UNHCR Jordan, Country Office Amman
Standard Operating Procedures for managing petitions and complaints

Jordan Operation is piloting the new process for managing petitions and complaints at Registration Centre at CO Amman. Aim of the new procedures is to enhance accountability and efficiency. The new approach will be piloted for three months starting 1 March 2020 to 1 June 2020, followed by a review, adjustment and finalization of the SOP, aiming for the roll out across the Operation.

July / August 2020 update

Due to COVID 19 Pandemic and guidance of the Government of Jordan to minimize paper-based work refugees were advised to send their petitions and complaints electronically. All petition boxes in registration center were sealed.

Effective as of 23 February 2020, endorsed by Deputy Representative, Carolyn Ennis

Date of review, October 2020, endorsed by Assistant Representative for Protection, Igor Ivančić

1. Framework

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) Operational Framework summarizes the key concepts for making programming at the field level more accountable to affected populations. The framework is designed to assist implementing agencies both individually and in groups to find practical entry points for improving accountability to affected populations.

Objective 2 of the Operational Framework specifies that Operations should systematically communicate with affected populations using relevant feedback and communication mechanisms, further specifying at the indicator level that affected populations should have opportunity to register complaints, provide feedback and to get a response, and that on the other side the Operation should document establishment feedback mechanisms and of complaints and response mechanisms, with evidence of responses provided[1]. Ensuring means / resources to respond to feedback and to address complaints in a timely and effective manner Respecting the privacy of individuals and providing means for confidentiality when lodging complaints[2].

Objective 6 of the Operational Framework specifies that Operations should ensure that accountability to affected populations is effectively integrated throughout the implementation of projects. At the indicator level it specifies to inform about and implement complaints and response mechanism, and that at the Operation should have the record of implementation and of received complaints. It further specifies that Operation should use feedback mechanisms to gather feedback on the quality and accountability of the response and to gather evidence of feedback including analysis of feedback and complaints (trends in number and type of complaints and feedback received over time).

2. Purpose

The purpose of these Standard Operating Procedures is to enhance accountability of CO Amman in managing and referring the petitions and complaints made by affected population.

3. Scope

The Standard Operating Procedures by its scope aim to systematize the intake and referral of petitions and complaints and harmonize it against the obligations set by the AAP Operational Framework.

4. Definitions

Complaint: for the purposes of these Standard Operating Procedures complaints are understood to be written, electronic or voice communication by the affected population against UNHCR staff or affiliate workforce, in relation to their conduct towards refugees, as defined by UNHCR Code of Conduct[3].

Petition: for the purpose of these Standard Operating Procedures "petitions" are understood to be written, electronic or voice communication by the affected population appealing UNHCR 's attention to their situation.

5. Intake and referral of petitions and complaints lodged
5.1. Letter boxes

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[1] HAP Standard Benchmark 5 - Handling complaints: The organisation enables the people it aims to assist and other stakeholders to raise complaints and receive a response through an effective, accessible and safe process
[2] HAP Standard Benchmark 4 and 5
[3] UNHCR Code of Conduct, June 2004, including obligations set by the Secretary General's Bulletin on special measures from protection against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse [ST/SGB/2003/13]

5.1.1. As per UNHCR experience regardless whether the refugee is writing about access to food, or about exploitation and abuse the tendency is that refugee regard all letter boxes the same and use them for lodging complaints and petitions of any kind. Therefore, no distinction will be made on the letter box on whether it should be used for complaints or petitions.

5.1.2. In total there are six (6) letter boxes in Registration Centre. All letter boxes are blue in color and have a lock.

5.1.3. Keys of the letter boxes are held by Anti-Fraud Focal Point [AFFP] for the Jordan Operation, Snr RSD Officer, and her alternate RSD Officer. In absence of either, alternates are Snr Protection Officer (PSEA FoP), and her alternate [Senior Protection Associate/ SGBV]

5.1.4. To ensure accessibility, safety and privacy of letter boxes they are installed in female toilets, and toilets for persons with disabilities, as well as at the entry to Registration Centre, filtering area, next to the security deposit of the mobile phones, and waiting area.

5.1.5. Purpose of the letter boxes is clearly indicated on the boxes themselves in English and Arabic.

5.1.6. Information available to refugees in the Registration Centre will also include information about the location and the purpose of letter boxes.

6. COVID 19 response

6.1. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Jordan instructed all public sectors to minimize paper-based interactions with clients. To that affect the letter boxes available to refugees outside[4] UNHCR Registration Centers were sealed since April 2020, and refugees were advised to instead write to joraminf@unhcr.org or call UNHCR Helpline on 06 400 8000.

6.2. Snr RSD Associate coordinates the intake process and ensures rotation of FoPs from RSD, REG, RST, Protection, Basic Needs, Education, CBP, Health Units is taking place and petitions are reviewed and processed. [5]

6.3. Snr RSD Associate screens emails and forwards complaints against staff, AWF or Partners to Assistant Representative for Protection immediately.

6.4. It is the responsibility of the focal points to check the individual functional folders and follow up on the emails as necessary and according to their unit's SOPs.

6.5. The focal points from each functional unit will review the emails in their designated folder on a weekly basis and do the following:
- Update ProGres with Communication record (copying the body of the email into the comments box)[6]
- Upload any attachments received via email on ProGres
- Follow up as necessary on the query and as per each unit's SOPs (through V4 referrals, RAIS, emails, etc.)

6.6. Snr RSD Associate draft monthly report on petitions received, analyzing trends and follow up actions.

7. Intake of petitions and complaints[7]

7.1. AFFP and her alternate open all letter boxes every Thursday.

7.2. Upon letter box opening all letters are placed in a plastic box with a lid.

7.3. Letters are then taken to the office of the AFFP, read and sorted thematically by a panel representing the below units which most of the petitions are addressed to: RST, RSD, REG, CBI, CBP, Health.

7.4. Once done with sorting, each unit representative will take the petitions addressed to his/her unit to do the required follow up:

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[4] Due to COVID 19 UNHCR registration centers were closed since 17 March 2020. Due to the Government's guidance even when reopened the complaints / petitions will have to be moved to electronic / phone format.
[5] See attached Annex 2 on General Mailbox Terms of Reference (ToR)
[6] See attached annex 3 on "updating ProGres".
[7] Under suspension due to COVID situation

- Record of receiving the letters is made on *proGres* data base through the communications entity (click on the individual number, then on communication entity, then add new communication record under individual case). CBI and Health unit will record the receipt of the letters on RAIS.

Unit focal points need to inform the AFFP and her alternate of how many letters have been received by the unit and confirm that all have been uploaded on proGres.

7.5. Once *proGres* is updated AFFP will inform the DAG, to generate the report of the intake for the day and share case numbers with External Relation Unit for sending the SMS message with the following text to the complainants: *"This is to confirm that UNHCR received your letter. Thank you for writing to us. We will contact you if we need further information".*

7.6. Responsible Units will follow up on the referrals and provide feedback as per their own SOPs. In comment box, referral will include the date [as it indicates the name of the sub-folder in e-safe, where relevant units can access scanned copy of the letter]. Referrals for basic needs/appeals will be sent in an email to the focal point from the CBI team so that they can be entered on RAIS.

7.7. All letters are scanned, saved under individual case number, and date of opening the letter box [e.g. 199-20cXXXX23.02.2020), and uploaded in proGres (click on the individual number, then on additional information section – Notes)

7.8. All complaints against conducts of UNHCR staff, including AWF or security guards is immediately forwarded by email to the IGO, by AFFP. For confidentiality purposes *proGres* will not be updated, AFFP will keep the record of these allegations, in a separate restricted e-safe folder called IGO under the executive office folder.

7.9. Records of all performance related complaints against UNHCR staff, including AWF (e.g. quality of service, attitude and similar) are held by AFFP/PSEA FoPC in esafe under executive management folder. Complaint, is shared with the relevant supervisor, requesting feedback within a week, which is then filed noted.

7.10. All allegations of sexual harassment and abuse will be forwarded to PSEA Focal Point for processing as per the relevant SOPs. For confidentiality purposes *proGres* will not be updated, PSEA FoP will keep the record of these allegations as per the relevant SOPs.

7.11. Originals of all letters, but IGO and SEA allegations, will be handed over to the filing room for filing.

8. Analysis of petitions and complaints

On bi-annual basis the AFFP will carry out an analysis of trends in number and type of complaints and petitions and feedback received over time. Quarterly report will be summited to the Representative, Deputy Representative and Assistant Representative for Protection.

9. Feedback

As per point 6.5 above, functional units are responsible for providing timely feedback to refugees on the complaints received. They should also record their feedback on *proGres.*

Annex 1. Focal points for the petitions and complaints

Unit	Name	Function
RSD Unit	██████████████████	Snr RSD Officer - AFFP
RSD Unit	████████████	RSD Officer – AFFP Alternate
RSD Unit	███████████	Snr RSD Associate
Legal Unit	███████████	Protection Associate
Community Based Protection	████████████	Snr. CBP Assistant
Health Unit	██████████	Snr Public Health Assistant
RSD Unit	█████████████	RSD Associate
Resettlement Unit	████████████	RST Associate
Registration Unit	█████████████	
CBI Unit	Basic needs: ████████████h Cash distribution: ████████████	Snr. CBI Assistant Snr. CBI Assistant
Repatriation Unit	█████████████	Repatriation Associate

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Annex 2. Managing intake process of petitions and complaints
Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Intake Focal Points

Context

Within the context of the UNHCR Operational guidance on Accountability to Affected People (AAP)[8], Operational Guidelines on Addressing Fraud Committed by Persons of Concern[9], and UNHCR Age, Gender and Diversity Policy[10] Jordan Operation is strengthening modality of managing petitions and complaints at Registration Centre at CO Amman. Aim of the new procedures is to enhance accountability and efficiency of petition management and provide relevant feedback to refugees.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Jordan instructed all public sectors to minimize paper-based interactions with clients. To that affect the letter boxes available to refugees outside[11] UNHCR Registration Centers were sealed since April 2020, and refugees were advised to instead write to joraminf@unhcr.org, UNHCR/JO Help Site (help.unhcr.org/jordan) or call UNHCR Helpline on 06 400 8000.

Scope of work

Eleven Focal Points from Registration, RSD, RST, Protection, Basic Needs, Education, CBP, Health and Repatriation Units were granted an access to the General Mailbox and Individual Functional units Folders, and they were assigned to review and refer the General Mailbox petitions on (Weekly) rotational basis as indicated in the SOPs on petitions and complaints.

1. **Management, Oversight and Reporting:**

    Snr RSD Associate will:

    1.1 Coordinate the intake process and ensure rotation of Focal Points from all functional Units is taking place and petitions are reviewed and processed.

    1.2 Screen emails and forward complaints against staff, AWF or Partners to Assistant Representative for Protection immediately.

    1.3 Review 3% of deleted repetitive emails on weekly basis to ensure that the process is in line with the External Fraud Policy and AAP Operational Framework.

    1.4 Generate monthly reports on petitions received from ProGres, analyze trends and do the necessary follow up actions.

2. **Filtering of Petitions and Complaints in the General Mailbox:**

    As per the weekly rotation[12], the Focal Point will:

    2.1 Read all the emails received in the General Mailbox within a week.

    2.2 Check ProGres Database for Resettlement inquiries/petitions.

    2.3 Place each email in the individual functional unit folder.

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[8] AAP Operational Guidance, September 2020. UNHCR/OG/2020/02. Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/handbooks/aap/documents/UNHCR-AAP_Operational_Guidance.pdf

[9] UNHCR/OG/2017/1

[10] UNHCR Policy on Age, Gender And Diversity, March 2018. Available at: https://www.unhcr.org/protection/women/5aa13c0c7/policy-age-gender-diversity-accountability-2018.html

[11] Due to COVID 19 UNHCR registration centers were closed since 17 March 2020. Due to the Government's guidance even when reopened the complaints / petitions will have to be moved to electronic / phone format.

[12] See attached annex 4 "Mailbox updated Roster Sep 2020".

2.4 Follow-up on unspecified/unclear inquiries by responding from the General Mailbox email with a standard message requesting the POC to provide further details (his/her File number, name, etc.).

3 Processing of Petitions and Complaints in the Individual Functional Unit Folder:

The Focal Points from each functional unit will:

3.1 Review the emails in their designated folder on a weekly basis.

3.2 Update ProGres v4 with Communication record (copying the body of the email into the comments box)[13].

3.3 Upload any attachments received via email on ProGres.

3.4 Follow up as necessary on the query and as per each unit's SOPs (through ProGres V4 referrals, RAIS, emails, etc.).

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[13] See attached annex 3 on "updating ProGres".

Annex 3. Updating ProGres

Recording Emails on ProGres V4

Any information related to postal mail, emails, phone calls and petitions received from POCs should be recorded under the communication entity.

Creating a communication record in ProGres:

In ProGres V4, you can create a communication record for <u>the individual</u> as per below:

1- Click on the individual to open up the individual, page, click on <u>ADD</u> button, then <u>select communication</u> from the individual page OR from the top bar click on the individual number and choose communication entity.

2- Complete the required fields on the communication form.

In the create communication window that appears fill out the following as required (Note that mandatory fields are highlighted with*. **Please pay attention to the fields highlighted in yellow (entries in this field should match the below guidance to enable extraction of statistics**.

Record form: Communication	
Fields	**Contents**
Communication Number	Generated Automatically by the system

Communication Description*	Fill in the subject/ purpose of the communication, e.g. registration ,health service
Communication Date *	It appears automatically the current date and it could be changed manually
Communication By	Default to user who create the record
Communication Type*	Select appropriate value from the Look up view **(select email here)**
Communication Type (other)	Please enter "help site" whenever an email received from this address: wordpress@help.unhcr.org
Followed up By	If applicable, select the unit/ agency which should follow up on the communication
Followed up By (Other)	If applicable, indicate follow-up to be undertaken by agent that is not available in the list above
Category	Select your functional unit
Other Category	Indicate other category that the communication may also fall under
Communication Details	A summary on the contents of the communication and indicate if a scanned copy of a relevant letter is uploaded. **(Copy the body of the email here)**
Related Case Type	Select the type of record that the communication is linked to, e.g. Registration Group

And a referral record can be linked to the communication. To create a referral record, use the Add Referral button in the ribbon in the communication record.

Uploading Documents:

To upload documents such as petitions or letters or other document relevant to the communication on proGres, you can add a new document **from the individual form, additional information section**. When you click on **Notes, you can see the attach button.**

Note:

To create a communication record the process status should be **active.**