INSPECTION AND EVALUATION DIVISION

Evaluation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

7 April 2016

Assignment No.: IED-16-001

INSPECTION AND EVALUATION DIVISION

FUNCTION

"*The Office shall evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the programmes and legislative mandates of the Organisation. It shall conduct programme evaluations with the purpose of establishing analytical and critical evaluations of the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, examining whether changes therein require review of the methods of delivery, the continued relevance of administrative procedures and whether the activities correspond to the mandates as they may be reflected in the approved budgets and the medium-term plan of the Organisation;" (General Assembly Resolution 48/218 B).*

Project team members include:

DEMETRA ARAPAKOS, CHIEF OF SECTION
MONA FETOUH, TEAM LEADER
NATSUKO KODAMA, TEAM MEMBER

CONTACT INFORMATION

OIOS/IED Contact Information:
phone: +1 212-963-8148; fax: +1 212-963-1211; email: ied@un.org

DEMETRA ARAPAKOS, CHIEF OF SECTION
Tel: +1 917-367-6033, Fax: +1 212-963-1211
e-mail: arapakos@un.org

(EDDIE) YEE WOO GUO, DIRECTOR
Tel: +1 917-367-3674, Fax: +1 212-963-1211
e-mail: guoy@un.org

Summary

Global conflicts have resulted in larger and more diverse displaced populations worldwide, reaching close to 58 million by mid-2015. Since it was founded in 1950, the role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has expanded to meet these challenges. While UNHCR has a refugee mandate, it also engages with internally displaced persons (IDPs), for whom the State has primary responsibility, through an inter-agency framework.

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) examined the relevance and effectiveness of UNHCR's engagement with and for refugees and IDPs in mixed refugee and IDP settings, within the overall implementation of its mandate. The evaluation focused on 21 mixed refugee and IDP settings, or "mixed settings," and used surveys, interviews, on-site visits, focus groups, case studies, document reviews and secondary data analyses.

Despite an increase in refugees in over half of the 21 mixed settings over the last three years, UNHCR provided critical assistance and protection activities, maintaining or increasing the percentage of refugees assisted in most settings. However, challenges remained in reaching out-of-camp refugees. Partners and staff generally rated UNHCR performance and trends positively in most key refugee outcome areas. UNHCR's consultation with refugees was also largely positive, but it was less effective in communicating back to refugees regarding their concerns.

Through the framework established by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), UNHCR's role with IDPs in mixed settings has become more defined. Its decisions to engage with IDPs have become more systematic, and its roles in leading coordination clusters are aligned with its perceived organizational strengths. However, within these cluster roles, UNHCR's specific activities and level of engagement with IDPs have varied at the country level.

Through its IDP coordination role, UNHCR has made a positive contribution to IDP response globally, and a majority of external stakeholders and staff rated UNHCR positively on IDP coordination in mixed settings. However, variations in performance and complications in coordination were evident at the country level. Factors affecting coordination performance included resources, staff skills and dedicated cluster leads.

On the whole, UNHCR's discharge of its specific but more limited responsibilities for IDPs within the IASC system has not affected its broader mandated responsibilities for refugees in mixed settings. In a few cases where it did, effects were not entirely negative, and the effect of IDP engagement on refugee coordination was also minimal.

As the numbers of refugees and IDPs have continued to grow, contexts with mixed populations will continue to pose challenges to UNHCR and the humanitarian system as a whole. This evaluation identified several system-wide issues which require further examination, including the 2014 *Joint UNHCR-OCHA Note on Mixed Situations.*

OIOS makes three important recommendations to UNHCR:

- Improve country-level monitoring on out-of-camp refugees;
- Ensure consistent communication back to refugees on action taken in response to inputs; and
- Develop country-specific coordination strategies.

Contents

I. Introduction and objective

1. The Inspection and Evaluation Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS-IED) identified the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for evaluation on the basis of a risk assessment undertaken by OIOS to identify Secretariat programme evaluation priorities. The Committee for Programme and Coordination selected the programme evaluation of UNHCR for consideration at its 57th session in June 2017.[1] The General Assembly endorsed the selection in its resolution A/RES/70/8.

2. The general frame of reference for OIOS is set out in General Assembly resolutions 48/218B, 54/244, 59/272, as well as ST/SGB/273, which authorizes OIOS to initiate, carry out and report on any action that it considers necessary to fulfil its responsibilities. OIOS evaluation is provided in the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/2000/8).[2]

3. The overall evaluation objective was to determine, as systematically and objectively as possible, the relevance and effectiveness of UNHCR's engagement with and for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in mixed refugee and IDP settings, within the overall implementation of its mandate. The evaluation topic emerged from a programme level risk assessment described in the evaluation inception paper.[3] The evaluation has been conducted in conformity with norms and standards for evaluation in the UN System.[4]

4. UNHCR management comments were sought on the draft report and taken into account in the preparation of the final report. The formal UNHCR response is included in the annex.

II. Background

UNHCR History and Mandate

5. UNHCR was founded through General Assembly Resolution 319 (IV) of 3 December 1949. Its mandate is defined in its Statute, adopted in General Assembly Resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950 (Annex), as providing international protection to refugees and seeking permanent solutions to refugee problems, and was extended in 2003 "until the refugee problem is solved."[5] The General Assembly also expanded UNHCR's core mandate responsibilities to stateless people. Furthermore, UNHCR has been invested with specific responsibilities in relation to IDPs within a joint inter-agency approach.[6]

---

[1] Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, Fifty-fifth session, A/70/16, June 2015.

[2] ST/SGB/2000/8, p. 12, Regulation 7.1: (a) To determine as systematically and objectively as possible the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the Organization's activities in relation to their objectives and (b) To enable the Secretariat and Member States to engage in systematic reflection, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the main programmes of the Organization by altering their content and, if necessary, reviewing their objectives.

[3] IED-15-004, OIOS-IED Inception Paper: Programme Evaluation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 26 June 2015.

[4] Issued by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in 2005.

[5] General Assembly Resolution 428 v, Statute of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, (A/RES/428 (V)) 14 December 1950 and General Assembly Resolution 58/153 (A/RES/58/153), February 2004.

[6] See paragraphs 15 and 16 below.

6. UNHCR's overall objective is "to ensure international protection to refugees and others of concern to the Office of UNHCR and to seek permanent solutions to their problems in cooperation with States and other organizations, including through the provision of humanitarian assistance."[7] Due to recent crises, the number of displaced people defined as "of concern" to UNHCR has risen significantly from 35.8 million in 2012 to 57.9 million in 2015.[8]

7. The primary instruments governing refugee rights and the legal framework underpinning UNHCR's work are the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, with 145 and 146 state parties, respectively.[9] For IDPs, national authorities have the primary responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to displaced persons within their jurisdiction.

UNHCR Structure and Governance

8. UNHCR is headed by the High Commissioner, responsible for the direction of the organization, and is supported by a Deputy High Commissioner and two Assistant High Commissioners – one each for Operations and Protection.

9. The Office is governed by the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council and reports annually to both bodies. An Executive Committee of 98 Member States meets every October and approves the biennial programme and budget.

10. UNHCR's headquarters (HQ) are located primarily in Geneva, Switzerland. It is comprised of the Executive Office, seven Divisions and five Regional Bureaux,[10] and its field operations are located in 456 locations in 126 countries.[11]

UNHCR Global Strategic Priorities and Results Framework

11. UNHCR's goals are articulated as Global Strategic Priorities in its results framework and include:

- Favourable protection environment;
- Fair protection process and documentation;
- Security from violence and exploitation;
- Basic needs and services;
- Community empowerment and self-reliance;
- Durable solutions; and
- Emergency response.[12] [13]

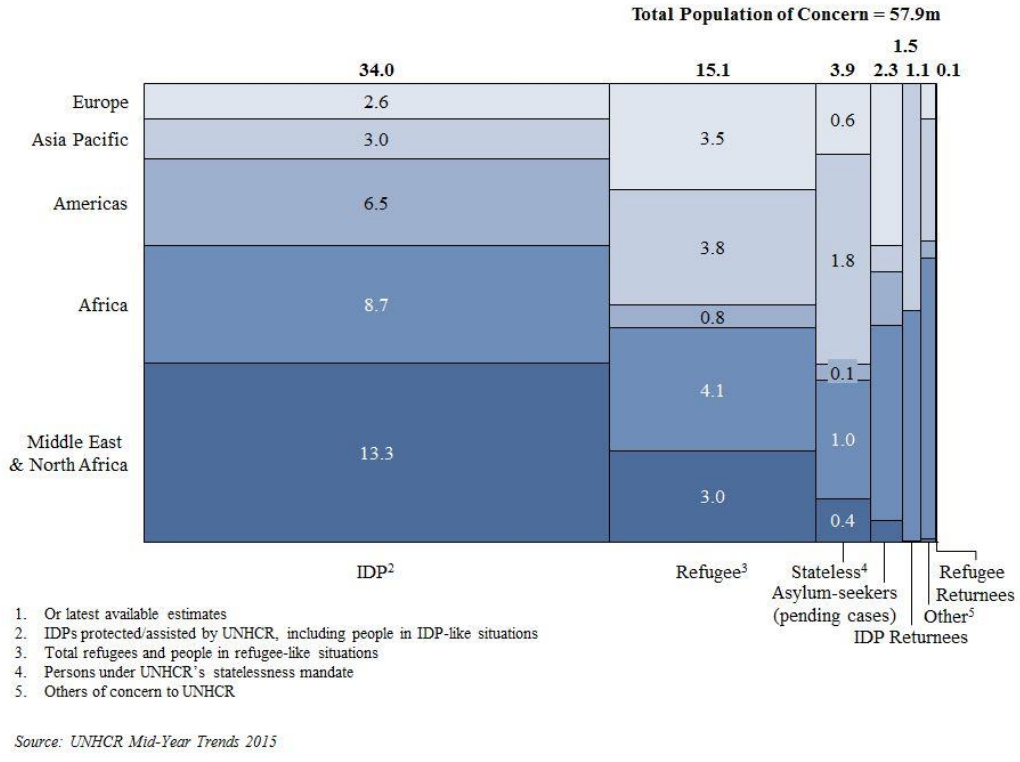
[7] Biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2014-2015 (A/67/6/Rev.1*).
[8] *UNHCR Mid-Year Trends 2015*, Table 1, page 19, UNHCR, 2015.
[9] As of April 2015. State Parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, UNHCR, 2015.
[10] Biennial Programme Budget 2014-2015 of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (A/AC.96/1125).
[11] *UNHCR Global Appeal 2016-2017*, UNHCR, 2015.
[12] Categorized under "support and management."
[13] UNHCR 2014-15 Biennial Programme Budget and Strategic Framework.

UNHCR Persons of Concern

12. The 57.9 million people under UNHCR's mandate, referred to as persons of concern (PoCs), are categorized as follows (shown in Figure 1) with total mid-2015 population levels:

- *Refugees* – persons outside their country of origin for reasons of feared persecution or indiscriminate violence, and who require international protection (15.1 million);
- *Asylum-seekers* – persons whose applications for asylum or refugee status are pending (2.3 million);
- *Refugee returnees* – persons of concern to UNHCR for a limited period after returning to their country of origin (.1 million);
- *Stateless persons* – persons not considered nationals by any State (3.9 million);
- *IDPs* – persons forced to flee from their home or place of habitual residence and have not crossed an internationally recognized State border (34.0 million);[14]
- *IDP returnees* – IDPs protected and/or assisted by UNHCR who have returned to their place of origin (1.5 million).

Figure 1: Populations of concern by UNHCR regional bureaux, 2015, millions



Source: UNHCR Mid-Year Trends 2015

UNHCR Resources

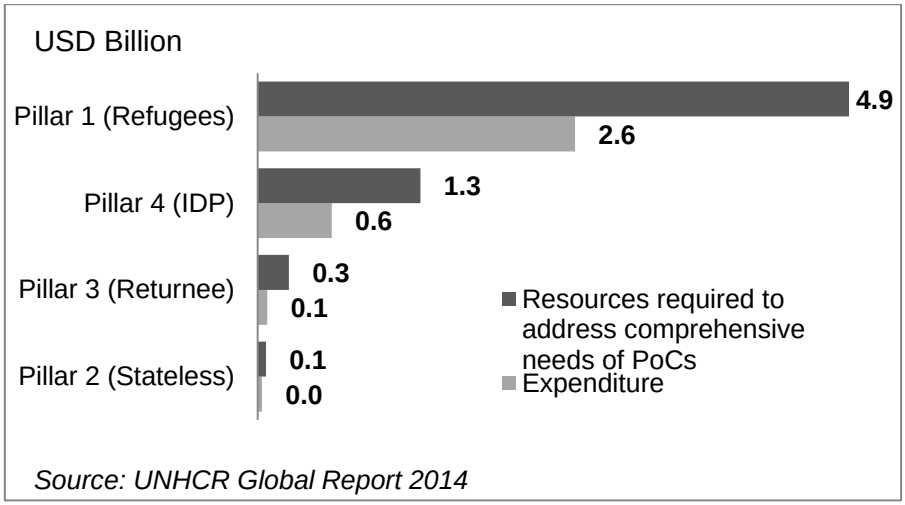
13. In 2014, overall resources required for implementation of UNHCR activities were $6.6 billion, a 53 per cent increase from 2012. Actual income was $3.6 billion and actual expenditure was $3.4 billion in 2014. Less than one per cent of UNHCR's budget comes from United Nations regular budget contributions; the remaining 99 per cent is funded by

[14] *UNHCR Mid-Year Trends 2015*, Table 1, page 19, UNHCR, 2015.

voluntary contributions.[15] In 2015, UNHCR had 9,728 staff, 88 per cent based in field locations.[16]

14. UNHCR's budget is divided by four pillars corresponding in part to key PoC groupings. Figure 2 shows the 2014 budget to address comprehensive PoC needs, as well as expenditure, by population type. Refugees represent the highest proportion, with 74 per cent of total requirements and 76 per cent of actual expenditures.

Figure 2: UNHCR final budget and expenditure by population type, 2014



Source: UNHCR Global Report 2014

UNHCR Engagement in Mixed Refugee and IDP Settings

15. In 1993, the General Assembly affirmed its support for UNHCR to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to IDPs, "especially where such efforts could contribute to the prevention or solution of refugee problems." The General Assembly defined the foundation for UNHCR's engagement with IDPs as being "on the basis of specific requests from the Secretary-General or the competent principal organs of the United Nations and with the consent of the concerned State."[17] It also set out criteria for such efforts, including that they "should not undermine the refugee mandate of the Office and the institution of asylum."[18]

16. In 1991, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 46/182, creating an Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), with an Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) as Chair. In 2012, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) stated that A/RES/46/182 gave the ERC responsibility for "coordinating humanitarian assistance" in complex emergencies. In 2013, UNHCR stated that its own Statute puts it "at the centre of the international refugee response system, including in respect of coordination functions." In 2014, responsibilities for both refugees and IDPs overlapped in 14 mixed settings with simultaneous United Nations refugee and IDP responses. UNHCR and OCHA attempted to clarify roles and responsibilities in the 2014 *Joint UNHCR-OCHA Note on Mixed Situations: Coordination in Practice*.

[15] UNHCR Global Report 2014, p. 135, UNHCR, 2015
[16] *UNHCR Global Appeal 2016-2017*, p.2, UNHCR, 2015.
[17] A/RES/48/116, para 12, December 1993.
[18] A/RES/69/152, para 11, December 2014.

III. Methodology

17. This evaluation examined UNHCR's work in mixed refugee and IDP settings, which were defined as countries which hosted over 10,000 refugees and over 10,000 IDPs concurrently as of 2014, whether or not UNHCR was engaged with the IDP population. Twenty-one such mixed refugee and IDP settings, hereafter referred to as "mixed settings," comprised the evaluation framework. The list was validated and revised down from 27 mixed settings identified in the inception paper, after consultations with UNHCR staff. The 21 mixed settings are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Serbia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Uganda, and Yemen. These account for 41 per cent of the 15 million refugees and 73 per cent of the 34 million IDPs globally, and 48 and 82 per cent of UNHCR's total expenditures for refugees and IDPs respectively in 2014.

18. The evaluation employed a combination of the following qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and focused on the past three to four years. All evaluation results are based on a triangulation of multiple data sources.

a) **Missions to UNHCR headquarters and three field operations, including direct observations and site visits:** missions to Geneva, DRC (Kinshasa, Goma, Bukavu and Uvira), Iraq (Erbil and Dohuk), and Mali (Bamako and Faragouaran), including visits to PoC camps and communities, and observation of conditions, communications, and UNHCR operations;
b) **Interviews**: 151 semi-structured HQ and field interviews with UNHCR staff, partners, donors, governments, refugees, IDPs and other stakeholders;
c) **Surveys:** web-based surveys of:
    - a non-random sample of UNHCR professional, substantive HQ and field staff in the 21 mixed settings,[19] and
    - a non-random sample of United Nations and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners in the 21 mixed settings, comprised of operational partners, members of UNHCR-led or co-led clusters, inter-cluster coordinators, and humanitarian coordinators;[20]
d) **Focus groups**: 13 focus group discussions with refugees and IDPs in DRC, Iraq and Mali;
e) **Case studies:** In-depth case studies of 11 of the 21 mixed settings, using data from interviews, surveys, document reviews and secondary data sources;[21] and cross-country comparison of results and contributing factors;
f) **Document review**: review of a selected sample of key documentation, including operation plans, internal directives and reports, global and operation-level coordination documents, and relevant evaluations; and

[19] The staff survey was sent to a non-random sample of 1,407 staff; 398 staff responded, for a 28 per cent response rate. Responses from staff in Lebanon and Turkey were dropped from country-level analyses but included for global-level analyses since they were not included in the final selection of 21 mixed settings.
[20] The partner survey was sent to a non-random sample of 1,362 partner staff; 276 responded, for a 20 per cent response rate.
[21] The 11 case studies are: Afghanistan, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Pakistan, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. They were selected based on: a) UNHCR engagement with IDPs, b) population and budget size, c) geographical representation and c) mix of coordination arrangements and varied displacement flows. Amongst the 10 mixed settings not selected as case studies are all six in which UNHCR is not engaged with IDPs.

g) **Secondary data analysis**: analyses of UNHCR programme data, population and budget figures, and operation-level data from UNHCR's Focus database.

19. The evaluation data collection encountered three main limitations: the lack of consistent and comprehensive UNHCR monitoring and performance data limiting cross-country comparisons; low response rates for the staff and partner surveys; and identification of several issues related to system-wide coordination structures that were outside the scope of this evaluation.

20. OIOS consulted UNHCR during the conduct of the evaluation and expresses its gratitude for its cooperation and assistance.

IV. Evaluation results

A: UNHCR provided critical assistance and carried out protection activities for refugees in all mixed settings

21. In the absence of comparable and comprehensive UNHCR monitoring and performance data noted in paragraph 19, this result is largely based on assessments of: 1) the percentage of refugees assisted; 2) partner and staff ratings of UNHCR performance; and 3) staff perceptions of change in refugee outcomes.

Despite an increase in the number of refugees in more than half of the 21 mixed settings, UNHCR maintained or increased the percentage of refugees assisted in most of the settings over the last three to four years

22. At the end of 2014, over 6.1 million refugees were present in 21 mixed refugee and IDP settings,[22] an overall increase of nearly 1 million since 2012. During this three-year period, refugee numbers increased in more than half of the settings (13 out of 21), while remaining at a similar level in six settings and decreasing in two.

23. Responding to this challenge, UNHCR reported assisting a large majority of refugees (87 per cent) of the total refugee population in the 21 settings in 2014; the percentage of refugees assisted increased in six settings, remained at a similar level in 12 settings, and decreased in three settings. UNHCR reported assisting 88 to 100 per cent of refugees in 14 of the 21 settings, and between 61 to 74 per cent in two settings. The remaining five settings with assistance rates under 50 per cent included: two settings where the national government directly assisted certain refugee populations; two settings with widespread active conflicts that significantly limited humanitarian access; and one with government restrictions on access to a large refugee population. Table 1 below illustrates numbers and trends for refugee populations and UNHCR assistance, by mixed setting, over the past three years.

[22] Refugee population figures included in this report are based on UNHCR data, which reflect some estimation. A 2015 report indicated that 23 per cent of refugee population data were either estimation or combined estimation and registration. *Report of Statistics Norway and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on statistics on refugees and internally displaced persons*, E/CN.3/2015/9.

Table 1: Refugee numbers and trends and UNHCR assistance in 21 mixed settings, 2012-14

UNHCR engagement	Operation	Population (# in thousands)		Population assisted by UNHCR (%)	
		2014	Trend	2014	Trend
Refugees & IDPs	**Afghanistan**	300	↗	100%	→
	Cameroon	264	↗	94%	→
	Chad	453	↗	100%	↗
	Iraq	271	↗	100%	→
	Libya	28	↗	100%*	→
	Niger	78	↗	100%	→
	South Sudan	248	↗	100%	→
	Syria	149	↘	17%	→
	Yemen	258	↗	46%	↘
	Burundi	53	↗	100%	→
	Mali	15	→	100%	↗
	Pakistan	1,506	→	100%	→
	Serbia	44	→	18%	↗
	Congo, DR	120	↗	74%	↗
	Sudan	278	↗	88%	↗
Refugees only	**Bangladesh**	232	→	14%	↘
	Ethiopia	660	↗	100%	→
	India	200	→	13%	↗
	Kenya	551	→	100%	→
	Nepal	38	↘	61%	↘
	Uganda	386	↗	100%	→
	Total	*6,132*	↗	*87%*	

** Based on mid-2015 data* *Source: UNHCR Global Trends, Mid-Year Trends*

24. In 2014, approximately 52 per cent of refugees in the 21 settings resided outside of camps. UNHCR has responded to this reality by developing a policy to pursue alternatives to camps, which acknowledges that living in communities can provide greater opportunities for resilience, independence and normality.[23] While UNHCR has started to collect information on the implementation of this policy,[24] comprehensive and/or disaggregated data on assistance to out-of-camp refugees provided by UNHCR are not available. In the meantime, field missions illustrated challenges regarding UNHCR's coverage of non-camp refugees. In two settings visited where a majority of refugees resided outside camps, several partners and staff interviewed viewed UNHCR's assistance to non-camp refugees as a weakness; in one, UNHCR assistance was primarily focused on in-camp refugees due to access issues and funding shortages, while in the other, data from direct observation and focus groups indicated that refugees out of camp had less reliable access to basic services than those in camp.[25]

[23] UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps, UNHCR, 2014, UNHCR/HCP/2014/9.
[24] UNHCR Diagnostic Tool for Alternatives to Camps: 2015 Global Results.
[25] In the third setting visited, all refugees were out of camp.

With the exception of achievement of durable solutions, partners and staff generally rated UNHCR performance positively

25. Partners and staff in all 21 settings were surveyed for their perspectives on UNHCR's performance in achieving four key refugee outcomes, as defined for this evaluation as:

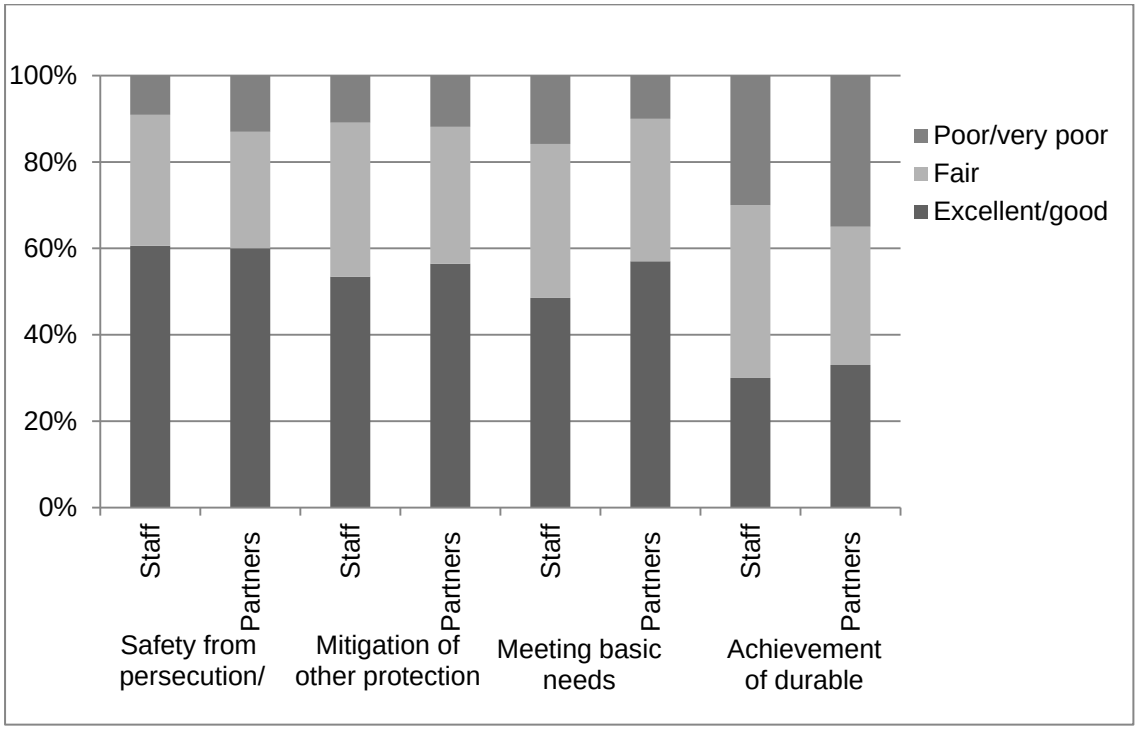
- safety from persecution/violence;
- mitigation of other protection risks;
- meeting of basic needs; and
- achievement of durable solutions.

26. As shown in Figure 3 below, partners and staff had similarly positive perspectives on UNHCR's performance in protection. Protection work was also cited most frequently as UNHCR's main success over the past three to four years by both partners and staff interviewed in field locations.

27. When rating UNHCR's performance in meeting refugee basic needs, partners were more positive than staff, with 57 per cent of partners saying it was good or excellent, compared to 49 per cent of staff.

28. Partner and staff ratings of UNHCR's performance towards achievement of durable solutions were lower. Only one-third of partners and staff surveyed had positive opinions on UNHCR's performance in this area, in acknowledgement of the external challenges raised in the 2014-15 OIOS evaluation of UNHCR.[26]

Figure 3: Partner and staff ratings of UNHCR performance were largely similar



Source: OIOS staff and partner surveys

[26] Evaluation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, March 2015, E/AC.51/2015/5.

Staff also reported that refugee outcomes had improved in two-thirds of mixed settings

29. In addition to being asked to rate UNHCR performance, staff in the 21 settings were also surveyed for their perspectives on trends in each of the four key refugee outcomes as influenced both by UNHCR performance as well as external factors. In 14 settings, staff noted positive trends over the last three to four years in at least three of the four refugee outcomes. In the remaining seven settings, staff did not report improvements. These settings were characterized by severe operational challenges including a high degree of insecurity and inaccessibility to refugee populations, political instability and/or host government resistance or restrictions.

30. With regard to the individual outcome areas, staff in 14 of the 21 settings reported that both safety from persecution/violence and mitigation of other protection risks had improved over the last three to four years. Similarly, staff in 14 of the 21 settings reported that meeting basic needs had also improved. In relation to achievement of durable solutions for refugees, staff in 15 of the 21 settings reported that these outcomes had improved.

With respect to implementing participatory processes, UNHCR consultation with refugees was generally good in the 21 mixed settings, despite challenges in managing refugees' expectations

31. All UNHCR operations are required to conduct participatory needs assessments to inform programme design and resource allocation "in line with the Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) and the Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) approaches."[27] UNHCR has generally performed well in this regard. A review of AGD reports submitted by the 21 mixed settings found that 19 reported conducting a formal participatory assessment exercise using the AGD approach in 2014, and that all of these reported incorporating findings from the assessments in planning and programming for 2015. The reports indicated that the extent of UNHCR efforts to involve a broad spectrum of PoCs in their formal assessment exercises varied across operations. For example, several operations conducted semi-structured dialogues with refugee women and men from different age groups in a selected few camps. Others reported conducting similar consultations with refugees in both camp- and non-camp settings. One operation reported having focused its formal exercise on returnees and IDPs. The two settings in which a formal exercise was not conducted were faced with significant security challenges in their countries; one of the operations nevertheless reported promoting more informal PoC participation in the planning process.

32. Forty-two per cent of field-based partners interviewed also expressed positive views on UNHCR's communications with PoCs, compared to 15 per cent who said improvement was needed. In addition, a majority of field staff interviewed (70 per cent) expressed positive views on UNHCR's communications with PoCs, citing the participatory needs assessment/AGD approach as well as other forms of regular communication, while 28 per cent said it needed improvement. Staff interviewed in the field reported using PoC feedback regularly to inform planning and programming. In at least four settings for example, including two to which field missions were undertaken, UNHCR moved to cash assistance programming for some refugee communities in response to PoC inputs. In addition, the field missions noted a variety of channels through which refugees could express their needs

[27] UNHCR Programme Manual, Chapter 4, Part II – Assessment (11 November 2015).

directly or through implementing partners. These included regular interactions through committees or other groups composed of refugees selected to represent both women and men and different age groups.

33. At the same time, the field visits revealed challenges faced by UNHCR and its partners in managing expectations of PoCs and in closing the feedback loop by communicating decisions made in response to their concerns. In focus groups conducted in the three missions, participating refugees expressed a high degree of dissatisfaction with the level of assistance provided by UNHCR and the extent of their communications with UNHCR. Almost unanimously, they demanded far greater assistance from UNHCR. Several partners and staff interviewed noted the inability to meet demands expressed by refugees and acknowledged that funding constraints may not have been adequately communicated back to the beneficiaries.

B: UNHCR's role with IDPs in mixed settings has become more defined, but its level of engagement remains variable

The parameters of UNHCR's engagement with IDPs have become clearer through the cluster system

34. Unlike its clearly defined role and accountability for refugees, UNHCR's role with IDPs has varied over the past four decades. From the 1970s to the 1990s, UNHCR's decisions to engage with IDPs were on a case-by-case basis according to General Assembly criteria and at the discretion of UNHCR management. There was also variation in the sectors in which UNHCR engaged with IDPs, including, for example, food, health and education.[28]

35. However, UNHCR's IDP engagement now largely falls within the framework defined by the introduction of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) cluster system in 2005, further articulated under the Transformative Agenda in 2011.[29] Under this framework, the IASC assigned global cluster coordination leadership responsibilities to participating humanitarian agencies. UNHCR leads the global protection cluster, and co-leads the clusters on camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) and emergency shelter and non-food items (NFI). Country-level clusters are activated on the basis of the needs and a set of criteria agreed through the IASC.

36. As a result, UNHCR's decisions to engage in IDP situations have become more systematic. This was reflected in HQ staff interviews, where UNHCR's role in the IASC was most commonly cited as the main reason for UNHCR engagement. Nearly one third of interviewed HQ staff also volunteered resource availability as a factor for engagement, as UNHCR's funding of IDP activities is project-based and earmarked to that population under its pillar budget structure. UNHCR has worked to clarify and further consolidate the legal basis and principles for IDP engagement, most recently through issuance of a guidance note in 2014. This stated that the intention for IDP engagement was to "reinforce the complementarities and synergies between UNHCR's work with refugees and the internally

[28] *UNHCR's Operational Experience with Internally Displaced Persons*, UNHCR, 1994 and *The Protection of Internally Displaced Persons and the Role of UNHCR*, UNHCR, 2007.

[29] Transformative agenda actions are articulated in the IASC's 2012 chapeau and compendium document and in protocols developed from 2013-2015. "Clusters" are IASC-designated coordination bodies, made up of humanitarian organizations in the main sectors of humanitarian action. "Sectors" have similar functions but generally fall outside of IASC frameworks, and for refugee response, are led by UNHCR.

displaced."[30] In this guidance, UNHCR identified priority IDP interventions in line with its cluster commitments and results framework, which became known as the "IDP footprint."[31]

37. Staff also reported that the clarity of UNHCR's IDP role had improved. All HQ staff interviewed who were asked about clarity said the role had become clearer, although a few said further improvements were needed. Most staff survey respondents reported that UNHCR's role with IDPs globally had either become clearer or stayed the same in the past three to four years (43 and 37 per cent respectively). Nineteen per cent believed it had become less clear, the bulk of whom were from six of the 21 settings.

There is broad alignment between UNHCR's cluster leadership roles in IDP response and its organizational strengths

38. UNHCR's cluster leadership roles correspond to its comparative advantages. In particular, UNHCR's leadership of the Global Protection Cluster and of country-level protection clusters aligns with the fact that protection expertise was the most commonly cited unique value of UNHCR, as volunteered by one-third of all partners and staff interviewed. The second and third most volunteered areas of UNHCR's valued added, by all interview respondents, were its emergency response capacity and its technical expertise in areas such as shelter and camp management. Partner survey respondents also most frequently mentioned UNHCR's coordination and/or partnerships, and protection expertise and capacity, as its unique strengths in working with IDPs.

39. Sixty-eight percent of partners surveyed said that UNHCR is playing the right role overall with IDPs. Those who did not think that UNHCR was playing the right role focused on deficiencies in coordination and insufficient engagement with IDPs – indicating the negative responses were related more to UNHCR's performance than its role.

UNHCR's leadership arrangements and expenditures for IDPs in mixed settings have broadly fallen within its defined cluster responsibilities and organizational objectives

40. UNHCR's country-level leadership arrangements generally reflect its global coordination roles. As shown in Figure 4, UNHCR leads or co-leads the protection cluster or sector in all 11 case studies. It leads or co-leads shelter/NFIs in eight of 10 cases in which the cluster is active and leads or co-leads CCCM in all seven cases in which the cluster is active. In two of the 11 cases, UNHCR's engagement goes beyond these three clusters in response to local needs and its own capacity: it co-leads the return, recovery and reintegration sector in Sudan and the cash working group in Iraq.

[30] UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement: Provisional Guidance, UNHCR, March 2014
[31] UNHCR subsequently issued the "Operational Guidelines on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement" in January 2016.

Figure 4: UNHCR's role in national level IDP response coordination mechanisms in mixed settings largely corresponded to its global roles

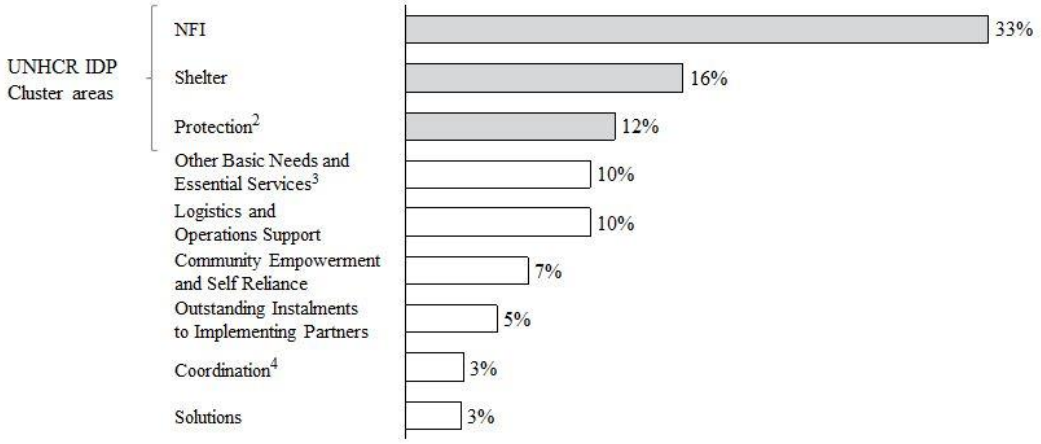
	Protection	Shelter	NFI	CCCM	Other
Afghanistan	Cluster co-lead	Cluster co-lead		N/A	Multi-sector lead
Cameroon	Sector co-lead	N/A			Multi-sector lead
DRC	Cluster lead	No leadership role		Working group co-lead	
Iraq	Cluster co-lead	Cluster co-lead		Cluster co-lead	Cash working group lead
Libya	Sector lead	Sector lead		N/A	
Mali	Cluster lead	Cluster lead			
Pakistan	Cluster lead	Cluster lead		Cluster lead	
South Sudan	Cluster co-lead	No leadership role		Cluster co-lead	
Sudan	Sector lead	Sector lead		N/A	RRR* co-lead
Syria	Sector lead	Sector co-lead		Sector lead	
Yemen	Cluster lead	Cluster lead			

Note: N/A = no cluster or sector
*Recovery, Return and Reintegration

Source: OIOS compilation of interviews, Humanitarian Response Plans and country-level coordination documents

41. IDP spending figures broken down by sector also reflect UNHCR's focus on its cluster area responsibilities in mixed settings. As Figure 5 shows, the three sectors with the highest expenditure in 2012-2014 are NFIs (33 per cent of total IDP spending), shelter (16 per cent), and protection (12 per cent), which aligns with its three cluster lead responsibilities. The additional spending categories, including coordination, may also have cluster-related spending.

Figure 5: UNHCR spending on IDPs by sector in 21 mixed settings between 2012-2014 was concentrated in its cluster leadership areas



1. Includes expenditure for operations in 21 mixed settings: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Kenya, Libya, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Serbia, South Sudan, Sudan (incl. Sudan CHP), Syria (incl. Syria RRC Office in Amman), Uganda, Yemen.
2. Includes: Fair Protection Processes and Documentation, Security from Violence and Exploitation, Favourable Protection Environment
3. Includes: education, energy, food, healthcare, special needs, WASH, water
4. Includes: Leadership, Coordination and Partnerships, and Headquarters and Regional Support

Source: UNHCR MSRP data

However, within its cluster roles, UNHCR's specific activities and level of involvement with IDPs have varied at the country level

42. Analysis of the "IDP footprint" discussed in paragraph 36 reveals that UNHCR's IDP activities broadly fall within its cluster areas. UNHCR analysed 2016 country-level plans according to the priority interventions articulated in its 2014 guidance note on IDP engagement. Seven of the 21 mixed settings have completed the footprint dashboard exercise, and in those seven, 80 per cent of IDP activities fall within the footprint. For the 20 per cent of activities that fall outside the footprint, about half are still within cluster areas but outside UNHCR's determined priority areas.[32]

43. Nevertheless, within these broad cluster areas, the 11 country case studies showed significant variation in the specific IDP activities undertaken by UNHCR. This is appropriate when in response to the needs of the local context, which was the case in some settings; in others, variations were more problematic. For example, in one setting with significant protection concerns, protection coordination activities were limited largely to convening meetings and coordinating protection monitoring, whereas in other cases this function encompassed more thorough needs assessments, 3/4W mapping[33] and fundraising to fill assistance gaps. Furthermore, the cross-cutting nature of protection has lent itself to varied interpretations of what constitutes protection interventions. The comprehensive nature of CCCM and shelter has also highlighted the interconnected nature of the clusters UNHCR leads or co-leads. For example, in one context, shelter cluster members expressed frustration with lack of progress amongst the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) cluster, which led to delays in shelter activities and discussions on whether UNHCR should be involved in WASH provision. Although the global clusters provide guidance and terms of reference for

[32] OIOS analysis based on seven country-level IDP Footprint Dashboards, UNHCR, 2015.
[33] 3W is "who, what, where" mapping of activities of all cluster members. 4W includes "when."

coordinators,[34] actual application in the field can be inconsistent – an issue noted by some staff and partners interviewed in five of the 11 case studies.

C: Through its coordination role, UNHCR has made positive contributions to IDP response in mixed settings, despite some complications at the country level

A majority of external stakeholders and staff rated UNHCR positively on IDP coordination in mixed settings, although variations in performance were evident at the country level

44. Although governments have the primary responsibility to assist and protect IDPs, the humanitarian system plays a key response role when government capacities cannot address the full scale of the crisis, or when governments are contributors to the crisis. Unlike its accountability for refugees, UNHCR is a contributor to a collective response on IDPs. Assessing its contribution thus requires focusing on its coordination role as well as its operational activities.

45. UNHCR's performance within its IDP coordination roles was rated positively by a majority of its partners. A majority of partners surveyed (61 per cent) said that UNHCR's contributions had resulted in better results achieved for IDPs in their countries of operation, and most also rated it positively in several key areas as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Partner ratings of UNHCR partnerships were largely positive

Partnership area	Excellent or good ratings
Partner's overall partnership with UNHCR	63%
UNHCR's understanding of partner work and expertise	65%
UNHCR's information sharing with partners	66%
UNHCR's contribution to the coordinated planning of IDP-related activities	67%
UNHCR's consultations with partners on changes to its IDP response	70%

Source: OIOS partner survey

46. Amongst staff surveyed, a small majority rated UNHCR positively in its coordination of protection work, shelter, and camp coordination and camp management (58, 54, and 53 per cent respectively) but noted that there was room for improvement in "mitigating other protection risks for IDPs," with over half (58 per cent) rating UNHCR's coordination performance in this area as poor.

47. Field-based partners and staff interviewed had similar views of UNHCR's partnerships in IDP response, with most stating that it was positive overall – three times more

[34] Global Protection Cluster TOR, CCCM Toolkit, Shelter Coordinator Toolkit.

than those who said it was negative. They most frequently noted UNHCR's leadership of the protection cluster and information-sharing as strengths. However, reflecting the varied nature of partner perspectives, field-based partners interviewed also most commonly cited UNHCR's leadership of the protection cluster as a weakness.

48. In six of the 11 case studies, UNHCR's performance in IDP coordination was working well overall. However, partners and staff reported performance variations over time, amongst the sectors, or within the country. In one case, while several interviewees noted effective coordination at the capital level, others in a field location pointed to frustrations with UNHCR's protection coordination, particularly in information sharing. In another case, field level interviews pointed to a high degree of functionality of UNHCR led or co-led clusters at the working level, despite initial problems, and HQ interviewees perceiving that case as problematic.

49. In protection coordination in particular, an independent whole-of-system review of protection[35] noted mixed results. While the review encompassed both mixed and non-mixed settings, it found inconsistent performance in protection clusters (PC), stating that "The performance of the PC can vary significantly, both within a country and also across different contexts. As observed in the field, PCs vary in breadth, depth and quality…In some contexts, the PC is where strategies are developed; in others, it operates primarily as an information-sharing platform and not where strategic decisions are made."[36]

50. As with refugees, UNHCR's engagement with IDPs was stronger with camp-based populations, although the vast majority of IDPs do not reside in camps.[37] One of the areas it co-leads (CCCM) relates mostly to camps, and the amount of shelter work undertaken outside of camps is difficult to quantify, as consistent data on assistance to out-of-camp IDPs are unavailable. A 2013 study by the Brookings Institution noted that data on non-camp IDP populations are inadequate, complicating the delivery of assistance.[38] Lower levels of assistance to out-of-camp populations were also observed during two of the three field missions, and noted during focus group discussions with IDPs in these locations. While in some case studies, access to national systems meant that less outside assistance was required, in others there were significant assistance gaps for IDPs, either in sectors such as shelter or in geographic areas with limited humanitarian access. This was evident

Tensions with partners were present in some settings with refugees and IDPs in the same geographic area

51. There is some lack of clarity regarding which office should play the lead agency role for refugees in mixed settings where refugees and IDPs are in the same geographic area, which has led to some complications in coordination. In 2014, UNHCR and OCHA signed the *Joint UNHCR-OCHA Note on Mixed Situations: Coordination in Practice* to "simplify and streamline leadership and coordination arrangements in a complex emergency or natural

[35] Niland, Norah, Riccardo Plastro, Antonio Donini and Amra Lee, Independent Whole of System Review of Protection in the Context of Humanitarian Action, Norwegian Refugee Council 2015.
[36] Ibid, p 45.
[37] UNHCR does not officially estimate out-of-camp IDP populations, but OIOS calculations based on UNHCR 2014 Global Trends data estimate roughly that 99 per cent of non-refugee PoCs resided outside of camps in 2014.
[38] Under the Radar: Internally Displaced Persons in Non-Camp Settings, Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement, 2013.

disaster where a Humanitarian Coordinator has been appointed, and a UNHCR-led refugee operation is also underway." The agreement stipulates that "where refugees are present in the same geographic area as IDPs," operational coordination and delivery for both populations should be merged into a single structure under either UNHCR sectors or IASC clusters, but does not specify which should apply in any given case. The Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) is mandated to coordinate with humanitarian partners "in full respect of their mandates," meaning that solutions should not be unilaterally imposed by the ERC.[39]

52. Throughout all six case studies with refugees and IDPs in the same geographic area, UNHCR retained the lead agency role for refugees and chose to maintain separate and parallel refugee coordination arrangements in four of the six case studies. Its fundraising for refugees also remained largely separate.[40] UNHCR's autonomous approach to refugee coordination was sometimes perceived as uncompromising, leading to tensions with some humanitarian partners in three case studies with contiguous populations. Moreover, partners and staff in some cases noted that parallel fundraising and reporting processes between UNHCR and IASC produced inefficiencies. In another case, cooperation with partners was hindered by a disagreement over whether sectors or clusters should apply to refugee response.

Factors that contributed to good UNHCR coordination in mixed settings included adequate resources, staff skills and dedicated cluster leads

53. Three factors were most commonly noted by partners and staff interviewed in HQ and the field as contributing to well-functioning coordination. Field-based interview respondents most frequently cited the level and availability of coordination resources as the main factor contributing to better coordination. The second most commonly cited factor was the existence of the right skill set. In all three field missions, as well as four other country cases, ratings of UNHCR's coordination performance were attributed at least in part to specific coordinators and their skills in leading and facilitating cluster goals. UNHCR's learning centre has developed a course on coordination, although only about 60 per cent of current coordinators have attended the course. High turn-over of coordination staff has also made it challenging to consistently deploy staff with strong coordination skills. The third factor, related to resources, was a dedicated cluster coordinator. In five of the 11 case studies, interviewees noted improvements in coordination with the appointment of dedicated cluster coordinators, rather than "double hatted" cluster coordinators who also held roles and responsibilities within the UNHCR country office. Several partners and staff involved in coordination in those contexts also noted that having dedicated cluster roles reduced perceived or actual conflicts of interest, between representing UNHCR versus representing cluster needs.

D: On the whole, UNHCR's involvement with IDPs has not negatively affected its refugee work in mixed settings

54. As noted in paragraph 15, the General Assembly emphasized that UNHCR's IDP work "should not undermine the refugee mandate of the Office." To assess UNHCR's conformity with this, OIOS assessed whether involvement with IDPs had negatively affected UNHCR's refugee work – specifically its ability to facilitate protection of and provide assistance to refugees and to effectively coordinate refugee responses. In addition to globally

[39] A/RES/46/182.

[40] UNHCR's appeals for refugees fed into independently-budgeted Global Appeals. These were included in annual IASC joint appeals in 11 case studies, but in 10 UNHCR maintained a separate chapter for refugees. UNHCR is authorized by EXCOM to fundraise independently: http://www.unhcr.org/3ae69efa0.html.

aggregated interview and survey data, OIOS searched for evidence of such links within its 11 country case studies.

UNHCR's involvement with IDPs in mixed settings has largely had no discernible effect on its refugee protection and assistance work

55. For the most part, UNHCR's IDP involvement in mixed settings did not appear to affect its refugee protection and assistance work. Globally, one-third of external stakeholders interviewed claimed there was no overall impact of UNHCR's IDP work on its refugee mandate, with some stating that this was due to UNHCR's prioritization of refugees. Among UNHCR staff surveyed about mixed settings where they most recently worked, 48 per cent claimed UNHCR's involvement with IDPs had no overall impact on its ability to achieve refugee protection/assistance outcomes in the last three to four years. In seven of the 11 case studies, OIOS assessments found no evidence that involvement with IDPs in recent years had impacted UNHCR's ability to facilitate refugee protection or provide refugee assistance. Among these seven case studies, either refugee and IDP responses were geographically distinct (operating independently with mostly separate financing), or refugees were categorically prioritized by UNHCR.

UNHCR's involvement with IDPs affected its refugee work in some cases, though the effects were not entirely negative

56. In four of 11 case studies, evidence indicated that UNHCR's involvement with IDPs affected its refugee work. In one unique case, negative government perceptions of UNHCR's IDP protection activities, and resulting restrictions on UNHCR's field presence, adversely affected its ability to respond effectively to a refugee emergency. In the three other case studies, IDP influxes created resource trade-offs that constrained refugee operations; in fact, when asked to identify ways in which UNHCR's IDP response has affected its refugee work, staff interviewed most frequently cited resource trade-offs. Across these three cases, IDPs protected and assisted by UNHCR more than tripled between 2013 and 2014, from 1.9 million to 6.5 million, and spending rose from $68 million to $263 million. Meanwhile, UNHCR's spending on refugee activities across those operations declined by a quarter to $239 million from 2013 to 2014, despite increases in refugees receiving assistance. These implied reductions in spending per refugee included cuts of between 21 to 57 per cent to basic needs and essential services, mainly in shelter and NFI provision.[41] However, in the three cases described above, refugee operations had already been established for over two years, limiting the relative impact of 2014 spending cuts.

57. In the three case studies mentioned above where IDP influxes constrained refugee spending, IDP assistance also served to enhance refugee protection. In two cases, staff noted that narrowing the gap between UNHCR's refugee and IDP assistance helped reduce threats to refugees from inter-group tensions, due to perceived disparities in assistance between the two groups.[42] In the third case, UNHCR's IDP assistance positively enhanced refugee protection, by improving UNHCR's relevance to the host government and enabling it to successfully advocate for enhanced refugee protection space.

[41] Basic needs and essential services include: water, shelter, food, WASH, healthcare, non-food items, energy, and education.
[42] This risk was noted by staff in five out of six case studies with contiguous refugee and IDP populations.

UNHCR's involvement with IDPs had minimal negative effect on UNHCR's coordination of refugee responses in mixed settings

58. UNHCR's coordination of refugee responses has been largely effective in mixed settings. Most operating partners surveyed (65 per cent) rated UNHCR's role in the coordination of refugee activities in mixed situations as good or excellent, compared to 14 per cent rating it poor or very poor. This overall ratio was mirrored across 10 of the 14 mixed settings where UNHCR is involved with both refugees and IDPs. Moreover, in seven of the 11 case studies, operating partners and UNHCR staff reported unproblematic refugee coordination throughout the refugee response. The other four case studies contained episodes of problematic coordination which were usually confined to initial phases of the refugee response and mostly resolved at the time of data collection.[43]

59. Two key underlying factors supported UNHCR in effectively coordinating refugee responses: the clarity of its mandate and its ability to mobilize resources for refugees. Drawing on its mandate, UNHCR acted as lead agency for refugee responses in all eleven case studies. UNHCR's needs-based approach to planning and budgeting also helped to ensure financing of refugee responses throughout the cases studied. This contrasts to the resource-based approach UNHCR used prior to 2010 (and currently used in consolidated appeals processes for all United Nations IDP planning and budgeting).

V. Conclusion

60. As the numbers of refugees and IDPs have continued to grow, contexts with mixed refugee and IDP flows will continue to pose challenges to UNHCR and the humanitarian system as a whole. UNHCR has retained its primary responsibility for refugees in accordance with its mandate, while contributing to IDP response through coordination roles aligned with its core organizational strengths. Its more focused engagement with IDPs has not negatively impacted its ability to deliver in its core refugee mandate.

61. The interconnected nature of this system means that the results identified in this evaluation have system-wide implications, a point raised frequently by evaluation respondents. As IDPs are nationals of their state, humanitarian agencies cannot assume or adopt accountability, in the same way that UNHCR has accountability for refugees. This lack of accountability is problematic when clusters assume responsibility for delivering against a humanitarian response plan. The IASC has attempted to address this through its Accountability to Affected Populations efforts and by assigning "provider of last resort" functions to cluster lead agencies, which are defined as follows: "depending on access, security and availability of funding, the cluster lead…must be ready to ensure the provision of services required to fulfil crucial gaps identified by the cluster and reflected in the HC-led Humanitarian Response Plan."[44] The IASC recognizes that even this level of accountability is more complex with cross-cutting sectors such as protection and CCCM, and notes that "sector leads are responsible for ensuring that wherever there are significant gaps in the humanitarian response they continue advocacy efforts and explain the constraints to stakeholders."[45]

[43] These included: UNHCR's failure to lead technical sectors effectively; role confusion; and leadership constraints due to lack of direct access to refugee locations. In all four cases, initial delivery of refugee assistance was adversely affected.
[44] Cluster Coordination Reference Module, p. 13 IASC, 2015.
[45] Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response, IASC, 2006.

62. The marked contrast between UNHCR's clear mandate and responsibility for refugees versus a system in which there is no clear non-State responsibility for IDPs lies at the heart of the tensions and varied effectiveness in some mixed refugee-IDP settings. UNHCR defends its prioritization of refugees due to its mandate and noting that refugee status itself is a vulnerability and protection risk that IDPs do not face. However in some contexts, IDPs increasingly face protection risks similar to those faced by refugees, who at times occupy the same geographic areas.

63. This evaluation identified several system-wide issues beyond the evaluation scope which require further examination. Among those is the application of the Joint Note, including factors determining which agency will lead merged coordination structures, and analysis of whether merged or parallel structures result in better outcomes for persons of concern. Agreements on responsibility for data collection and IDP population estimates also require system-wide reflections, as do discussions on budget approaches. As needs-based budgets have enabled UNHCR to gain a more comprehensive picture of refugee needs, inter-agency discussions on whether to systematically adopt similar budget systems for IDPs may lead to more harmonized approaches. A more comprehensive system-wide humanitarian response will become more critical as population numbers increase. Whilst funding may continue to rise, it is unlikely to cover requirements. Access constraints may also increase.

64. UNHCR can make adjustments to improve its contributions and to advocate with partners on more effective coordination, but they are one player in a much larger system that comprises other United Nations agencies, international and local NGOs, donors, States and PoCs. Ensuring that the needs and inputs of affected populations are incorporated into planning and response on a broad-based level will be the main challenge for all contributing partners, but one on which UNHCR, with its global leadership and expertise in displacement, can play a guiding role.

VI. Recommendations

65. OIOS makes three important recommendations to UNHCR.

Recommendation 1 (Result A)

66. Within and between mixed settings, there are differences in the extent and quality of data collected, particularly between refugees in camps and those out of camps. **To address this, UNHCR should improve country-level monitoring through strengthening efforts to collect data on out-of-camp refugees including on assistance provided by UNHCR.**

Recommendation 2 (Result A)

67. In line with the policy objective of accountability to affected populations, UNHCR should do more to close the feedback loop and involve PoCs more substantively in decision-making. Recognizing the challenges in promoting meaningful participation that manages expectations and is not resource intensive, **UNHCR should systematize efforts to communicate back to refugees on what was done with their inputs by consistently and regularly integrating reviews and consultations on the results of the prior year AGDM assessments, what decisions were made with them, and why, at the start of each annual participatory assessment.**

Recommendation 3 (Results B and C)

68. To ensure that coordination more effectively and efficiently facilitates the response to IDP and refugee needs, **UNHCR should develop country-specific coordination strategies, outlining incorporation of RCM and/or Joint Note provisions where appropriate**, and possibly including:

- decision and rationale for separate or combined coordination structures,
- strategies for UNHCR-led or co-led clusters which reflect global cluster norms and standards while responding to realities of each context,
- tailored national and local level terms of reference for refugee, cluster and sector coordinators,
- the appointment of an NGO co-lead for the protection cluster as appropriate,
- contribution to the formulation of HCT priorities on IDPs and subsequent consideration of those priorities in coordination, and
- plans for data collection and joint needs assessments.

Annex 1

In this Annex, OIOS presents below the full text of comments received from UNHCR on the Evaluation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. This practice has been instituted in line with general Assembly resolution 64/263, following the recommendation of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee.

UNHCR comments on the evaluation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

1. In response to your Memorandum of 23 March 2016 addressed to High Commissioner Grandi on the Programme Evaluation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), I outline below UNHCR's main observations on the formal draft evaluation report. Before doing so, I would like to record UNHCR's satisfaction with the willingness of the OIOS evaluation team to engage in an open and constructive dialogue with both our headquarters and field based colleagues throughout the process. This has contributed significantly to the insights generated during the evaluation and in the quality of the draft report.

2. As has been widely recognised in recent years, the humanitarian system has come under considerable pressure. The substantial increase in the numbers of forcibly displaced persons, both refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), many of them caught in protracted situations, has presented a sharp challenge for the international community. The provision of protection and assistance has often been constrained by issues of rising insecurity, violence and of restricted access to affected populations. Notwithstanding the substantial increase in funding overall, financial resources have not kept pace with the level of global humanitarian needs.

3. The forthcoming World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in Istanbul will consider a range of policy, technical and financial issues that may influence the direction of travel for humanitarian agencies in the future as they strive to meet the overall needs of affected populations more effectively. In that perspective, the draft evaluation report provides a timely reflection on the important question of UNHCR's different responsibilities for refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in particular.

4. By and large, UNHCR considers that the draft report has captured well the main operational implications and differences between the organisation's engagement for refugees under its mandate and those applicable to IDPs as part of the inter-agency effort developed in the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) context under the leadership of the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC). It is pleased that the draft report has recognised UNHCR's efforts not only in responding successfully to the increase in the number of refugees requiring protection and assistance but that it has also largely upheld its specific responsibilities for IDPs. UNHCR is further satisfied with the conclusion that meeting these dual obligations has not resulted in any observable negative consequences for either refugees or IDPs. UNHCR notes also that the report makes references to the measures taken in cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), most prominently the Joint Note, to clarify how leadership and coordination mechanisms in mixed settings should function in practice.

5. UNHCR acknowledges the need to improve its data collection, monitoring and coverage of out-of-camp refugees and to strive to further strengthen the consistency of its feedback and communications with refugee populations. It also recognises that specific coordination modalities may be required for particular country contexts. As such UNHCR accepts the three recommendations proposed by OIOS. It has set out its proposed actions in the accompanying matrix.

6. Further comments and observations have been embedded in the text of the draft report accompanying this Memorandum. These serve principally to highlight points that are insufficiently clear or where further precision or elucidation is required. That these are neither numerous nor contentious, testifies to the exemplary cooperation that has characterised the conduct of this evaluation since its inception.

7. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your colleagues, in particular the evaluation focal points, for the excellent cooperation.