



## **MINUTES: 2<sup>nd</sup> National Refugee Protection Working Group meeting 12 JULY 2018**

1. The Uganda National Refugee Protection Working Group (NRPWG) held its second meeting on **12 July 2018** at the UNHCR Branch Office - Kampala. The meeting was chaired by Douglas Assimwe, OPM Principal Protection Coordinator and co-chaired by Margaret Atieno, UNHCR Ass. Representative (Protection).
2. The agenda of the meeting focused on:
  - I. Adoption of the TORs for the National Refugee Protection Working Group.
  - II. Sub-National Protection Dialogues Outcomes
  - III. Key Updates and Communication by Partners/Sub-Working Groups.
  - IV. AOB.

### **Summary of key issues discussed and recommendations**

#### **Discussion point 1: Adoption of the TORs of Reference for the Working Group**

3. The draft Terms of Reference of the NPRWG was reviewed and endorsed. Participants suggested to amend ToR # 9 on public advocacy on refugee issues to include the development of an advocacy strategy which will reinforce and streamline advocacy approaches, techniques and protection messages to targeted audience. The advocacy strategy will be drafted in collaboration with the protection actors and based on the Uganda multiyear protection and solutions strategic priorities.

*Action: UNHCR/OPM to circulate the finalised ToRs with members of NPRWG and other Sub Working Groups including CP, SGBV, and Education among others.*

*Action: UNHCR to lead the development of advocacy strategy*

4. Participants approved the last week of every month for the NPRWG meeting in order to align with the field protection/sub-working group meetings. The precise meeting date will be communicated later by the co-chair. This timeline will be reviewed at end of 6 months period (which started in June and ending in December 2018).

#### **Discussion point 2: Sub-National Protection Dialogue Outcomes:**

5. UNHCR gave a brief presentation on the key issues emanating from the sub regional protection dialogue workshops held in South Western Uganda, Mid-Western and West Nile Regions in late April – early May, 2017. Participants had the opportunity to share comments on key protection issues, opportunities and recommendations moving forward. It was agreed that UNHCR will share the report and notes from the Sub -National Protection Dialogue workshops with the Sub Working Group Leads and Co-leads. The Sub -WG members will review and work together towards addressing identified protection issues and gaps.

*Action: UNHCR to re-circulate soft copies of summary notes and thematic detailed report with NPRWG members and chairs and co-chairs of the Child Protection, SGBV and other Sub Working Groups.*

The following thematic issues/concerns were discussed at length during the meeting

6. Addressing Reports of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) is a major concern across different settlements and calls for concerted efforts by all protection actors and the government of Uganda. Among urban refugees, the situation is exacerbated by limited access to basic services and lack of knowledge among refugees on their rights and existing asylum procedures.
7. All protection actors including OPM and UNHCR were requested to strengthen current efforts towards prevention, mitigation and response to SGBV, child protection and SEA related issues in Kampala and across refugee settlements. In addition, UNHCR reported that there is an established PSEA interagency Taskforce plan of action developed by UN agencies and additional trainings have been conducted with the last ToT ongoing in Hoima for Mid-Western region.
8. A suspected case of human trafficking involving a group of unidentified girls (potentially either economic migrants or refugees from Burundi, Rwanda, etc.) across Busia border to Kenya was reported by one of the NGO staff – no further details could be established. OPM and UNHCR requested all protection actors providing assistance to urban refugees to include sensitization/ information sessions on Human Trafficking and PSEA related issues in their programmes. OPM also promised to engage with the Immigration Department and Ministry of Labor to put into place stringent mechanisms to minimize and address potential trafficking cases involving refugees and other persons of concern to neighboring countries.

*Action: The RC Office/PSEA Task team to be invited to give a presentation on the interagency PSEA TF Plan of Action at the next NPRWG meeting*
9. While the Government of Uganda maintains its policy on promoting refugee settlement approach, given the current dynamics with increasing numbers of self-settled refugees in urban areas, OPM is committed towards working with UNHCR and protection actors to improve reception and coordination of assistance to urban refugees. There is a need to streamline and strengthen existing asylum admissions, reception, registration and RSD procedures including functioning of the Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC) and Refugee Appeals Board (RAB) to address backlogs. OPM reported that they have plans with the police to improve asylum procedures and facilities in Kampala and across settlements. Earlier in the year OPM, UNHCR and the police met to discuss possible ways of addressing asylum procedures and reception in Kampala.

*Action: OPM together with UNHCR to conduct an internal review of existing asylum processes, procedures and capacity of government to effectively respond to the growing number and needs of new arrivals across the country.*
10. A mapping of actors working with refugees in Kampala will be necessary to understand/explore effective mechanisms to better coordinate protect and assistance packages delivered to urban refugees. The meeting was informed that Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA) has volunteered to work with humanitarian actors on addressing refugee protection and assistance issues within Kampala. It was suggested that UNHCR undertakes an internal review of its current Urban Refugee Assistance Strategy and to bring together the different protection actors and Government Line Ministries (GLMs) to review the way of working including provision of assistances to refugees residing in urban and peri-urban areas across the country.

11. Protection partners suggested to set-up an Urban Refugee Coordination Forum to reinforce coordination amongst relevant actors. Partners also proposed to UNHCR and OPM to bring in new actors/ players in to the urban refugee response. UNHCR promised to organize a protection dialogue for Kampala to discuss pertinent protection concerns, challenges and opportunities towards address protection and assistance needs among self-settled refugees in Kampala.

*Action: UNHCR to organize a stakeholder's meeting/dialogue to discuss the urban refugee response.*

12. Registration and Case Management Tools: OPM and UNHCR are currently rolling out its ProGres V4 and BIMS/ GDT to address continuous registration, Food and CRI distribution. This will also help solve Case Management challenges within Child Protection, PSN and SGBV. ProGresv4 training for OPM is ongoing in several locations and currently the SOPs are under development jointly by OPM and UNHCR. There will be briefings and consultations in due course with respective partners and line ministries.

### **Discussion Point 3: Key updates and communication by partners/sub-working groups.**

13. NRC recently concluded a research study on the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) processes, access to Land and Property and spread of HIV in the urban areas. They promised to share the key findings at the next meeting and final report with NPRWG members.
14. UNHCR updated on the interagency assessment on the measures, services and Safeguards for protection of women and children in refugee settlements in Uganda. The assessment was finalized in settlements in South Western region, currently ongoing in West – Nile region and Mid-West and thereafter in Kampala. Data collection and field work is expected to be finalized on 3rd August. A workshop will be organized at Kampala level to discuss the draft report including preliminary findings. All partners including INGO/NNGO representatives from the field and other actors will be invited to attend the workshop.
15. An update on the INGOs and NNGOs proposal to establish a Peaceful Co-existence Task Team (not a Working Group) was shared during the meeting. It is anticipated that few donors will participate in the meetings of the group. A draft TOR of the Task team has been prepared, reviewed and adopted by its members. There will be a rotating chair during the first 6 months and this will be reviewed over time. All discussions and decisions at this meeting will feed into the NPRWG.
16. Protection actors requested that there should be strong linkages between NPRWG and the Interagency Cash and Social Protection Working Groups, which in essence relate to protection. The meeting agreed that these WGs should be invited to the share their updates at the next NRPWG meeting.

**Next Meeting's proposed agenda and follow up action points:** These were proposals by the members

- All Sub WGs and Task Teams to provide strategic updates.
- Presentation on climate change by CARE International.
- Brief presentation on the UN PSEA TF Plan of Action.