arise from joint monitoring activities.

✓   Clear time frames are agreed for follow ups, action plans, responses, clarifications and requirements for additional information arising from the monitoring process.

Verification of Data by UNHCR

Verification of Partner reports should be initiated within five working days of receipt of a report. The relevant UNHCR Office must then verify, seek evidence and certify that the contents of project reports are based on facts before accepting them. Verification is a precondition to accepting the report, clearing expenditure accounts and releasing funds to the Partner.

TIPS: Actions Conducted by UNHCR in Verifying Project Reports

✓   Inspection of project sites and facilities and collection of evidence by technical specialists and project control and program staff.

✓   Review of feedback received from Persons of Concern on project activities and their results.

✓   Correlation of reported performance delivery and expenditures with actual outputs.

✓   Checking reported expenditure against financial reports and accounting records to substantiate reported figures.

✓   Assessing the quality and accountability of Partner internal financial control mechanisms (such as segregation of duties, accounting procedures, cash management, procurement, governance, fraud prevention, auditing, refugee compliant mechanisms, etc.).

✓   Readiness to help draft and disseminate advocacy and messages targeting affected communities, national authorities, donors, the HCT, clusters, and the media.

Other Country Level Coordination Mechanisms

At country level, other relevant sector coordination structures led by the government or other UN agencies may also be present, especially around development programs. These may present further opportunities for coordination around shared goals and objectives for both UNHCR and its Partners in line with the **New Way of Working**, and collaborative efforts to strengthen the **Humanitarian-Development nexus**.

The coordination mechanism among UN agencies operating in the same country is currently under review as part of a wider UN Reform process.

https://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/sites/outreach.un.org/files/development_system_faq_31_may.pdf

2.2.3 Information and Data Management

Information management /data management is the capture, handling, storage, analysis and dissemination of data pertaining specifically to operations and populations of concern, including demographic and statistical information. It is an integral and critical responsibility of every UNHCR staff, office and Partner, and has a direct impact on the quality and efficiency of humanitarian operations.

In refugee crises, UNHCR requires quality information to meet its own operational needs, but also as a service provided to fulfil the needs of Partners, as part of its role in coordinating the response. When the coordination and dissemination of operational information is done in a regular and predictable manner by UNHCR, its Partners and other operational agencies, coordination among all responders is improved.

Guidance on the following aspects of Information Management with associated tools, can be found in the **UNHCR Emergency Handbook** (see the Resources box at the end of this section):

▪   **Operational web portal: Emergency Refugee Situations** - provides a unified platform for UNHCR, its Partners and other humanitarian actors for visualizing, coordinating and disseminating information on a refugee emergency.

http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations

▪   **Who's doing what, where (3W)** – vital for UNHCR, its Partners and other humanitarian agencies in coordination and analysis of possible duplication and gaps in the response.

- **Common Operational Datasets and Fundamental Operational datasets** – used by UNHCR and its Partners to develop the baseline that underpins planning and response in a refugee emergency.

- **Information and data management strategy** - a plan that defines the purposes, outputs, time frames and responsibilities of all operational information services in an emergency. Used by UNHCR and its Partners in targeting their Information Management functions and activities.

- **Updates, Fact Sheets and other external communication materials** – used to inform external audiences, notably donors and other agencies, about the response of UNHCR and its Partners to a given emergency. These can be accessed through one or more of the following platforms:

    - Relief web: https://reliefweb.int/disasters

    - UNHCR Global Focus: http://reporting.unhcr.org/operations

    - OCHA Humanitarian Response: https://www.humanresp/ops

- **Communicating with affected populations** – facilitates two-way information sharing, gathering and feedback mechanisms between UNHCR and its Partners and Persons of Concern about their protection situation, their needs, and the effectiveness and quality of humanitarian programs, e.g. through refugee-led Facebook groups, call-in radio shows, community meetings, telephone or WhatsApp hotlines, complaints procedures.

- **Records / knowledge management** – required within UNHCR and its Partners as the basis for good governance and accountability in managing, sharing, storing and protecting records and information such as, registration data, case files, project information, reports, plans, Human Resource records, contracts, etc, in a safe and systematic manner.

UNHCR Information Management Toolkit

UNHCR's **Information Management Toolkit** sets the standard for the Information Management tools and products that UNHCR will deliver to its Partners, including: information provided by partners camp profiles, maps illustrating security phases and population movements, situational and Who's Doing What, Where (3W) information, disaggregated population, info-graphics, and other operational and analytical data. It is divided into sections covering core IM functions, objectives and activities needed in a refugee emergency, along with "how-to" guides for undertaking Information Management functions.

Step 2:   Collecting monitoring data

Project monitoring and verification should be undertaken by Partner organizations and UNHCR, individually and jointly over the life of the project. For example, monitoring early in the year supports the management of programming already underway. Whereas monitoring closer to year-end assists with effective reporting and planning for future interventions.

In principle the process should also include Persons of Concern and other stakeholders directly or indirectly impacted by the project. This is important in considering different perspectives and building ownership and commitment for follow up actions and resolutions. Tools for participatory monitoring include one-to-one informant interviews, group interviews, focus group discussions and specific monitoring committees.

Partners are generally responsible for collecting and validating data. This is shared with UNHCR through the reporting schedule specified in the Partnership Agreement (see Section 6.2.1). UNHCR's role is generally to verify the data to ensure quality and accuracy.

Effective **data management** is also an important part of the monitoring system. UNHCR is responsible for specifying any specific formats required for capturing data i.e. whether quantitative (numerical), qualitative (narrative), or both. Also, how the data should be organized (e.g., by location, by date, by objective). In addition, clear guidance should be given in relation to data storage, access controls required, and other data protection requirements (see Section 2.2.5 for further information).

Joint monitoring

The **IPMS Guiding Note on Joint Monitoring and Partner Feedback** incorporates 'Joint Monitoring Terms of Reference – Guiding Principles and Key Considerations' which has been developed to assist in defining the terms for joint monitoring and verification. Also refer to the Tips box below.

TIPS: Joint Monitoring and Verification

✓ All parties to the Partnership Agreement have a thorough understanding of the Agreement and the project results before commencing joint monitoring activities.

✓ Appropriate staff is designated from UNHCR and the Partner for all technical and/or financial and accounting matters.

✓ Before starting, all relevant primary sources of information (e.g. baseline thematic data, population information, project reports, etc.) are consolidated and shared.

	▪ Does the Project Performance Monitoring Plan require any tailored activities to meet these needs?
2. **Select methods for monitoring and review**	▪ What are the most appropriate monitoring and review methods and tools suited for the project, Partner and operational environment? ▪ What data collection methods are most relevant, effective, credible and useful? ▪ How will Persons of Concern be included in the monitoring of the project activities and results? ▪ How will collected information be recorded systematically, stored safely and reported?
3. Consider the frequency and time required	▪ How much time will be required to prepare for, undertake and document the monitoring and review activities? ▪ What is the planned frequency for each type of project monitoring and review activity? ▪ What events will trigger an increase or decrease in planned monitoring and/or review?
4. Identify the required skills, human resources, participants, funding and other resources	▪ Who will undertake the monitoring and review activity and report on results? ▪ What skills are required for these duties? Is training required? ▪ Do UNHCR and the Partner have sufficient expertise to monitor all elements of the project? What external expertise might be needed? ▪ What other resources will be required to support monitoring and review activities (ex. vehicles, escorts, drivers, equipment, etc.)?
5. Discuss and jointly prepare Project Performance Monitoring Plan	▪ Who should be involved in developing the Project Performance Monitoring Plan? ▪ Who must be informed of the project monitoring results for overall country implementation and coordination purposes? ▪ What inputs and agreements does the Partner need to provide? ▪ What coordination and communication channels are needed?
6. Regularly review the monitoring plan	▪ When and how frequently should the Project Performance Monitoring Plan be reviewed? ▪ What process should be followed for making any required adjustments?

2.2.4 Personal Data Protection

Taking adequate and effective measures to protect the personal data of Persons of Concern and UNHCR and Partner personnel and assure confidentiality is a vital element of protection and security management. UNHCR has strict requirements and procedures in relation to both which are articulated through Article 13 of the Partnership Agreement and set out in detail in the **Policy on the Protection of Personal Data of Persons of Concern to UNHCR.**

This Policy applies to all personal data held by UNHCR in relation to Persons of Concern whether processing takes place within one UNHCR office, between offices, or whether personal data is transferred to Partners or third parties. The Policy continues to apply even after persons are no longer of concern to UNHCR. As such, Partners should be aware of, and take the necessary measures to adhere to the policy requirements.

Basic Principles

The principles[28] set out in **Figure 12** below guide the way in which UNHCR and its staff are required to protect and process the personal data of Persons of Concern. Where the collection and processing of personal data is part of a Partner's responsibilities in undertaking their work with UNHCR, the Partner is expected to respect and adhere to the same or comparable principles and standards. This requirement applies whether UNHCR is transferring data directly to the Partner, or the Partner is collecting personal data in order to carry out agreed activities.

Figure 12: Basic Principles of Personal Data Processing

Legitimate and fair processing	Processing of personal data should be carried out in a fair and transparent manner and only on one or more of the following legitimate bases: ▪ With the consent of the data subject ▪ In the vital or best interests of the data subject ▪ To enable UNHCR to carry out its mandate ▪ Beyond UNHCR's mandate, to ensure the safety and security of Persons of Concern or other individuals
Purpose specification	Personal data needs to be collected for one or more specific and legitimate purpose(s) and should not be processed in a way that is incompatible with that/those purpose(s).
Necessity and proportionality	The processing of personal data should be necessary and proportionate to the purpose(s) such that, it should be

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[28] Policy on the Protection of Personal Data of Persons of Concern to UNHCR, 2015

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	adequate and relevant to the purpose, and not exceed that purpose.
Accuracy	Personal data should be recorded as accurately as possible and, where necessary, updated to ensure it fulfils the purpose(s) for which it is processed.
Respect for the rights of the data subject	The data subject should be given information about what data is being collected, how it will be used/shared and why. The data subject's rights to access, correction, deletion and objection to data that is processed should be respected.
Confidentiality	UNHCR and its Partners need to maintain the confidentiality of the personal data of Persons of Concern at all times, even after a data subject is no longer of concern to UNHCR.
Security	To ensure the confidentiality and integrity of personal data, appropriate technical and organizational data security measures need to be put in place. Transfer of personal data to third parties is limited to the condition that the level of data protection offered is comparable with UNHCR's requirements.
Accountability and supervision	To ensure accountability for the processing of personal data, adequate supervision structures need to be put in place.

Partner Obligations

Any information that is attained or shared between UNHCR and its Partners during, or subsequent to a project must be treated in confidence and must not be disclosed without the prior agreement of both parties. To ensure compliance with this requirement, Partners are required to make every effort to segregate all information that is provided by UNHCR or generated through the project they are working on, from any other information or data that is stored.

Irrespective of the terms of a Partnership Agreement, UNHCR may need to verify that the standards for processing of personal data by a Partner organization satisfy the requirements and basic principles of the UNHCR Policy. Such verification may form part of a Data Protection Impact Assessment. If deemed appropriate, UNHCR can assist a Partner in enhancing their capacity to comply with the required data protection standards through the establishment or adjustment of policies, delivery of training or putting the necessary technical and organizational measures in place.

During project implementation, the Partner must maintain appropriate measures and controls against accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorized disclosure or access to personal data. Any actual or suspected loss, damage or disclosure must be reported to UNHCR immediately. Similarly, any

Figure 49: UNHCR Project Monitoring Process
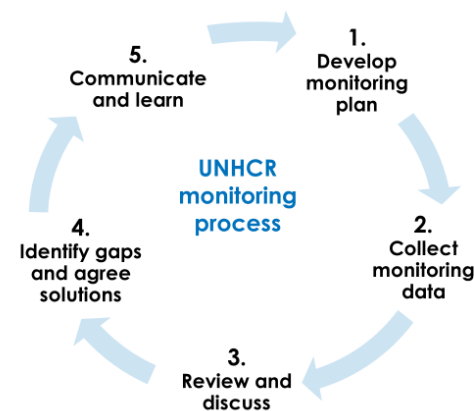
Step 1: Developing a Project Performance Monitoring Plan

UNHCR recommends that a Project Performance Monitoring Plan is developed jointly for any project that is being implemented in partnership. The plan should be completed within one month of signing a Partnership Agreement and can be implemented individually or jointly. It specifies how, when and by whom the performance and impact of a project will be monitored and verified and how the monitoring outcomes will be used. The Plans are reviewed by the UNHCR Head of Office and help to inform the overall monitoring of UNHCR's Operations Plan. Key components of a Project Performance Monitoring Plan are outlined in **Figure 50** below.

Figure 50: Components of a Project Performance Monitoring Plan [72]

Component	Key considerations
1. Establish the purpose for monitoring and target audience for the outcome	▪ How will progress against delivery of results within agreed budget and time frame be monitored? ▪ How will cross cutting issues such as gender mainstreaming, protection mainstreaming, and child protection be monitored? ▪ How will compliance with the general terms and conditions of the Partnership Agreement be monitored? ▪ Who requires information on the results of monitoring and review activities?

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[72] UNHCR Risk-Based Performance Monitoring and Control Toolkit, 2017

Figure 48: Understanding monitoring requirements of the Partnership Agreement

Section	Description	Monitoring objective
Project Description (refer to Section 5.2.1)	Stipulates performance specifications, such as baseline data, objectives, planned results, and indicators	To establish **actual performance against plans**, e.g. the project is achieving the expected results for the intended population
Project Resources (Budget; Personnel) (refer to Section 5.3)	Describes the agreed resources allocation for delivering the expected outputs	To establish that **delivery of project results and expenditure are achieved within the allocated resources**, and resources have been used as intended.
Project Work Plan and Instalment Plan (refer to Sections 5.2.2 and 5.4.4)	Shows the planned activities within timeline and resource requirements	To establish **delivery of project results and rate of implementation are within the planned time frame**
General Provisions (refer to Section 5.1.2)	Describes the project standard provisions	**Compliance** with the ethics, terms, responsibilities and obligations of the PPA and **adherence** with financial rules and regulations

6.1.2   UNHCR Project Monitoring Process

UNHCR follows five steps in the monitoring and review of projects that are implemented through its Partners[71], as illustrated in **Figure 49** overleaf. Individual Partners may have alternative steps or procedures that they use monitoring and review of their own projects, including those they are implementing in partnership with UNHCR.

complaint by an individual in respect of his/her personal data must be reported to UNHCR within five working days.

After termination of a Partnership Agreement, all personal data collected in the performance of the partnership should be returned to UNHCR. Partnership Agreements may provide for exceptions to this requirement, where there are legitimate reasons to do so, such as the consent of the data subjects.

RESOURCES

Coordination in Refugee Related Crises
- Refugee Coordination Model (RCM)
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/refugee-coordination-model
- Refugee Response Plans
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/refugee-response-plans

Coordination in Mixed Situations (Refugees and other Persons of Concern)
- Joint UNHCR-OCHA Note on Mixed Situations: Coordination in Practice (26 April 2014)
  http://www.unhcr.org/53679e679.pdf

Cluster Coordination and The Transformative Agenda
- Cluster approach and links to individual clusters
  https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/clusters
- Transformative Agenda
  https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-transformative-agenda
- IASC's Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level
  https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/cluster_coordination
- Humanitarian Programme Cycle
  https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/HPC
  http://www.buildingabetterresponse.org/course
- Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle
  https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/Protection_AAP_in_HPC
- Global Protection Cluster
  http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/index.html
- ICVA E-learning on Humanitarian Coordination
  https://www.icvanetwork.org/navigating-humanitarian-coordination

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[71] From the FIP Learning Module 3: Effective Project Partnership Undertaking

Information Management

- UNHCR Emergency Handbook – Information management
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/topic/14445/information-management
- UNHCR Data sources and data management (Displacement, operations, resettlement, global trends, statistics, protection)
  http://www.unhcr.org/uk/data.html
- UNHCR Information Management Toolkit
  http://data.unhcr.org/imtoolkit/
- Inter-Agency Refugee Response Portal http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations

Personal Data Protection

- Policy on the Protection of Personal Data of Persons of Concern to UNHCR, May 2015
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/55643c1d4.html
- Standard Format Bipartite Project Partnership Agreement (UNHCR with Non-governmental and other not-for-profit Partners):
  https://www.icvanetwork.org/Partnership_Agreement
- Protection Information Management principles and matrix, 2016
  http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/PIM quick ref flier
- UNHCR Information Management Toolkit
  http://data.unhcr.org/imtoolkit/events/index/lang:eng
- Handbook on Data Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2017
  https://www.icrc.org/en/publication/handbook-data-protection-humanitarian-action

6.1.1 Monitoring and Review of projects implemented with UNHCR

Purpose and Scope

UNHCRs monitoring of projects is part of its **Results Based Management** and Results Framework. The purpose of project monitoring and verification is to:

1. Determine whether interventions undertaken in partnership are progressing towards the expected outputs and objectives, in line with the allocated resources, timeframe and terms of the Partnership Agreement. This reflects the **project scope** described in Section 5.2.1.

2. Contribute to improving the quality and results of programming for Persons of Concern by generating the evidence required to adjust ongoing programming and make improvements for the future.

3. Provide data and information to report to donors, governments, Persons of Concern and other stakeholders.

The frequency, methods and schedule for project monitoring and verification should be informed by:

- The **risks** associated with the context, nature of project and nature of organization (UNHCR, Partner, others);
- The **likelihood** and impact of these risks to the project should they occur;
- The **criticality** of a project to the success of an operation.

Extensive monitoring and verification are likely to be needed for critical high-risk projects. For example, where the critical needs of Persons of Concern will not be met if the project fails to deliver. Section 3.1.3 provides further guidance on managing project risk.

Project monitoring must take account of both financial and programmatic aspects of a project. It is important to review previous project reports (performance and financial), mission reports, audits and reports on the management of supplies and assets. Time is also needed to ensure all relevant UNHCR and Partner staff have a thorough understanding of the Partnership Agreement. **Figure 48** overleaf indicates how each section of the Partnership Agreement relates directly to a monitoring objective.

Chapter 6: **Monitoring, Reporting, Audit and Closure of Projects**

Chapter 6 explains the ongoing requirements for project monitoring, verification and reporting by both Partner organizations and UNHCR. It describes the modalities for monitoring and review and sets out the timing and content for reports covering project performance, finance, personnel and use of assets and resources.

The chapter also provides guidance on UNHCR's risk-based approach to audit and explains the purpose, steps and timeline for the auditing process. Guidance is also provided on other aspects of project closure including final reporting, liquidation of funds and return or transfer of assets.

6.1 Monitoring and Review

Monitoring enables organizations to assess whether their activities are on track and achieving the desired results for Persons of Concern. This helps inform timely decision making and provides opportunities for building the capacity of those involved.

The monitoring of projects is part of UNHCRs overall monitoring approach which is comprehensive and includes the following components:

- Monitoring of overall protection and solution situation in a country or situation;
- Monitoring of overall refugee response results coordinated by UNHCR as set out in the Refugee Coordination Model;
- Monitoring of results achieved by UNHCRs and partners at impact and performance level. This includes project monitoring.
- Contribution to monitoring of results of joint strategies and initiatives, including inter-agency and wider UN plans e.g. **Humanitarian Response Plans**.

UNHCR and its Partners are responsible for monitoring their own activities in refugee, statelessness, IDP and mixed situations. UNHCR also has an obligation to monitor all activities implemented with UNHCR funds. In addition, UNHCR and its Partners should participate in and support inter-agency monitoring initiatives in refugee situations, as set out in the **Refugee Coordination Model and** IDP or mixed situations, as covered in the 2016 **Humanitarian Response Monitoring Guidance**. In both cases, every effort should be made to ensure consistency between inter-agency and UNHCR indicators and data collection mechanisms in order to simplify the monitoring process.

2.3 Principles and support for working in partnership

UNHCR implements its programs and activities directly or with partners. Globally, UNHCR establishes partnerships with a diverse range of governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental bodies, United Nations organizations and other not-for-profit organizations.

Partnerships are important for UNHCR as they constitute one of the most strategic ways of providing protection, assistance and solutions to Persons of Concern. However, it is critical that the understanding and approach to partnering with UNHCR is not limited to the concept of project-based activities, or provision of funding. Effective partnerships should support broader areas of collaboration such as advocacy and communications which also play a critical role in facilitating assistance and protection to Persons of Concern. Similarly, Partners need to contribute to the capacities and resources needed to maximise the impact and effectiveness of the collaborative partnership efforts.

2.3.1 Principles of Partnership

The relationship between UNHCR and its Partners is guided by a shared commitment to humanitarian principles and providing assistance, protection and solutions to Persons of Concern. UNHCR views this relationship as one of close and strategic partnership and makes a clear distinction between such partnerships and other commercial arrangements.

All activities implemented with Partners are guided by the Principles of Partnership[29], as set out in **Figure 13** below. Within a project, parties to the partnership play specific roles and undertake clearly defined tasks as stipulated in a **Partnership Agreement** (PA).

Figure 13: Principles of Partnership

Equality	**Equality** requires mutual respect between members of the partnership irrespective of size and power. The participants must respect each other's mandates, obligations and independence and recognize each other's constraints and commitments. Mutual respect must not preclude organizations from engaging in constructive dissent.

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[29] The Principles of Partnership were adopted in 2007 by the Global Humanitarian Platform and humanitarian organizations such as, the UN, the Red Cross and the NGOs

Transparency	**Transparency** is achieved through dialogue (on equal footing), with an emphasis on early consultations and early sharing of information. Communications and transparency, including financial transparency, increase the level of trust among organizations.
Results - orientated approach	Effective humanitarian action must be reality-based and action-oriented. This requires **result-oriented coordination** based on effective capabilities and concrete operational capacities.
	UNHCR uses a Rights-based Results framework which focuses on the rights and outcomes for Persons of Concern. See Section 2.1.2 for further details.
Responsibility	Humanitarian organizations have an ethical obligation to each other to **accomplish their tasks responsibly**, with integrity and in a relevant and appropriate way. They must commit to activities only when they have the means, competencies, skills, and capacity to deliver on their commitments. Decisive and robust prevention of abuses committed by humanitarians must also be a constant effort.
Complementarity	The diversity of the humanitarian community is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and **complement each other's contributions**. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build. Whenever possible, humanitarian organizations should strive to make it an integral part in emergency response. Language and cultural barriers must be overcome.

It is important to note the difference between the termination of a single Partnership Agreement and termination of partnership between UNHCR and a Partner organization. Termination of a single Partnership Agreement does not automatically result in the termination of partnership with that organization in all other projects and locations. While the termination of a Partnership Agreement is at the discretion of a UNHCR Representative, a decision on cessation of a partnership can only be taken at UNHCR Headquarters.

RESOURCES

Checklist for Preparing a Partnership Agreement

- IPMS Guidance Note 8: Management of UNHCR-Funded Partnership Agreements, Dec 2017
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

Amending a Partnership Agreement

- Project Partnership Agreement Amendment
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

Examples of How the Principles of Partnership Can Be Applied

✓ Jointly discuss difficult decisions such as budget cuts or termination of Partnership Agreements with Partners, ahead of time.

✓ Partners seek opportunities, as part of the 'Partner Contribution' to lever contributions from whole-of-society actors who are not themselves UNHCR Implementing Partners.

✓ Partners proactively engage in participatory assessments and planning with UNHCR.

- A partner discriminates against Persons of Concern, including discrimination due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion, gender or affiliation with social groups.

- A partner demonstrates behaviour that is found to be in gross violation of humanitarian and partnership principles, including a violation that damages the credibility or reputation of UNHCR.

- A partner misuses or misdirects UNHCR resources (financial and property) and fails to take appropriate remedial action.

- A partner fails to carry out all or parts of the agreed work in the Partnership Agreement.

- A partner's financial status leads to any one of the following: appointing a receiver; being judged as bankrupt, is liquidated or becomes insolvent; and/or the partner makes an assignment for the benefit of its creditors.

- A partner is found in violation of laws, using of child labour, related to corruption or involved in anti-personnel mine manufacture.

- A partner is found to be in gross violation of the terms, conditions or requirements of the Partnership Agreement and fails to take remedial action.

- A partner fails to take all possible measures to prevent its personnel from exploiting and abusing Persons of Concern or fails to investigate allegations of the same and to take disciplinary and corrective actions when misconduct is found to have occurred (see Section 1.3.3).
- A significant curtailment or termination of UNHCR's mandate or funding mandate in the country of operation. UNHCR must inform the partner without delay in the event of such a situation.

The process of termination is complex and sensitive. It requires that both parties develop a joint action plan for winding down the Agreement, and all subsequent steps are jointly agreed and recorded which include termination with cause.

In the event of termination, the Partner will be reimbursed by UNHCR for all reasonable costs incurred prior to the notice of termination, provided these costs are not more than the funds made available under the signed Partnership Agreement and they relate to work and services conforming to the terms of the Partnership Agreement. UNHCR is not liable for any expenditure or obligations made in advance, or in excess of remittances disbursed, unless expressly authorized by UNHCR.

When a Partnership Agreement is terminated, UNHCR no longer has any obligations under the Agreement or liabilities for compensation. Moreover, the Partner must return all unspent funds and any UNHCR property in its possession. The Partner should be informed of these matters in writing to avoid any misunderstanding or disputes.

✓ Jointly discuss how gaps in operational priority areas can be addressed through both UNHCR and Partner resources.

✓ Conduct regular, structured consultation meetings between all parties to a Partnership Agreement.

✓ Partners raise issues of shared interest or concern outside a formal partnership and collaborate in addressing it e.g. agreed advocacy messaging, or coordination approaches.

Further examples are included in the UNHCR Introduction to the Framework for Implementing with Partners (refer to Section 3.2.1)

2.3.2 Partner Consultation Process

UNHCR is committed to working in partnership and the number and diversity of its Partners continues to grow. In addition to a shared commitment to the **Principles of Partnership**, the effectiveness of these relationships depends on an established and regular practice of interaction, communication, coordination, and information sharing.

High Commissioner's Structured Dialogue on UNHCR-NGO-IFRC Partnership[30]

At the end of 2011, the former High Commissioner called for a review of the quality of partnership between UNHCR, the IFRC and NGOs, which became known as the **HC's Structured Dialogue**, with the broad goal of achieving mutual respect and trust evidenced through open communications, transparency in decision making, and clear accountabilities between UNHCR and Partners.

This led to 10 recommendations[31] to strengthen the application of partnership principles in practice. The need for joint planning and analyses, for good information-sharing was underscored, as well as transparent dialogue at field level. The specific areas of advocacy, capacity development for local actors and partnership in urban refugee settings were identified as providing opportunity for closer and more strategic collaboration. **Figure 14** overleaf sets out some of the ideas for applying the recommendations in practice. It was agreed that problem resolution should primarily be handled at field level where regular and frank dialogue between UNHCR and Partners should facilitate this.

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[30] http://www.unhcr.org/high-commissioner-structured-dialogue-with-ifrc-and-the-ngos.html
[31] Joint assessment and analysis, prioritization and strategic planning; information-sharing; developing advocacy positions and strategies; IDP; Statelessness; strengthening capacity for collective response; urban; review current for a for dialogue; complaint mechanisms and progress report.

Figure 14: Some Ideas and Next Steps for Applying the Recommendations in the Field

Recommendation	How it translates in practice
Strengthen interaction and coordination with all humanitarian actors, **to facilitate common approaches to coordinated assessment, planning and monitoring of performance**	- NGOs are included in participatory assessments and planning initiatives - NGOs participate in evaluation and monitoring exercises - Coordination meetings and information management in refugee emergencies and UNHCR led clusters effectively serve the needs of UNHCR's partners - NGOs with expertise in coordination of specific technical areas are engaged - Key NGO partners are consulted on significant policy developments and upcoming challenges
Expand partnership opportunities at national and regional **levels, particularly in** advocacy **and in** urban settings	- Use the guidance note on advocacy[32] to jointly analyse, plan and prioritize priorities ahead of time, and clarify partner roles - Mutually engage and consult formally and informally on specific issues as they emerge - Ensure that significant regional initiatives have broad NGO participation - Engage Partners in jointly implementing the urban refugee strategy; refer to best practices and lessons learned.
Strengthen national NGO capacity **through partnerships with UNHCR and INGOs. Build on complementarity capacities and previous lessons learned.**	- Explore approaches to and resources for capacity-development with INGOs and relevant NNGOs, identifying which areas and partners are involved - Identify gaps in UNHCR's operational priorities and discuss if and how these could be addressed jointly through existing UNHCR and NGO resources (human and financial), especially among INGO Partners that prioritize capacity development in their missions/mandates

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[32] https://intranet.unhcr.org/content/intranet/unhcr/en/home/support_services/humanitarian_partnerships0/bilateral_and_multilateral/ngos/_jcr_content/mainpar/multidownload_1/multidownloadItems/multidownloadfile_0/file/file.res/Guidance%20note%20on%20partnership%20in%20advocacyFINAL.pdf

No Cost Extension

The UNHCR budget period ends on 31 December. Therefore, no expenditure or commitments can be made beyond this date. Any further commitment of funds or implementation of Project activities beyond this date requires written authorization from the UNHCR Controller.

In exceptional circumstances a **no-cost extension of the project implementation period and/or liquidation period** beyond the dates specified in the Partnership Agreement could be authorized by the Controller. If such extension is granted, it should be recorded in a Partnership Agreement Amendment before the end of the Partnership Agreement implementation period (not later than 31 December).

Requests for extension of the Project Implementation Period and/or Liquidation Period must be put forward by UNHCR Offices to the Controller during the

last quarter of the Project Implementation Period. The deadline for such requests is usually specified in the UNHCR year-end accounts closure internal instructions.

Once the extension of the Project Implementation and/or Liquidation Period is authorized, the requesting UNHCR Office will be informed by IPMS about the approved extension dates, including the date the final reports and Project audit reports are due.

Terminating a Partnership Agreement

Termination is the cessation of a Partnership Agreement prior to the end of its implementation period, the details of which are set out in Article 13 of the Partnership Agreement. Termination may be initiated by UNHCR or the Partner organization **without cause** at any time by giving 90 days advance written notice. Such a termination is extremely rare, given the potential impact on the other party – and both parties must ensure that there is no negative impact on the Persons of Concern. UNHCR may terminate a Partnership Agreement **with cause**, at any time and with immediate effect. Situations that may lead to the termination of a Partnership Agreement by UNHCR[70] with cause, include:

- A partner is sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council Committee on Sanctions pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) or the partner is proven to have been supporting, directly or indirectly, individuals and entities associated with those sanctioned by the Sanctions Committee.

- A partner is charged or found to be complicit in corrupt activities, including crimes against humanity and war crimes, or becomes involved in activities that would render the organization unsuitable for working with Persons of Concern.

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[70] From UNHCR Program Manual Chapter 4, 9th July 2017

TIPS: Mitigating Risks to Successful Partnership Engagement [69]
Thoroughly review and check that: ✓ Project rationale and implementation arrangements are well articulated and understood by UNHCR and the Partner. ✓ Deliverables and expected results are well-defined. ✓ All inputs have been fully and realistically costed and they are clearly linked with the expected deliverables. ✓ Potential project risks have been fully assessed and mitigation measures are integrated into the project management arrangements. ✓ Planning and timing of project activities is accurate and realistic, and appropriate resource requirements are identified. ✓ There is sufficient clarity and understanding of the terms and conditions of the Partnership Agreement across relevant UNHCR and Partner staff.

5.5.2 Amending and Terminating a Partnership Agreement

Amending a Partnership Agreement

An amendment to a Partnership Agreement will be needed if any of the following situations arise:

- the scope of the project changes (e.g., PPG, goal, rights groups, objectives, sites or situations change);

- there is a significant increase/decrease in the number of beneficiaries;

- there is significant modification of the budget within the Partnership Agreement value (e.g., certain budget lines increase or decrease substantially);

- the budget is increased beyond the Partnership Agreement value; and/or

- the project implementation period requires adjustment.

In such cases, a Partnership Agreement amendment must be issued by UNHCR to formally recognize and record the agreed modifications, using the standard **Partnership Agreement Amendment template**. All parts of the original agreement that are unchanged remain valid. Amendments must be signed by the duly authorized personnel of UNHCR and the Partner organization. If the project implementation period needs to be extended into the following year, additional approval is needed from the UNHCR Controller.

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[69] From UNHCR Enhanced FIP, Processes, Risks and Solutions, Aug 2015

Resolve problems **at the field level, without fear of retaliation**	▪ Maintain an open-door policy at senior level and ensure NGO partners have access to the relevant UNHCR Representative ▪ Make difficult decisions such as budget cuts, or termination of Partnership Agreements through transparent criteria and discuss with respective Partners ahead of time and in a respectful way (bilaterally) ▪ Maintain regular information sharing and coordination meetings to keep Partners abreast of the situation and of the rationale for possible changes in strategy which may affect them ▪ Use problem resolution mechanism when issues need to be addressed through senior staff or HQs.

Since 2014, ICVA and InterAction have supported roll-out of the recommendations from the Structured Dialogue through workshops in the DRC, Pakistan, Kenya, Chad, Lebanon, Myanmar Greece, and regional workshops for West Africa, Central America and Asia. A **review of lessons learned** in 2016 has led to a narrower focus on specific themes and priorities for strengthening partnership at field level.

http://www.unhcr.org/HC-structured-dialogue-with-ifrc-ngos.htm

https://www.icvanetwork.org/doc00005442.html

Channels for Partners to Engage and Access Support and Guidance

There are several teams in UNHCR with a specific role in supporting and consulting with Partners. The ICVA, InterAction and several regional networks also play a focal role in facilitating dialogue and information sharing – refer to **Figure 15** below for further details.

Figure 15: UNHCR Staff and Others Supporting Partner Consultation

UNHCR Departments and Services	
UNHCR Partnership and Coordination Service – Partnership Section	The PCS promotes and facilitates more effective partnerships with traditional and non-traditional partners, collaboration and coordination leading to better and more predictable protection and solutions for Persons of Concern. PCS works closely with the Executive Office coordinating UNHCR's institutional positions and policies on partnership and coordination, including both humanitarian and development issues.

(PCS)	The Service manages bilateral partnerships with UN agencies, NGOs and consortia; organizes the Annual Consultations with NGOs as well as the follow-up of the HC Structured Dialogue; services the Executive Office for their high level meetings with NGOs; facilitates the contribution of NGOs to policy discussions through their statements in ExCom, Standing Committees and any other relevant UNHCR meetings; organizes briefings for NGOs on specific operations and liaises with NGOs and bureau to address a variety of partnership issues.
Implementing Partnership Management Service (IPMS/DFAM)	The IPMS leads UNHCR's efforts to strengthen strategic partnership and operational management. It leads the development of policies, procedures, guidelines, training programs and provides support to UNHCR and its Partners in application of the Framework for Implementing Partners (see Section 3.1.1). IPMS also leads in implementation of the risk-based approach to management, ensuring greater accountability and compliance, and strengthening the capacity of Partners and UNHCR. The Service manages the audit certification of UNHCR-funded projects implemented through Partners. IPMS can be contacted at epartner@unhcr.org.
Global Learning Centre	The Global Learning Centre coordinates, designs and delivers learning activities for UNHCR staff – and to some extent for Partners. It provides a diverse range of programs using distance and face-to-face methodologies. https://unhcr.csod.com/client/unhcr/default.aspx

International Council of Voluntary Organizations (ICVA)

ICVA is a global network of NGOs whose mission is to make humanitarian action more principled and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice. It plays a key role in supporting engagement, consultation and dialogue between UNHCR and its Partners through:

- working in partnership with UNHCR to organize, coordinate and report on the annual UNHCR-NGO Consultations
- facilitating several working groups for the exchange of information, debate and policy development around key issues of relevance to working with Persons of Concern
- facilitating consultations, gathering input and drafting NGO statements for ExCom meetings, committees and the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection

https://www.icvanetwork.org/

implementation. Payment of the first instalment from UNHCR should also be paid within ten working days of the date that the Agreement comes into force.

Timely signing of Partnership Agreement is very important. Delays in signing the Agreement and releasing funds can generate risks for Partners, delay project implementation, and have a negative impact on Persons of Concern. Significant delays may also affect cash flow, lead to losses or requests for recovery of additional costs from UNHCR or, render parts of the Partnership Agreement such as planned activities invalid, requiring revision of the Agreement. Where there is a risk of delays, it is advisable to agree a timeline reflecting the actual situation with realistic lead times, benchmarks and deadlines, for authorizations and other potential challenges.

TIPS: Avoiding Delays in Project Implementation

✓ Agree realistic reporting requirements (**refer to 6.2.1**). Ensure that these are clearly stated in the Partnership Agreement, scheduled well in advance and the Partner has blank copies of all templates.

✓ All changes to the Partnership Agreement project description, work plan or budget should be made before 31st December to avoid delays.

✓ Conclude signing of the Partnership Agreement in December to ensure timely commencement of activities from January.

✓ Assign responsibilities for timely monitoring and verification of activities in line with the plan.

✓ Ensure both parties have an original signed copy of the Agreement

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Implementing in Emergencies

There are several special measures which allow UNHCR to respond rapidly and flexibly through its Partners in a sudden onset emergency.

- Mapping of current and potential Partners as part of preparedness or contingency planning;

- Issuing of a Letter of Mutual Intent to Partners to kick start project implementation while a standard Partnership Agreement is being prepared (refer to Section 5.1.1 for templates and further details);

- Issuing of a waiver by the UNHCR Controller if there is insufficient time for a full Partner selection process (refer to Section 3.3);

- Direct procurement of goods or services by UNHCR for a joint intervention by a Partner and UNHCR.

First instalment paid	Within 10 days of signing Partnership Agreement	UNHCR
Subsequent instalments paid	As per the instalment plan (see Section 5.4.3)	UNHCR
Monitoring of project activities and project goods and property	Ongoing, as outlined in the Partnership Agreement	UNHCR and Partner
Joint monitoring	In accordance with requirements specified in Partnership Agreement	Partner and UNHCR
Preparation and submission of project reports (see Figure 51)	Quarterly and/or as specified in the Partnership Agreement and when instalments are requested	Partner
Verification of Partner reports and follow up, documentation	In a timely manner following submission of reports	UNHCR
Verification of goods and property (where applicable)	Final quarter of project implementation	Partner and UNHCR
Finalization of implementation	31 December (unless the project duration is shorter, or an extension is authorized)	Partner and UNHCR
Project liquidation (see Section 6.4.1)	31 January (unless the project duration is shorter, or an extension is authorized)	Partner and UNHCR
Final project reporting (see Section 6.4.1)	Not later than 15 February (unless the project duration is shorter, or an extension is authorized)	Partner
Project audit reports submitted to Headquarters	Not later than 30 April	Partner, UNHCR, auditors

UNHCR and the Partner organization are jointly responsible for finalizing and signing the Partnership Agreement in a timely manner. Before any activities begin, the Partnership Agreement must be signed by duly authorized personnel from both parties. However, in exceptional cases and if agreed and stated in 'Project Implementation Period' clause of the Agreement (Article 3.2), implementation of the project may start earlier than the signature date. In this case, the Agreement comes into force from the date specified in Article 3.2 as the effective start date of

InterAction

InterAction is an alliance organization of NGOs which share a commitment to working with the world's poor and vulnerable, and a belief in making the world a more peaceful, just and prosperous place – together. It is based in Washington D.C. and serves as a convener, thought leader and voice for its community through mobilizing its 180+ members to think and act collectively, maintain high standards, respect human dignity and work in partnership.

InterAction plays a key role in supporting engagement, consultation and dialogue between UNHCR and its partners through:

- convening working groups on topics related to partnership with UNHCR and other UN agencies, protection programming and the protection of civilians in armed conflict
- enhancing NGO voice and engagement on protection in inter-agency fora, such as the Global Protection Cluster and the IASC

https://www.interaction.org/

Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN)

The Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network is an open network of more than 320 civil society organizations and individuals from 28 countries committed to advancing the rights of refugees in the Asia Pacific region through information sharing, mutual capacity building, and joint advocacy.

https://aprrn.info/

Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies (VOICE)

VOICE is an NGO network promoting effective humanitarian aid worldwide since 1992. VOICE promotes the values of its 85 member organizations and is the main NGO interlocutor with the European Union on emergency aid and disaster risk reduction.

Members of VOICE are dedicated to practicing good humanitarian aid and saving lives and are active in different sectors of humanitarian aid and in all countries affected by natural disasters, armed conflicts and emergency situations.

https://ngovoice.org/

The European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)

ECRE is a pan-European alliance of 95 NGOs protecting and advancing the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons. ECRE's mission is to promote the establishment of fair and humane European asylum policies and practices in accordance with international human rights law.

https://www.ecre.org/

Coalition of African NGOs (CoAN)

The Coalition of African NGOs, CoAN, joins together African NGOs from all corners of the continent working together to address the impact of forced displacement due to disaster, conflict and to advocate for development and human rights in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The mission of CoAN is to bring together African NGOs to share ideas, experience and knowledge in shaping the response to the humanitarian and developmental challenges; disaster displacement and conflict. CoAN uses its unique identity to influence national, regional and global policies, working in close partnership with local communities, affected populations, global actors and governments.

Forums for Partner Consultation, Collaboration and Feedback

There are also several forums in place which aim to support and strengthen the collaboration and relationship between UNHCR and its Partners, as outlined below.

The High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges	In 2007, UN High Commissioner for Refugees launched the first in a series of Dialogues on Protection Challenges. This annual event provides an important, informal forum for open exchange of views between states, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, the academic and research community, and other stakeholders on new or emerging global protection issues. At the close of the meeting, the HC summarizes the discussions and highlights elements for follow up.
	Recent topics for discussion have included: The global compact on refugees and learning from application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (2017); Children on the Move (2016); Protection at Sea (2014) and Faith and Protection (2012). http://www.unhcr.org/uk/high-commissioners-dialogue.html
Annual Consultations with NGOs	The UNHCR Annual Consultations with NGOs is a major and unique event that provides an important forum for debate on global and regional themes and an opportunity to explore fresh collaboration on advocacy and operational issues.
	The Consultations have become an appreciated networking event for the community working on displacement and protection issues and offer interaction with all UNHCR's senior managers, including the High Commissioner.
	Every year, over 500 representatives from around the world attend the Consultations in Geneva, co-organized by ICVA

5.5 UNHCR Modalities for Managing Partnerships

5.5.1 Managing a Partnership Agreement

Comprehensive guidance on the correct formats and requirements for managing a Partnership Agreement are set out in the **IPMS Guidance Note 8: Management of UNHCR-Funded Partnership Agreements** which must be referred and adhered to by UNHCR staff and shared with all relevant Partners.

Signing a Partnership Agreement

Partnership Agreements are normally signed for a calendar year from 1 January to 31 December. They may be signed at different times or for shorter periods depending on the specific requirements and operating context. However, in all cases the completion date of the Partnership Agreement can be **no later than 31 December** of the budget year. Refer to **Figure 47** below for guidance on the recommended completion, submission, and approval timing for different elements of the Partnership Agreement cycle.

Figure 47: Timing for Main Elements of the Partnership Agreement Cycle [68]

Activity	Timing	Responsibility
Partner participates in development of Operations plan	February/March	Partner and UNHCR
Partner selected for project implementation	Recommended latest by October	UNHCR
Agreement reached on project activities, including objectives, budget, performance targets, etc.	Recommended by November	Partner and UNHCR
Partnership Agreement documents finalized (main body and annexes)	Recommended by December	Partner and UNHCR
Partnership Agreement signed	Latest by 31 December for implementation as of 1 January	Partner and UNHCR

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[68] Extract from UNHCR Program Manual (Chapter 4) Section 4.8.7

RESOURCES

Financial Management and Controls
- UNHCR Strategic Framework for the Prevention of Fraud and Corruption, July 2013
  http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5433a4e54.pdf
- Partnership Agreement Annex C-2: Instalment Plan
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal
- Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, 2015
  https://hr.un.org/handbook/index/8254

Procurement
- IPMS Guidance Note 4 Rev1: Procurement by Partners under Partnership Agreement, Jan 2018:
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal
- UN Procurement Manual, v7, 2013
  https://www.un.org/ProcurementManual
- UN Supplier Code of Conduct
  https://www.un.org/Depts/ptd/about-us/un-supplier-code-conduct

Goods and Property
- Agreement for the Receipt and Right of Use of UNHCR Assets (RoU)
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal
- Agreement on Transfer of Ownership of UNHCR Assets and/or Project Goods and Property
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal
- Partnership Agreement Annex D: Goods and Property Report
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

and UNHCR. They are open any organization that meets at least one of the following criteria[33]:

- is a member of ICVA;
- has consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council;
- is an implementing Partner for UNHCR in the current or preceding year;
- is an operational Partner for UNHCR (with recommendation from a UNHCR Office).

https://www.unhcr.org/annual-consultations-ngos.html

Regional Consultations with NGOs	The aim of the regional consultations is similar, i.e. to exchange with the widest possible range of NGOs and civil society actors concerned with forced displacement and statelessness, to network, align advocacy, and discuss policy and operational issues. The seven decentralized UNHCR regional bureau will hold their own regional NGO consultations as from 2020.
Annual Survey on the State of UNHCR-NGO Partnerships	The annual survey on the state of UNHCR-NGO partnerships began in 2014, commissioned by the IPMS to track partnership dynamics and develop a body of evidence on perceptions of these partnerships. The surveys have been facilitated by HIAS, and in 2017, jointly with InterAction. Separate but almost identical surveys are sent to UNHCR Country offices and to NGO Partners. https://reliefweb.int/unhcr-ngo-partnership-survey-2017
UNHCR ExCom Annual Plenary and Standing Committee Sessions	The annual ExCom meeting is attended by ExCom member states (refer to Section 2.1.1), other UN member states, specialized UN agencies, Intergovernmental organizations, and NGOs meeting the ExCom criteria. After the opening, the High Commissioner makes the Annual Statement, then the meeting takes the form of a debate in which ExCom members will make interventions and comment on the Statement. The intervention on behalf of NGO members is coordinated and delivered by ICVA. After the debate, there are discussions around other issues and concerns, including a report on outcomes from UNHCR's Annual Consultation with NGOs. http://www.unhcr.org/uk/executive-committee.html

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[33] UNHCR Partnership Section and ICVA, A Guide for NGOs Participating in UNHCR's Annual Consultations with NGOs

Annual Network Organizations' Meetings	The Network Organizations Group (NOG), established by UNHCR in June 2012 upon the recommendation of the Field Reference Group (FRG), is comprised of approximately twenty (20) persons, including representatives of NGO Networks, UNHCR Senior Staff from Bureaus as well as Divisions and representatives of the FRG.
	The NOG is expected to play important roles in the roll-out and field application of the Enhanced Framework for Implementing with Partners. These roles include: (1) regularly share information and knowledge about the Framework with the respective constituencies; (2) participate in annual meetings to provide feedback from these constituencies on the status of the global roll-out of the Framework; (3) identify and highlight gaps that require additional guidance and support; and (4) provide input on drafts for further development of the Framework, should this be required.
Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR)	The Annual Tripartite Consultation on Resettlement is an annual meeting between UNHCR, Resettlement States and their national NGOs, and selected INGOs and International organizations. This forum plays an important role in raising awareness and building consensus around issues such as reception, referral and resettlement of refugees, planned UNHCR and Partner resettlement activities, and policy issues. Participating NGOs include those working with refugees in host countries and countries of resettlement.
	http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a2cd39e6.html

2.3.3 Capacity Strengthening with Partners

UNHCR has a strong and increasing commitment to working in partnership, as a means of addressing the growing scale and complexity in protecting, assisting and finding durable solutions for Persons of Concern. To achieve this, the need to strengthen and diversify partnerships is also one of the overarching themes of UNHCR's 2017-2021 strategy[34]:

"We will give strong priority to extending and strengthening partnerships in ways that make the most effective use of available resources and expertise…... We will make particular investments in strengthening our collaboration with national and local partners, working to complement and reinforce national capacities, with an emphasis on sustainability."

The Instalment Plan forms the basis for calculating the remittances to be transferred to the Partner's nominated bank account, Instalments can only be transferred in the currency of the project budget and to the nominated bank account which must bear the official name of the Partner as it appears on the Partnership Agreement.

The first instalment payment is made by UNHCR upon signature of the Partnership Agreement by all parties and within ten working days following the date that the Agreement comes into force i.e. date of the last signature. (Refer to Section 5.5.1 for guidance in relation to exceptional circumstances when a project may have to start prior to signing an Agreement by all parties).

Subsequent instalments will be made subject to:
- availability of funds;
- receipt, verification and approval of the project financial report(s) (see Section 6.2.3);
- receipt of a duly justified request from the Partner for a cash transfer to be made;
- checking that the amount of the requested instalment is commensurate with the Partner's actual performance;
- checking that the payments made are in line with the rate of implementation.

Any unauthorized or ineligible expenditures and unsubstantiated reports may be rejected by UNHCR and the respective funds recovered. At the end of the project period, any unspent balance remaining from previous instalment(s) must be reimbursed to UNHCR (refer to Section 6.4.1 for further information on project closure).

Project implementation can lead to changes in the planned activities and funding requirements, necessitating revisions to the Instalment Plan. However, such changes do not require an amendment of the Partnership Agreement.

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[34] http://www.unhcr.org/unhcrs-strategic-directions-2017-2021

Return, Disposal and Transfer of Goods and Property

In all cases, unless UNHCR opts to transfer the ownership of specific items, all Goods and Property acquired or received by the Partner must be transferred back to UNHCR:

- upon completion of the Project
- at the request of UNHCR
- upon termination of the Partnership Agreement, unless otherwise agreed upon in writing.

The return, transfer or disposal of Goods and Property, including items that are damaged or broken, must be approved by UNHCR. Whatever decision is taken by UNHCR in relation to the return, disposal or transfer of Goods or Property, it must be approved, documented and copied to the Partner (refer to Section 6.4.2 for reporting details).

5.4.4   Transfer of Instalments to Partners

The transfer of funds (instalments) to Partners by UNHCR is made in line with the planned activities, as described in the Work Plan (Annex C-1). During preparation of the Partnership Agreement, the details and timing of the financial resources required to implement the project should be negotiated and agreed between UNHCR and the Partner and should be documented in the Indicative Instalment Plan (Partnership Agreement Annex C-2). As the scope of different Partnership Agreements varies, there is no standard or typical Instalment Plan. Some projects can have 4 instalments, while others may have only 2 or 3.

TIPS: Transfer of Instalments

✓ Align the timing of instalments with key outputs in the Work Plan to ensure that there is sufficient funding in place for contracting the services or procuring the goods required

✓ Ensure there are sufficient instalments planned to meet cash flow requirements, for example for cash-based interventions

✓ Regularly monitor the receipt of instalments from UNHCR and follow up promptly in the event of delays

✓ Allow at least one additional month lead time for each period that a given instalment tranche is expected to cover to ensure adequate cash flow. For example, if an instalment is planned for the first quarter, it should cover the funding requirements for 3 months of the first quarter, plus funding for an additional month's activities to allow sufficient lead time before release of the next instalment.

This echoes the commitments made by the international community during the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 through the Grand Bargain[35]. The second work stream in the Grand Bargain around 'localization' commits to[36]:

- Increase investment in the institutional capacities of local and national responders
- Work to remove barriers to partnering with local and national responders
- Support and complement national coordination
- By 2020, direct at least 25 per cent of humanitarian funding to local and national responders
- Develop and apply a 'localization' marker to measure this funding
- Increase use of funding tools that facilitate local delivery of assistance

Strengthening National and Local Capacities

The importance of strengthening national and local capacities was one of the main outcomes of the High Commissioner's Structured Dialogue on UNHCR-IFRC-NGO partnership in 2012 which recognized that **"while any NGO – UNHCR partnership arrangement has to ensure it focuses on achieving effective assistance; it needs to also build mutual capacity for ongoing effectiveness and sustainability".**

Suggested recommendations from the Structured Dialogue included that[37]:

- UNHCR develop an institutional strategy for strengthening capacity in its work with NGOs;
- UNHCR work with NGO Partners and other UN agencies to develop country capacity strengthening plans;
- A Capacity Strengthening plan and budget for national/local capacities should be built into NGO UNHCR partnership agreements.

The importance of capacity strengthening has been raised repeatedly through the annual UNHCR-NGO consultation forum with increasing concern that capacity strengthening should not be left to chance. It needs to be a planned and proactive process on the part of UNHCR and its international and national Partners, including articulation of measurable capacity building commitments with the Partnership Agreement. Greater attention should also be given to the benefits and arrangements for two way or mutual learning such that local actors, including refugees and host communities contribute to building the knowledge and capacity of international actors through knowledge of local networks, ways or working and contextual expertise.

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[35] The Grand Bargain – A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need
https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-hosted-iasc
[36] https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/TheGrandBargain
[37] http://www.unhcr.org/strengthening-capacity-unhcrngo-partnerships

Furthermore, effective and sustainable local refugee response capacity is dependent on recognizing and supporting local capacities that extend way beyond NGOs. Support must be provided for and tailored to the needs of refugee-led community-based organizations, particularly models where there is co-leadership by members of the host community and refugees. Success of the whole-of-society approach advocated for in the New York Declaration[38], depends on a long-term commitment to working with and building the capacity of a broad range of local and national actors.

Capacity Gaps and Strategies to Address Them

In response to the recommendations from the 2012 High Commissioner's Structured Dialogue, UNHCR's IPMS commissioned a collaborative capacity mapping exercise by UNHCR and its international and national NGO Partners. The main gaps which emerged included[39]:

- lack of trained staff and problems with staff retention
- lack of financial resources
- lack of indicators to measure capacity strengthening organizational visibility, linked to resource mobilization
- qualified staff to lead capacity strengthening and managerial activities
- effective systems, procedures and manuals (Human Resources, finance, procurement)

Operational Guide for Complementary Capacity Strengthening for UNHCR and its NGO Partners has been developed collaboratively by UNHCR and a reference group of Partner organizations. It outlines various initiatives and strategies for fostering mutual collaboration and capacity strengthening between UNHCR and its Partners (refer to the box below for further details). The aim is to secure a more effective and contextualized response that reinforces local capacities and secures better protection outcomes.

Strategies for Capacity Strengthening with National and Local Actors [40]

✓ Prioritize community outreach activities to develop the capacity of front-line responders

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[38] http://www.unhcr.org/5a18304f7.pdf
[39] Operational Guidelines for complementary capacity strengthening for UNHCR and its NGO partners, March 2017
[40] Drawn from annual UNHCR-NGO consultations and the Operational Guidelines for complementary capacity strengthening for UNHCR and its NGO partners, March 2017

Agreement. Depending on the circumstances, separate Agreements may need to be signed for different items:

- **Agreement for the Receipt and Right of Use of UNHCR Assets (RoU)** - which serves to record receipt of UNHCR Goods and Property by the Partner and outlines specific clauses in relation to their use. The Partner must sign the Agreement as acknowledgement of receipt of the correct Goods and Property. Their value should not be included in the Project Budget. However, they must be recorded and tracked by the Partner.
- **Agreement on Transfer of Ownership of UNHCR Assets and/or Project Goods and Property** - which sets out the conditions for transfer of ownership of Goods and Property to the Partner or a third party.

UNHCR retains the right to recall its property or assets at any time, should they be required in another project, in case of breach (e.g. misuse of the asset for other purposes than the intended) or termination of the contract.

Partner Responsibilities in Relation to Goods and Property

- The Partner is responsible for the proper custody, maintenance and any damage and loss, theft and third-party liability in respect of Goods and Property. Any costs for repair/replacement which are more than what is provided in the Project Budget will require written authorization from UNHCR.
- The Partner should acquire the appropriate type and level of insurance coverage in accordance with local legislation and practice. Adequate budgetary provisions should be made for such insurance
- UNHCR must be informed of any compensation awarded from a claim against any insurance policy funded by UNHCR. The amount received should be treated as miscellaneous revenue received by the Partner.
- Any vehicles provided in-kind by UNHCR as part of UNHCR Goods and Property will remain part of UNHCR Global Fleet Management (GFM). These vehicles will have UNHCR GFM Vehicle Insurance. The UNHCR Office should make any necessary provisions to reflect vehicle rental and insurance charges for UNHCR vehicles in the Project Budget.
- The Partner is responsible for tracking, verification and maintaining proper records for both UNHCR and Project Goods and Property.
- The Partner is required to provide information about UNHCR and Project Goods and Property twice a year through the **Goods and Property Report** (Annex D to the Partnership Agreement). Guidelines on the full reporting requirements can be found in the document. UNHCR should in turn regularly monitor and verify this information as part of their monitoring activities.

confirming the urgency of the situation, together with any other comments on the application.

If the evaluation determines that the applicant's procurement manual, policies and procedures are compatible with the provisions of this Guidance, the applicant will be granted the PQP status for a period of maximum five years. The Partner will also be added to the list of Partners with PQP status recorded on UNHCR's intranet, on the Partner Portal and on the UNHCR public website www.unhcr.org/supply.

If there are changes to a Partner's Procurement manual or procedures, or if their PQP status expires, the Partner must submit a request to renew its pre-qualification status. In the event of expiry, this request must be submitted before 1st March of the 5th year.

5.4.3 Goods and Property Management

Goods and Property refers to any tangible or intangible items which are in the custody of the Partner to support implementation of agreed activities in addressing the needs of Persons of Concern. These may consist of:

- **UNHCR Goods and Property**: items provided in-kind by UNHCR to the Partner (known as 'UNHCR Assets' and recorded in UNHCR's accounts and MSRP system).
- **Project Goods and Property**: items acquired by the Partner with UNHCR funds. **IPMS Guidance Note 4 Rev1: Procurement by Partners with UNHCR Funds** provides guidance on the procedures for procurement.

Such items may include any or all the following:

- **Property, Plant and Equipment** (e.g. vehicles, structures, buildings, etc.) Tangible items with a unit value of US10,000 or more, and a useful life of at least one year;
- **Serially Tracked Items** (e.g. desktop computers, network printers, satellite transmitters, etc.) Tangible items used for day-to-day business with a unit value of less than USD10,000, that do not fit in with the category of 'Property, Plant and Equipment' or 'Inventories';
- **Inventories** (e.g. tents, blankets, kitchen sets, etc.) All items intended for distribution to the Population of Concern irrespective of their value; or
- **Intangible Assets** (e.g. software, licenses and rights, copyrights, etc.) Identifiable non-monetary value assets without physical substance.

In addition to the standard clauses in the Partnership Agreement (under Article 12), there are two types of Project Property Agreement which must be completed as appropriate to the proposed use of the Property. The appropriate Agreement must be signed by UNHCR and the Partner at the time of finalising the Partnership

- ✓ Recruit refugees and host community members to foster opportunities for exchange of knowledge and skills, and learning
- ✓ Access and draw on available capacity strengthening guidance and resources (see list below)
- ✓ Extend and open-up training and learning opportunities for UNHCR, its Partners and other national and local actors.
- ✓ Establish capacity strengthening focal points in UNHCR and its Partners (including ICVA and InterAction)
- ✓ Engage in capacity strengthening fora and discussions at country level
- ✓ Undertake or contribute to capacity mapping at country level to identify key capacity gaps and effective mechanisms for addressing them
- ✓ Explore/learn from other capacity strengthening initiatives to determine potential methodologies and opportunities for collaboration
- ✓ Support initiatives which facilitate two way and mutual learning through 'twinning programmes', peer-to-peer support, 'North-South partnerships', intensive training, and linking national NGO Partners to private sector corporations.
- ✓ Develop collaborative capacity strengthening strategies/plans between UNHCR, NGO Partners and national and local actors
- ✓ Incorporate capacity strengthening activities in existing partnership agreements and funding proposals

Capacity Strengthening Resources Available to Partners

A diverse range of guidance, resources and online or face to face-based training materials are freely available to support general understanding around capacity strengthening and develop capacities in specific technical areas. **Figure 16** below provides links to some of these resources.

Figure 16: Capacity Strengthening Resources

Description of Resource	Content/Purpose	Access
Guidance and Tools on How to Implement Capacity Strengthening		
Community Capacity Strengthening Resource Guide - Save the Children http://www.sc.org/CommunityCS	Guide for capacity strengthening with communities	Open access

Capacity Building for NGOs Manual - Progressio http://www.progressio.org.uk/CB-manual	Guide for capacity building with local partners	Open access
Finance capacity building resources - MANGO https://www.mango.org.uk/capbuilding	Extensive finance guidance, tools and resources for NGOs	Open access
Capacity development resources - PACT http://www.pactworld.org/resources	Resources and tools for capacity development	Open access
Resources or Tools for General or Technical Capacity Strengthening		
UNHCR - Learn and Connect portal facilitated by the Global Learning Centre https://unhcr.csod.com/Learn&Connect	Technical training and resources	UNHCR & Partners only
CaLP (Cash Learning Partnership) Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool http://www.cashlearning.org	Self-assessment tool for cash transfer programming	Open access
Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action http://alnap.org	Wide range of resources on humanitarian action	Open access
Disaster Ready – online training and learning portal https://www.disasterready.org/	Humanitarian training and learning resources	Requires sign up
Kaya – online training and learning portal https://kayaconnect.org/	Training and learning resources	Requires sign up
All In Diary – online and hard copy humanitarian guidance http://allindiary.org/information	Resources on humanitarian action	Open access

1. Partners carrying out activities on an international level with entities in several countries might be entitled to gain the global PQP status that is applicable to all countries where the Partner operates;

2. Partners that only carry out activities at a country level – even if members of an international Family/Federation, are only entitled to gain the PQP status to operate in a single country.

Process for Attaining Pre-qualification for Procurement (PQP) Status

To be considered for a project involving procurement values in excess of USD 100,000, Partners that do not already have either international PQP status, or PQP status in the country of project implementation, will need to apply for PQP status. Assessment of PQP status for a Partner is conducted independently from the Partner selection and retention process and is conducted by UNHCR's Procurement Service.

To apply for PQP status, a Partner:
- must be registered in the Partner Portal;
- must submit a request for Pre-qualification;

Partners may also request and be granted PQP status even if no Partnership Agreement is currently envisioned. This PQP status can be a valuable contingency measure in emergency-prone areas.

The evaluation process to determine the granting of a PQP status involves review by UNHCR's Procurement Service, of the compatibility of the Partner's procurement policies and procedures with the provisions of **Guidance Note 4 Rev1 (Annex 2)**. It is not an evaluation of the Partner's capacity and capability to perform effective procurement in a given operation. Such a capacity and capability assessment are conducted separately by the UNHCR Country Office as part of the Partner selection process.

To apply for PQP status, the Partner must submit the following documents via email, the Partner Portal, or via the UNHCR Head of Office if there is poor internet connectivity:
- Scanned version of completed "Partner Procurement Self-Assessment Check List for Application for Pre-qualified for Procurement (PQP) Status" signed by an authorized person (Head of Supply or Representative of the Partner Organization) (see **Annex 1 of Guidance Note 4 Rev1**).
- A copy of their Procurement manual detailing procurement policy and procedures as well as any procurement related sample forms for evaluation.

In emergency situations, a Partner can submit an urgent request for pre-qualification in accordance with the procedure described above. In this situation, the submission should be accompanied by a declaration by the UNHCR Office

Requirements for Partners to undertake procurement values of more than USD100,000 under one Partnership Agreement

If the expected procurement value under a single Partnership Agreement is USD 100,000 or more, then any Partner being considered the Agreement and this level of procurement must:

- demonstrate sufficient capacity (actual or potential human and logistics resources for undertaking procurement at the required scale) and experience in undertaking effective and efficient procurement of similar size, specification and within the same or similar operating environment;
- have current PQP status covering the country in which the Partnership Agreement is to be signed, unless the Partner falls under the exemptions of paragraph 19 of Guidance Note 4 Rev1.

Figure 46: Partner Requirements for Pre-Qualification for Procurement

Procurement of Goods and Services Below USD100,000	Procurement of Goods and Services Above USD100,000
The Partner does not need to be pre-qualified for procurement.	The Partner needs to be prequalified for procurement i.e. has PQP status
Partner signs the agreement and in doing so: - Confirms that it has the capacity to undertake procurement up to a value of USD100,000; - Commits to conduct procurement in line with UNHCR procurement principles and standards outlined in Guidance Note 4 Rev1; - Complies with the terms of the Partnership Agreement	Partner signs the agreement and in doing so: - Confirms that it has the capacity to undertake procurement of a value of USD100,000 or more; - Confirms that it has a valid Prequalified for Procurement (PQP) status granted by UNHCR that covers the country in which the Partnership Agreement is signed; - Complies with the terms of the Partnership Agreement - Informs UNHCR if its procurement rules, policies or procedures change.

There are two types of PQP status that could be obtained by Partners, depending on the extent of their activities:

Chapter 3: **Establishing an Effective Partnership**

Chapter 3 addresses the principles, policies and procedures used by UNHCR in governing and managing its partnerships, to provide quality assistance and protection to Persons of Concern.

It sets out policy guidance for registering, selecting and retaining Partners and outlines the measures used to mitigate risks and assure accountability to donors and Persons of Concern.

3.1 Framework for Implementing with Partners

3.1.1 The Framework for Implementing with Partners

In 2015, UNHCR developed the **Framework for Implementing with Partners (the Framework or FIP)** in consultation with its Partners and other stakeholders, as illustrated in **Figure 17** below.

Figure 17: Representation of the Framework
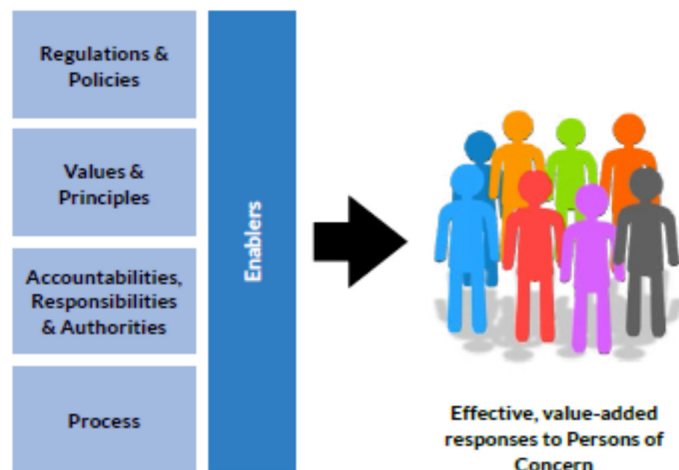
It provides guidance for UNHCR and its Partners on governing policies, principles and operating procedures for:

- **Proper Vendor Management -** proper evaluation, pre-qualification and registration and effective management of vendors are carried out.
- **Customs and Taxation -** maximize the use of any tax exemptions available under the Partner's charitable status.
- **Documentation of Procurement Actions -** all actions to be fully and transparently documented.

Organizational Structure and Duties

The Partner must have a clear organizational structure delineating and assigning the authority, responsibility and accountability for procurement. Partner employees assigned such delegated authority for procurement, finance and other relevant functions must be properly trained.

A Partner Committee on Contracts must be established. The acquisition processes followed must comply with the applicable policy and procedures for procurement of goods and services. The organizational structure as well as the authority, responsibility and accountability of each function must be documented.

When UNHCR is assessing whether to entrust procurement to a specific Partner, it must verify that the Partner's procurement rules, regulations and practices are compatible with:

- UN/UNHCR Key Procurement Principles,
- UNHCR ethical standards in procurement; and
- A systematic approach that maintains control measures for effective management of procurement processes.

When a Partner contracts goods and services from a supplier, the Partner will be fully responsible for all work and services performed by that supplier, and for all acts and omissions committed by the supplier or its employees.

TIPS: Procurement Obligations

- Partners should refer to the **IPMS Guidance Note No. 4 Rev1: Procurement by Partners with UNHCR Funds** for full details of their obligations in relation to undertaking any procurement activities.

- Partners are advised to use the **Partner Procurement Self-Assessment Checklist** (Annex 1 of Guidance Note 4 Rev1) to review and verify whether they have the required procurement policies and procedures in place, and whether these meet the required standards for compliance with Guidance Note 4 Rev1.

quotes are required, vendors should be given at least 3 days to submit a quote which must be in writing. Quotes may only be opened after the deadline for submissions.

Formal Solicitation Method - involves the submission of sealed/secure bids/proposals submitted by a publicly announced deadline. Tender documentation should be publicly available, promoting fair access to all potential suppliers in the market and provide clear guidance on the solicitation provisions, including evaluation criteria.

Exception to the Effective Competition Principle - may apply in circumstances such as the absence of a competitive marketplace, price fixing through regulation or legislation, use of recent comparable competitive bidding results, specific standardized requirements – see Guidance Note 4 Rev 1 for full details. Any such waiver of competitive solicitation must be taken by the Partner Head of Office and fully justified and documented in writing.

Ethics in Procurement

Procurement must be undertaken in an ethical manner, with total impartiality, and without any preferential treatment. Partners must not condone corrupt and fraudulent practices or any other form of misconduct including:

- **Conflict of Interest -** where the private or personal interests of Partner staff interfere or appear to interfere with performance, obligations or impartiality.

- **Breach of Confidentiality -** where confidential information is disclosed putting vendors at an advantage or disadvantage and/or harming the reputation of the Partner organization and/or UNHCR.

- **Gifts and Hospitality -** where the acceptance of gifts by Partner staff constitutes or suggests the provision of favourable treatment to a vendor or other entity.

- **Proscribed Practices -** which can occur at any stage of the acquisition process and include fraud, corruption, collusion, bribery, coercion, extortion, bid rigging, unethical behaviour. Refer to Guidance Note 4 Rev 1 and the UNHCR Handbook on Fraud and Corruption Prevention, Detection and Reporting (in **Resources box**) for further guidance.

- **Suppliers Code of Conduct -** Partners have standards for their vendors, along with sanctions to reduce the risk of corrupt practices in procurement. Suppliers should only be contracted if they perform satisfactorily and ideally in accordance with the principles in the UN Supplier Code of Conduct regarding labour, human rights, environment and ethical conduct.

Other Essential Requirements

- **Segregation of Duties -** all actions in the procurement process, contract management and payment processes are properly authorized, and appropriate segregation of duties is ensured.

- providing quality assistance and protection to Persons of Concern, and

- accountability for the resources entrusted to UNHCR and its Partners by donors.

The Framework for Implementing with Partners embeds UNHCR's commitment to the Principles of Partnership (see **Section 2.3.1**), along with appropriate risk management and measures for adequate project oversight. It consists of four main work-steps (set out in **Figure 18** below) that reflect the project management process and give equal consideration to operations, accountability and effective partnership with the aim of achieving the best results for Persons of Concern.

Figure 18: Overview of the Framework for Implementing with Partners (FIP) [41]

Work Steps	Content
1 Establishment of effective partnership	▪ Partner registration and use of the Partner Portal ▪ Partner selection and retention processes
2 Proper partnership engagement	▪ Partner engagement in the needs assessment and development of a project ▪ Understanding the Partnership Agreement ▪ Preparation of a Partnership Agreement ▪ Concluding a Partnership Agreement
3 Effective project partnership undertaking	▪ Project monitoring ▪ Joint monitoring and review ▪ Project risk management and verification ▪ Project reporting
4 Project Partnership closure and smooth disengagement	▪ Project audits ▪ Final project reporting ▪ Review and evaluation ▪ Terminating of a Partnership Agreement ▪ Ordinary project closure ▪ Feedback mechanisms to and from Partners

This Partner Handbook reflects the structure of the Framework for Implementing with Partners in order to maintain consistency in the presentation and contents of guiding policy, principles and procedures for Partners. Training materials on the

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[41] Based on Framework for Implementing with Partners Learning Program: Introduction to the Framework for Implementing with Partner s

Framework for Implementing with Partners are accessible via the Partner Portal and further information can be found in the **Resources box** at the end of Section 3.1.

3.1.2 Risk Based Approach

UNHCR adopts a risk-based approach to managing partnerships to enhance the outcomes for Persons of Concern and improve stewardship and accountability of the resources used through partnerships.

DEFINITIONS

Risk is an uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, has a positive or negative effect on objectives. A risk can be a threat or an opportunity, and sometimes it can be both.

The treatment of risks that deal with negative consequences are sometimes referred to as "risk mitigation", "risk elimination", "risk prevention" and "risk reduction" measures.

There are various types of risks – internal and external – that can affect a project's ability to achieve its objectives as set out in **Figure 19** below.

Figure 19: Major Project Risks and Their Potential Impact

Operational Risk	Negative impact on achievement of planned results for Persons of Concern resulting from a partnership arrangement that is not best suited to the needs of Persons of Concern, or the operating environment.
Reputational Risk	Negative impact on either or both parties to a Partnership Agreement due to: ▪ weaknesses in the partnership or operational processes or competencies; ▪ poor matching of Partner mandates, interests or values, and/or poor, unethical or unprofessional conduct; ▪ inability of UNHCR to implement its Operations Plan
Financial Risk	Mismanagement and/or loss of resources entrusted to the project by either party.
Compliance Risk	Negative impact on achievement of planned results for Persons of Concern due to non-compliance with the terms of the Partnership Agreement, donor requirements or UNHCR rules and regulations, in general.

- It brings added value in addressing needs of Persons of Concern (e.g. local conditions, specific technical expertise, operational efficiency, cost savings)
- There are compelling circumstances (e.g. urgency)

Partners are obliged to comply with the **IPMS Guidance Note No. 4 Rev1: Procurement by Partners with UNHCR Funds** in relation to all procurement activities that they are authorized to carry out. Furthermore, they must have:

- The capacity and capability to procure the required goods and services in the quantity, quality, location and time frame needed, and in a cost effective and efficient manner;
- Successfully completed the process of selection or retention for a Partnership Agreement;
- Have a signed Agreement with UNHCR detailing the procurement requirements, and stipulating the mutually agreed responsibilities, obligations and terms, including clauses on delegated authority for procurement by the Partner;
- Adopt standards comparable with UNHCR's principles, policies and practices for procurement (a summary is provided in **Figure 45** below) and comply with the policy and procedures outlined in **Guidance Note 4 Rev1**. Annex 2 of the Guidance Note sets out the key criteria for assessing compatibility.

Figure 45: Summary of UNHCR Procurement Principles, Ethics, Conduct and Accountability Requirements [67]

Procurement Principles

Procurement is undertaken based on the following principles:
- Best value for money;
- Fairness, integrity and transparency through effective competition;
- Effective international competition; and
- Best interests of the organization

Compliance of Procurement Solicitation with the Procurement Principles

Distinct Thresholds - the threshold applied by Partners to trigger a formal solicitation method (e.g. competitive bidding) should not be materially higher than the threshold set by UNHCR. Clear triggers for all forms of formal and informal solicitation must be in place.

Informal Solicitation Method - does not require a formal competitive bidding process i.e. a simple Request for Quotation is sufficient. At least three valid

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[67] Extract from Guidance Note 4: Procurement by Partners with UNHCR Funds, Nov 2014

the time and place that they are needed and in the most cost-effective and efficient manner. The **procurement process** includes specification of requirements, sourcing, evaluation of offers/proposals, contract award, inspection, delivery, installation and commissioning resulting in the provision of the required goods and/ or services.

It is UNHCR's policy to limit procurement by Partners to those occasions when the Partner has a clearly proven advantage, such as awareness of local conditions, specific technical expertise, operational efficiency, cost saving, or compelling urgency. The procurement of core relief items, medicines and vehicles is normally done centrally by UNHCR and not delegated to Partners.

Determining Procurement Requirements

UNHCR plans its procurement requirements well in advance. This involves two stages:

1. As part of the operational planning process, the IPMC and UNHCR Office undertake a comparative advantage analysis to determine whether procurement through partnership is more advantageous than direct procurement. Authority to approve the entrusting of procurement to a Partner sits with the UNHCR Head of Office.

2. If procurement through Partners is recommended, it should be included in the Call for Expression of Interest to Partners during the Partner selection process. As part of the selection process for Partners, the IPMC will then need to assess whether potential Partners have the required human and logistics capacity to undertake procurement of the required type and scale (see **Section 3.3.3**). For procurement values of more than USD 100,000 under one Partnership Agreement, potential Partners are required to have pre-qualification for procurement (PQP) status with UNHCR (see further details below).

Once the Partner selection process is completed and the UNHCR Head of Office has made a decision to entrust procurement to a Partner, the requirements must be included in the Partnership Agreement and supporting project procurement plan. The UNHCR office should also make every effort to support the Partner in obtaining exemption from the relevant authorities for all relevant taxes and duties for the purchase and importation of goods and property for humanitarian purposes.

General Requirements for Partners to Undertake Procurement

A Partner can undertake procurement under a Partnership Agreement subject to UNHCR's assessment of its procurement capacity, and when:

The Framework for Implementing with Partners also incorporates policies, procedures and tools to mitigate each of the major risks as set out in **Figure 20** below. This starts with a process to select the best Partner's to work with in order to meet specific needs and deliver the required results in a given situation and moves on to consider risks associated with design, implementation and control of a proposed project.

Figure 20: Risk Mitigation Measures Taken in Each Step of the Framework for Implementing with Partners

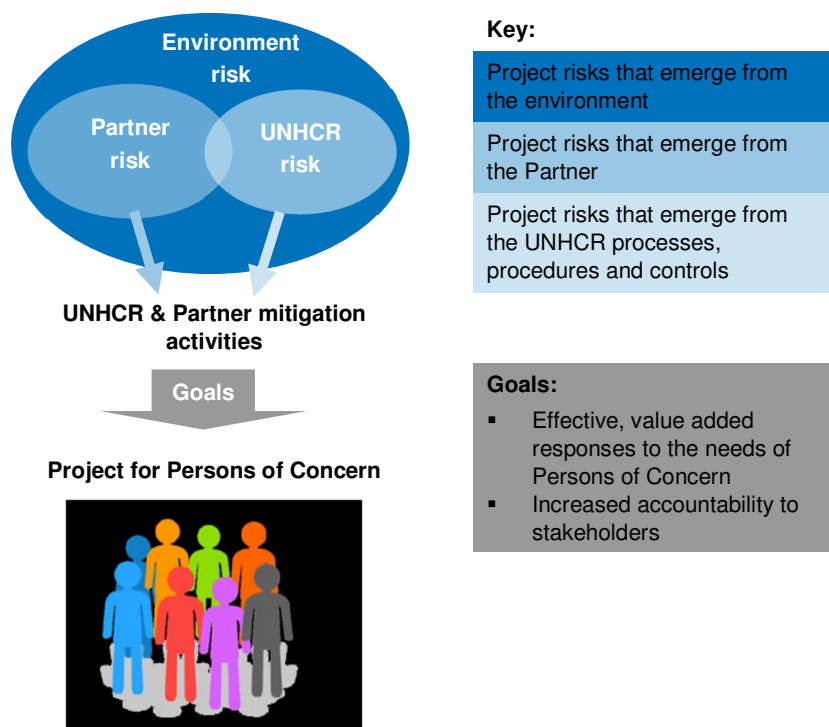| Work steps	Risk mitigation measures
1. Establishment of Effective Partnership by UNHCR	✓ Verification of Partner profile, values, interests and mandates ✓ Use of a selection process to identify the Best-fit Partner for a given project and operating environment
2. Proper Partnership Engagement by Both Parties	✓ Timely and well-prepared Partnership Agreement ✓ Jointly and well-designed project
3. Effective Project Partnership Undertaking by Both Parties	✓ Compliance with terms of the Partnership Agreement ✓ Proper project control, monitoring and follow up ✓ Deployment of appropriate capacity and personnel ✓ Funds and resources made available on time by UNHCR. ✓ Regular coordination, communication and joint reviews
4. Partnership Closure and Smooth Disengagement by Both Parties	✓ Timely submission and verification of reports ✓ Adequate guidance and planned/timely closure, disengagement and phase-out ✓ Commitment to accountability and recovery of unspent balances ✓ Sound audit quality, professional conduct, and systematic follow-up on audit findings

3.1.3 Managing Project Risks

Project risk management is used to identify and address key factors that could potentially impact on:

- Delivery of the intended objectives and expected results (impact and performance) of a project
- Completion within the agreed time frame
- Completion within the agreed project budget and resources

Establishing the Risk Context

Both UNHCR and its Partners assume project risks and share mitigation responsibilities in relation to assessing, planning and implementing a project as illustrated in **Figure 21** below.

Figure 21: Project Risk Context

Key:

Project risks that emerge from the environment
Project risks that emerge from the Partner
Project risks that emerge from the UNHCR processes, procedures and controls

Goals:
- Effective, value added responses to the needs of Persons of Concern
- Increased accountability to stakeholders

Project risks should be identified and analysed in relation to the operating environment, the different stakeholders involved, along with the time frame.

5.4 Finance and Resource Management Requirements

5.4.1 Financial Management

UNHCR is accountable to its donors and its Executive Committee for the funds entrusted to provide protection, assistance and solutions for Persons of Concern. To fulfil this obligation and comply with the **Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations**, UNHCR requires specific financial accountability on the part of its Partners.

The minimum requirements for financial accounting and record keeping by UNHCR's Partners are specified in the Partnership Agreement and related Annex documents: Annex B, C-2 and E. Provision is also made to allow UNHCR to audit Partner accounts and conduct visits to Partner offices to verify the content of project reports by inspecting the Partner's accounting records.

UNHCR prefers its Partners to maintain a separate bank account for recording and controlling the funds received from UNHCR. However, if, for legal, administrative or economic reasons, the use of separate accounts is not feasible and use of a pooled account is warranted, the Partner will need to seek approval from the relevant UNHCR Head of Office before signing the Partnership Agreement. The approved use of a pooled account should be reflected in the Agreement and all income and expenditure from UNHCR funds must be clearly traceable and auditable.

Partners are expected to maintain accounting records in sufficient detail to allow all receipts, commitments and disbursements of Project funds to be readily identifiable. Accounting records should include a general ledger accounting system (hard copy or computerized), bank statements and reconciliations, a cash book to record receipts and disbursements, inventories of non-expendable Goods and Property, staffing records and employment contracts, purchasing contracts, building contracts and sub-contracts. Documentation should also include back-up material to substantiate the accounting records, such as receipt and payment vouchers (identifying who paid/received money to/from whom, when, how much and for what), commitment records, bid documents and analyses, receiving and distribution reports, project reports and audit reports.

Partners should maintain their accounting records in a way which facilitates the required reporting to UNHCR, i.e. the accounting system should be detailed enough to provide the receipt, commitment and disbursement information necessary for each budget line item at Account level, in the Project budget.

5.4.2 Procurement

Procurement is undertaken to provide the required quantity and quality of goods and services required in addressing the identified needs of Persons of Concern at

Partners should budget for and report on PICSC as a single budget line against the following MSRP fields:

- **Objective:** **811** – Operations Management, Coordination and Support Strengthen and Optimised
- **Output:** **811AH** – General project management service provided
- **Account:** **611000** – Partner Integrity Capacity and Support Cost

The actual amount paid as PICSC by UNHCR will be based on actual programmatic expenditure (not the budgeted expenditure). It is paid as part of the instalments transferred to the Partner. At the end of a Project, the total PICSC will require adjustment based on the final actual expenditure of the Project, before the final Project Financial Report is submitted.

A detailed breakdown and reporting of itemized expenditure is not required for PICSC however, Partners are advised to retain relevant information supporting the expenses incurred and use of PICSC in covering these expenses. UNHCR reserves the right to conduct random checks to verify that the PICSC funds provided have been spent on the intended purpose described in the Partnership Agreement and IPMS Guidance Note No. 3 (rev 2).

RESOURCES

General Guidance on Budgeting

- MANGO
  https://www.mango.org.uk/guide/budgeting

Relevant Annex Documents to the Partnership Agreement

- Annex C-2: Indicative Instalment Plan
- Annex E: Partner Personnel List

  All Annex documents can be found at:
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

Guidance on Costing Project Personnel

- IPMS Guidance Note 7: Partner Personnel, 1st Jan 2017:
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

Guidance on Costing Headquarters Costs

- IPMS Guidance Note No. 3 (Rev. 2): UNHCR's Contribution towards Partner Integrity Capacity and Support Costs, May 2019 (revised)
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

Monitoring and review of the risk context is needed throughout a project, along with regular communication and consultations with all relevant stakeholders.

Some risks may be unpredictable, others may be linked to the operating environment and therefore go way beyond a specific project. Some may have existed for a long time and others may emerge in the future.

Risk Management Process

There are four stages in the risk management process which help to ensure that the most critical risks are identified, and appropriate measures are taken where possible to mitigate the negative impact that they might have on a project:

Stage 1: Identifying the risks – this involves generating a list of risks based on those events that might prevent, enhance or delay the achievement of a project's objectives. It is also important to consider the risks associated with either pursuing, or not pursuing an opportunity or course of action.

Stage 2: Analysing the risks identified – this involves detailed consideration of the causes and sources of individual risks, their possible positive and negative impacts and the likelihood of their occurrence.

Stage 3: Evaluating the risks – this involves comparing the level of each risk identified and its significance to the project's ability to achieve its objectives. The risks can then be prioritised based on those with the highest likelihood (i.e. almost certain, likely, possible, unlikely) and level of impact (i.e. low, medium, high, extreme) on the project.

Stage 4: Addressing the risks – this involves selecting one or more options for modifying or mitigating the most serious risks selected in the previous evaluation stage. The four options for addressing risks are:

TOLERATE	Tolerating (accepting or retaining) a given risk means accepting the risk as-is and accepting it based on an informed decision. This means that exposure to the consequences of the risk may be tolerable without taking further action e.g. remote management
TREAT	Treating (controlling or reducing) a given risk is achieved by taking actions aimed at containing the risks at an acceptable level e.g. replacing a vendor if there is a risk of delay
TRANSFER	This involves partly or fully transferring risks to a third party. Typical examples include insuring against security risks or fraud.

TERMINATE	This involves disengaging from an activity which presents a risk that is beyond an acceptable level. This option may be severely limited for UNHCR due to obligations under its mandate.

Some of the common factors or sources of risks that Partners and UNHCR will need to consider when identifying, assessing and evaluating the risks of a project are set out in **Figure 22** below. It is also important to consider the interrelation between the sources and impact of risks, as the effect of one risk can compound the likelihood of another. For example, a combination of a large-scale sudden onset emergency in a country with weak government capacity and less experienced Partners presents a higher overall risk of project shortfalls than one or two of these factors in isolation.

Figure 22: Sources of Risks Related to the Operating Context

Environmental Risks

- Types of operation (i.e. emergency, protracted, phase-out)
- Country profile including existing political, economic and security situation
- Other environmental factors that may affect achievement of the project

Partner Risks

Performance

- Capacity and experience (managing similar projects, internal controls, financial management)
- Historical performance working with UNHCR / other UN organizations
- Outcome of previous project monitoring and audit

Project Profile

- Level and type of UNHCR resources provided for the project
- Project activities (e.g. cash-based initiatives, construction activities, high value procurement)
- Sub-delegation of implementation to third parties

UNHCR Risks

- Timely support and guidance to Partners and project (signing Partnership Agreement, release of funds, verification and feedback)
- Policies, procedures and controls
- Presence in project locations

Project Risk Register

Partners may be required to participate in developing and maintaining a Project Risk Register under a Partnership Agreement as part of UNHCR's risk management procedures. The register is developed during project planning and

2). The Partner must also commit to using the PICSC in accordance with the objectives set out in paragraph 1 of this policy.

Calculation of PICSC Allocations

PICSC is calculated and contributed as a flat rate of the overall programmatic expenditure[65] under a Partnership Agreement as set out in **Figure 44** below. There are no longer specific categories of expenditure which are excluded from the calculation of PICSC (as previously applied in relation to PHSC).

Figure 44: PICSC Allocations for Different Partner Organizations

Partner	% flat rate of overall programmatic expenditure
Non-governmental International Partners (as defined above)	7%
Non-governmental National Partners (as defined above)	4%
International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other UN system organizations	Respective applicable Interagency rates[66]

Any diversion from the rates set out above must be approved by UNHCR before a Partnership Agreement is signed, or at the time that funding is extended to the Partner. The Partner should submit its request and rationale for any diversion from the flat rate to the respective UNHCR Country Office which will then seek approval from UNHCR Headquarters through the relevant internal procedures.

Use and Reporting on PICSC

Partners can use the funds contributed by UNHCR under PICSC at their own discretion to support headquarters, regional, country or branch office operational costs, in order to achieve their overall humanitarian objectives and/or project goals. As such, Partners are no longer restricted in using these funds to cover headquarters costs, as was the case under the previous policy.

[65] Programmatic expenditure is defined in IPMS Guidance Note No. 3 (rev 2) as all expenses under the Project Budget of a Partnership Agreement covering all costs except costs allocated under the budget line for PICSC.
[66] These are the interagency rates and reciprocol arrangements for covering 'support costs' which apply among UN agencies. The prevailing rates at the time will be applied

Partnership Agreement[64] for undertaking programmatic activities. Its main purpose is to enhance UNHCR support to Partners by introducing the concept of Partner Integrity Capacity and Support Costs (PICSC) which replaces Project Headquarters Support Costs (PHSC) or 'Headquarters Overhead Costs' or 'Recovery Costs' which are terms that may be more familiar to some NGOs.

acts as a live document which is updated and reviewed throughout the course of a project.

Responsibility for maintaining the Project Risk Register is shared between UNHCR and the Partner allowing those involved in the project to be kept aware of risks and provides a means of tracking the response to risks.

DEFINITIONS

Partner Integrity Capacity and Support Cost (PICSC) - is defined as the support provided by UNHCR to it Partners to cover expenses for enhancing integrity, accountability, oversight, as well as administrative and other support (such as headquarters and shared costs) which cannot be definitively attributed to a specific activity implemented by the Partner in connection with the projects carried out under a Partnership Agreement.

In the context of PICSC:

Non-governmental National Partners include Non-governmental and other Not-for-Profit organizations that operate solely in the country where their headquarters are established;

Non-governmental International Partners include International NGOs and other Not-for-Profit partners that operate both within and outside the country where the organization has been incorporated, including those that undertake projects under the Global Programme from their headquarters location.

Partners should identify themselves as National or International partners through registration on the UN Partner Portal.

RESOURCES

Framework for Implementing with Partners (FIP)

- A range of background information and guidance on the Framework for Implementing with Partners
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partner portal

- Partner Portal – providing comprehensive guidance and training in relation to the Framework for Implementing with Partners and working in partnership with UNHCR:
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

Risk Based Management

- MANGO Risk Register template and sample:
  https://www.mango.org.uk/guide/riskregister

Eligibility for PICSC

A Partner qualifies for a UNHCR contribution towards its PICSC when the following criteria are met:

- The Partner is an International or National Non-governmental Partner (as defined above) for undertaking programmatic activities;

- UNHCR and the Partner have signed a relevant Partnership Agreement for undertaking a Project within UNHCR's Operational Plan and the Partners commits to comply with its terms and provisions; and

- The payment of UNHCR's contribution to PICSC is stipulated in the Project Budget (Annex B) of the signed Partnership Agreement. The rate must be budgeted and applied in accordance with IPMS Guidance Note No. 3 (rev

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[64] Refer to Section 5.1 for further details

3.2 Due Diligence Partner Registration

3.2.1 Pre-Requisites for Partnership

UNHCR collaborates with a diverse range of Partners in fulfilling its mandate, including governmental bodies and institutions, other United Nations organizations, NGOs, private sector, research bodies and academia. Before being considered, a prospective Partner must register on the **UN Partner Portal** and demonstrate that it meets the five core prerequisites (or eligibility criteria) for partnering with UNHCR as set out in **Figure 23** below.

Figure 23: Pre-Requisites for Partnership

1	The prospective Partner must confirm that it is not on, or associated with, an individual, groups, undertakings and entities that are listed by the Security Council committee established by the **UN Resolution 1267**.
2	The prospective Partner must confirm that it has not been charged with or complicit in corrupt activities, including crimes against humanity and war crimes, and has not been involved in the past with such activities that would render the organization unsuitable for dealing with UNHCR or working with Persons of Concern, including failure to appropriately address incidents of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (refer to Section 1.3.3).
3	The prospective Partner must confirm that it will not discriminate against any refugee or Person of Concern, regardless of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, gender or social groups.
4	The prospective Partner must confirm that it is committed to abiding by the Principles of Partnership (equality, transparency, a results-oriented approach, responsibility and complementarity).
5	The organization confirms that it will comply with all clauses of the UNHCR Partnership Agreement when implementing UNHCR-funded projects.

TIP: Undertaking Due Diligence

UNHCR and its Partners must be fully aware of who they are working with to mitigate the risk of negative consequences, including potential harm to Persons of Concern.
Review the Sanction list issued by the UN Security Council's Committee on Sanctions pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011).

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activities contrary to UN values, and for sharing details of any incidents of misconduct with the relevant UNHCR Office should they arise (refer to Section 1.3.4).

- UNHCR has no right to dictate or engage in selection and recruitment of Partner personnel, unless the Partner and UNHCR have reached a specific understanding which should then be reflected in the Project Description. They can however encourage partners to promote inclusion and diversity, specifically local staff, women, people with disabilities and other under-represented groups.

- Written employment agreements between Partners and their personnel must comply with applicable national regulations and legislation.

- Partners must meet all the costs for employing personnel, including salaries/wages and other entitlements (such as overtime, social security, taxes, allowances, termination costs, etc.) based on applicable legislation.

- UNHCR will not cover the cost of remuneration and other entitlements, benefits or compensation accrued over the years of engagement of Partner personnel, other than the contribution stipulated in the Project Budget.

- Partners are responsible for taking out insurance for all relevant personnel against work-related accidents, the costs of which can be included in the Project Budget.

- Partners are responsible for recruiting competent personnel, in a professional and transparent manner, as specified in the Project Description and in consultation with UNHCR. The Partner should respect equal opportunities and take all necessary measures to oppose and guard against child labor and exploitation.

- Partner Personnel must observe the standards of conduct set out in the Partnership Agreement (refer to Sections 1.3 and 5.1.5), including respecting the confidentiality of Persons of Concern. Further, they should not take instruction from any external authority regarding activities under the project.

5.3.3 Partner Integrity Capacity and Support Costs (PICSC)

UNHCR's Partners are obliged to comply with **IPMS Guidance Note No. 3 (rev 2): UNHCR's Contribution towards Partner Integrity Capacity and Support Costs**, effective from May 2019. This Guidance Note broadens and re-defines UNHCR's contribution for support costs to Partners implementing a UNHCR funded

Recuperation for Partner Personnel based in high-security locations. Refer to Guidance Note 7 for detailed guidance on these provisions.

Figure 43: Standard Categorization of the National Personnel Functions

Category	National personnel functions (or positions)
A	Support (Guards, Helper, Driver, casual labor etc.)
B	Junior Assistants (Clerks, Data Entry, Secretaries, etc.)
C	Senior Assistants (Senior Finance Assistants, Program Officers, Nurse, Social Workers, etc.)
D	Senior Officer (Senior Program Officers, Doctors, Engineers, etc.)
E	Managers (Team Leaders, Senior Managers, Deputy Directors, Directors, Presidents, etc.)

Given the diversity of **National Personnel of Partners** and their functions, UNHCR's contribution to these costs is based on a scale of local rates for standard functions, as categorized by UNHCR. These are outlined in **Figure 43** above. The rates are established through UN Country Teams (not the UN staff salary scale) or, through a survey commissioned by the UNHCR Country Office in consultation with Partners. These rates are periodically reviewed (every two to three years or when there is a notable change in the local labor market or prevailing resources).

Recruitment, Remuneration, and Contractual Obligations

Article 12 of the Partnership Agreement sets out specific terms and conditions related to the recruitment, employment, and conduct of Partner personnel. Key points include:

- There is neither an employment relationship nor a contractual link between Partner personnel and UNHCR. Partner personnel cannot be considered in any respect as being UNHCR staff members.

- Partners have a responsibility to ensure that their staff and contractors adhere to the standards of conduct set out in Appendix 2 of the Partnership Agreement (refer to Section 5.1.5 and 1.3.2 for further guidance on standards of conduct). UNHCR has zero tolerance for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and expects Partners to have appropriate measures in place for detecting, preventing, reporting and addressing such acts (refer to Section 1.3.3 for further details).

- Partners are also responsible for vetting of personnel before recruitment to ensure they are have not been involved in any misconduct or other

3.2.2 Partnership Arrangements

Within a project, parties to the partnership play specific roles and undertake clearly defined tasks as stipulated in a **Partnership Agreement** (PA)[42]. Comprehensive guidance on the content and process for developing a Partnership Agreement is covered in Chapter 5.

The guidance in this Handbook relates specifically to the types of partnership through which UNHCR contributes resources (financial or in kind) with a Partner. These include:

1. Standby Partnerships

2. Operational Partnerships

3. Implementing Partnerships

Standby Partnerships

UNHCR has several standby Partnership Agreements in place with government agencies, NGOs, and private sector organizations, to improve the efficiency and predictability of emergency response. Standby Partners, after signing an agreement with UNHCR, maintain a standby capacity of personnel or equipment which can be rapidly deployed upon request to enhance UNHCR's capacity to respond to humanitarian crises.

Operational Partnerships

In an operational partnership, UNHCR and a governmental, inter-governmental or non-governmental body, United Nations organization, not-for-profit organization or for-profit organization and academic institution collaborate to achieve a common objective. However, there is no transfer of funds or resources between the parties. Rather, both parties use their own resources to work towards achieving their shared objective. The broad areas of cooperation are defined through a global Memorandum of Understanding or other forms.

Implementing Partnerships

In an implementing partnership, UNHCR and a governmental, inter-governmental or non-governmental body, United Nations organization, or other not-for-profit organization partner to achieve a common objective. The Partner must share UNHCR's core values and principles as set out in Section 1.3.1. UNHCR and the Partner contribute financial and other resources for specific activities which are defined in a Partnership Agreement (PPA) (refer to Section 5.1.1).

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[42] Also referred to as Partnership Agreements in this Handbook

The Partner in an implementing arrangement with UNHCR has full responsibility for the delivery of results as set out in the Partnership Agreement, as well as accountability to UNHCR for the effective and timely use of resources. UNHCR remains solely responsible to the donor(s) for the effective and efficient use of resources entrusted to UNHCR to meet the needs of Persons of Concern.

UNHCR implements much of its programming through this type of partnership arrangement. However, this does not mean that Partners are simply contracted to implement projects on behalf of UNHCR. Rather, they should engage from the early stages in development of UNHCR's Operations plan, as well as any specific project activities. Similarly, and in the spirit of partnership, UNHCR should contribute to the development of their Partner's strategies and plans. Partners can also propose initiatives that address the needs that UNHCR is mandated to assist.

Monitoring Partnership Implementation

The mechanisms for joint monitoring and review, verification and audit are an essential part of the implementing partnership arrangements for both UNHCR and its Partners in meeting their mutual responsibilities to each other, Persons of Concern, and their donors. Refer to Chapter 6 for further details.

Partnering for Advocacy

For UNHCR and its Partners, advocacy includes influencing decision-making at all levels through the development of coalitions and alliances, research and publications, diplomacy, public campaigning, common messaging; conferences and events, communications and media work, and the facilitation of social mobilization and self-advocacy by Persons of Concern. The selection of activities, targets and implementers should be tailored to the specific context and maximise the use of complementary strengths, resources and mandates of each Partner.

A key recommendation from the UNHCR High Commissioner's Structured Dialogue in 2012, centred on the need for increased collaboration in developing advocacy positions and strategies:

"Acknowledging the complementarities in roles, expertise and relationship to other stakeholders in the response to refugees and stateless persons, UNHCR, the IFRC and NGOs will enhance their collaboration in developing advocacy positions and strategies at field level on issues of mutual concern."

This led to development of the **Guidance Note on Partnership in Advocacy for Protection**. Its purpose is to guide Partners through the process of advocacy in partnership, to increase the impact and strategic nature of advocacy initiatives. While the focus of the Guidance Note is on joint advocacy, this does not preclude Partners from undertaking independent advocacy activities. **Annex A** of the Guidance Note sets out guiding questions to help inform the understanding,

Figure 42: Account Codes for Partner Personnel Costs

Account Code	Description	Comment
622250	Expatriate International Partner Personnel Costs (engaged by international or national Partners)	Partner Personnel of all types of Partners (except United Nations organizations which have other specific codes)
622300	National Partner Personnel Costs (engaged by international or national Partners)	
665200	Partner travel (all Partner Personnel)	
622650	Persons of Concern hired for performing professional services	When engaging Persons of Concern for hired professional services or casual labor.
622750	Persons of Concern hired for performing casual labor	

Partner Personnel Costs must be budgeted for the applicable number of months at an applicable rate and using the Account Codes outlined in **Figure 42** above. International Expatriate Personnel costs must be budgeted, transferred and reported in US Dollars, and National Personnel costs must be set out in local currency.

UNHCR's contribution to personnel costs must be included in the Project Budget. The Partner contribution to personnel costs also needs to be reflected in the Partnership Agreement. The Partner should also document UNHCR's and other donors' contributions towards the cost of any personnel engaged in project activities for review and audit purposes.

Partners are required to complete a Partner Personnel Report as part of the standard reporting requirements (see Section 6.2.4), and maintain accurate supporting documentation (Human Resource policies, employment contracts, engagement time records, breakdown of payment and transaction records, etc.) for UNHCR verification, audit and review purposes.

Rates Payable for Partner Personnel

In line with the main principles advocated by the UNHCR-NGO Network Organizations Group, UNHCR's contribution for **International Expatriate Partner Personnel** is pegged to the International Civil Service Commission index at a fixed grade level (P4 Step 5 at gross rate). This grade is considered to be commensurate with the skills and profile of most International Expatriate Personnel engaged in UNHCR-funded projects. An additional contribution will be paid to cover Rest and

UNHCR's Partners are obliged to comply with **IPMS Guidance Note 7 covering Partner Personnel**, effective from 1st January 2017. The Guidance Note sets out applicable rates for International Expatriate Personnel, and the standard functional categories, approach and guidance on setting applicable rates for National Personnel, who are employed by Partners. It also explains the terms of Partnership Agreements related to obligations and responsibilities towards Partner Personnel.

UNHCR and its Partners are required to jointly set reasonable personnel levels and associated costs (i.e. numbers of personnel, competencies, skills, and affordable costs), to maximize benefits for Persons of Concern in an effective and timely manner.

If the proposed intervention includes hiring of Persons of Concern or other community workers, it is important to consider the potential impact this could have on:

- their access to other livelihood opportunities;
- their entitlement to other forms of assistance at individual and household level i.e. will the benefits from employment extend to other family members;
- social relations and/or the risk of conflict between Persons of Concern;
- social relations and/or the risk of conflict between Persons of Concern and host communities;
- local markets and the environment, particularly where the role of Persons of Concern or other community workers relates to the supply of local resources or produce.

Detailing and Reporting on Partner Personnel

A detailed breakdown of Partner personnel roles and costs should be included in the Partnership Agreement **Annex E: Partner personnel list**. The standard table requires details of:

- The name, position and function of each member of personnel
- The employment period and full or part time nature of engagement
- The actual monthly cost of engagement, along with the split of costs between UNHCR and the Partner organization

UNHCR's contribution towards Partner Personnel Costs is based on a flat rate (lump sum) per person which must be adjusted for part time personnel, or personnel whose costs are partly borne by the Partner and/or other donors. The way that this flat rate is broken down for different entitlements (e.g. salaries, allowances, insurance, termination benefits, and end-of-service costs) is at the discretion of the Partner. While the Partner may provide this breakdown, budgeting at the Partnership Agreement level shall remain as a lump sum.

development and implementation of protection advocacy partnerships with UNHCR (refer to the **Resources box** at the end of this section for details).

Despite this guidance, continued concerns have been voiced through the UNHCR-NGO consultation mechanism [43], about the need for greater collaboration and engagement between UNHCR and its Partners in advocating for the protection and rights of Persons of Concern. Such initiatives are not restricted to those organizations having a Partnership Agreement with UNHCR, nor to activities that are led or resourced by UNHCR. It is the responsibility of all organizations with shared commitment to achieving the best protection and assistance for Persons of Concern and UNHCR role as a catalyst.

Ongoing Development of Partnerships

UNHCR's approach to partnering is likely to further develop in response to three major commitments:

1. **The Grand Bargain - A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need** which was agreed at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. Within this, UNHCR joined over 30 other donors and international organizations in committing to ten work streams aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action through:

   1. Greater transparency
   2. More support and direct funding to local and national responders
   3. Increased use and coordination of cash-based programming
   4. Reduced duplication and management costs with periodic reviews
   5. Improved joint and impartial Needs Assessments
   6. Better including people receiving aid in the decisions which affect them
   7. Increased collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding
   8. Reduced earmarking of donor contributions
   9. Harmonized and simplified donor requirements
   10. Enhanced engagement between humanitarian and development actors[44]

   This has already resulted in an increase in the number of UNHCR partnerships with local and national organizations under this partnership modality. The Grand Bargain process is supported by a one-person Secretariat hosted by the IASC. Further details on the Grand Bargain can be found through links in the **Resources box** at the end of this section.

2. **The New Way of Working,** which was agreed by the UN Secretary General, the Heads of eight UN agencies, IOM and the World Bank at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. It is intended to bring humanitarian,

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[43] UNHCR Annual Consultations with NGOs 2017 Report
[44] This has been absorbed within the other workstreams and is being taken forward through the IASC Task Team on Strengthening the Humanitarian / Development Nexus with a focus on protracted contexts

development, and peace actors closer together to work towards collective outcomes based on their comparative advantage. It requires broader partnerships among UN organizations, NGOs, private sector, civil society, and governments, and is meant to reinforce existing national and local capacities. A significant part of the 'New Way of Working' involves getting UN organizations to work more effectively together, despite their sometimes-overlapping mandates.

3. **The IASC Task Team on Strengthening the Humanitarian / Development Nexus with a focus on protracted contexts** was established in February 2016. It was created following recognition by IASC Principals that a significant shift is needed in the way that humanitarian and development actors work together and with other stakeholders. Specifically:

   - how these communities of practice (their policies, systems, and tools) interact, and where the context allows, even integrate in the most complex protracted crisis settings and fragile contexts;

   - how to ensure that their collective engagement contributes to ending needs in both the short and long term.[45]

The Humanitarian-Development Nexus

Rather than responding to refugee displacement through a purely, and often underfunded, humanitarian lens, the elements of the CRRF are designed to provide a more systematic and sustainable response that benefits both refugees and the communities that host them. It engages a much broader group of stakeholders: government at national and local levels, international and regional financial institutions, UN Agencies and NGO Partners, refugees themselves, the private sector, and civil society actors.

It seeks to ensure more sustainable responses by linking humanitarian and development efforts early on in a crisis, and by strengthening and making more inclusive service delivery, including through investment in national and local systems wherever possible. It also calls for more robust and expanded planning and opportunities for durable solutions[46].

UNHCR commits to prioritized 'helping to connect' refugees, IDPs and stateless people to local systems and communities, reducing their dependency on aid, enabling them to progress realization of their rights and to better prepare them for eventual solutions.

Practical ways partners can help ensure this happens:

The justification for any transfer must be included in documentation maintained by the Partner and should be made available for UNHCR verification and audits. Any other budgetary transfers require an advanced written authorization from UNHCR.

TIPS: Important Pointers for budgeting

1. Conduct timely, preliminary discussions with UNHCR to clarify the format, content and specific budget requirements.

2. Calculate and submit all budgets in the currency of implementation.

3. Use current unit costs, with no projections for possible inflation.

4. Use current population figures when determining quantities, unless adequate justification can be presented for using a higher or lower figure.

5. Do not include unspecified support costs or administrative overheads in the budget.

6. Do not include a "contingency reserve" in the budget.

7. Consider the financial reporting requirements while budgeting to determine a budget structure and level of details that will be easier to report against.

8. Avoid splitting the budget across objectives where possible as this can create very long budgets which complicates monitoring, analysis and reporting.

5.3.2 Partner Personnel Costs

DEFINITIONS

Partner personnel include, but are not limited to:

- Permanent employees
- Fixed-term personnel
- Temporarily assigned or deployed personnel
- Consultants or paid advisors
- Paid "volunteers" or community workers
- Persons of Concern hired by partner for performing services
- Other individual service providers

See IPMS Guidance Note 7: Partner Personnel for further definitions

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[45] https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-task-team-strengthening-humanitariandevelopment-nexus-focus-protracted-contexts
[46] http://www.unhcr.org/events/conferences/584689257/new-york-declaration-faqs.html

Example of allocation of accounts codes

For a project including the construction of primary schools, the output (Educational Infrastructure Constructed, improved or maintained) may be budgeted as a single item in which the calculation could be relatively simple, i.e. number of schools' x the cost of the building construction contract (the cost of the school) = the total of the budget line.

The amount would be coded as 420AZ623050 where:

'420' = Population has optimal access to education (Objective);

'AZ' = Educational Infrastructure Constructed, improved or maintained (Output);

'623050' = "Construction Contracts-buildings for operations (account)

Alternatively, the same Activity could be budgeted according to the various materials and supplies needed for construction, such as roofing materials, timber, cement, electrical supplies, workshop supplies, etc., represented as separate Accounts.

Budget Format

- There is a standard format for the Project Budget under a Partnership Agreement. This is generated from the MRSP system by UNHCR.
- While the Project Description and Work Plan are prepared offline (outside of Focus and MSRP), the Project Budget must be entered in Focus by UNHCR, as part of the Partnership Agreement process. The content of project budgets is automatically aggregated to objectives, rights groups, goals and pillars at UNHCR Country and global levels within Focus.

Budget Variations

During project implementation, a Partner may make discretionary movements of funds between budget lines (without consulting UNHCR), provided that:

- ✓ they are at the account levels within an output;
- ✓ the change at output level does not exceed 20 per cent;
- ✓ the delivery of the expected results at the output level remains the same as earlier agreed, and;
- ✓ there is no change in Partner personnel costs and the overall project budget.

- Promote the inclusion of refugees, IDPs and stateless persons in National Development Frameworks and the plans of international development actors;
- Discourage approaches that locate people in camps, separate settlements or contribute to exclusion in other ways;
- Increase the emphasis on cash-based forms of assistance to promote inclusion of displaced people and benefit local communities and economies;
- Help develop an evidence-based case for enabling displaced and stateless people to contribute to the communities in which they live.

3.2.3   Web-based Partner Portal

The UNHCR **Partner Portal** is a web–based interactive tool that supports communication and collaboration between UNHCR and its current and prospective Partners. **IPMS Guidance Note No. 6: UNHCR Partner Portal** provides step-by-step guidance on use of the Partner Portal.

The **purpose** of the Partner Portal is two-fold:

1. To strengthen UNHCR partnerships and achieve the best protection and assistance for Persons of Concern.

2. To facilitate the Framework for Implementing Partners, including registration, verification and maintaining a database of Partner information.

The portal enables Partners to present their organizational profile to UNHCR and manage their own access for registration. It also assists UNHCR in vetting and recording new Partners and provides a repository of consistent and updated information on funded partnerships. All prospective Partners must register on the Partner Portal and will be vetted by UNHCR, before they can respond to a 'Call for Expressions of Interest'.

Services provided through the portal include:

- A mechanism for registration and uploading a Partner Profile;
- A dashboard highlighting the status of Partnership Agreements and funds disbursements for each Partner;
- Access to UNHCR policies, procedures, guidance and updates;
- Notification of 'Calls for Expressions of Interest' and mechanisms for submitting Concept Notes;
- A facility for requesting Pre-qualification for Procurement (PQP) and use of pool bank accounts
- Invitations to UNHCR-organized workshops, meetings and conferences;

- On-line learning programs such as the FIP and capacity building tools and notification of training
- E-mail notifications.

Usage by UNHCR Partners

To access the Partner Portal, Partners need to complete the on-line registration process outlined in Section 3.2.4 below. The person completing the registration process will automatically be granted the role of **Organization Primary User**.

TIP: Who to Register on the Partner Portal

When **registering via the Partner Portal**, select the most appropriate staff member for the role of Organization Primary User. This person will need the authority to upload and update information as and when needed and have administrative responsibility for setting up other users.

Once registration is completed and activated, the Organization's Primary User will be able to create additional user accounts within the organization. These user accounts should fit into one of the following roles:

- **Organization User:** These users are created by the Organization Primary User and can alter or add to the organization profile. However, they cannot create or edit country profiles or create and administer other user accounts.
- **Country User:** These users are also created by the Organization Primary User, but their accounts must be attached to an existing country profile. Country Users can only edit their own country profile.

Guidance on using the Partner Portal is available through the portal itself or through links provided in the **Resources box** at the end of Section 3.2 below.

The new UN Partner Portal (UNPP)[47]

The UN Partner Portal is an online platform designed to promote partnership and collaboration between the UN and its prospective and existing Partners operating in the humanitarian space. It also aims to simplify and harmonize partnership processes among UN Agencies to achieve better results for Persons of Concern.

The Portal also represents as part of UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP efforts to implement the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit Grand Bargain commitments

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[47] UN Partner Portal, ICVA and UNHCR briefing note, undated

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- All costs should be budgeted under clearly identifiable budget line items and not as lump sums (e.g., Account 657100 - Stationary and Other Office Supplies; Account 608455 - Registration Supplies, etc.)
- Only eligible costs according to the specifications of the Project can be included in the budget.
- The Partner should budget, spend and report in the 'currency of project implementation'. UNHCR will transfer funds (instalments) in the same currency, as stipulated in the Project Budget.
- Partner Expatriate Personnel Costs should be budgeted and reported in USD and National staff costs should be budgeted and reported in local currency.
- The Partner may budget for Project Integrity Capacity and Support Costs (PICSC) in local currency or USD. This must be clearly shown in the budget and UNHCR's contribution to PICSC will then be transferred in the same currency.
- Expenditure in a currency other than the currency of project implementation should be limited to necessary circumstances only, or as authorized by UNHCR.

Guidelines on currency fluctuations

UNHCR will not bear any costs due to exchange rate fluctuations (loss/gain). However, in the event of concerns around extreme currency fluctuations, Partners should seek guidance from UNHCR on the appropriate remedial actions to take.

Budgeting According to Results

UNHCR budgets follow the principle of results-based management, by which the allocation of resources (type, quality, quantity, frequency) is directly linked to the outputs to be delivered by the Partner, and the objectives to be achieved through the project (as illustrated in Figure 5.4; the Project Scope diagram).

As such, while budgets are formulated at the lowest level following UNHCR's account codes (e.g., Account 623050 "Construction Contracts-buildings for operations" as illustrated in the box below, each budget line must relate directly to an output and objective in the project's log frame (Annex A).

reflected in the Project Performance Report (section 4- Related Inputs and Projects / Other Parties). UNHCR's contribution to the overall budget will be detailed in the Project Budget (Partnership Agreement Annex B).

Budget Details

The exact level of detail needed in budgeting for proposed activities should be agreed collaboratively between the Partner and the UNHCR Office, depending on the operational circumstances. Budgets should reflect a careful assessment of needs, available resources, and the appropriate standards required within the local context. This will enhance the likelihood of agreement to the proposed budget with minimum delays.

It is important that these discussions allow sufficient time for the Partner to review and adjust their proposed budget submission, if needed (see diagram 27 for an indicative timeline for implementing a Partnership Agreement). While it is acknowledged that the UNHCR Office may not have final details of its budgetary envelope, it is beneficial for both parties if as much detail as possible on the expected budget for the project can be given to mitigate the risk of delays and re-working of the budget requirements.

Some proposed budget items may be examined more closely by UNHCR. These include the administrative costs within a project and the amounts budgeted for Partner personnel costs. Significant expenditure for large capital items or infrastructure will also be scrutinized. Further guidance on budgeting for these items is covered in Sections 5.3. and 5.4 below.

Considerations to bear in mind when preparing the budget for a Partnership Agreement include:

- If project activities are spread across more than one of UNHCR's budget pillars (refer to Section 2.1.4 for details), either a separate Partnership Agreement for each pillar, or one Partnership Agreement for all pillars can be concluded.

- Partnership Agreements can include projects related to different **Population Planning Groups (PPG)**.

- It is possible to budget for and carry out activities for a UNHCR Country Office and Sub Office within the same Operation, under one Partnership Agreement.

- Depending on operational reality, a UNHCR office may want the Project Budget to be prepared with a further breakdown by cost center and site for internal management and tracking purposes. For example, this additional detail may be very useful for UNHCR if they are required to report on these expenses in donor reports.

to reduce duplication and management costs and enhance partnerships with local and national actors.

UNHCR is leading development of a UN partner portal, with UNICEF and WFP. When complete, this single portal will enable Partners to:

- Learn more about UN partnership guidance and opportunities

- Undertake due diligence registration and present a profile to UN agencies

- Submit concept notes to UN agencies responding to calls for expression of interest

Building on the success of the UNHCR Partner Portal, a broader **UN Partner Portal (UNPP)** is being launched[48]. This will reduce the assessment and administrative burden for Partners and the relevant UN agencies, provide a shared library of Partner information, facilitate opportunities for coordination and collaboration around partnership activities and provide a common platform for funding calls/expressions of interest.

3.2.4 Process for Registering for Partnership

The process for prospective Partners to register with UNHCR is undertaken through UNHCR's Partner Portal (see Section 3.2.3). **IPMS Guidance Note No. 6: UNHCR Partner Portal** provides step-by-step guidance on the registration process and use of the Partner Portal. The basic steps are highlighted in **Figure 24** below.

Figure 24: Process for Registration [49]

1. **Application via Partner Portal or email** → 2. **UNHCR verification** → 3. **Submit Declaration** → 4. **Full access to Portal**

1. **Application:** Prospective Partners should approach UNHCR through the Partner Portal at: https://Partner.unhcr.org. To apply, follow the 'Registering as a Partner' button, and follow a few simple steps through to the page for 'Identifying the organisation and Creating an ID'.
   At this stage, the following information needs to be submitted:

   - Legal organizational name and authorized person

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[48] https://insight.wfp.org/introducing-the-un-partner-portal-9a2b2261bf9f
[49] Based on the IPMS Guidance Note 6, Section 4.2

- Copy of statute or constitutional document
- Copy of legal registration with national authorities
- Two recommendation letters from reputable organizations. If recommendation letters are not available, the UNHCR Country Representative may request the registration of a prospective Partner

If there are problems accessing the Partner Portal, an application can also be made via email at: ePartner@unhcr.org

2. **Verification:** UNHCR's Implementing Partner Management Service (IPMS) will verify the information provided and if the initial requirements are met, the prospective Partner will be granted further access to the Partner Portal to complete a 'Partner Declaration' form (refer to the **Resources box** at the end of Section 3.2).

3. **Declaration:** The Partner Declaration is used to determine whether the Partner is committed to UNHCR's core values and its commitment to Persons of Concern. An organization must have answered 'yes' to all five statements to engage in a partnership with UNHCR (refer to Section 3.2.1).

4. **Full access:** Following a successful review, UNHCR will invite the prospective Partner to complete a detailed 'Partner Profile' on the Partner Portal and set up 'Country profiles' for each of its operations relevant to their partnership with UNHCR. Once completed, the Partner will be assigned a 'Partner Code' in MSRP[50] permitting the Partner to participate in the Partner selection process.

> Read through **Guidance Note No. 6: UNHCR Partner Portal** in detail and gather all the required documentation before starting the registration process.
>
> Partner compliance with this Guidance Note is mandatory.

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[50] MSRP is UNHCR's web-based Enterprise Resource Planning system

5.3 Determining Financial Provisions for a Partnership Agreement

5.3.1 Budget Requirements

Project budgets are negotiated in the field between the Partner organization and relevant UNHCR office. UNHCR can only establish a Partnership Agreement within the **Operating Level Budget** of a relevant Country Operations Plan (refer to Section 4.3.4).

Budgets negotiations can be difficult and time consuming. This may be due to insufficient guidance on budget provisions from UNHCR, lack of sufficient detail from Partners, or challenges for both parties in translating the budget requirements into the required format.

Timely, joint preliminary meetings will help to fully and accurately identify the budgetary requirements and plan the budget, thereby reducing the risk of later difficulties. UNHCR should communicate to Partners the funds that are available for a proposed project and any further funds that may be available in the event of an increase in the Operating Level Budget for that operations. Partner organizations should ensure that costings are accurate, and that the best possible cost effectiveness is being proposed.

Budget Contributions

When UNHCR and its Partners enter into an Agreement, there is an expectation that both parties will endeavor to raise complementary funds and resources to support the proposed intervention in meeting the needs identified for Persons of Concern. Partners are also encouraged to use the 'Partner Contribution' to describe how the proposed project would leverage contributions from whole-of-society actors who are not themselves UNHCR Partners.

UNHCR normally contributes funds for some or all the operational costs (direct costs for implementing the activities set out in the Partnership Agreement), and some of the support costs (the costs for supporting and managing a project which should also be described in the Partnership Agreement). Under the terms of the Agreement, Partners are also obliged to inform UNHCR in quantifiable terms of their contribution to the project. This may include funding raised by the Partners, contributions from its own funds, or in-kind contributions.

In instances where other donors or supporters are contributing towards the Partner's budget, the Partner should include these details when negotiating the cost sharing arrangements in relation to all relevant budget lines with UNHCR. Any contribution being made by the Partner, either directly or through other sources of funding, should be stated in the project description (Partnership Agreement Annex A) and in the main body of the Partnership Agreement (Article 6.3). It must also be

5.2.2 Project Work Plan

The **Work Plan** is a standard outline which forms **Annex C-1 of the Partnership Agreement**. It defines the timeline for implementation of the planned project or intervention. Bear in mind the time needed for negotiating and signing the Partnership Agreement when developing the Work Plan to avoid the need for review and re-scheduling (see Section 5.5.1).

Partners need to include the detailed activities for each output in a matrix indicating the start and end date of each activity. This Work Plan also forms the basis for:

- Development of the Indicative Instalment plan (see Section 5.4.3) and the release of remittances after the first instalment is paid;

- Development of a Project Performance Monitoring Plan, together with UNHCR (see Section 6.1.1).

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RESOURCES

Global Processes Linked to Partnership

- The New York Declaration
  http://www.un.org/NewYorkDeclaration

- Grand Bargain
  https://IASC/hosting-grand-bargain

  https://www.icvanetwork.org/Grand_Bargain_Explained

- ICVA Briefing Paper on The New Way of Working, Oct 2017
  https://www.icvanetwork.org/NWoW_Briefing_paper

- UNHCR Guidance Note on Partnership in Advocacy for Protection
  http://www.unhcr.org/guidance-note-Partnership-advocacy

- IASC Humanitarian Development Nexus Task Team
  https://iasc/TT-Humanitariandevelopment-nexus

Partner Registration and Partner Portal

- IPMS Guidance Note No. 6: UNHCR Partner Portal
  https://partner.unhcr.org/Partner portal

- IPMS Guidance Note No. 1: Selection and retention of Partners for Project Partnership Agreements, Refer to Annex A - Partner Declaration
  https://partner.unhcr.org/Partner portal

- UNHCR Partner Portal
  https://partner.unhcr.org/Partner portal

- UNHCR Partner Portal User Guide
  http://unhcrpk.org/Partner-Portal-User-Guide

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3.3 Partner Selection and Retention

3.3.1 Identifying Best Fit Partners

The **IPMS Guidance Note No. 1: Selection and Retention of Partners for Project Partnership Agreements** outlines UNHCR's policy on selecting and retaining its Partners. Recognizing that each Partner brings distinctive attributes and that UNHCR operates in a range of different environments, the **objective of the policy** is to ensure that UNHCR establishes partnerships with the most suitable organizations in order to provide quality protection, assistance and solutions for Persons of Concern.

UNHCR's process for selecting and retaining Partners involves five main steps, set out in **Figure 25** below. Each step is covered in the subsequent sections of this chapter and further guidance is provided in a **Frequently Asked Questions** document in support of the Guidance Note.

Figure 25: Partner Selection and Retention Process at Country Level

Compliance with the policy is **mandatory** where the value of the Partnership Agreement is more than USD100,000, and it applies to the following types of Partner:

- Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)
- Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- Other not-for-profit entities

The process for the selection outlined is not required when:

- The Partner is a United Nations agency

1.0 Project Overview
Brief project statement and description of the operational context, problem, main objectives and intended impact.

2.0 Population of Concern / Other Supported Entities
Detailed demographic profile of the population of concern including gender, age, children, people with disability, people living with HIV/AIDs, the elderly, and other vulnerable groups, along with information on any other entity the project aims to assist, e.g. through capacity building.

3.0 Implementation Arrangements
Implementation strategies and activities to deliver the expected objectives, outputs and intended impact, identification of key project risks and mitigation activities, coordination mechanisms, monitoring and reporting mechanisms and visibility.

4.0 Related Inputs and Projects
Partner and/or third-party contributions of financial and in-kind resources

5.0 Agreement Amendment History
Listing of any agreement amendments and description of main changes.

6.0 Log Frame for Planned Results
Description of the problem, and project objective, impact, outputs and selected performance indicators, all corresponding to UNHCR's Operations Plan (see Section 4.3.3) but adapted to the project context, where needed. Also includes an indication of the budget (by output) and identification of project-specific performance targets. Additional outputs can be added if the associated activities are fully funded by the Partner.

The Log Frame is based on UNHCR's Results Framework (see Section 2.1.2) and needs to be completed for all forms of Partnership Agreement. Most of the information required can be extracted from FOCUS, UNHCRs results-based management software, by UNHCR. However, the Partner should work with UNHCR to ensure that this information is adapted to the specific context that they will be operating in.

TIPS: Project Description

The Log Frame should be simplified as much as possible, focusing on the key results that the intervention expects to achieve. It is advisable to select a limited number of outputs covering a wider range of activities and select only one indicator per objective and output. This will assist in facilitating timely project reporting and managing any potential variations or later revisions.

5.2 Preparing a Project Description and Work Plan

5.2.1 Project Description and Results

Project Scope

All projects or interventions must be formulated in line with UNHCR's Operations Plan and priorities for that Operation (refer to Section 4.3.2) and should link the project goal(s), objectives, and outputs with corresponding resource requirements. Consideration should also be given to strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus, particularly in protracted crises (see Section 2.2 and 3.2.2).

Defining the project scope within a Partnership Agreement ensures that a project is designed to provide protection, assistance and solutions for Persons of Concern, within a **defined timeframe**, clearly **allocated resources** and according to **specific performance indicators**. The three elements must relate to each other, and directly contribute to achieving the **expected results** (outputs, impact). This relationship between the different project elements is illustrated in **Figure 41** below, along with the Partnership Agreement annex templates / documents in respect of each element.

Figure 41: Project Scope
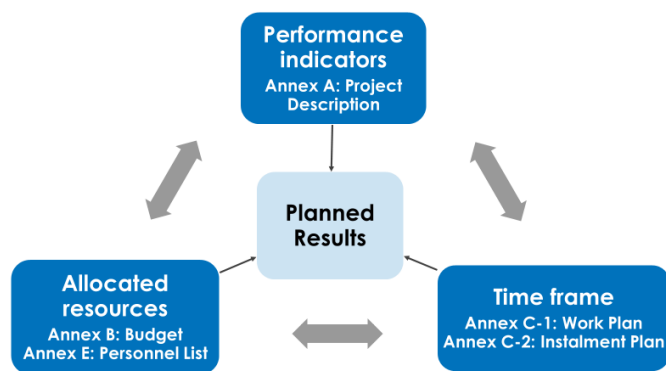
Project Description

Formulating an accurate description of the project or intervention is the joint responsibility of UNHCR and the Partner organization. The **Project Description** follows a standard narrative format which forms Annex A for all types of Partnership Agreement and is made up of the following sections:

- The Partner is a governmental institution with a unique mandate that cannot be assumed by another organization

UNHCR offices are required to demonstrate due diligence and select and retain Partners in a manner which:

- Best addresses the protection and/or assistance requirements for Persons of Concern, while taking into account the operating context;
- Builds on partnership principles, complementarities and comparative advantages;
- Demonstrates transparency, objectivity, timeliness and accountability;
- Demonstrates sound stewardship of funding provided by donors.

3.3.2 The Implementing Partnership Management Committee (IPMC)

An Implementing Partnership Management Committee (IPMC) is established by a UNHCR Country or Regional Office. The committee has responsibility for making informed and objective recommendations to the Head of the UNHCR Country Office on the selection or retention of Partners for all Partnership Agreements.

Membership of the IPMC is limited to UNHCR staff, and all Committee information is confidential to UNHCR. The IPMC can vary in size but should have a minimum of three members (e.g. from programme, protection, finance, supply, community services, or technical sector) plus a Chairperson and secretary (see **Figure 26** below.

Figure 26: IPMC Composition
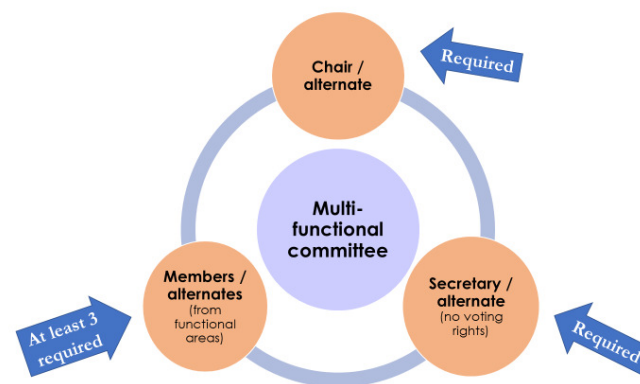
The Chairperson and IPMC members vote on the selection and retention of Partners. The Secretary has no voting rights. Terms of Reference for the IPMC are set out in **Annex B** of Guidance Note 1: Selection and Retention of Partners (refer to the **Resources box** at the end of Section 3.3).

3.3.3   Call for Partner Expression of Interest

Call for Expression of Interest

The next step in selecting and retaining Partners involves the relevant UNHCR Country Office announcing a 'Call for Expression of Interest' via the Partner Portal. This can be done at any time of year, but the proposed activities will always need to be completed by 31st Dec in line with UNHCR's Operation management cycle (see Section 4.1.1). The UNHCR Office may also use other appropriate and available media to communicate the information, such as internet, newspapers, flyers, meetings, radio, taking into account the local context, to reach out to as many potential Partners as possible.

The **purpose of the 'Call for Expression of Interest'** is to broaden opportunities for existing and new Partners to express their interest in partnering with UNHCR to implement specific activities in a given location. Interested organizations are expected to contribute complementary resources to achieve the specified objectives (e.g. human resources, knowledge, funds, in-kind contributions, supplies, equipment).

The UNHCR Country Office will provide background information, including:

- project goals and specifications

- predefined and relevant selection criteria for Partner assessment

- deadlines for submission of interest

- date of decision and any other essential details.

The 'Call for Expression of Interest' is a **mandatory part** of the selection process. However, the format of the 'Call' is at the discretion of the relevant UNHCR Country Office. A sample is included in **Annex C** of the Guidance Note 1: Selection and Retention of Partners (refer to the **Resources box** at the end of Section 3.3).

A new or existing Partner can also submit a Concept Note at any time on their own initiative. If this is within the scope of UNHCR's Operation Plan and the value is greater than USD50,000, the relevant UNHCR office will issue a 'Call for Expression of Interest' in relation to the suggested intervention, to ensure fair selection among all interested Partners (see Section 3.3.4 below for further guidance).

RESOURCES

Partnership Agreement Guidance

- IPMS Guidance Note No. 8: Management of UNHCR-Funded Partnership Agreements, Dec 2017
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

Partnership Agreement Annex Documents for NGOs and Other Not-For-Profit Partners

- Annex documents to the Bipartite Project Partnership Agreement (UNHCR with non-governmental and other not-for-profit Partners)
  https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

Ethics and Professional Conduct

- UNHCR Investigation Resource Manual
  http://www.unhcr.org/uk/investigation-resource-manual.html

- Strategic Framework for the Prevention of Fraud and Corruption, July 2013
  http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5433a4e54.pdf

- Policy on Addressing Fraud Committed by Persons of Concern, October 2017
  https://www.unhcr.org/55f97a4812.pdf

TIPS: Key Points to Consider When Entering an Agreement

✓ Partners must be registered in the Partner Portal.

✓ A Partner may sign several Partnership Agreements within the same Operation (e.g. one for IDPs, one for refugees, or across different costs centers in the same Operation), or for multiple Operations.

✓ The articles of a Partnership Agreement cannot be changed.

✓ The content and annexes of a Partnership Agreement should be carefully checked by both parties before signing.

✓ Those signing the Partnership Agreement on behalf of each party (i.e. UNHCR and the Partner) must have the appropriate level of authority.

✓ Only Partnership Agreements that have been created and recorded in UNHCR's MSRP constitute a legal document.

✓ By signing a Partnership Agreement, the Partner assumes full responsibility for the effective use of resources and delivery of agreed results. UNHCR agrees to provide resources and other support in a timely manner.

✓ Partners should have access to all relevant background information such as the Operations Plan, Results Framework, Partnership Agreement template, guidance notes and associated policies.

✓ All parties should understand the provisions of the Partnership Agreement before starting negotiations and preparing the project description, budget, and other annexes.

✓ All parties should be involved in preparing the project description, budget, work plan and instalment plan.

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria should be set out in the 'Call for Expression of Interest' so that prospective Partners are aware of the criteria that their Concept Note will be judged against. These criteria also form the basis on which the IPMC and UNHCR Head of Office assess and evaluate each applicant organization's Concept Note. The IPMC select and/or adapt criteria for each specific situation. Examples of some of the more common criteria are outlined in **Figure 27** below.

Figure 27: Examples of Selection Criteria

Criteria	Description
Sector Expertise	The specific skills, sector specialists, knowledge and human resources to undertake the required activities, including understanding of solutions and protection principles.
Project Management	Ability to deliver integrated programming, project objectives, accountability mechanisms and sound financial management, considering past performance and previous audit results.
Local Experience, Presence	Local knowledge, trust and engagement with Persons of Concern
	Local presence and ongoing activities in the area of operation.
	Collaboration with local NGOs, community-based organizations and host communities
	Other factors that would facilitate local access, understanding and reduce administrative and security difficulties. Registration with the host government is not normally a pre-condition for selection but if required by the host government, it will be the Partner's responsibility to secure the necessary permissions.
Partner Contribution	Cash or in-kind contribution of resources by the Partner to supplement UNHCR resources for the required activities.
Security Considerations	Evidence of policies, procedures and practices related to security risk management, and ability to operate in the security conditions associated with the operating area.
Cost Effectiveness	Level of proposed direct costs and administrative costs in relation to project deliverables.
Experience Working with UNHCR	Global and/or local partnerships including knowledge of UNHCR policies, practices and programmes, and the ability to work within UNHCR's funding limitations.

| **Partner Capacity in Procurement** | Functioning procurement unit in the area(s) of operation. |
| | Previous procurement experience, value and ability to undertake large scale procurement. |
| | Effective internal-controls and Pre-Qualification for Procurement (PQP) status (USD100,000 and above) – refer to Section 5.4.2 for detailed guidance on Procurement. |

Timeframe for Partner Selection

UNHCR's policy on the Selection and Retention of Partners stresses the importance of partnership selection and engagement as early as possible in the programming cycle. Ideally, selection should take place in October for implementation of activities in the following year (refer to the planning timeline in Section 4.4.2). Sufficient time is also needed to allow Partners to prepare for the outcome. **Figure 28** provides an indicative timeline for the key decision-making stages[51], assuming a Call for Expression of Interest is launched at the start of September.

Figure 28: Indicative Timeline for Selection and Retention of Partners
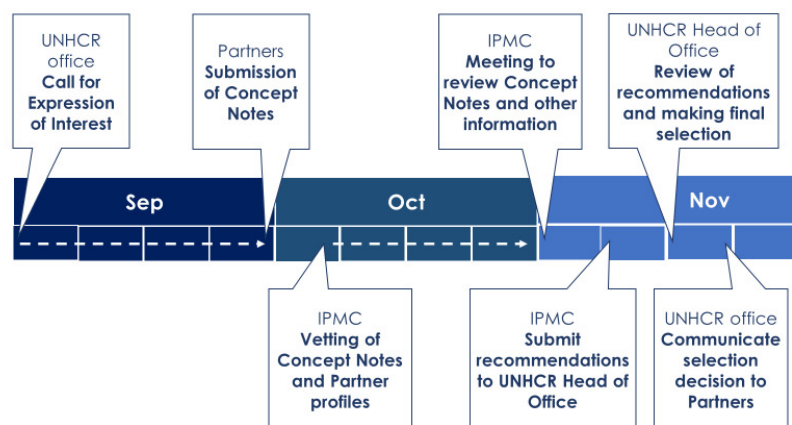
The period from issuing the Call for Expression of Interest to communicating the final selection decisions to Partners should not exceed **three months**, as illustrated in **Figure 29** overleaf.

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[51] Based on agreement following the 2017 UNHCR-NGO consultations

Individual Specialized Activities also provides reference to relevant UNHCR polices and guidance.

5.1.5 Ethics and Professional Conduct

As articulated through the Principles of Partnership (see **Section 2.3.1**), both UNHCR and its Partners are expected to undertake their activities to the highest ethical and professional standards, both within their respective organizations and externally. This includes efficient and cost-effective management and transparent, timely reporting and communications, to maintain credibility, reputation and integrity and to attain the best results for Persons of Concern. In developing a Partnership Agreement, consideration should be given to the capacity strengthening needs of less experienced Partners in areas such as financial management, governance and monitoring and evaluation in meeting these requirements (see Section 2.3.3 for further guidance).

Article 12 of the Partnership Agreement reflects this obligation and **Appendix 2 of the Partnership Agreement** details the Partner's **responsibilities for managing misconduct** and having appropriate minimum standards in place. The appendix provides:

- A listing of types of misconduct;
- A set of recommended minimum investigation standards;
- Standards on ensuring protection from sexual exploitation and abuse; and
- Procedures for reporting of misconduct.

For agreements that do not have a separate appendix on managing misconduct (e.g., LOMI, SSA) the relevant clauses on managing misconduct are inserted directly into the agreement. Section 1.3 of this Handbook provides detailed guidance on reporting, managing and investigating allegations of misconduct or abuse.

Sharing of Sensitive Information

Under a Partnership Agreement, the Partner commits to complying with the standards set out in the Policy on the Protection of Personal Data of Persons of Concern to UNHCR when processing personal data. Refer to Section 2.2.5 for further guidance on these requirements.

Article 7 - Procurement from Commercial Suppliers

Sets out the procurement requirements and status (Pre-Qualified for Procurement) status required of Partners. See Section 5.4.1 and **IPMS Guidance Note 4 Rev1: Procurement by Partners with UNHCR Funds** for further guidance.

Article 8 - Articles Relating to Specialized Project Activities

Details any specialized activities that are part of the Project. See **Section 5.1.4**

## 5.1.4 Articles Specific to Specialized Projects

Article 8 of the Partnership Agreement outlines specific provisions for specialized project activities. These include:

- Building, shelter and construction
- Cash and Voucher assistance
- Education
- Environment
- Food and non-food items distribution
- Fuel Supply /Storage Infrastructure
- Heavy Duty Vehicles
- Livelihoods
- Protection of children
- Public Health and nutrition
- Revolving Loan funds
- Sexual and Gender Based Violence
- Vehicle Workshop in the Field
- Warehouse and inventory management
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

In preparing the Partnership Agreement in MSRP, UNHCR is responsible for selecting the specialized activities that are part of the Project. It is only these activities that should then appear in the Partnership Agreement. UNHCR is also responsible for ensuring consistency throughout the Partnership Agreement with respect to these activities. For example, if the 'Public Health and Nutrition' specialized activity is included in the Partnership Agreement, the Project description should have outputs and indicators for Public Health (as provided in the UNHCR Results Based Management Framework) and the budget should have provisions for such activities.

The provisions outlined in Article 8 for each of the Specialized Project Activities that have been selected will detail the Partner's obligations in relation to that area of specialization, along with reference to the existing UNHCR strategies, policies, operational and other guidance (refer to **Chapter 7** for links to sector-specific strategies and guidance). The **Additional Short Operational Guidance Note for**

Figure 29: Timeframe for the Partner Selection and Retention Process
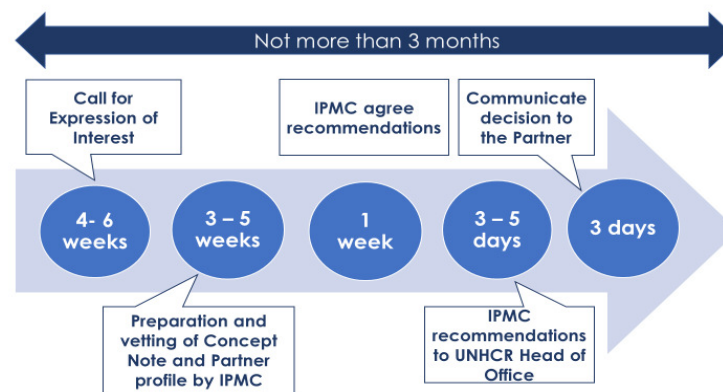
TIP: When to submit a Concept Note

When submitting a Concept Note outside a UNHCR 'Call for Expression of Interest', **timing of the submission** should ideally be done in July / August to link in with UNHCR's programming cycle.

Selection of Partners in An Emergency

Guidance on the process for selecting and engaging Partners in an emergency is provided in the **UNHCR Special Measures for Management of Partnerships in Emergencies**.

Figure 30 overleaf provides an overview of the special provisions for selecting Partners in an emergency. The timeframe for Partner selection or retention may need to be compressed and UNHCR may conduct Partner selection in advance as part of contingency planning, to identify and prepare Partners on standby.

Figure 30: Special Provisions for Selection of Partners in An Emergency

Subject	Non-emergency situation	Emergency (L2 and L3)[52]
Registration of New Partners	Registration and due diligence review through Partner Portal	Registration through Partner Portal is not required before signing Partnership Agreement – refer to Section 5.1.1
Acceleration of the Selection Process	Undertake selection process for the Partners. Ideally the process takes 2-3 months. (refer to Figure viii)	Expedite the selection process to complete it in 1-2 weeks. Create a roster of selected Partners in advance as part of emergency preparedness.
Engaging Partner in Small Scale Project	The ceiling of the threshold for discretionary undertaking of selection of Partners has been raised from USD50,000 to USD100,000 (as of 2017).	
Waiver from Selection	In case of urgency a waiver of the selection process may be requested by Field Operations.	Decentralization of the waiver request/approval process to the Field Operations, during the first 6 months of a Level 2 or Level 3 emergency.

3.3.4 Review of Partner Concept Notes

Submitting a Concept Note

To partner with UNHCR, new or existing Partners must submit a Concept Note as a **mandatory** requirement. This is done either in response to a Call for Expression of Interest by UNHCR, or to propose their own initiative which can be done at any time of the year. Concept Notes should be submitted through the Partner Portal.

Prospective Partners that are not yet registered with UNHCR will need to complete the registration process set out in Section 3.2.4, prior to submitting a Concept Note.

The **purpose of the Concept Note** is to enable:

- a Partner to express interest and demonstrate its unique advantage and value added for undertaking the Partnership Agreement;

Article 14 - Responsibility for Claims
Article 15 - Privileges and Immunities
Article 16 - Force Majeure and Other Changes in Condition
Article 17 - Amicable Settlement and Arbitration
Article 18 - Termination

5.1.3 Specific Provisions of a Partnership Agreement

The Specific Provisions make up Section 1 of a Partnership Agreement (Articles 3 – 8) and are specific to each individual Project based on its scope, duration and budget. They follow on from the Preamble within the Partnership Agreement (Articles 1 – 2), which sets out the spirit of the Agreement and common principles underpinning the Partnership.

Figure 40: Specific Provisions of a Partnership Agreement

Article 3 - Duration of this Agreement

Defines the **Project start and completion dates**. The start date cannot normally be before the dates of signing the Partnership Agreement and the completion date cannot be later than 31st December in the same calendar year. Defines the **liquidation period** which is the period beyond the completion date within which any commitments entered into during the Project period must be settled.

Article 4 - Project Identification

Contains relevant information generated from UNHCR's MSRP such as the Agreement number, Partner code, Budget year, Cost Center, Pillar, Operation.

Article 5 - Project Reporting

Sets out the requirements for periodic reporting to demonstrate performance, progress and utilization of resources. All reporting formats are provided in Annex D to the Partnership Agreement and the minimum requirements are set out in Section 6.2**.**

Article 6 - Resource Requirements and Financial Arrangements

Sets out both UNHCR and the Partner contributions to the Project budget and resources, the planned financing arrangements, and the commitment of all parties to seek additional resources if needed. Details eligible costs and budget restrictions, and the requirements in managing Project funds. See Section 5.3.1 below.

For LOMIs, the Budget (Annex B) is required at the time of signing the LOMI. Preparation of other Annexes is optional depending on the requirements of the specific operation and UNHCR Office.

Templates for the Annex documents can be found in the **Resources box** at the end of Section 5.1. Further guidance on the modalities and timeline for signing, amending and terminating Partnership Agreements are set out in **Section 5.5**.

5.1.2 General Provisions of a Partnership Agreement

UNHCR staff and Partners must be fully aware of General and Specific provisions set forth in the main body of the Partnership Agreement before starting the detailed negotiations. Only after understanding and accepting the Agreement terms can UNHCR and the Partner finalize the Project Description, Budget, Work plan and other Annexes to the Partnership Agreement. With the preparation and signature of the Partnership Agreement, UNHCR and the Partner commit to fulfill their respective obligations under the provisions of the Partnership Agreement.

The General Provisions make up Section 2 of a Partnership Agreement (Articles 9 – 17) and are common to all Partnership Agreements issued by UNHCR. They cannot be removed or amended in any way.

Figure 39: General Provisions of a Partnership Agreement

Article 1 – General Responsibilities of the Parties
Article 2 – Participation of the Population of Concern
Article 3 – Participation, Responsibilities and Obligations of UNHCR
Article 4 – Participation, Responsibilities, and Obligations of the Partner
Article 5 - Integrity, Ethical and Professional Conduct
Article 6 - Assignment to a Third Party – Non-Commercial Entities
Article 7 - No Party to Benefit
Article 8 - Compliance with Legislation
Article 9 - Taxation and Customs
Article 10 - Copyright, Patents and Other Proprietary Rights
Article 11 - Confidentiality
Article 12 - Personal Data Protection
Article 13 - Visibility

- UNHCR to better understand and select the Best-fit Partner for a specific project.

It is intended to allow the Partner to:
- Set out its objectives in undertaking a project or intervention;
- Briefly describe how it will achieve the desired outcomes;
- Demonstrate the unique advantage it brings to the partnership;
- Demonstrate how it will complement UNHCR's capacity and resources.

It is important that the selected Partner participates in the design and detailed budgeting of the project in concluding the Partnership Agreement. Therefore, the Concept Note is not expected to include a full and well-defined description and budget for a project.

Annex D of Guidance Note 1: Selection and Retention of Partners provides an outline of the information to be included in a Concept Note (refer to the **Resources box** at the end of Section 3.3). A different template format may be used by a UNHCR Country Office. However, all Partners must be given the same format and submission guidelines to ensure consistency and objectivity.

3.3.5 Selection of Partners for a Partnership Agreement

IPMC Review and Recommendations

All submissions from prospective and existing Partners are compiled by the IPMC Secretary and checked to verify:
- Partner compatibility with the eligibility criteria for partnering with UNHCR (refer to Section 3.2.1 for details)
- that the applicant organization is not on any of the sanctions lists established and maintained by the United Nations Security Council.

They are then reviewed by the IPMC to:
- Examine and evaluate the Concept Notes and other information submitted by all prospective Partners, the results of technical and other assessments, and any other related documents compiled by the IPMC Secretary
- Analyze and review the Concept Notes, considering the selection criteria and project specifications outlined in the 'Call for Expression of Interest'.

Annex E of Guidance Note 1 provides examples of scoring scales and evaluation matrices that can be used during this process, but it is at the discretion of the IPMC to decide the process to be used. The recommendations of the IPMC are then presented to the UNHCR Head of Office within 3-5 working days of the IPMC meeting.

Final Decision on Partner Selection

UNHCR's Head of Office may endorse or reject the recommendation of the IPMC. If the Head of Office disagrees with the recommendation, s/he must fully document the rationale for that rejection.

If the Head of Office agrees with the recommendation, s/he will grant the Partner an Agreement which covers engagement in project implementation with UNHCR for a maximum of one year. Specific details of the proposed intervention will be discussed prior to signing the Partnership Agreement. An agreement may be renewed for a second year subject to a positive desk review of the Partner's performance and availability of funding (refer to Section 3.3.7 for further details of partnership renewals).

If an agreement cannot be reached on the selection/retention of a Partner, UNHCR's Head of Office may select the next Best-fit Partner or ask for re-advertisement of the 'Call for Expression of Interest'.

3.3.6 Feedback on Selection Decisions

Once the Partner selections have been made, the relevant UNHCR Office must inform each applicant organization of the outcome. This is a **mandatory** requirement and should be done in writing, within three working days of the decision date. However, it is at the discretion of the UNHCR Head of Office to decide the level of detail provided in the feedback. Sample wording for the feedback to be provided is included in **Annex G** of Guidance Note 1: Selection and Retention of Partners.

A Partner can request clarification on the decision, and getting sufficient feedback is important for building effective partnerships in the future. If clarifications are requested, the UNHCR Head of Office must provide a response. However, details of why a Partner has not been selected may not necessarily be given. Applicant organizations that are not satisfied with the feedback they receive can escalate their concerns to the Implementing Partnership Management Service at UNHCR Headquarters for further consideration together with relevant stakeholders

3.3.7 Retention of Partners

While the selection of a Partner is normally for two consecutive years of the UNHCR annual programme cycle, UNHCR's Programme Unit (or other designated unit) will conduct a review to verify that the operation requires retention, and that the Partner performance is adequate, before entering a Partnership Agreement for the second year.

In addition to Partner performance, some of the criteria that Operations may use when considering retention include:

| UNHCR and a UN Agency | can only be used for programme-related activities, not administrative arrangements such as cost-sharing or secondments. https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/PPA UNHCR+UN |

Several **additional agreements** are used by UNHCR for partnering with specific organisations such as IFRC, or for specific purposes.

Elements of a Partnership Agreement

Each Partnership Agreement consists of several elements that contain the terms, conditions, responsibilities, obligations and accountabilities of participating parties. Collectively, these elements form a valid Agreement:

- **Main Agreement document** - see guidelines in Sections 5.1.2 – 5.1.4).

- **Appendix 1: Definitions** - defines terms used in the Agreement.

- **Appendix 2: Standards of managing misconduct** - lists the responsibilities of the Partners for managing misconduct (see Section 1.3.4).

- **Annex A: Project Description** - a standard format detailing the proposed intervention and its link to the Operations plan (see Section 5.2.1).

- **Annex B: Project Budget** - a standard format which sets out detailed financial provisions for the project (see Section 5.3.1).

- **Annex C-1: Project Work Plan** - a standard outline which describes project activities and the timelines for achieving them (see Section 5.2.2).

- **Annex C-2: Indicative Instalment Plan** - details the financial resources required by output and budget line and assists in the calculation of instalments (see Section 5.4.3).

- **Annex D: Project Report formats** - standard templates for the submission of periodic project reports (see Section 6.2.1).

- **Annex E: Partner Personnel List** - details the human resources engaged by the Partner to implement the Project and indicates UNHCR's contribution towards Partner personnel costs (see Section 5.3.2).

In urgent or emergency situations, the Project Budget (Annex B) and Result Matrix (Section 6.0 of Project Description) must be completed by the time of signing the Agreement. Other Annexes, including the full Project Description (Annex A) should be concluded within 1 month of Agreement signature.

	resilience at community level and small-scale. The Agreement must exclusively be used for partnerships with an annual budget equal to or lower than USD 25,000.
Multi-Year Bipartite Partnership Agreement	The **Multi-Year Partnership Agreement** supports a multi-year strategy and plan. Priority and provisions for the entire duration of the Multi-Year agreement must be foreseen under Operating Level for the two consecutive years. https://unpartnerportalcso.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360020656373-Multi-year-Partnership-Agreement-package
Bipartite Agreement between UNHCR and a Governmental Partner	The **Standard Format Bipartite Project Partnership Agreement** is used when the Partner is a governmental organization https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/PPAGovernment
Tripartite Agreement between UNHCR and a Non-Governmental or Not-for-Profit Organisation and Host Government	The **Standard Format Tripartite Project Partnership Agreement** is used when the Partner is a non-governmental or other not-for-profit organization, and the host government is a signatory endorsing the engagement of the Partner. https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal
Small Scale Agreement	The **Small Scale Agreement (SSA)** is used with governmental, non-governmental, community based or not-for-profit entities. It allows small scale interventions with limited scope or a single objective. The SSA: - can only be used when the UNHCR contribution is under USD 100,000 (or equivalent) for one or more Agreements with the same Partner in each operation, during one budget year. - requires completion of the Agreement, a basic project description and the budget (Annex B), at the time of signing. https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal
Agreement between	The **UNHCR to UN Partnership Agreement** is used when the Partner is another UN agency. The template is based on an agreed format between the UN Development Group and

- Overall direction of the protection and solutions strategy of the operation;
- Whether there is a shift in the focus of the operation (e.g. if the operation moves from an emergency situation to a more solutions-oriented approach);
- Whether a change in Partner could have a negative impact on Persons of Concern and the protection and solutions outcomes achieved so far;
- Feedback from Persons of Concern on the benefits or not, of retaining a Partner.

If there is a substantive change to the project from one programme cycle to the next, a completely new selection process (Call for Expression of Interest) must be undertaken by the UNHCR Office.

If the desk review indicates that the Partner should not be retained, this is referred to the IPMC. The IPMC will then review the findings and make a final recommendation to the UNHCR Head of Office, who makes the final decision. This decision must then be communicated in writing to the Partner.

A Partnership Agreement may be extended for up to four years depending on Partner performance, continuity of operations and availability of funding. After 4 years, the Partner will need to re-apply for selection by responding to a new Call for Expression of Interest.

The overall time frame for the retention process, as illustrated in **Figure 31** overleaf, comprises of a 4-year cycle with:

- Desk review after Year 1
- IPMC review after Year 2
- Further desk review after Year 3
- Repeat of the complete selection process after Year 4

Annex H of Guidance Note 1: Selection and Retention of Partners contains a template for Partner retention.

Figure 31: Process for Retention of Partners

Figure 38: Types of Partnership Agreement
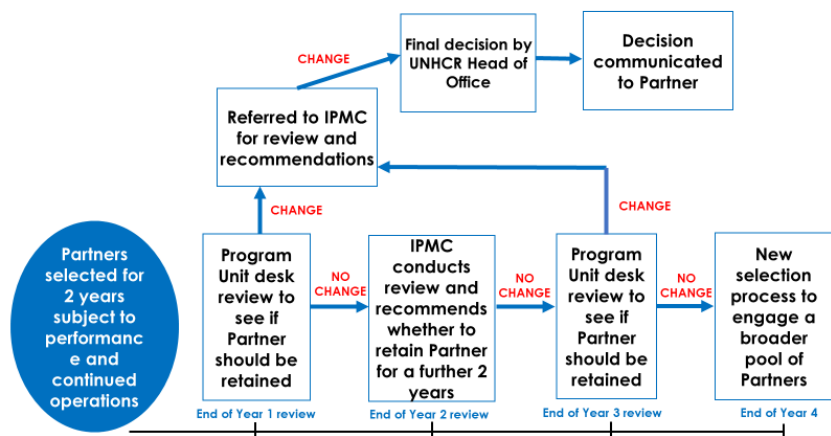
RESOURCES

Partner Selection and Retention

▪ IPMS Guidance Note No. 1: Selection and retention of Partners for Project Partnership Agreements, including Annexes A-L, July 2013
https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

▪ Selection and Retention of Partners for Project Partnership Agreements - Frequently Asked Questions, Aug 2014
http://www.unhcr.org/Annex-Partner-Selection-FAQ.pdf

▪ Special Measures for the Management of Partnerships in Emergencies, July 2017
https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal

Letter of Mutual Intent to Conclude an Agreement (LOMI)	The **Letter of Mutual Intent (LOMI)** is a simplified start up Agreement that is used by UNHCR with any type of Partner in urgent or emergency situations. It is a temporary mechanism that allows for kick-starting the delivery of protection and assistance while the full project details are being formulated, and a standard Partnership Agreement is prepared and finalized. It: ▪ can be used as a one-off or bridging arrangement; ▪ requires completion of the LOMI and Project Budget (Annex B). All other annexes are optional ▪ can be used for a duration of up to maximum of six months. Once the standard Partnership Agreement is signed, this will immediately supersede the LOMI. https://emergency.unhcr.org/LOMI
Bipartite Agreement between UNHCR and a Non-Governmental or Not-for-Profit Organisation	This is the standard format Partnership Agreement used by UNHCR when the Partner is a Non-Governmental (NGO) or Not-for-Profit Organization. Further detail of the provisions within a Partnership Agreement and guidance on how to complete the Agreement can be found in Sections 5.1.2 – 5.1.4 of this Handbook, and the documents linked below. ▪ Implementing Partnership Management Service: **How to Guide on Standard Format Bipartite Project Partnership Agreement** (NGO and other not for profit Partners) v3, May 2015: https://www.icvanetwork.org/HowToCompletePPA ▪ Additional short **Operational Guidance for Individual Specialized Activities:** https://www.icvanetwork.org/HowToPPAAnnex ▪ **Standard Format Bipartite Project Partnership Agreement** (UNHCR with Non-governmental and other not-for-profit Partners): https://partner.unhcr.org/partnerportal
Community-Based Support Agreements	The **Community–Based Partnership Agreement** serves to support community-based initiatives that advance and facilitate the participation of a collective of self-motivated group of people (such as refugees, IDPs, and other persons of concern and host communities) in identifying, advocating for and implementing solutions and/or strengthening their

accountabilities of the parties for undertaking specific activities to provide protection and assistance to Persons of Concern.

Under the Partnership Agreement, UNHCR is authorized to contributes financial and other resources for specific programmatic activities, while the Partner assumes full responsibility for the delivery of agreed results, as well as accountability to UNHCR for the effective use of resources, in accordance with the UNHCR Financial Rules. Consideration should be given to the operational and/or governance capacity strengthening needs of smaller or less experienced Partners in meeting these requirements, particularly where they have the access, trust and contacts needed at community level to achieve the desired results (see **Section 2.3.3** for further guidance).

The Partnership Agreement is used to

- conclude and confirm the agreed understanding of previous negotiations;
- stipulate the shared principles and common goals setting out terms, conditions, obligations and accountabilities of all parties;
- outline the expected results and implementation arrangements for providing protection and solutions for the Persons of Concern, including the budget and duration.
- recognize the contributions of all parties;
- govern the transfer of financial and other resources for undertaking the intervention.

All Partnership Agreement are created and recorded by UNHCR in their MSRP[63] to ensure that UNHCR's commitments are recorded and any Partner risks are minimized. A Partnership Agreement can only be formulated and signed in English, French or Spanish. Translations into other languages are unofficial documents and may be used only for assisting readers to understand the content of the Partnership Agreement.

Types of Partnership Agreement

UNHCR offices can sign bipartite or tripartite agreements with local, national, regional or international NGOs or not-for-profit organizations, host Governments, inter-governmental organizations, and UN agencies. There are various types of Partnership Agreement and only the version applicable to a specific type of Partner, or nature of Partnership should be used (e.g., the standard Agreement for a UN entity cannot be used for an NGO Partner). **Figure 38** below sets out the six main types of Partnership Agreement used by UNHCR.

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[63] UNHCR's web-based Resource Planning system known as Managing for Systems, Resources and People

Chapter 4: **Assessment and Planning Operations at Country Level**

Chapter 4 introduces UNHCR's Operations Management cycle which is the mechanism used for assessing, planning, implementing, monitoring and reporting on its operations at country level. It also covers UNHCR's commitment and approach to Age, Gender and Diversity.

There is guidance on the assessment, planning and budgeting processes used with specific attention to the role and contributions made by Partners at each stage. In addition, the final section outlines the provisions and procedures used by UNHCR to proactively anticipate, prepare for and achieve an optimal response to emergencies.

4.1 Managing Operations at Country Level

Most humanitarian organizations have some form of internal program or project management process to guide the way they manage their operations at country level. While conceptually this process generally operates in a 'cycle', in reality some stages in the process may happen simultaneously (such as implementation and monitoring), and other stages are iterative due to complex and changing nature of many humanitarian situations (e.g. assessment and review).

In addition, the multitude of actors in the humanitarian sector and complexity of operations means that organizations responding to humanitarian crisis need to be actively engaged in wider inter-agency and sector programming, as well as their own operations, e.g. through the Refugee Coordination Model in refugee settings (refer to Section 2.2.2) or Humanitarian Programme Cycle in IDP situations (refer to Section 2.2.3).

4.1.1 UNHCR's Operation Management Cycle

The Operations Management Cycle (OMC) as illustrated in **Figure 32** overleaf, is the process by which a UNHCR office organizes its programming for refugees and other Persons of Concern, including determining which activities to undertake directly and which to undertake in partnership. This cycle is aligned to UNHCR's biennial global planning, budgeting and reporting process (see Section 2.1).

This chapter provides guidance for Partners on the assessment and planning stages of the cycle and how these relate to the Partner's role in working with or

alongside UNHCR. Guidance on the remaining stages is covered in chapters 5 and 6.

The Operations Management Cycle is dynamic reflecting the changing nature of the environments in which UNHCR and its Partners operate. In addition, building on Partner feedback from annual and individual consultations there is significant attention to the importance of participation by Persons of Concern in as many parts of an operation as possible, including but not limited to assessment, planning and monitoring.

Commitments under the **Grand Bargain**, such as Multi Year Multi Partner trials[53] are also aimed at developing more innovative long-term programmes with partners, which are complementary to ongoing development efforts and will be better able to support UNHCR's engagement with Persons of Concern over several years.

Figure 32: Operations Management Cycle

In emergency situations where it is essential to respond rapidly, the phases of the operations management cycle tend to be initiated and undertaken more quickly. They emanate from contingency planning and preparedness measures that are already in place, allowing for rapid review and decision making. Refer to Section 4.5 and the UNHCR Emergency handbook for further details: https://emergency.unhcr.org/operations-management-cycle

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Chapter 5: **Implementing in Partnership**

Chapter 5 provides guidance on the modalities for project implementation with emphasis on projects that are implemented in partnership by UNHCR with its Partners. It sets out the contractual arrangements involved including the content and provisions of standard Agreements for different Partners and situations. Key considerations are highlighted, along with links to detailed Guidance Notes, policy documents and standard templates.

This chapter also sets out the requirements for planning, budgeting and managing financial and other resources, as part of the process in negotiating and finalizing a Partnership Agreement with UNHCR.

5.1 Partnership Agreements

Implementation of projects and activities identified by UNHCR and its Partners at the planning and design stage are outlined in the Operations Plan and may be implemented directly by UNHCR or in collaboration with its Partners. The modalities for implementation may also be combined. For example, UNHCR might procure core relief items directly, while a Partner distributes them. Or, UNHCR may advocate directly for improved access to refugee status determination for asylum-seekers, while a Partner delivers legal assistance.

The selection of appropriate Partners for undertaking a UNHCR project or other activities is detailed in **Section 3.3.** Once selected, the relevant UNHCR Office will enter into detailed negotiations with the selected Partner(s) to fully define the project and the terms of the Partnership Agreement (PA) under which the activities will be delivered. The Partnership Agreement is used to confirm and document the agreed understanding of the negotiations, including formation of strategies and objectives of the project, the expected outcomes, performance indicators, budget and duration.

IPMS Guidance Note 8: Management of UNHCR-Funded Partnership Agreements provides policy guidance which should be followed by UNHCR and the selected Partner(s) in drawing up an Agreement.

5.1.1 Introduction to Partnership Agreements

Purpose of Partnership Agreements

A Partnership Agreement (PA) is a legally binding document between UNHCR and the Partner(s), stipulating the terms, conditions, responsibilities, obligations and

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[53] For information on Multi Year Multi Partner trials: http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/15535

RESOURCES

- Emergency Preparedness and Response Policy, UNHCR, 2017
  https://cms.emergency.unhcr.org/EPR policy 2017
- UNHCR Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/PPRE
- Online UNHCR Emergency Handbook: Emergency preparedness and response section
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/policy-ERP
- IASC Emergency Response Preparedness Approach, 2016
  https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/EP approach

TIPS: Operating in Emergencies

To respond quickly, UNHCR's Partners can:

- Draw on contingency plans and emergency preparedness actions during all stages of the operations or project cycle.
- Gather assessment data that is critical for programming and reasonably easy to obtain in order to expedite activities quickly.
- Start preparing an initial budget and sources for other resources as early as possible.
- Keep the results chain simple (within the Partnership Agreement) with a limited number of objectives, outputs and indicators (refer to Section 2.1.3).
- Ensure there is sufficient capacity (trained personnel, knowledge and skills) to cover all phases of the operation and clearly allocate and agree roles and responsibilities with UNHCR and other stakeholders.

Undertake frequent reviews to validate initial assessments and response to changes in the situation.

4.2   Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD)

Forced displacement and statelessness impact people differently, depending on age, gender, and diversity. Understanding and analyzing the impact of intersecting personal characteristics on people's experiences of forced displacement or statelessness are necessary for an effective response. Through the systematic application of an **Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) approach**, UNHCR seeks to ensure that all Persons of Concern enjoy their rights on an equal footing and can fully participate in the decisions that affect their lives.

Effective and accountable humanitarian responses require:

1. Continuous and meaningful engagement with Persons of Concern;
2. Understanding their needs and protection risks;
3. Building on their capacities; and
4. Pursuing protection, assistance, and solutions that take into account their perspectives and priorities.

Age, gender, and diversity considerations guide all aspects of UNHCR's work. As we hold ourselves accountable to Persons of Concern, the views of women, men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds need to inform our interventions, advocacy, and programs. To achieve this, UNHCR will engage on several areas and undertake core actions as described in **Figure 33** overleaf. Taken together, these areas of engagement comprise the framework for achieving accountability to Persons of Concern, within an age, gender, and diversity approach.

Figure 33: UNHCR core commitments to age, gender and diversity

1. AGD Inclusive Programming

The different capacities, needs, and exposure to protection risks of the women, men, girls, and boys with whom we work must be incorporated into assessments, planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation.

2. UNHCR's Framework for Accountability to Affected People

Participation and Inclusion: Women, men, girls, and boys of diverse backgrounds are able to engage meaningfully and are consulted on protection, assistance, and solutions.

Communication and Transparency: Women, men, girls, and boys of diverse backgrounds in all operations have access to timely, accurate, and relevant information on (i) their rights and entitlements, and (ii) UNHCR and its partners' programs.

Feedback and Response: Formal and informal feedback from Persons of Concern is systematically received and responded to, and corrective action taken as appropriate.

Organizational Learning and Adaptation: Interventions, planning, priority setting, course corrections, and evaluation are informed on an ongoing basis by the views of Persons of Concern.

3. Gender Equality

Women and girls participate equally and meaningfully in all decision-making, community management and leadership structures, and committees of Persons of Concern.

Women and girls are provided with individual registration and documentation, directly or through support provided by UNHCR.

Women and girls have equal access to and control over management and provision of food, core-relief items, and cash-based interventions.

Women and girls have equal access to economic opportunities, including decent work and quality education and health services.

Women and girls have access to comprehensive SGBV prevention and response services.

4.2.1   Age, Gender, and Diversity unpacked

UNHCR recognizes the different age, gender and diversity characteristics of the people it works with and how the intersected nature of those characteristics plays a role in shaping their experience, needs, capacities and skills. Accountability to affected people can only be achieved if participation of all women, girls, men and boys in the community is realized, and programs can only be inclusive when the

with government (including local authorities and line ministries), refugees already in the country, host communities, UN agencies, development partners and private actors, local, national and international NGOs, and other relevant stakeholders. The inclusion of donors at all phases of preparedness helps to ensure that preparedness and early action are adequately understood, supported and funded (where needed).

Where the risks relate to non-refugee situations, UNHCR and its Partners actively contribute to Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator-led inter-agency processes and lead or contribute to cluster preparedness plans through the Emergency Response Preparedness approach endorsed by the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

4.5.2   Activation of Emergencies

UNHCR will declare an emergency at one of three levels set out below in order to increase the financial, material and Human Resource support across the organization and from Partners. For sudden onset emergencies, the level will be declared within 72 hours of the initial event. Level 2 and 3 declarations remain in force for 6 months, after which they are reviewed.

UNHCR Emergency Level 1: Proactive preparedness	Activated to trigger active preparations for a likely humanitarian emergency.
UNHCR Emergency Level 2: Stepped-up Bureau support	Applies in a situation where additional support resources are required, mainly from the respective regional Bureau, to respond to an emergency in a timely and effective manner.
UNHCR Emergency Level 3: Whole-of-UNHCR response	Signifies an exceptionally serious situation in which the scale, pace, complexity or consequences of a crisis exceed the existing response capacity of the country operation and respective regional Bureau
IASC System-wide Level 3 Emergencies	Declared by the Emergency Relief Coordinator following consultation with the Humanitarian Country Team, the Emergency Directors Group and the IASC Principals. Requires the collective humanitarian sector to mobilize capacity for the accelerated delivery of protection and humanitarian assistance to those affected.

Simplified procedures apply to Partnership Agreements during the first 6 months of Level 3 emergencies (refer to **Sections 3.3** and **5.1** of this Handbook for further details).

4.5 Emergency Preparedness and Response

In order to save lives, ensure protection, deliver assistance, and promote solutions for Persons of Concern, UNHCR's **Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response** seeks to ensure that UNHCR has sufficient and appropriate capacity and procedures to proactively anticipate, prepare for and achieve an optimal response to emergencies.

The policy sets out UNHCR's internal mechanisms for emergency preparedness and response, including criteria for their activation and deactivation and for determining the level of response. It calls to involve a range of players in design and delivery: governments, civil society, local and international NGOs, UN agencies, development actors, financial institutions, the private sector, the media and refugees, internally displaced people and host communities. The Emergency Policy outlines the key principles for UNHCR and its Partners in guiding emergency preparedness and response activities, including:

- Adopting a whole-of-UNHCR approach
- Putting Persons of Concern at the center
- Overriding duty to act on a Do No Harm and No Regrets basis
- Promoting state responsibility and humanitarian complementarity
- Diversifying partnerships
- Pursuit of solutions in all preparedness and response activities from the onset and links to development
- Maintaining a duty of care
- Being innovative and scanning the horizon

4.5.1 Emergency Preparedness

On an annual basis, all UNHCR operations are required to undertake an exercise of refugee emergency risk analysis together with partners and governments and to ensure a minimum level of preparedness following guidance set out in the **UNHCR Preparedness Package for Refugee Emergencies** (PPRE). Country operations at a medium to high risk of new or escalated emergencies are required to complete additional activities including the designation of a senior Preparedness Focal Point and the development of Preparedness Actions Plans in collaboration with Partners and government counterparts.

Designed to align with the Refugee Coordination Model, the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, and other coordination mechanisms established in agreement with governments, the PPRE promotes an inclusive strategic planning process to ensure that the multi-sector response is coordinated and delivered smoothly. The activities described in the PPRE are to be undertaken in partnership

differentiating characteristics of individuals are taken into account. UNHCR's AGD policy highlights the diversity at community level and identifies specific risks and concerns to be considered by staff and Partners during programming.

Children and adolescents bring unique and valuable perspectives and solutions to problems confronting them and their communities. Female and male children and adolescents should be supported to participate and express their views in all matters affecting them in accordance with their age, gender, maturity, and capacity. Children and adolescents are entitled to special protection and assistance because they are at greater risk than adults of abuse, neglect, sexual and other forms of violence, exploitation, trafficking, and forced recruitment into armed groups.

Children, including adolescents are exposed, through displacement to neglect, exploitation, and sexual exploitation and abuse. Children are at particular risk due to their dependence on adults to survive, their vulnerability to physical and psychological trauma, and the need to ensure normal growth and development. Education in a safe environment provides children and young people with opportunities for some normalcy, as well as a mechanism for teaching children and young people to respect their diversity. Children have a unique and valuable perspective and their participation in decisions that affect them is essential in facilitating their protection and wellbeing.

Youth are frequently overlooked as a social group and have the potential to make important contributions to protection and solutions for themselves and their communities, when given the opportunity to develop their talents and skills. Displacement frequently forces female and male youth to take on new roles and responsibilities to try to meet their own and their families' protection and assistance needs. Displacement can lead to harmful coping strategies, such as sexual exploitation and sex work, the risk of forced recruitment in criminal and armed groups, and exploitation in the labor market.

Older persons may face heightened protection risks, as a result of aging factors alone, or in combination with other individual characteristics. The specific risks older persons face can be the result of physical and mental conditions but can also result from obstacles encountered due to societal perceptions and the interactions of an individual with his or her environment. Older people can play vital roles in their households and communities, for example as transmitters of knowledge, culture, and skills.

Older women and men may suffer a heightened risk of marginalization, exploitation and other forms of abuse. While they may be severely challenged, older persons should not be seen only as passive, dependent recipients of assistance. They often serve a key role as community leaders and transmitters of knowledge, offering guidance and advice, and contributing to peace and reconciliation measures.

Women and girls take on important roles in their communities and families and contribute in various ways to strengthening protection and solutions. However, negative gender roles ascribed to them often ensure that they face specific, severe,

and wide-spread barriers to accessing their rights, including fewer opportunities and resources, lower socio-economic status, less power and influence, numerous forms of discrimination, and heightened protection risks, including of SGBV.

Men and boys can be agents of change for rights promotion, including increasing gender equality and preventing SGBV. Displacement creates protection risks for men and boys, including trafficking, forced recruitment, and certain forms of violence, including SGBV.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons face complex challenges, threats, and barriers, and are often exposed to discrimination, abuse, prejudice, and violence due to their sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity. This is often severely compounded in situations of displacement, where the nature of the discrimination they encounter can be particularly virulent, their isolation from family and community profound, and the harm inflicted on them severe.

Disability arises out of the interaction between an individual's impairment and various barriers, including attitudinal and environmental barriers, which may hinder full and effective participation in society and access to opportunities on an equal basis with others. Due to those barriers, persons with disabilities are often excluded from programs, lack support networks, and are denied participation in decisions that affect their lives. As a result, they may face heightened protection risks and be unable to access humanitarian assistance and programs, such as education, livelihoods, and health care. Women, men, girls, and boys with disabilities have diverse needs and capacities, which need to be understood to inform programming, facilitate the identification and removal of barriers, and promote equal access and inclusion.

Women, men, girls, and boys belonging to **national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, or indigenous groups** often experience discrimination and marginalization. They are frequently excluded from participation and encounter obstacles to expressing their identity, factors which are compounded in displacement. They are likely to be affected both by the immediate events leading to their displacement and by the long-term legacy of discrimination.

UNHCR and its Partners need to make themselves aware of their own preconceptions or discriminatory attitudes towards different groups to ensure that programs are inclusive and participatory. Prejudice may stem from lack of knowledge about a particular group or their rights. Exclusion of specific groups or individuals during displacement can be inadvertent or purposeful: either way, it is discriminatory.

Planning in IDP Settings

Humanitarian organizations operating in IDP settings should be aware of and contribute to achieving the agreed inter-agency sector priorities and standards set out in all relevant **Humanitarian Response Plans** through linking their own projects and proposals to these priorities and areas of activity. The Humanitarian Response Plan is based on findings from a joint assessment (such as a **Multi cluster/sector Initial Rapid Needs Assessment**) which are summarized in the **Humanitarian Needs Overview**. This process is directed by the Humanitarian Country Team and guidance in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle.

Humanitarian Response Plans are developed in two stages:

1. A **Preliminary Response Plan** is developed 3-5 days after onset of the emergency. This sets out the immediate priorities of the response. If an up-to-date contingency plan exists, it will provide the foundation for the Preliminary Response Plan.

2. 30 days after the Preliminary Response Plan, a more detailed **Humanitarian Response Plan** is completed. This sets out the direction of the response and provides a specific framework for humanitarian actions and programs, coordination, and monitoring outcomes and results.

UNHCR and its Partners should demonstrate similar engagement and alignment with response plans for any specific sector and/or cluster in which they are planning to implement activities.

RESOURCES

UNHCR Planning and Budgeting Processes
- Operations Plan in an emergency
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/operations-plan-in-emergencies

Refugee and Humanitarian Response Planning
- Refugee Response Planning process and tools
  https://emergency.unhcr.org/refugee-response-plans

- Humanitarian Response Plans
  https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/strategic-response-planning

Changes to Operations Plans

Due to the dynamic nature of refugee and other emergencies, Operations Plans often need to be updated to reflect changes in the operating context. This is particularly so as plans are normally developed a full nine months prior to implementation. Changes that would necessitate updating of an Operations Plan include a sudden influx of refugees, new opportunities for local integration, unexpected improvement in the country of origin enabling large scale returns or funding constraints that necessitate reprioritization of activities.

4.4.2 Inter-agency Planning

The humanitarian response to large scale refugee, IDP or mixed emergency situations is guided by inter-agency response plans. These aim to build on existing national and international preparedness measures and contingency plans and draw on evidence-based findings from the coordinated assessments described in the previous section.

Planning in Refugee Settings

Humanitarian organizations operating in refugee settings should be aware of and contribute to achievement of the priorities set out in the relevant **Refugee Response Plan (RRP)** through linking their own projects and proposals to these priorities and areas of activity. This expectation reflects the coordination requirements of the Refugee Coordination Model. The Refugee Response Plan describes the needs for protection, assistance and solutions of refugees and other Persons of Concern, and sets out the priorities, actions and resources required to address them.

The development of a collective Refugee Response Plan aims to support government leadership and coordination, through mobilization of international support and funding. Where more than one country is involved in hosting refugees, a regional Refugee Response Plan may be prepared incorporating the individual country-level inter-agency response plans.

A Refugee Response Plan is prepared in two stages:

1. An **Initial Refugee Response Plan** is developed within two weeks to guide immediate priority interventions over a timeframe of 3-6 months depending on the context. An on-line inter-agency Refugee Response Plan portal (http://www.data.unhcr.org/) is also be established.

2. After 2-3 months (or later depending on the timeframe), a **Consolidated Operational Refugee Response Plan** is developed which sets out a detailed strategy and implementation plan for all humanitarian organizations, including UNHCR's Partners that are involved in the response.

RESOURCES

- UNHCR's policy on Age, gender and Diversity, March 2018
  http://www.unhcr.org/5aa13c0c7.pdf

- UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations, May 2006
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/462df4232.html

- Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action, IASC, 2018
  https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/GenderHandbook

- Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Persons in forced displacement, UNHCR, 2011
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/4e6073972.html

- Working with National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and Indigenous Peoples in forced displacement, UNHCR, 2011
  http://www.refworld.org/docid/4ee72a2a2.html

- Protecting Older People in Emergencies, HelpAge 2012
  http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/Older_People

- Working with Older Persons in forced displacement, UNHCR, 2013
  http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4ee72aaf2.pdf

- Working with Persons with Disabilities in forced displacement, UNHCR, 2011
  http://www.unhcr.org/persons-disabilities

- Disability Checklist for Emergency Response, Handicap Intl
  http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/Disability_Checklist

  Gender with Age Marker (GAM)
  https://iascgenderwithagemarker.com/download-the-gender-with-age-marker/

4.3   Assessment

The purpose of assessments is to help those responding to a crisis to better understand a situation and the conditions and needs faced by the affected populations. Where possible, assessments should be conducted with the active participation of Persons of Concern and be an ongoing activity that has a close link to monitoring and implementation, and feeds into regular adjustments to program design and resource allocation.

- **Coordination and Partnership Strategy** – this outlines UNHCR's involvement in different coordination mechanisms in country and set out its strategy for coordination with its Partners, including the government.

- **Comprehensive and Prioritized Budgets** – refer to Sections 2.1.4 and 4.3.4.

TIPS: Assessments

- Assess the severity of the situation and conditions faced by Persons of Concern.

- Identify the different protection needs and risks, perspectives and capacities of diverse women, men, girls, and boys of concern, and establish priorities.

- Engage with Persons of Concern and other key stakeholders to create a common understanding of the protection and solutions context including the diversity of conditions and needs faced by different groups.

- Identify existing capacities and resources of government, Partners, other agencies and Persons of Concern, including positive and negative coping mechanisms.

- Engage with government-led coordination mechanisms and reflect and build on national development plans.

- Engage with other international and national agencies and sector coordination mechanisms and strengthen or complement their work.

- Inform emergency or longer-term program responses and address gaps between an affected population's current status and the desired state.

- Support operational and strategic decision-making, including targeting and define priorities for other information systems, such as protection monitoring

- Avoid causing harm with humanitarian interventions.

- Inform future assessment design based on identified information gaps.

Engage with government-led coordination mechanisms and provide a basis to feed into national plans, in line with the humanitarian-development nexus and the pledge to "leave no one behind" in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.[54]

UNHCR Internal Prioritization in Planning Operations

UNHCR has an internal process for prioritizing the planned activities in its annual Operations Plans. These may be useful for Partners to consider in developing their own proposals. The criteria may include:

- Links to UNHCR's global strategic priorities.

- Consistency with the operation's Protection and Solutions strategy.

- The need to sacrifice some planned activities in order to prioritize others that are considered more critical to implementing the protections and solutions strategy.

- The ability to plan and budget for prioritized activities for the full term (12 months) of the Operations Plan without relying on the possibility of further funding from elsewhere.

- Giving priority to activities that are already earmarked for donor funding.

- Giving priority to activities that can be readily achieved within the constraints of available resources, capacity and the operating context.

- Looking at the budgetary requirements across administration, operations and staffing elements holistically, rather than prioritizing one over another.
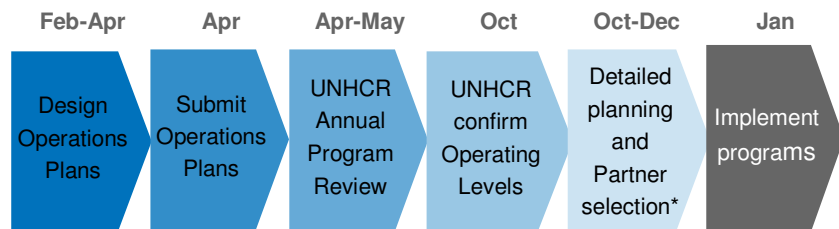
Developing an Operations Plan budget

As part of the planning process, UNHCR and its Partners determine and specify the comprehensive budget requirements for each output in the **Operations Plan**. The Operations Plan budget reflects the total resources required to meet all the identified needs. As needs almost always exceed the resources available, each UNHCR office also builds up an **Operating Level Budget** based on the prioritized activities set out in the Operations Plan.

The Operations Plan is therefore broken down into two elements:

- activities and budgets that fall **within the operating level**

- activities and budgets that are **above the operating level**

All Partner costs must be fully covered within UNHCR's Operating Level budget before a Partnership Agreement can be signed.

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[54] http://www.unhcr.org/comprehensive-refugee-response-framework-crrf.html

Figure 37: Planning and Selection of Implementation Modalities [62]

Feb-Apr	Apr	Apr-May	Oct	Oct-Dec	Jan
Design Operations Plans	Submit Operations Plans	UNHCR Annual Program Review	UNHCR confirm Operating Levels	Detailed planning and Partner selection*	Implement programs

* Implementing partnership is one of the implementation modalities that may be chosen by UNHCR for implementing their Operations Plans. Projects may also be implemented directly by UNHCR.

Operations Plans

The Operations Plan (also known as a Country Operations Plan) represents UNHCR's plan of action for the coming year. It contains the following elements:

- **Population of Concern** – this defines the population that UNHCR is seeking to support. Population planning figures need to be agreed with government and UNHCR offices to facilitate a consistent approach to planning. The population of concern is broken down into **Population Planning Groups (PPG)** which are considered to be homogenous for use in planning and budgeting purposes (refer to Sections 2.1.2 and 2.1.4 for further guidance).

- **Protection and Solutions Strategy** - This outlines a vision of what UNHCR expects to achieve, including well defined priorities, concrete targets, and how it proposes to achieve these objectives. The multi-year strategy should be developed with input from Partners, government, Persons of Concern and other stakeholders, and particularly those with a good understanding of the operational context.

- **Results Chain** - In line with the Protection and solutions strategy, the Operation Plan outlines the results chain for each Population Planning Group consisting of at least one goal, at least one rights group, various objectives with impact indicators and various outputs with performance indicators. This is illustrated in Section 2.1.2.

- **Office Structure and Staffing** – this summarizes the staffing and office structure needed to achieve the objectives and deliver the targets in the Operations Plan.

Assessments are also important to ensure that protection principles are respected and upheld. An assessment should seek to understand whether[55]:

- an intervention exposes people to increased danger or abuse of their rights;
- protection and assistance are provided without discrimination;
- programs expose people to violence or acts of coercion; and
- Persons of Concern are adequately assisted and supported to claim their rights.

Coordinated assessments

Coordinated assessments help to ensure complementarity in coverage of affected populations and avoid duplication of effort. Coordinated assessments range from formalized joint needs assessments to a harmonized approach to single-agency assessments.

In contrast, assessments that are carried out in isolation run the risk of duplication, lack of interoperability and potential harm to populations of concern, who may be asked about their needs by multiple actors, including potentially about sensitive or traumatic issues.

4.3.1   Assessment process

UNHCR's plans are not only based on an assessment of needs but also an analysis of the wider protection and solutions context, key stakeholders of relevance to Persons of Concern, including government, and the situation, rights, capacities and skills of Persons of Concern and other key stakeholders. Partners often have information and data of relevance to this wider analysis and they should be active constituents in the assessment process.

Stages in UNHCR's assessment process

Figure 34 overleaf illustrates the stages that UNHCR follows to ensure a systematic assessment process. These are explained in more detail on the Programming for Protection Learning Module 2[56]

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[62] Adapted from UNHCR Program Manual (chapter 4)

[55] From UNHCR Programming for Protection Learning Module 2
[56] Available through the UNHCR Learn and Connect platform

Figure 34: UNHCR Assessment Process

Understand context	**Initial context review** • Define scope and scale of crisis • Define legal and policy framework	• Identify initial needs • Determine if further assessment is needed
Plan	• Set objectives • Define purpose and assessment process	• Define information requirements • Establish coordination arrangements
Collect and collate data	**Secondary data review** • Baseline data (pre crisis) • In crisis data (e.g. government) • Data from Partners • Remote sensing	**Primary data collection** • Joint or harmonized data collection
Draw conclusions	• Situation analysis • State and severity of needs • Key issues and underlying causes	• Risks and vulnerabilities • Perspectives reflecting the diversity of Persons of Concern
Share information	• Situation analysis • Needs assessment report • Key findings and recommendations	• Dashboards • Visual outputs such as charts, maps, heat maps • Datasets

Situational analysis

Situational assessment is the process of analysing a complex situation within its wider context. It has a broader scope than needs assessment due to the focus on the wider context and the capacities of those affected and usually informs the development of a multi-year multi-partner protection and solutions strategy. A comprehensive situational assessment should include an analysis of the following components:

• Profile of the population
• Analysis of patterns and trends of displacement
• Analysis of the protection environment and specific risks
• Analysis of the socio-economic situation of the hosting country and of the living conditions of people of concern
• Opportunities to integrate people of concern into national systems and planning

leveraging development partners and facilitating inclusion into national and local systems and services.

Enable Local Integration/Durable Solutions	- build links between host communities and Persons of Concern and strengthen local capacity to integrate and promote peaceful co-existence and mitigate the risks of conflict or harm.
Adopt Clear Targeting Criteria	- design and deliver programs based on clear targeting criteria. For example, protection vulnerabilities, socio-economic factors, geographical location or the presence and capacity of other actors, to focus on those most in need among Persons of Concern.

Outcomes from annual consultations between UNHCR and its NGO Partners have reiterated the importance of an open planning process which engages a 'whole-of-society' pool of stakeholders to achieve maximum coordination and delivery of effective protection, assistance and solutions for Persons of Concern. The process should contribute to establishing a shared vision and understanding of UNHCR's operations and determine which actions will be undertaken by UNHCR directly, and which in collaboration with its Partners.

Operational planning

UNHCR's operational planning is based on a protection and solutions strategy covering a two-year period (biennium). This strategy is developed by operations at country level together with Partners and other stakeholders. The strategy is used to define annual **Operations Plans**.

Instructions for UNHCR's planning exercise are issued annually in December as part of the consolidated reporting, implementation and planning instructions. Based on these instructions, guidance by the High Commissioner and information on indicative budgets, operations start developing their Operations Plans in February-April for the following year. This is illustrated in **Figure 37** overleaf.

Operations Plans are developed by each UNHCR office in collaboration with their Partners, government and Persons of Concern, and submitted for review in April. Once the budget allocations are approved by the **ExCom** in October, instructions for the detailed planning and budgeting are issued. This process takes place over the period October - December and includes identification of implementation modalities, including partnership arrangements.

Implementation of the Operations Plans commences from January, although individual projects may commence at any time during the year depending on the situation and needs. The overall planning timeline is broadly aligned with UNHCR's process for selecting Partners (refer to details in Section 3.3).

4.4 Planning and Budgeting

Planning is the process by which findings from assessments and ongoing monitoring and reporting are translated into the design of a response to the needs and vulnerabilities of Persons of Concern.

4.4.1 UNHCR's Planning Process

Principles Guiding UNHCR Programming

The planning and design of UNHCR programs is underlined by several core principles[61] summarized in **Figure 36** below. These are relevant for Partners in contributing to UNHCR's operational planning process and in developing their own proposals.

Figure 36: Guiding Principles for Designing UNHCR Programs

Provide Protection	- be guided by UNHCR's mandate as a protection agency.
Strengthen Capacity	- support host governments and build on existing national and local capacities and systems (e.g. education and health systems).
Facilitate Participation	- engage Persons of Concern in meaningful ways at all stages of the Operations Management Cycle, while not putting people at risk of harm and taking account of age, gender and diversity needs.
Promote Partnership	- work through Partners with shared values and objectives for collaboration and in a way that promotes synergy and value for money. Seek opportunities to work with and develop the capacity of national Partners that have local knowledge and access to Persons of Concern.
Use Local Skills & Resources	- draw on local capacities, particularly among Persons of Concern to facilitate an active role in influencing design, implementation and decision making, promote dignity and livelihood opportunities and contribute to more efficient and sustainable use of resources.
Focus on Resilience	- focus on ways to develop the self-reliance of Persons of Concern and reduce dependency early on. Examples are

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[61] from UNHCR Program Manual (chapter 4)

▪ Analysis of key stakeholders and their possible contribution to protection and solutions

As other types of assessments situational assessments should apply, a rights-based and community-based approach and should be conducted in line with the Age, Gender and Diversity Policy. This will facilitate understanding of the different realities people face because of their age, their gender and their diversity with respect to ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity (among other factors). Failure to consider the circumstances of specific sub-groups within a population can lead to actions that have unintentionally resulted in further exclusion and discrimination.

Therefore, when analyzing the different aspects of a situational assessment, it is important to identify:

▪ who the most vulnerable are;
▪ the differences that exist among the population in terms of protection needs, risks, access to rights, services, and assistance; and
▪ the underlying causes of inequalities and barriers that need to be overcome.

Needs assessment

Needs assessment is a data collection exercise, usually conducted at a single point in time. It is generally undertaken as part of a wider assessment process but may also be triggered by the need to better understand the situation and problems in relation to a specific issue or group. The type and scope of needs assessment undertaken depends on the context, the stage of an emergency or displacement situation, the nature of information needed and the time and resources available. Refer to **Figure 35** overleaf for more information.

Different types of assessment are commonly used at different stages of an emergency, with each type designed to address specific information and decision-making requirements. For example, in the immediate aftermath of a crisis or major population displacement, an initial assessment may be needed to determine the overall scale and severity of needs without gathering detailed information about the impact of the crisis on different groups. At a later stage or in more protracted crises, an in-depth assessment may be conducted to understand specific needs , such as the protection risks for children in a particular area.

Conducting needs assessments can be costly and time-consuming and may also raise expectations among Persons of Concern and other stakeholders. The design of any assessment starts with a review of the overall context. This review should draw on results of any situational analysis that has been done and help determine whether a needs assessment is relevant and necessary.

Figure 35: Summary of assessment types [57]

Criteria	Initial assessment	Rapid assessment	In depth assessment
Objectives	▪ Define the scale and severity of the crisis ▪ Estimate men, women, girls and boys in need ▪ Identify and locate affected groups considering age, gender and diversity ▪ Establish key priorities ▪ Define access constraints	▪ Define the impact of a crisis ▪ Estimate men, women, girls and boys in need by groups of concern ▪ Assess severity of need in affected groups and areas ▪ Capture views of different groups ▪ Establish key priorities with the affected population ▪ Determine information needs	▪ Envision durable solutions to inform needs assessment ▪ Define and quantify needs using in depth information ▪ Provide statistically representative data ▪ Capture representative views of different groups through joint consultations ▪ Establish baseline for needs and response monitoring
Type of decision to inform	▪ Initial response decisions ▪ Design of rapid assessment ▪ Emergency funding appeals.	▪ Initial response planning ▪ Focus for in-depth assessments ▪ Recommendations for strategic planning	▪ Planning of relief, early recovery, and durable solutions ▪ Adjustments to ongoing response ▪ Operational requirements
Time frame	3-5 days	2-4 weeks	1-4 months
Design	▪ Secondary data analysis only. ▪ A few field visits, if feasible. ▪ Data gathered at provincial, district or community level	▪ Secondary /primary data analysis ▪ Data gathered at community level ▪ Qualitative research methods	▪ Secondary/primary data analysis ▪ Data gathered at community, household, or individual level ▪ Quantitative and qualitative research methods
Resources required	Very limited resources	Limited resources	Can involve significant resources

RESOURCES

UNHCR Assessment Resources

▪ UNHCR Needs Assessment handbook
http://needsassessment.unhcr.org/

UNHCR Needs Assessment E-learning modules are also available on Learn and Connect

▪ UNHCR Emergency assessments and tools
https://emergency.unhcr.org/assessments

▪ UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations
http://www.unhcr.org/participatory-assessment-operations

Humanitarian Assessment Resources

▪ IASC Operational Guidance on Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises, 2012
https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/Coordinated_assessments

▪ Humanitarian Needs Overview
https://reliefweb.int/report/HNO

▪ Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS)
https://www.acaps.org/

▪ Multi cluster/sector Initial Rapid Needs Assessment (MIRA)
http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/MIRA-2015

▪ REACH: tools and products to inform assessments and planning
http://www.reach-initiative.org/tag/needs-assessment

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[57] Adapted from UNICEF Needs Assessment Handbook, 2017

emergency, or an assessment to determine a **Humanitarian Needs Overview** during more protracted crises. Findings from the assessment and subsequent analysis are used to inform the development of a **Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP)**, cluster strategies, and Flash Appeals (see Section 4.3.1).

Single Sector or Cluster Assessments

Humanitarian organizations are expected to engage in undertaking, coordinating or participating in single sector or cluster assessments. These allow for more in-depth investigation of key issues, risks, and capacities at sector or cluster level. Guidance on UNHCR's approach to assessment in those sectors within which it has an active involvement (cash programming, shelter, health, nutrition, WASH, food security and people with specific needs) can be found in the UNHCR Emergency Handbook at: https://emergency.unhcr.org/assessments

UNHCR and its Partners have responsibilities related to assessment in their capacity as operational agencies, as well as cluster or sector members. They should share information on their own assessments, as well as sharing findings from monitoring, tracking, and reporting.

UNHCR's Needs Assessment Handbook provides step by step guidance on the process and tools that can be used in assessing the needs and capacities of Persons of Concern, across a variety of different situations. The **Guidance for Profiling Urban Displacement Situations** gives practical tips on developing methodologies that are appropriate to the added complexity of urban contexts.

Participatory assessment

Participatory assessment is UNHCR's primary tool for partnering with Persons of Concern to get a thorough understanding of the situation for all groups within the population and host communities. It applies from the beginning of an emergency and throughout UNHCR's engagement with affected groups to analyse the evolving situation as diverse women, men, girls and boys experience it.

Participatory assessments can be used as a one-off collaborative multi-sector assessment tool or as a continuous part of UNHCR's community-based approach involving multiple smaller assessments of varying scope and scale that are jointly analyzed with Persons of Concern and Partners to inform ongoing priorities and programming. The use of participatory assessments reinforces UNHCR's commitment to accountability to affected populations, the Age, Gender and Diversity policy, and a community-based approach. This approach also serves a range of operational purposes, including:

1. Creating the basis of ongoing, honest and two-way dialogue between UNHCR and Persons of Concern
2. Ensuring programs are relevant and responsive
3. Making programs more effective and efficient
4. Increasing the sustainability of UNHCR's work including the progressive realization of rights
5. Mobilizing support for UNHCR's programs
6. Generating learning and mutual understanding among staff, Partners and communities

Participatory assessments are conducted through a range of consultations methods such as group discussions, semi-structured interviews, etc. When covering sensitive issues, it is important to select staff with good communication skills who are well versed in the issues to ensure effective relationship building and results.

It is important that Persons of Concern are involved in the analysis and identification of clear and specific priorities solutions put forward by the different groups. The findings from participatory assessments should also be compared with information collected through other assessments. This enriches your evidence base and provides more comprehensive data to inform decision making.

Further details on participatory assessments can be found in UNHCR's Programming for Protection Learning Module 2 and the **UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations**.

Targeting

Targeting is a process that aims to ensure that Persons of Concern are supported with the most appropriate interventions to address their needs and reinforce their ability to exercise their rights. It helps to focus on the most vulnerable and contributes to reducing inclusion errors (i.e. persons that are not in the target group benefitting from the intervention) and exclusion errors (i.e. persons that are in the target group failing to benefit from the intervention)[58].

Within UNHCR's Operations Management Cycle, the targeting process starts with assessments and is part of the planning for implementation. Information from the assessment process feeds into the definition of targeting eligibility criteria, which describe the characteristics of intended target groups.

A set of indicators may be used to define the eligibility criteria, for example nutritional status, family status, poverty levels, etc. The types and number of indicators varies by situation and context. Applying targeting criteria to a population of concern contributes to a broader understanding and projection of comprehensive needs. It is then possible to estimate how many Persons of Concern need to be targeted for a required intervention and whether a smaller or larger number need to be considered.

Annual Comprehensive Needs Assessment Process

Each year UNHCR, normally during the period January-March, conducts a **Comprehensive Needs Assessment** to determine the needs of persons of concern and inform the development of the Operations Plan for the following year. The Comprehensive Needs Assessment consolidates information on the risks, protection gaps and capacities of Persons of Concern gained from assessments and regular monitoring and reporting, carried out through the year. This enables UNHCR to design appropriate responses either directly or in collaboration with Partners, prioritize available funding and highlight the consequences, if the required funding is not available.

The process depends on extensive consultation with Persons of Concern, Partners and other stakeholders to be effective. It also provides an important opportunity for Partners to contribute to UNHCR's planning process and build up a comprehensive understanding of the needs and priorities of the affected population.

In a multi-year planning situation, the assessment findings will inform the multi-year strategy. Any major issue highlighted through the CNA will trigger revision of the multi-year strategy.

Findings from the Comprehensive Needs Assessments in each UNHCR operation are also aggregated on an annual basis in a **Global Needs Assessment**. This

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[58] Refer to the UNHCR Needs Assessment Handbook 2017 for further details

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provides a comprehensive global picture of the humanitarian needs of Persons of Concern to UNHCR.

4.3.2 Assessment Modalities in different settings

Assessment in Refugee Settings

As lead agency in refugee emergencies, UNHCR is responsible for coordinating timely, protection-focused, participatory needs assessments with the specific aim of ensuring that planning and programming processes are underpinned by community-identified protection concerns, as well as an understanding of community capacities to address them. Where feasible, assessments are undertaken in collaboration with a government counterpart and the assessment activities themselves may be shared between humanitarian partners.

UNHCR commits to ensuring that the necessary tools, skills, and leadership are in place to facilitate coordinated needs assessments. Several assessment methodologies can be used depending on the timing and nature of the emergency and operating context[59]. The findings are used to inform UNHCR and inter-agency response planning, including **Refugee Response Plans**.

Assessment in Mixed Settings

In situations of displacement that include both refugees and IDPs, either in the same geographic area or in separate areas within a country, UNHCR will coordinate joint assessments relevant to the refugee response and lead inter-agency assessments relevant to IDPs in the clusters that it leads (refer to Section 2.2.1).

Assessment in IDP Settings

In an IDP related emergency, the Humanitarian (or Resident) Coordinator oversees the implementation of assessments as a critical stage in the **Humanitarian Programme Cycle** (refer to Section 2.2.3). Where feasible, this is done through supporting the government in leading a coordinated assessment process.

The **IASC Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crises** are followed by UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies to facilitate effective coordination, produce comparable data, and promote a shared vision of needs and situations.

There are several assessment methodologies that may be used[60], including a **Multi-Cluster/Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA)** at the start of an

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[59] Refer to the UNHCR Needs Assessment Handbook 2017 for further details

[60] http://www.unocha.org/es/themes/needs-assessment