SUMMARY NOTE
Inclusion of Persons of Concern into National Development Plans and UNDAFs:
Regional Workshop - Americas
Quito, 20 May – 1 June 2018

Background to the workshop

Following a series of regional and global stocktaking on UNHCR’s experience with applying the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, UNHCR seeks to increase the knowledge and understanding on including persons of concern into national and UN development planning frameworks. Inclusion into these frameworks is part of UNHCR’s approach for sustainable responses to large movements of refugees.

A regional workshop in the Americas, jointly planned and conducted by Americas Bureau, DRS, DER/PCU and DPSM/IPS brought together 26 UNHCR staff from 14 countries to
- Increase understanding of inclusion of persons of concern into national and UN development planning frameworks;
- Understand the implications of the 2030 Agenda and the new generation of UNDAFs and
- Solicit experience and good practice from operations for developing lessons and guidance.

The workshop benefited from resource persons from UNDP, UNDOCO, UNDG-LAC, UNRC Office and the Government of Ecuador. The workshop was opened by the UNHCR Deputy Representative who emphasized the need to support states in meeting their obligations as well as the need for expanded engagement with line ministries and providing evidence that persons of concern are not a burden. This was echoed by the BPRM Representative who highlighted that UNHCR is its largest partner in Ecuador and indicated support in raising the CRRF approach with national authorities and strengthening their capacity. Operations mentioned that the workshop was timely as number of host countries are currently engaged in the planning stage for a new NDP or UNDAF.

The following issues emerged in discussions and presentations during the workshop:

Emerging issues and lessons learned: National development planning processes (NDPs):

National Development Plans (NDPs) are a critical process that can be leveraged to include persons of concern in the societies that host them - if UNHCR is prepared to engage more systematically and meaningfully with the appropriate preparation, including data.

- UNHCR’s engagement in national planning processes in the Americas has been sporadic and limited to a few countries (Ecuador, Costa Rica) with diverse experiences: In Costa Rica, the NDP 2015-18 mentions the graduation approach for refugees. Refugees are mentioned specifically in one pillar of the NDP in Brazil highlighting RSD for which the government is responsible and provides data. The CRRF/MIRPS in Costa Rica is not based on the NDP, but conceptually aligns with the NDP and addresses some issues that could be conceived as gap areas in the NDP. As such, it complements the NDP. In Belize, the NDP developed prior to UNHCR’s presence in the countries does not mention refugees, however, it includes issues relevant to persons of concern that can serve as entry points for inclusion.
- When envisionning to work on including displacement and statelessness issues into national development plans, it is important for UNHCR to consider
  a) The timelines, steps and actors involved in the process, noting it is not a one-off exercise;
  b) The degree of decentralisation within a country which will impact on what level UNHCR should engage most (national, provincial, local);
  c) Budgeting processes, which are distinct from planning processes and influence the allocation of budgets for local and national plans, and
d) The importance of building alliances with stakeholders that are critical for achieving the 2030 Agenda and are engaged in national consultations, such as mayors, civil society, universities etc.
- Engaging in the planning and implementation of national development plans requires capacities and resources and UNHCR needs to prioritize when, how, with whom (line ministries etc.) and on what issues to engage on national development plans to maximise UNHCR’s input.
- Given UNHCR’s role and mandate, data and analysis can be key assets to bring to a national development planning processes.
- Knowledge and understanding of NDP processes, including budgeting, SDG alignment, monitoring and national statistics as well as engagement in these processes is currently limited.

A. UNDAFs:

The new generation of UNDAFs as part of the UNDS Reform represent opportunities for UNHCR, especially in shifting protracted displacement situations through the greater involvement of development partners and new alliances and strategies for more inclusion and impact. However, current mixed practices limit the strategic use of UNDAFs for UNHCR.

- Common Country Analysis, from now on a mandatory step, is a strategic entry point that will allow UNHCR to develop a joint narrative based on evidence around displacement and statelessness and highlight these as part of national development challenges. The analysis conducted jointly by hum. and devel. partners can influence national priorities and serve as input to the NDP. It is an opportunity for UNHCR to put a normative agenda at the centre of development planning and to address leaving no one behind.
- What to include in an UNDAF: How much of UNHCR’s portfolio and which portion of UNHCR’s portfolio should be captured in an UNDAF requires further thinking. Consensus is emerging that what UNHCR should strive to include in an UNDAF is context specific and dependent on the phase of displacement, the scope of displacement and statelessness issue, the need for structural and transformational change (for example, changes in judicial systems, changes in national RSD procedures), the operating context in a given country and with a given Government and the potential for impact for persons of concern. In addition, careful considerations should also be given to the necessity of maintaining independence of humanitarian action; UNHCR’s mandated responsibilities; new reporting line to Resident Coordinators on UNDAF matters, as well as capacities available/required for sustained engagement and impact. Creative approaches are required for linking the CRRF to the UNDAF and in situations where the UN Country Team is reluctant to champion displacement and statelessness related issues.
- Sensitive issues and context: The context in some countries makes it difficult to raise issues related to human rights and protection. Experience cited by participants from countries suggests that one strategy can be not to include sensitive matters in the UNDAF and continue working on them through different means, including through advocacy which can be a result in itself. UNHCR can stress that the UNDAF should be linked to national priorities, which may be different to government priorities. If data and information analysed in the CCA highlights key issues and challenges important for national development that the government may not want to discuss, the development of the UNDAF itself can be seen as a tool to build an advocacy strategy around these topics. At the same time, it was also discussed that some rights related concerns can be reflected by framing them less explicitly (‘for example, using concepts such as ‘fostering transparency’ rather than ‘combatting corruption’). As the CCA is a UN analysis built on evidence, it can be a powerful tool for portraying sensitive issues and rights related challenges and by that, creating visibility around issues.
- How to approach inclusion in the UNDAF (stand-alone versus mainstreaming): UNDAF outcomes and outputs are high-level and broad. UNHCR can approach the inclusion of refugees through:
Mainstreaming displacement or statelessness issues into several outcomes and outputs in order to make persons of concern part of a bigger picture, foster data disaggregated data and create ownership of other agencies and partners;
- Refugee specific outcomes and outputs in situation where the number of persons of concern itself is a development challenge and where refugee protection and solutions can be explicitly addressed by a variety of actors or through a combination of both.

- **Data is an asset and comparative advantage.** Bringing data and analysis to the table can be UNHCRs comparative advantage in the CCA, UNDAF and NDP process. Data can support UNHCRs advocacy on displacement and statelessness and makes UNHCR a credible player.
- **Return on investment.** UNDAF is less a fundraising and more a policy influencing and partnership tool, as well as a way to mobilize the support of UN agencies for durable solutions for refugees.

**B. UNHCR’s programming and coherence with NDPs and UNDAFs:**

*Our current internal processes and structures do neither facilitate nor block our engagement in multi-year planning and budgeting processes of national governments and development partners. Offices are applying different approaches in leveraging UNHCRs internal systems by mapping processes and results and indicators against NDPs and UNDAFs. Coherence across offices would increase UNHCRs predictability and leverage.*

- UNHCRs one year budget cycle should not prevent UNHCR to engage in in multi-year budget planning for NDPs and UNDAFs. Government entities and other agencies develop costing and budgets on a multi-year basis despite a one year budget cycle. This requires a conceptual shift and capacities for multi-year costing.
- To create coherence and maximise efficiencies, UNHCR needs to link different planning processes and their related requirements (data, reporting etc.) into one approach; integrated monitoring plans can be one tool. Others should be explored (i.e. results and indicator mapping)
- UNHCR’s multi-year strategy should be based on an understanding of the timelines of NDPs and UNDAFs and strategic entry points and include steps and deliverables for UNHCR’s engagement in these processes. Effective engagement can be facilitated through an improvement in UNHCRs strategic planning and monitoring.
- Engagement in national and UN development plans does not mean that UNHCR is required to provide extensive reporting: by striving for inclusion into these plans, data related to refugees and displaced people can be collected by a variety of actors as part their overall data collection efforts.
- If inclusion of persons of concern into NDPs and UNDAF is to be a success, it can not be an ad-hoc exercise: it requires strategic preparation, investment in data, new partnerships, political engagement by at the highest level, resources, dedicated focal points, multi-functional response and more flexibility on implementation arrangements as well as technical and practical advice at global level on how UNHCR aligns with and fully commits to the UNDAF.
- Internally, synergies can be created by closely linking new approaches and their implementation, such as CRRF, MYMP and other related new ways of working.

**Next steps**

1. A second workshop on inclusion into national and UN development planning frameworks is planned for CRRF roll-out countries in Africa in July 2018.
2. Following the two workshops, experiences and conclusions gathered will be consolidated in a a) lessons learned document and b) Frequently Asked Questions to be shared with UNHCR offices.
3. Information and conclusions from the two workshops will also feed into new learning modules developed by GLC, UNHCRs position and guidance on SDGs engagement and the UNHCRs operationalisation of the UN Reform.
Annex 1: Agenda

Americas Regional Workshop on the Inclusion of Persons of Concern in National and UN Development Plans

Swissotel, Luis Cordero, Quito, 170143
30, 31 May, 1 June 2018

| Day 1 - 30 May | 08:30-09.00 | Arrival & Coffee |
| | 09:00-09:15 | Session 1 | Opening Introductions |
| | 09:15-09:45 | Session 2 | Welcome and opening remarks by: 
- UNHCR Deputy Representative – Peter Janssen 
- Donor Perspective on the importance of inclusion - Benjamin Rinaker- BPRM Ecuador |
| | 09:45-10:15 | Session 3 | Participants introduction and objective setting |
| | 10:15-10:30 | Tea/Coffee break |
| | 10:30-12:30 | Session 4 | Scene setting - looking at the wider landscape |
| | 12:30-13:30 | Lunch |
| | 13:30-15:00 | Session 5 | National Development Plans: overview of process, leverage points for inclusion, opportunities and challenges in different steps and contexts 
- UNDP & Government of Ecuador |
| | 15:00-15:15 | Tea/Coffee break |
| | 15:15-17:15 | Session 5 | Continuation of session |
| | 17:15-17:30 | Wrap up and key take aways |

| Day 2 - 31 May | 08:30- 10:30 | Session 6 | New generation of UNDAFs 
- UNDOCO, RCO Ecuador, Regional UNDG |
| | 10:30-10:45 | Tea/Coffee break |
| | 10:45-13:00 | Session 6 | Continuation of session |
| | 13:00-14:00 | Lunch |
| | 14:00-15:15 | Session 7 (Internal UNHCR) | Sharing experiences - challenges, opportunities and way forward. Presentations by country operations |
| | 15:15-15:30 | Tea/Coffee break |
| | 15:30-17:15 | Session 7 (Internal UNHCR) | Continuation of session |
| | 17:15-17:30 | Wrap up and key take aways |

| Day 3 – June 1 | 08:30-08:45 | Recap of Day 2 and introduction to Day 3 |
| | 08:45-10:30 | Session 8 (Internal UNHCR) | Alignment with UNHCR internal processes |
| | 10:30-10:45 | Tea/Coffee break |
| | 10:45-12:00 | Session 8 (Internal UNHCR) | Continuation of session |
| | 12:00-12:30 | Workshop evaluation, Wrap up and close by Deputy Representative Ecuador |
| | 1230 | Lunch |