



Forced Displacement Working Group Meeting

Tuesday 21 March 17, 14:00 – 15:30

ICVA's Conference Room, 26-28 Avenue Giuseppe-Motta

NGOs/UN Agencies Present

The NGOs/UN Agencies present were:

- ACF (call in); ACT Alliance; Act for Peace Australia (call in); CARE Canada (call in); DRC (call in); NRC; ICMC; ICVA; IDC; Intersos; LWF (call in); Oxfam International (call in); RefugePoint; Save the Children (in person + call in); Women's Refugee Commission; World Vision International.

1. Discussion on the current Resettlement Climate:

ICMC and RefugePoint provided short presentations on recent developments and their perspectives on the current climate related to resettlement, how programmes are (likely to be) affected.

Background:

Process for people to be admitted to the US: Resettlement Support Centers (RSCs) are processing cases for referral to the US. ICMC runs one RSC in Istanbul, and one in Beirut.

Departures have never stopped but numbers have changed, mostly following the new ceiling put by the Trump administration.

- Under Obama's administration, ceiling was at 100 000 - the highest ever.
- Under Trump's administration, the ceiling is now at 50 000. (Yet, the latest court decision might seem to say that this ceiling will no longer be applicable).
 - ⇒ Historical context: In 2006/7, resettlement ceiling was of 48'000. While the ceiling was much higher under Obama's administration, actual arrivals were at 50'000. So depending on what you look at (historical perspective, needs), you might have different opinions.
 - ⇒ Debates on the number of the ceiling: Is it a target? A ceiling? A quota? In any case, the administration is hardly obliged to hit it. Administration could not find hard ways to limit the numbers, except through the extreme vetting.

Impact of lowering the ceiling:

- RSCs have been asked to revise their figures and revise their budgets. For ICMC, the initial target figure was of 13'500 people to depart from Beirut and Istanbul and is now of 7'000 people only.
- Number of departures per week from all RSCs: For now, this is a steady pipeline of 600 people leaving per week. With new order, it is expecting to decrease to 100 per week.

- It is possible that we will reach the 50'000 ceiling and then departures will stop. It will all depend on the court decision.
 - Uncertainty for 2018: It is now very difficult to estimate what is needed for this pipeline.
 - o Estimates need to include UNHCR referrals, and it is not clear how UNHCR plans to fill the respective RSCs.
 - o With Trump's extreme vetting, will the procedure become more complicated? Will we need more people to process cases? Security vetting means one more layer of security check (social media screening for example). This could delay the process of resettlement, and more people could drop out.
 - At national level: With the legal uncertainty there is no clear idea of what is coming up (i.e., once people are told they will fly the following day, there is still an uncertainty about what they will become. NGOs are not always able to respond adequately to the queries, because they depend on guidelines coming from PRM). It is key here to have a very good coordination and communication among the different actors involved in this process, starting with UNHCR. In the case of Turkey, cases come from the national authorities, which are then transferred to UNHCR. There are many actors along the way and therefore, a higher risk of bottleneck developing.
 - On the deployment scheme:
 - o Some NGOs work with UNHCR to prepare the cases and submit them to governments such as the US. These actors are very directly impacted in terms of budget and staff. In the case of ICMC, the cut represents 30% of their deployees. It is important now to make sure that sources of funding do not only come from UNHCR (given the personnel cuts) – While, Canada just renewed their contract with ICMC, RefugePoint has external funding coming from Norway.
 - o Africa and Asia are the continents the most impacted for financial reasons (Syria situation is funded from a separate funding pot). The US used to take about 90% of refugees from Africa. So for Congolese, Somali and others, it will be very difficult to find solutions. Last year, UNHCR submitted over 40'000 refugees for resettlement to the US from Africa alone. PRM has instructed not to submit any cases from Africa from now until October. This creates a huge problem of backlog with those pending and those already in the pipeline.
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- ⇒ While it is thought the executive orders target Muslims, non-Muslim regions are actually the most targeted in the cuts for the resettlement.
 - ⇒ Do we tend to focus too much on the US? It is hard to avoid the fact that US is having an important impact. Also when UNHCR is looking to refer refugees based on needs and no other criteria, the main option/destination tends to be the US. When we look at other countries such as Canada and Australia, they have very specific criteria, which creates a limit for those most in need.
 - ⇒ We need to acknowledge that the rest of the world needs to do more and look at other opportunities. There is much hope from UNHCR that complementary pathways can become some form of alternative programmes to make up for resettlement numbers. But the volume and capacity of those alternatives are still uncertain. The Canadian government will release a research on private sponsorship, showing the benefits for integration.

2. March Standing Committee debrief:

Key reactions NGO statements received at the last March Standing Committee on Operations:

- No specific reactions on the Africa or MENA statement
- Very positive reactions on the statement on the Americas:
 - o UNHCR will try to look at its presence at the border at Costa Rica;
 - o UNHCR remains very much open to have a dialogue with NGOs in order to:
 - discuss how civil society can support in addressing the challenges in North and Central America
 - join efforts of the stock taking exercise regarding the Brazil Plan of Action.
- NGO statement on Asia was fully endorsed by UNHCR, who is currently looking for a stronger engagement of governments and NGOs' support regarding resettlement. UNHCR cannot use that much resources for this process.
- On the NGO statement on Europe:
 - o The call for spending on integration was specifically welcome. According to Vincent Cochetel, it is not normal that some countries are not spending a single euro on local integration through states, local municipalities, private enterprises, faith based organizations. It is time to recognize the diversity of actors.
 - o UNHCR recognizes that there have been challenges in terms of coordination. However, UNHCR needs to be specifically designated for that role to address those challenges. Also, UNHCR is doing its best with regards to needs based response.
 - o Finally regarding leadership on policy issues, UNHCR has been giving recommendation in terms of detention, family reunification, UAMs, and the EU-Turkey statement.
- UNHCR's reply on the NGO statement on Partnership clarified its intentions to revise and strengthen the 2011 Structured Dialogue and not simply stop it. Key takeaways and potential follow-ups need to be discussed.
- NGO statement on Emergency Preparedness, the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges, as well as on Conclusions were all well received. Those statements were written in a spirit of complementary advocacy, and the Emergency preparedness team is interested in meeting NGOs.
 - Despite UNHCR praising its growing and positive collaboration with NGOs, the NGO statement on the CRRF created some debate. UNHCR reacted to some aspects of NGOs concerns. Based on existing guidelines (2011 version attached. ICVA will look into possible updates to those guidelines and share ahead of the June Standing Committee), the tone of the statement was adapted. UNHCR does not seem to understand that they are not engaging well with NGOs. Member States also seemed unsatisfied with the process.
 - ⇒ ICVA will work further on the process in order to facilitate the NGO statements on the basis of guidelines and make sure they are critical while being propositional for both states and UNHCR.
 - ⇒ An open discussion could take place at the UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations on the process of drafting NGO statements, the partnership

- aspects of it, how UNHCR perceives the process and the statements, etc.
- ⇒ For statements where NGOs may have different advocacy approaches on the matter, it would be useful that they take the time to look into language and feed into the rounds of revision for better representativity.
- ⇒ Regarding CRRF, NGOs need to make the call and warn UNHCR further of their dissatisfaction.

3. Annual Consultations update:

Reminder: Registrations for the [2017 UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations](#) are now open and NGOs are encouraged to act quickly on this. As of today, there were 238 registered participants.

- UNHCR is looking into livestreaming for more than just the opening and closing sessions.
- Some of the NGOs' junior staff could be supporting note-taking and therefore be registered in addition to the number the quota authorizes.

The draft outlining NGOs' Expected Outcomes for the 2017 UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations on CRRF was shared again. ICVA would still be interested in getting NGOs' feedback on this document.

The list of NGOs' coordinators for each session is almost finalized and is shared with those notes.

4. Update and discussion on the Migration Compact and CRRF/Refugee Compact:

4a. IDC provided an update on the Migration Compact process, with reference to the upcoming consultations led by OHCHR-SR on HR of Migrants and relevant debates/events at the Human Rights Council. In relation, please see:

- [Global Migration Group \(GMG\) Provisional calendar of key events](#)
- Ben's e-mail with all relevant information attached.

Main reactions:

- There will be a lot of opportunities to engage over the next couple of months
 - In June, panel on unaccompanied and separated minors
 - GFMD in June – Colin Rajah will be the Rapporteur.
 - Current information on the regional consultations' dates:
 - Addis: September (tbc)
 - Bangkok: 6-8 November
 - Beirut: 26-28 September
 - Santiago: August (tbc)
- On NGOs' engagement:
 - Anyone with ECOSOC status can register and engage in those processes
 - For regional consultations, like for GFMD, a document will be put together and there will be a consultation previous to the 2 dates in order to present something

- to MS as the CSO contribution.
- For the thematic consultations, there is time for very limited statements.

4b. ICVA provided an update on recent developments related to the **CRRF/Refugee Compact**, with specific focus on the recent UNHCR 'Roadmap non-paper' (attached) and 13 March Geneva Palais Briefing; the 'UNHCR-NGO-IFRC Reference Group on CRRF'; the Entebbe-Nairobi IGAD meetings; the Uganda Solidarity Conference. *[N.B. ICVA is looking into the (busy) calendar to schedule a dedicated meeting with NGOs to discuss objectives and strategic approaches to the CRRF/Global Compact.]*

The first meeting of the Reference Group might take place on 10th of April:

Reactions:

- How does ICVA plan to have feedback from the broader NGO community?
 - ⇒ Each network has a role to go to its members to feed into the discussion, gets inputs, suggestions, - inputs welcome
 - ⇒ The Reference Group ToRs include the possibility of having individual NGOs joining the meetings to provide specific expertise.
 - ⇒ This is not the only avenue of discussions with UNHCR
 - ⇒ Also, ICVA is trying to secure regular discussions with Daniel (roll-out of the CRRF) and if possible, Ellen Hansen (development of the GCR)
 - ⇒ Last but not least, there were some thinking around how to fit the non-paper/road map into the Annual Consultations:

While sessions/agenda cannot be changed given the timing, the following could be considered:

- Thematic consultations that will take place fit with the current approach - the sessions of the consultations could help consult or take stock on the themes depending on the state of the thematic consultations
- In a similar way, regional consultations could fit with the consultations' regional sessions could be a way to consult/help prepare for the upcoming/past regional consultations.
- Preambular & concluding paragraphs + programme of action: NGOs could work together to develop their proposal of the programme of action between now and June. They could come with a draft proposal at the Consultations, have specific note-takers during the 3 days to capture relevant outcomes for the development of the programme of action. The draft would be finalised in June-July and then, it could become either a stand-alone document, or an Annex to the Rapporteur's report. In terms of format, the 2003 agenda for protection could be the starting point.

Reactions:

- Very supportive feedback from NGOs present
- On the non-paper, the fundamental rights for all people is completely missing (which is not missing at all on the migration side)
- Maybe we could also suggest very soon that UNHCR themselves have a human rights mainstreaming conversation so to make sure it is integrated
- It would be useful to identify regional partners, as well as thematic partners, and have someone to play a lead role on each of those themes.

- At the beginning of the process, NGOs will need to discuss how and what to do.
- This strengthens the link between this paper and the UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations and puts further responsibility on NGO coordinators. Having a discussion with all NGO coordinators would be helpful.
- When looking at having a shadow document, NGOs need to think of the value of it vis a vis States position. ICVA will work on convening such a meeting.
- Having a strategic meeting on the CRRF could also prepare the meeting with Daniel Endres and make sure the right targeted questions are asked.
- Field colleagues would benefit from receiving more information.
- The Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS) has just created a regional WG on the CRRF to know more about the process in the countries; involved in the IGAD Summit. To improve exchange of information and coordination between regional and global levels, ICVA is now involved in this ReDSS WG, while ReDSS will join discussions coordinated by ICVA on the CRRF/GCR.

5. **AOB**

- Dangerous Crossing Campaign from UNHCR Yemen
See Ben's e-mail attached.