



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER



PSN ASSESSMENT REPORT– IMVEPI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

October 2019

1. Background/Overview

UNHCR's mandate is to provide international protection to persons of concern (PoC) through applying an age, gender and diversity (AGD) approach to all aspects of its work, to ensure that PoC have equal access to and enjoy their rights.

UNHCR works in partnership with PoCs to identify and address the protection risks and needs they face. In order to better protect and assist persons with specific needs, community-based approaches should be integrated into protection work. If PoC are put at the centre of operational decision-making, and protection strategies are built in partnership with them, they will be better protected, in a better position to identify, develop and sustain solutions, and resources will be used more effectively.¹

In situations of displacement, some individuals will face heightened protection risks because of their specific needs. Timely identification of individuals with specific needs is crucial in order to best support them through social services or community structures.

Assessment of persons with specific need is a key activity conducted by UNHCR and its partners. Despite the interventions that take place daily including the registration upon arrival, it may be challenging for UNHCR and partners to identify all the specific needs of PoC as some of their needs may not be visible or spoken about and require further assessment and verification. In this regard, **PSN assessments have been taking place in the settlements including Imvepi on an annual basis to identify, update and address the specific needs, level of vulnerability and its urgency for further protection interventions.**

¹ UNHCR, Manual on a Community Based Approach in UNHCR Operations, 2008.

IDENTIFICATION OF PSN

Identification of persons with specific needs is a continuous process. The identification can be done at different stages, by different actors. Specific needs are variable. Therefore, constant follow-up of cases on one hand, and continuous identification on the other hand, are key. The PSN assessment exercise is one way of identifying persons with specific needs. Nevertheless, the PSN identification is an evolving and dynamic process and PSN assessment exercises cannot go without a continuous identification process and follow-up of cases already identified. Successful PSN assessment will allow all participating agencies to identify systematically specific needs of PSN; to design and implement protection and assistance programmes in cooperation with the PSN and their communities; to prioritise PSN in protection and assistance; to develop partnerships and referral mechanisms with other protection and assistance actors who have the expertise and capacity to support groups and individuals with specific needs; and to establish and maintain a confidential individual case management system to register and track PSN, and record the protection and assistance they require and receive. UNHCR has a global commitment to the good practice of 'continuous registration'. Hence, data collection should not be a one-time event, but should be periodically updated to accurately reflect significant events in the timeline of an individual case (IOM 030/2009 FOM 030/2009, *Guidance on the Use of Standardized Specific Needs Codes*, 10 June 2009).

Imvepi Settlement is in Arua District with a population of 62,711 individuals². The Settlement comprises of 03 zones.

- Zone 1 with a population of 16,769
- Zone 2 with a population of 35,482
- Zone 3 with a population of 10,460

The starting point of the PSN assessment was cases of PSN identified during the verification exercise which took place in Imvepi in 2018. **The PSN assessment exercise took place between 07 October and 24 October 2019.**

1.2 The following are groups generally considered to have specific needs, among others:

- **Girls and boys at risk** including **Unaccompanied and Separated Children**;
- **Persons with serious medical conditions**;
- **Persons with special legal or physical protection needs**;
- **Single women, women- headed households**;
- **Older persons at risk**;
- **Persons with disabilities**;
- **Persons with diverse sexual orientation or gender identity.**
- **Survivors of SGBV and Torture**

It is important to remember that not every individual in each of these groups will have specific needs, and that their needs may alter over time and according to context. Rather than target 'labelled' groups with a standard package of assistance, **it is essential to analyse the protection and assistance risks that individuals and groups face and assess their needs by means of a targeted protection assessment, a needs assessment, or both.** It is also important not to limit the scope of protection and assistance to the above-mentioned groups ³, and to note that some individuals might have more than one specific need.

² Statistics as at 31 October 2019.

³ **Emergency Handbook, *Identifying persons with specific needs (PWSN)***, available at <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/125333/identifying-persons-with-specific-needs-pwsn>

1.3 Risks

The following risks are likely to occur, and attention should be put in order to avoid or reduce such risks.⁴

- If groups or individuals with specific needs are not identified early in an emergency, they may face heightened protection risks.
- If not addressed early on, protection and assistance gaps that groups or individuals with specific needs face may become more severe over time.
- Although communities play an essential role in identifying and supporting persons with specific needs, and designing and implementing protection and assistance programmes, they can sometimes be a negative force. Harmful traditional practices may (re-)emerge during displacement, marginalized and vulnerable groups may face more extreme exclusion or exploitation, power imbalances can be exacerbated, etc.
- If systems simplistically favour persons with specific needs, they may generate needs artificially.
- Specific needs and their prioritization should therefore be reviewed regularly as the emergency context evolves.
- If specific needs are not identified and addressed promptly, the situation of persons of concern may deteriorate, causing further harm and loss of life.
- Late or ineffective response may create security risks.
- There are reputational risks for UNHCR: if it does not fulfil its protection responsibilities towards specific groups, this can damage its credibility and authority, and undermine its mandate.

2. Participating agencies

The PSN assessment exercise was coordinated by UNHCR in conjunction with OPM and actively conducted by UNHCR, OPM and all implementing and operational partners including Community Based Organisations and refugee leadership⁵. The refugee leaders greatly supported in community mobilisation.

3. Guiding principles

All actors extended their fullest cooperation and meaningful participation in carrying out the PSN assessment exercise in order to achieve ownership and continue providing protection and assistance for PSN. All participating actors agreed to follow the AGD approach, community-based and rights-based approaches as per following set of guiding principles:

- All refugees (male and female, children, older persons) are consulted and meaningfully participated in the process of PSN assessment exercise.
- No assumptions are imposed with respect to the specific needs of PoCs.

⁴ The mentioned risks are listed in the Emergency Handbook, *Identifying persons with specific needs (PWSN)*, available at <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/125333/identifying-persons-with-specific-needs-pwsn>

⁵ OPM, UNHCR, IRC, OXFAM, DCA, DRC, CAFOT, CARE, CTEN, A-Z, XAVIER, MALTESER, WVI, RICE WN, SCI, MTI, CV, AAR JAPAN HI, URCS, TPO, CARITAS, War Child Holland (WCH) WHH, WIU, UDRMC & CEFORD.

- All PSN to benefit equally and fairly from protection and assistance according to their needs.
- Refugees to receive information about the assessment exercise, and when and how the collected data is used.



PSN assessment interview in Imvepi © UNHCR

4. PSN Assessment Procedures/Criteria

In order to ensure the credibility of the process and the collected data, **PSN assessment exercise was conducted in three levels:**

- **Identification and assessment done by Multi-Functional Team (MFT)⁶** comprised of staff members from UNHCR, OPM, and implementing and operational partners through the most feasible data collection methodology that was agreed among the participating agencies. **To guide the identification and assessment of specific needs during the exercise, the participating agencies used the UNHCR’s “Guidance on the Use of Standardised Specific Needs Codes”⁷ which provides a comprehensive list of an individual’s characteristics, background, or risks that may require urgent response.** These codes are used in the UNHCR registration and case management tool, proGres v4, which at the time of the assessment was used only by UNHCR and OPM, but which will be eventually used also by other partners. The total number of categories of specific needs are 11 and there are 71 subcategories that have detailed information on the specific needs.
- Participating **agencies had a one-day training prior to the exercise on specific needs codes to familiarise themselves with the codes / criteria and to accurately record the information.**
- **A separate briefing of refugee leaders/interpreters⁸** was also conducted in order to inform them about the PSN assessment, its importance/objectives, methodology to be used in the data collection, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, ethics of interpretation and role of the leaders in mobilization of the PSNs.
- With close collaboration with UNHCR Kampala, a questionnaire was developed in order to be able to capture all information regarding PSN as well as referrals to be done to the appropriate service provider.



Debrief of the MFTs at Imvepi Base Camp © UNHCR

⁶ All the MFT members received training on the questionnaire.

⁷ IOM 030/2009 FOM 030/2009, *Guidance on the Use of Standardized Specific Needs Codes Annex II*, 10 June 2009

⁸ 103 RWC members, community/block leaders and interpreters.

➤ The questionnaire was uploaded in the Kobo tool and with the use of tablets, enumerators collected the data in a time-effective harmonised and simplified manner.

➤ The Protection Partners, refugee block and community leaders supported the MFTs particularly in locating all the houses in the different villages across the three zones. **The exercise was done through home visits to the PSN households in all 41 villages. The assessment was conducted only to the PoCs who presented one of the following documents:**

➤ Family Attestation and Proof of Verification

➤ Proof of Verification

Unregistered individuals as well as individuals who missed the verification exercise conducted earlier in 2018 were referred to OPM for further management.

➤ During the assessment, the Kobo data entry tool was used with pre-populated information from the ProGres V4 database. Participants used tablets to enter the household number volunteers first recorded all the information from the questionnaires into an Excel sheet that reflected the fields required for migration into proGres v4. UNHCR then further cleaned the list and did a verification of all individuals against data captured in proGres v4. Once the list was finalized, data migration UNHCR staff in UNHCR Kampala supported the migration of all PSN codes into the system.

➤ Due to their complex nature requiring assessments by trained or specialized personnel, cases such as those related to SGBV, child protection, legal protection and medical condition and disability were referred to relevant service providers during or immediately after the assessment exercise depending on the urgency and vetted by technical experts.

➤ PSNs who could have missed on the profiling will be handled on a case by case basis by the protection partner and or UNHCR All codes vetted after the migration, new cases and changes in PSN identified after the migration will be entered directly into proGres v4 by OPM/UNHCR in Arua.

5. Findings

All the PSNs who were present in the Settlement were visited by the multi-functional teams. Nevertheless, in some cases, refugees were not at home during the time of the assessment and were not in the settlement due to self-relocation to areas out of the Settlement. **During the PSN assessment, a total of 4,000 Households were profiled.** The total number of **Specific Needs** recorded **7,982⁹**.

5.1 Breakdown Per Specific Need

116 CHILD AT RISK (CR). Person below the age of 18¹⁰ who is at risk due to his/her age, dependency and/or immaturity.

⁹ Note that the number total number of individuals with specific needs does not equal the total number of specific needs, as one individual might have multiple specific needs.

¹⁰ The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) defines, in Article 1, a "child" as "every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier". See: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3ae6b38f0.html>.

4,413 UNACCOMPANIED OR SEPARATED CHILD (SC)

Person below the age of 18 who are currently not under the care of either parent or other legal or customary primary caregiver.

300 WOMEN AT RISK (WR)

Women of 18 years old or above, at risk because of her gender, such as single mothers or caregivers, single women, widows, older women with disabilities and survivors of violence.

02 SPECIFIC LEGAL AND PHYSICAL PROTECTION NEEDS (LP)

Person with legal protection needs because of a threat to life, freedom or physical safety.

1,229 OLDER PERSON AT RISK (ER)

Person of 60 years old¹¹ or above, with specific need(s) in addition to his/her age. This includes single older persons and older couples. They may be the sole caregivers for others, suffer from health problems, have difficulty adjusting to their new environment, and/or otherwise lack psychological, physical, economic, social or other support from family members or others.

609 SINGLE PARENT OR CAREGIVER (SP)

Single person of 18 years or above with one or more dependants, including biological or non-biological children, or other dependants (such as an older person). The single parent/caregiver is both the primary income earner and/or caregiver.

660 PERSONS WITH DISABILITY (DS)

Physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments from birth, or resulting from illness, infection, injury, trauma or old age. These may hinder full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

¹¹ The UN-agreed cut-off is 60 years to refer to older persons, but exceptions can be made to the age requirement depending on the physical state of the individual. See, for example, World Health Organization, *Definition of an older or elderly person*, <http://www.who.int/healthinfo/survey/ageingdefnolder/en/>.

645 SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITION (SM)

Serious medical condition that requires assistance, in terms of treatment or provision of nutritional and non-food items, in the country of asylum.

03 FAMILY UNITY (FU)

The right to family unity is inherent to the universal recognition of the family as the fundamental group unit of society and as a fundamental principle of refugee protection. The right to family unity may, depending on the circumstances, be infringed on when action is taken to separate an existing family unit, or when family members who already have been separated are not able or permitted to reunite.

03 TORTURE

Any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions.¹² Torture, therefore, includes four main elements: 1) severe physical or mental pain and suffering; 2) intent; 3) purpose; and 4) State involvement. Acts of torture may include, but are not limited to, beatings, kicks, burns, cuts, electric shock, suffocation, submersion, suspension, solitary confinement, toe/finger nail removal, and sexual assault/violence.

02 SGBV

Any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to persons based on their sex or gender, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life. It encompasses, but is not limited to: (i) physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation; (ii) physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution; (iii) physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.

¹² *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*, 1984, Article 1, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3b00f2224.html>.

6. Way Forward

- **Data collection should not be a one-time event. UNHCR and partners will continue to identify and assess PSNs daily. Additionally, the final list of PSN has been shared with the protection partners who will be responsible for updating regularly the list to accurately reflect the specific needs of PoCs.** They will also cross-check the information with the tracking sheets used by partners and will inform UNHCR of any change. All new cases identified as well as updates on the codes of PoCs already identified, will be referred **on a weekly basis to UNHCR in order to record them in proGres v4.**
- Like the systematized assessment exercise, **cases that require further review will be vetted by UNHCR, OPM and the protection partner which should meet regularly for the purpose of continuous registration**
- **Urgent cases should be referred to specialized agencies for appropriate response.**
- During the PSN assessment, some unregistered/undocumented individuals were recorded by partners who referred them to OPM for timely registration and documentation. The above were as well as those that have been registered while the assessment was on-going were not assessed for the purposes of the PSN assessment, they will be assessed later and updated on the system directly by OPM staff.
- **The Protection Partners in the Settlement are responsible for continuous identification of PSN.**
- **All actors are responsible and committed to ensure that the most appropriate actions and follow-ups are taken for PSN.**

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